

WOMEN AND THE ANCIENT MEDITERRANEAN SEA,
6TH-1ST CENTURIES BCE

A Thesis

by

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ABSTRACT

Women have often been relegated to an afterthought in the annals of classical history, by their contemporaries and later scholars. Unearthing the scant information available about them has become easier due to the surge of digital humanities and a greater interest in women's lives. I took an interest in this topic after realizing the lack of information that had been gathered about the interaction of historical women and the sea in ancient Greece. In this thesis I will gather the evidence that informs our understanding of ancient women and how they functioned within a male-dominated sea.

My goal is to present the lives of women who have often been overlooked in the context of maritime history and to present a more comprehensive view of ancient Greek maritime culture. I will also discuss contemporary theories about the lives of ancient women, such as the works of Sarah Pomeroy, and how the evidence from the maritime world corresponds to and challenges some of these beliefs.

My analysis will rely primarily on evidence from Greek texts and artifacts from archaeological excavations. The main portion of the information will be from ancient texts including histories, plays, contracts, and inscriptions.

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All other work conducted for the thesis was completed by the student independently.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Women in the ancient world have become of increasing interest to scholars over the last 35 years accompanying a growth in research into aspects of maritime culture in the Mediterranean.¹ In the spirit of these developments, I have chosen to address the relationship between women, both divine and mortal, and the sea in ancient Greece and Hellenistic Egypt, including their roles in maritime warfare, economic activities, and travel (both physical and metaphorical).

Goddesses with sea powers had considerable sway over the actions of mortals on the ocean and were often sought to provide fair winds and calm seas for sailors. As seafaring and marriage became poetically connected as analogous voyages, female deities were invoked to make the transition from maiden to bride a peaceful one and to protect a new wife on her journey from her father's home to her husband's bed.² Thus deities who were mainly concerned with the safety of the family became increasingly connected with safe passage over water and the return of loved ones to the familial household. Goddesses were also entreated for their influence in naval matters and to provide safe, victorious return.

However mortal women did more in the maritime domain than just entreat deities. Documentary evidence shows that women worked weaving fishing nets, trading grain along the Nile, and

¹ This thesis follows the format of the *American Journal of Archaeology*.

² Barringer 1991.

fighting as marines on board ships. They also travelled across the Mediterranean, both willingly and unwillingly.

Overview of Research

In order to discuss the types of roles divine and mortal women assumed on the Mediterranean, I will focus on the overarching roles of women as warriors, providers, and travelers. Data were collected from inscriptions,³ archaeological sites, and various ancient texts from across the Mediterranean. The decision to focus on women in the Greek world stemmed from a richness of information about mortal women along with strong documentation about the character of divine women. I have explored ancient Greek culture from prehistory to the reign of the Ptolemies in Late Hellenistic Egypt in order to present the roots of female participation in seafaring to the end of independent Greek rule in the Mediterranean in 146 BCE.

An inherent bias in the study of ancient women is that many Greek literary sources are focused on Classical Athens and, later, Hellenistic Egypt. This can lead to (1) a limited view of the broader culture and (2) modern scholars transferring the cultural values of the urban elite across a much wider population.⁴ Relying on Athenian views distorts the views of Greeks as a whole, since other Greek city-states allowed elite women to rise in power and status in ways that were oppositional to Athenian views that women should be unobtrusive in public matters.⁵ Through study of the archaeology and epigraphy of other Greek cities, I have been able to assemble a

³ Databases consulted include Papyrus.info, Perseus, Packard Humanities Institute Online, Collection of Greek Ritual Norms, and Attalus, amongst others.

⁴ Hemelrijk 1999.

⁵ Penrose 2016, 13.

more complete view of the relationship between ancient Greek women and the sea. During the second and first centuries BCE, women outside of Athens were gaining money and status unavailable to their counterparts in the city, possibly partly because of growing Roman influence. They began building aqueducts,⁶ made and forgave large loans to the city,⁷ or flaunted their wealth by treating the citizens with sweets and funding public buildings.⁸ Additionally, many of the Athenian male historians came from the upper class and wrote primarily for their peers. The stratification of their beliefs along with the scant surviving evidence for many periods creates a narrow and biased perspective as these authors had little interest in detailing the lives of women regardless of their social class. Aline Rouselle attributes some of this inequity to women's lower status and the fact that their day-to-day writings were treated differently from men's.⁹ Instead of being copied and published throughout antiquity, letters and other writings by women were often lost.

While Classical Athens had subdued women's voices, Hellenistic Egypt was privileged with a large population of literate women.¹⁰ Unfortunately, Alexandria, where many papyri were collected at the Great Library, does not have a climate conducive to preserving natural fibers.¹¹ The loss of the writings by these women further impedes modern researchers from being able to better construct the nature of their general lives and interactions with the sea.

⁶ Priene 147 from Priene, Ionia (c. 100-50 BCE).

⁷ *SEG* 22.432 from Boeotia (early second century BCE).

⁸ *IKyme* 13 from Kyme, Aeolis (after 130 BCE).

⁹ Rouselle 1988.

¹⁰ Sheridan 1998.

¹¹ Pomeroy 1984.

Because literary texts influenced how early archaeologists searched for and interpreted sites, women were often left out of the picture. By placing higher value on the sites of ancient battles and temples, the daily lives of Greeks and the domestic spaces in which women operated were overlooked.¹² Penelope Allison argues that “[p]ast approaches to artifacts, and the labor involved in collecting, analyzing and reanalyzing this wealth of remains, have also been major obstacles inhibiting ... scholars from developing more theorized, interdisciplinary approaches to interpreting artifacts and gendered practices.”¹³ The reanalysis of Qumran, a Ptolemaic era Jewish burial site in Israel, by Joan E. Taylor demonstrates the value of new investigation.¹⁴ Her research has pointed out the original excavators’s dismissal of probable female skeletal remains in favor of characterizing the only certain female remains as “marginalized” in order to confirm the celibacy of male Essenes described in Judaic texts. Taylor’s reexamination exemplifies the dangers of ignoring or marginalizing the presence of women in order to support a literary or religious tradition.

Although many issues are present when researching women in the ancient Mediterranean, these challenges also make any effort to uncover a more complete view of their interactions with the sea all the more important.

The Status of Women in Ancient Greece

It is important, before diving into the ancient sea, to discuss first the status of ancient Greek women. While the old certainty that the ancient Greeks "created a form of society in which, for

¹² Meyers 2003.

¹³ Allison 2015, 119.

¹⁴ Taylor 1999.

all practical purposes (which were, for them, war, politics, competitive athletics, and litigation), women played no part whatsoever”¹⁵ may be true to some extent, especially in Athens, recent research has shown that women were involved in many aspects of Greek public life. In coastal Priene during the Hellenistic period, a woman named Phile rose to the position of *stephanephoros*, garland-wearer, the highest magistrate in town.¹⁶ In his examination of attitudes towards ancient Greek women, Peter Walcot points out that “we have no way of being certain how far social reality corresponded to the social ideal of female seclusion.”¹⁷ This argument about how integrated women were in Greek public life will remain but the current debate supports at least some inclusion of women into positions of power over time.

In Neolithic to Late Bronze Age Greece (7000–1100 BCE), archaeological evidence points towards a lack of distinct gender roles that became increasingly instilled over time.¹⁸ Throughout Prehistory, females make up the majority of extant figurines across Greece and there is a significant proportion of fertility figures among them. Some figures were also sculpted with beards and breasts that indicate greater sexual ambiguity and a spectrum of gender. Sexual asymmetry begins to grow in the Bronze Age and becomes more solidified over time,¹⁹ as men become associated with militaristic imagery and the predominance of female figurines wanes. Throughout the Bronze Age, female deities who had been associated with war, such as Hera, increasingly became related to gentler roles and took over spheres of protective influence such as

¹⁵ Knox 1992.

¹⁶ Eckhardt 2012; see also Bremen 1996.

¹⁷ Walcot 1984.

¹⁸ Talalay 2005, 134.

¹⁹ Talalay 2005, 140.

guiding lost sailors home.²⁰ Although many, like Athena, retained their military power, goddesses like Hera and Aphrodite progressively became more closely correlated with protecting the family unit and were invoked to bring home wayward fathers and husbands or to prevent lovers from leaving by sea. In the Homeric epics, however, divine women sometimes maintained their guileful natures and often served to divert men from their chosen path.²¹

For mortal women in Classical Athens, the gender asymmetry that began in the Bronze Age created a system of seclusion in fifth-century BCE Athens. The Periklean ideal of never speaking about women in public spaces likely fueled a lack of documentation, as it influenced many of his contemporaries to not write about women. After the late fifth century BCE, attitudes towards women tended to relax, although some men still maintained old ideals. During the fourth century BCE, Xenophon maintained that the nature of women suited them for indoor work and men were suited to the outdoors.²² Demosthenes echoed this ideal in his argument against Eubulides, who had accused him of not being an Athenian citizen by citing as evidence his mother working outside the home. Demosthenes rebuffed this argument by referencing the Athenian law “which declare[d] that anyone who makes business in the market a reproach against any male or female citizen shall be liable to the penalties for evil-speaking.”²³ Demosthenes stated that his mother had worked outside the home as a nurse while impoverished early in his life, and that they together sold ribbons in the marketplace to earn money. While contrary to the model of a woman staying indoors and not entering into the world of business, it seems to have been commonplace

²⁰ Alföldi 1960, 143.

²¹ Hom. *Il.* 15, Hera blows Heracles off course; *Procl. Cypria* 14, Hera blows Paris off course.

²² Xen. *Ec.* 7.22.

²³ Dem. 57.30.

enough in Athens to not raise many qualms except amongst the ultraconservative. Aristotle contemporaneously states that it is impossible to "keep the wives of the poor from going out of doors."²⁴ Whereas the extremely wealthy could support women not working and making little if any income, a poor family could not afford to let hands go idle.

Throughout this thesis, I discuss how some women subverted Athenian ideals and engaged in maritime roles. While affluent women were able to take on large scale trading operations, especially under Ptolemaic rule, poor women were also able to engage in maritime activity on a smaller scale in order to support themselves and their families. This is against the attitudes espoused by Xenophon and demonstrates a more diverse level of social engagement for women across the Greek world. The decision to separate women into divine and mortal chapters reflects the differences in roles available to them and how they interacted with each other. Much of the discussion on divine women includes religious tradition and attitudes, while the chapter on mortal women is focused on histories, personal letters, and other documentary evidence.

²⁴ Aris. *Pol.* 4.1300a 6-7.

CHAPTER II

DIVINE WOMEN

Introduction

The nature of divine women in ancient Greece varied from city to city as different aspects were favored according to what the populace needed or valued. As referenced above, several female deities with militaristic pedigrees began to take on familial duties during the Bronze Age. This transition also became blended with the idea of marriage as a sea voyage, transforming some goddesses into both protector of marriage and sea voyages.²⁵

For the purpose of this discussion, sexual status has been defined as a woman's transition from virgin to sexually active, normally under the guise of marriage. Many deities were perceived as guiding this transition and keeping a watchful eye over young women on the journey to make sure it was a pleasant and safe one. Throughout this chapter I will discuss how female deities guarded women through their metaphorical voyage as they also guarded men on the sea.

Hera

Fostered by freshwater divinities Oceanus and Tethys in her youth,²⁶ Hera grew to sit atop the pantheon of Greek gods with her brother/husband Zeus. Along with protecting marriage and birth, Hera also served as a goddess of navigation,²⁷ providing safe passage to those who supplicated her as evidenced by inscriptions and dedications at various seaside cult sites across

²⁵ Talalay 2005.

²⁶ Hom. *Il.* 14.200 and 14.300.

²⁷ Demetriou 2015, 88.

Greece and Italy. In Crotona, Italy, a boat model was dedicated at the Temple of Hera Lacinia along with votive anchors.²⁸ Crotona was originally founded by Achaean Greeks ca. 710 BCE, which predates only slightly the flourishing of the cult of Hera as a sea goddess from the seventh century BCE to the sixth century BCE.²⁹ Relevant finds also include a small terracotta boat from the temples at Perachora, Greece,³⁰ and a goddess with a ship farther inland at Tiryns in an archaic temple dedicated to Hera.³¹ Fishhooks were also dedicated in her honor by grateful fishermen at Foce del Sele (Paestum), and again at Perachora.³²

Hera's powers were closely related to Poseidon's, and her cult spaces appear alongside his on Samos and Thasos. Herodotus, in the fifth century BCE, wrote about a Samian sailing party blown off course to outside of the Pillars of Hercules and Tartessus; when they safely returned home they set aside ten percent of the profits they had made outside the pillars to dedicate a bronze cauldron in the Temple of Hera.³³ Having witnessed Hera's power to protect sailors and increase their profits, the Samians seem to have valued her equally with Poseidon for a time as their main protectors at sea.³⁴ On the processional route from the temple to the harbor were at least two full-size ships dedicated to Poseidon and Hera ca. 600 BCE.³⁵ There are 40 ship models dedicated to Hera recorded at Samos,³⁶ although there is debate whether they are all votive or if some served in ritual activities. There is a strong likelihood that some of the earlier ship models

²⁸ Iacopi 1952, 167-68.

²⁹ Boedeker 2016, 201.

³⁰ Streuding 2014, 46.

³¹ Kyrieleis 1995, 112.

³² Baumbach 2004, 179-80.

³³ Hdt. 4.152.2-4

³⁴ Kyrieleis 1995, 112.

³⁵ Walter 1990, 82-88; see also de Polignac 2004, 116.

³⁶ Baumbach 2004, 163.

were used similarly to those during the processions on Samos mentioned by Athenaeus in the early third century CE, almost a millennium later; some were also possibly left as votive offerings by sailors either giving thanks to or asking for favor from the goddess. According to Athenaeus, the procession, called *τονεύς*, celebrated the return of the statue of Hera after being stolen by Tyrrhenians, at an unknown time, who when trying to escape with the stolen statue, found their boat cursed to stand still, allowing the Samians to catch up and recover it.³⁷

At the temple of Poseidon on Thasos, there is a small altar outside the southern entrance dedicated to Hera Epilimnia (at the harbor) and an inscription dated to ca. 450 BCE that mentions her aversion to goats:

*Ἡρῆι Ἐπιλιμενίῃ
αἶγα ὤ θέμις.*

*To Hera Epilimnia (at the harbor), a goat is not permitted.*³⁸

She is also venerated on Delos by the same name,³⁹ and at Athens a seat at the theater of Dionysus was held for the priesthood of Hera Epilimnia,⁴⁰ indicating the widespread recognition of her as a goddess found in harbors and connected to the protection of sailors.

Hera's influence was also felt on the island of Lesbos, as evidenced by extant fragments of Sappho's poetry. The most recent find, the so-called Brothers Poem, mentions the power of Hera

³⁷ *Ath.* 15.

³⁸ *CGRN* 23, 1, x-x. from Thasos (ca. 450 BCE).

³⁹ “Ἡρᾶς τῆς ἐν λιμένι” *ID* 1426, B, col. II, line 26.

⁴⁰ *IG* II² 5148 from Attica (unknown date).

to return safely those in danger at sea: "...but instead send me, urge me; to pray profusely to Queen Hera; that Charaxos return here; guiding his ship safe; and find us unharmed."⁴¹ This poem mentions Sappho's two brothers, Charaxos and Larichos, and another woman whose encouragement is being rebuked by Sappho. Sappho says that only gods can control the outcome of her brothers's fate, and Sappho's own time would be better spent beseeching Hera for her brothers's safe return rather than trading encouraging words.⁴² This entreaty to Hera reflects the goddess's ability to keep safe the family structure, keep watch over the loved ones of the sailors while they are away, and bring them home safely. Prayers to Hera specifically, rather than to Poseidon, may have been the responsibility of women left behind by sailors.

The tradition of supplicating to Hera likely started on Lesbos during the Trojan War, as evidenced in *The Odyssey*, Menelaus relates that Hera, as well as Poseidon, saved Agamemnon from peril on the seas, after the Greeks prayed while on the island.⁴³ This is also echoed in a hymn by Callimachos.⁴⁴ This practice is referenced in Sappho Fragment 17,

πλάσιονδημ[οισοπ]ολοις α[ἰ]θήσθ]ω,
 ποτίνι Ἥρα,ς ἀχ[α]ρίε[ς]τ' ἐόρταν.
 τὰν ἀράταν Ἀτρ[εΐδ]α]ι πρήσαν
 τοι βασιλῆες
 ἐκτελεζάντες μ[ε]γάλοισ ἀέθλοισ
 πρῶτα μὲν περὶ Εἰ[λι]ον], ἀψερον δε´
 τυιδ´ ἀπορμάθεν[τες· ὁ]δον· γὰρ εὐρήν
 οὐκ ἐδύναντο
 πρὶν σε καὶ Δί' ἀντ[ί]ισον] πεδελθην
 καὶ Ἰουώας ἴμε[ροέντα] παῖδα·

⁴¹ Translation Boedeker 2016, 189, Lines 9-13.

⁴² Bierl 2016.

⁴³ Hom. *Od.* 4.512-513; translation Murray (1960) "But thy brother escaped, indeed, the fates and shunned them with his hollow ships, for queenly Hera saved him".

⁴⁴ Callim. *H.* 3.228-32.

νῦν δὲ κ[...]/ποίημεν
 καὶ το π[άλ]λαιον
 ἀγνακαικ[α].....ὄχλος
 π[α]ρθε[νων]γ]υναίκων
 αμφις []
 μετ[ρ]ὸ λ[ο]λύγας
 πας []
 []ν.ιλ[έ]μμενα[ι]
 [Ἡ]ρ[ά] σ[ὺ]ν ἰκε[ῖ]σθαι

*Nearby let your favor blow towards the attendants
 of the Muses, honored Hera, and towards the festival
 that the kings, Atreids, made
 desired by you (i.e. made desirable to you),
 after facing great endeavors,
 firstly around Ilium and then
 when they came ashore here, for they could not have
 found the right route
 before turning to you and Zeus, protector of the suppliants,
 and the attractive son of Thyona.
 But now, O queen, we too, look!, are celebrating
 these holy and beautiful rites
 according to the old usage, and the crowd
 of virgins . . . and women
 around . . .
 the measures of the clamors . . .
 to be . . .
 o Hera, to arrive.⁴⁵*

Deborah Boedeker contends that these two fragments, 17 and the Brothers Poem, of Sappho along with Fragment 5,⁴⁶ represent a cycle of poems about the brothers away at sea that were meant to be performed at the local festival of Hera.⁴⁷ Melissa Mueller has put forth the idea that

⁴⁵ Ferrari 2014, 15-16.

⁴⁶ For Fragment 5, see the section on Aphrodite.

⁴⁷ Boedeker 2016, 194.

the Brothers Poem is a deliberate retelling of the *Odyssey* with Charaxos as the wayward Odysseus, Sappho as Penelope, and Larichos as the young Telemachus.⁴⁸ Since the festival on Lesbos was in part to celebrate Hera saving Odysseus, Sappho's retelling of a familiar maritime story central to the festival reiterates Hera's power over the sea to reconnect the familial unit, while expressing her own desire for Charaxos to escape the clutches of Rhodopis, a prostitute (*hetaira*) he is known to have freed from slavery,⁴⁹ who stands in for Circe.

The Heraia at Perachora

Located at the end of the Perachora peninsula on the Corinthian Gulf, two temples provide evidence for cult activity surrounding the veneration of Hera as a navigator. Originally excavated by a British team directed by Humfry Payne between 1930 and 1933, the work revealed most of the sanctuary including one temple to Hera Akraia, built in the mid-ninth century BCE near the harbor at the tip of the peninsula, and another to Hera Limenaia, located at the top of the hill and named for the dedications found there. The site was likely used primarily by sailors, especially in its early years, due to its remote location and "lack of secular structures".⁵⁰ Perachora is known to be one of the sites of the Daidala procession, which celebrated the relationship between Hera and Zeus,⁵¹ although there is no direct evidence for processions between the two Hera temples at Perachora.

⁴⁸ Mueller 2016.

⁴⁹ Obbink 2016.

⁵⁰ Menadier 1995, 129.

⁵¹ de Polignac 2004, 43.

The Limenaia temple, and an adjacent large pool, were built on the seaward side of the hill during the sixth century,⁵² a time when Corinthian commercial interests overseas grew.⁵³ T. J. Dunbabin, a contemporary of Payne, put forth the idea that the pool was used in maritime ritual, as more than 200 offering bowls (*phialai*) corresponds roughly to the number of years the pool was in use, ending in 146 BCE when the Roman general Mummius sacked Corinth. If the *phialai* were used in a way similar to that of the Syracusans, who lowered their cups into the sea when they lost sight of the Temple of Minerva,⁵⁴ this may indicate an analogous ritual. Given the annual nature of the Perachoran ceremony and the dependence of Corinthian power on maritime success, it stands to reason that the *phialai* ritual may have been related to the beginning of the sailing season and seeking the favor of Hera for the commercial voyages to come.⁵⁵ Some have reconstructed the *phialai* in different ways, including that they were used in feasts at the site and were added to the pool as infill later;⁵⁶ this maintains their use in the cult worship at Perachora, though does not suggest a purpose for the feasts other than general celebrations.

John Salmon indicates his puzzlement that the oracle at Perachora was located down in the harbor temple of Hera Akraia, although the *phialai* are found further up on the hill at the Limenaia temple.⁵⁷ I would venture to attribute this difference to the inland vantage point overlooking a greater span of sea. There is now a modern lighthouse near the site showing that

⁵² Dunbabin 1951, 63.

⁵³ Salmon 1972, 175.

⁵⁴ Polemon ap. Athen. 11.462b-c.

⁵⁵ Dunbabin 1951, 69.

⁵⁶ Menadier 1995.

⁵⁷ Salmon 1972.

the temple still commands a panoramic view of the gulf despite sea level changes having inundated some of the harbor area.

Aphrodite

Although Aphrodite is generally thought of as a peaceful goddess of love, her association with the sea began violently at birth as seafoam commingled with the castrated genitals of Uranus.⁵⁸

After birth, she traveled to the island of Cyprus and made it her home; because of this she is often referred to in epigraphic texts with the epithet *Kypris*.⁵⁹

A large find of a dozen votive anchors at an Etruscan temple in Gravisca, Italy also indicates her influence was felt more broadly across the Mediterranean and that other cultures venerated her as well.⁶⁰ The identification of this temple as Aphrodite's was recently challenged by M.-L. Haack, who argues that it belonged to another goddess associated with the sea, Hera, based on the number of inscriptions.⁶¹ In either case, this example speaks to the jurisdiction of divine women in seafaring and their importance for sailors.

On the island of Aegina around the beginning of the fifth century BCE, a marble anchor stock was dedicated to Aphrodite Epilimena.⁶² It was found near the Temple of Aphaia (associated with Athena) where Herodotus tells us a ram had been dedicated in 519 BCE, on the occasion of

⁵⁸ Hes. *Th.* 173.

⁵⁹ Demetriou 2010.

⁶⁰ Torelli 1977, 435.

⁶¹ Haack 2007.

⁶² Demetriou 2010.

the Aeginetan capture of Cydonia, Crete.⁶³ These contrasting offerings speak to the differing natures of the goddesses involved; while the naval ram was a suitable offering to warrior Athena Aphaia, an anchor as a symbol of safe harbor was more appropriate for Aphrodite (or Hera, as above), representing her ability to save wayward sailors and bring them home again to their loved ones. Sappho's Fragment 5 refers to Aphrodite and the Nereids for their ability to bring home lost seafarers.

πότνιαι Νηρήιδες, ἀβλάβη[ν μοι
τόν κακίγνητον δ[ό]τε τυιδ' ἴκεσθα[ι]

...
γνώσε[τ' ἄψ] οἴ[ο]ν. σὺ [δ]έ, Κύπ[ρ]ι σ[έ]μ[ν]α,
οὐκ ὄνε[κτα κατ]θεμ[έν]α κάκων

Revered Nereids, grant me that my brother may come here unhurt,

But you, august Kypris, having eliminated unbearable things, ...⁶⁴

Aphrodite was also known by various epithets that reflect the reverence for her felt by those apprehensive about sea travel. She was referred to as *Einalia* (of the sea) by Mnasalkes, an epigrammatist in the third century BCE,⁶⁵ *Galenaia* (calmer[of the sea]) on a nautilus-shell at Cape Zephyrion,⁶⁶ *Epilimonia* (near the harbor) on anchor stocks in Aegina and Corinth,⁶⁷ *Pontia* (of the open sea) in inscriptions on Kos, and *Pontia kai Limonia* (of the sea and harbor) in Hermione.⁶⁸ Her abilities lay not only in protecting seafarers but also in making sure they

⁶³ Streuding 2014, 51. Hdt. 3.59.

⁶⁴ Ferrari 2014.

⁶⁵ *Anth. Gr.* 9.333.

⁶⁶ *Anth. Gr.* 9.21.

⁶⁷ Demetriou 2010.

⁶⁸ Paus. 2.34.11.

brought home considerable wealth. On an undated dedication taken from a statue, Aeximenes inscribed an appeal to Aphrodite “the guardian of all navigation,”⁶⁹ that if she watched over his ship, he would make her a shareholder as thanks and provide her with the profits befitting the position. Phaeinos of Halikarnassos dedicated a statue in his home city to thank Aphrodite for embarking “on the sea with him as a trader, this honest man kept his honest riches.”⁷⁰

Konon, an Athenian admiral, brought worship of Aphrodite Euploia (good ships or fair voyage) to Piraeus near Athens, ca. 350 BCE, by dedicating a temple to her after his victory over the Lacedaemonian navy off Knidus, as the Knidians typically called her Aphrodite Euploia (fair voyage).⁷¹

Inscriptions on a white marble stele found in the Sanctuary of Aphrodite on the island of Kos, dated to ca. 196/5 BCE, also point to the dual nature of Aphrodite Pandemos (“common to all the people”) and Aphrodite Pontia (“of the open sea”). One inscription lays out the means by which Aphrodite’s priestess in Knidos had the authority to collect a fine of 10 drachmas from merchants and ship-masters who set sail from the city without performing the necessary sacrifice.⁷² Sailors returning from serving on warships were also required to either sacrifice an animal worth 30 drachmas or pay the priestess 15 drachmas with an additional 1 for the “money-box.”⁷³ Fishermen and shipowners were also required to pay 5 drachmas annually to the goddess. This tax generated a consistent source of income for the temple and was distributed to the high

⁶⁹ *Anth. Gr.* 9.601, trans. Demetriou 2010, 77.

⁷⁰ *SEG* 28, 838, trans. Demetriou 2010, 77.

⁷¹ Paus. 1.1.3.

⁷² *IG* 12.4.1.302 from Kos (after 198 BCE).

⁷³ *IG* 12.4.1.319 from Kos (late second century BCE).

priestess to maintain the temple and help the city recover from the earthquake of 198 BCE. The city of Knidos was possibly moved at some point in fourth century BCE, from a location on the southern coast of the Datça peninsula to the current position on the point,⁷⁴ the exact reason is unknown but the move to a more prominent position may have been to capture more tax from passing traders looking to use the harbor as a safe port.⁷⁵

Aphrodite's association with sexuality and the sea often leads to assumptions about the use of her seaside temple as brothels. Although no concrete evidence of sacred prostitution has been identified, it continues to cloud the understanding of the goddess as a provider to sailors.⁷⁶ She is more accurately represented as a guide through tumultuous times in life, be it matters of the heart or matters of the sea. As a guide for young Theseus to Crete, she metaphorically assists him in entering manhood in addition to guiding him to the island.⁷⁷ Philodemos called on Aphrodite to lead him to his wife's good graces and to maintain their love.⁷⁸

Athena

As the patron goddess and namesake of Athens, the war goddess Athena was routinely honored in commemorating Athenian victories over the Persians and the Spartans. Less celebrated is her attribute as a guide to young heroes on their journeys across the sea. In Apollonius of Rhodes's *Argonautica*, third century BCE, Athena guides Argus to build the first ever keeled ship, the

⁷⁴ Bean and Cook 1952.

⁷⁵ Demand 1989.

⁷⁶ Demetriou 2010.

⁷⁷ Plut. *Thes.* 18.2, the oracle at Delphi told Theseus to select her as his guide for the journey.

⁷⁸ *Anth. Gr.* 5.121.

Argo, which Jason and his crew sail to find the Golden Fleece.⁷⁹ She not only assists with the construction of the ship but also provides the helmsman Tiphys to ensure their safe passage (Fig. 1).⁸⁰ The crew itself was protected by Hera, indicating there was a division of responsibility between the two with Athena more concerned with the ship while Hera was charged with ensuring the safe return of the Argonauts. During the journey to Colchis, the original stone anchor was set aside for a heavier one; the anchor made its way to the temple of Jasonian Athena, in Kyzikos, where it was laid as a sacred stone.⁸¹



Figure 1. 1st century CE Roman terracotta relief depicting Athena and Tiphys at the sails (Reprinted from Nguyen 2007a).

⁷⁹ Apollon. 1.18.

⁸⁰ Apollon. 1.105.

⁸¹ Apollon. 936; see also Arr. *Peripl.* 7 which states that the anchor is dedicated in the sanctuary of Rhea at Phasis.

On the island of Aegina, Athena became associated with the local goddess Aphaia, the primary goddess on Aegina from the 14th century BCE onwards. At the temple of Aphaia, a collection of ships's rams in the shape of boars's heads were reportedly dedicated to Athena, collected from a naval victory in 519 BCE against Samian colonists of Cydonia, Crete.⁸² In addition to Athena's main temple on the Athenian Acropolis, there was also a smaller temple located at Cape Sounion adjacent to the temple of Poseidon. It was built ca. 470 BCE and was likely part of the rebuilding and rededication of Attica after the Persian Wars. Sounion was a major territorial landmark for Athenians and represented an important landmark on any sea voyage,⁸³ so the placement of a temple of Athena in this spot attests to her importance for ancient sailors and maritime merchants.

Nike as Naval Victor

In addition to Aphaia, Athena absorbed another minor goddess into her retinue. Originally a goddess of victory in gymnastic and musical contests, Nike eventually became a war goddess at some point before the middle of the fifth century BCE.⁸⁴ The first association between Athena and Nike came during the Archaic period, as represented by a statue sculpted by Archermos of Chios in 530-520 BCE and dedicated by Iphidike, an Ionian woman, on the Athenian Acropolis.⁸⁵ Brunilde Ridgway posits that the Ionian style of this dedication was the result of Archermos having moved to Athens to produce statues for Ionian expatriates living there.⁸⁶ The

⁸² Hdt. 3.59.

⁸³ Theodoropoulou-Polychroniadis 2015.

⁸⁴ Sikes 1895.

⁸⁵ Ridgway 1987, 402; see also Nike Akr. 693.

⁸⁶ Ridgway 1986, 273.

first representation of a winged Nike was also the work of Archermos, and dedicated at the Artemision on Delos earlier in the sixth century BCE.⁸⁷

The first literary mention of Nike in her role as bringer of victory comes from Herodotus:

χαλκός γάρ χαλκῷ συμμίζεται, αἶματι δ' Ἄρης
πόντον φονίζει. τότε ἔλευθερον Ἑλλάδος ἦμαρ
εὐρύοπα Κρονίδης ἐπάγει καὶ πόντια Νίκη.

*“Bronze will come together with bronze, and Ares will redden the sea with blood. To Hellas the day of freedom, far-seeing Zeus and august Nike will bring.”*⁸⁸

In her position as a bringer of freedom in battle, Nike was closely linked with Zeus and assisted him in the delivery of victory. According to E. E. Sikes, Nike worship was likely revived in Olympia,⁸⁹ home of the main temple of Zeus, after having waned in popularity, and this accounts for her relation to Zeus as herald. Eventually in Athens and elsewhere in Greece,⁹⁰ Nike became absorbed into the more prevalent Athena cult and served as a minor goddess in the Olympian pantheon.

The Nike of Samothrace

The Winged Victory/Nike of Samothrace (fig. 2) is easily the most iconic and well-known representation of the goddess. Discovered in 1863, it has held a place of honor in the Louvre Museum since 1884. Standing at just over 8 feet tall, the statue commands both a monumental

⁸⁷ Ridgway 1986, 258.

⁸⁸ Hdt. 8.77.2, trans. Godley 1920.

⁸⁹ Sikes 1895.

⁹⁰ Sikes (1895) states specifically Megara and Erythrai.

presence over the Daru staircase and enduring questions about its nature. The prevailing theory, based on Hermann Thiersch's work in 1931 and Karl Lehmann's re-excavation in 1950, that the statue originally was part of an early second-century BCE fountain, has been questioned in recent years, with some reconstructing it as part of a theater.⁹¹

The exact form of ship on which Nike is standing is also debated. Olga Palagia thinks it to be a Roman ship⁹² and Marianne Hamiaux identifies it as a quadrireme,⁹³ although it is generally believed to be a *trihēmiolia*, a type of oared warship used by the Rhodian navy for chasing pirates. Andrew Stewart argues that it should be classified as a *tetrērēs* (quadrireme) type of *kataphraktos*, considering the oar ports and boxed-in outrigger.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Wescoat 2015.

⁹² Palagia 2010.

⁹³ Hamiaux 2014, 156.

⁹⁴ Stewart 2016, 404.



Figure 2. Nike of Samothrace on display in the Louvre (Reprinted from Shonagon 2018).

My main interest is the monument's dedication following a naval victory and how the location of the piece informs us about the importance of the sea in Rhodian religious practice. The monument's original location was on the island of Samothrace in the Sanctuary of the Great Gods, whose main role was "to save the worshippers from the perils of the sea."⁹⁵ Samothrace was a popular site of worship for Rhodian sailors, with many clubs of *Samothraikiastai* set up by Rhodian naval officers and a variety of Rhodians mentioned in inscriptions at the site.⁹⁶

The statue itself is made from 3-4 tons of white Parian marble,⁹⁷ a common material for Greek statues. The stone of the ship is less common; it is made from 30 tons of Rhodian blue-gray

⁹⁵ Burkert 1985.

⁹⁶ Stewart 2016, 404.

⁹⁷ Stewart 2016, 402.

lithos lartios, not typically seen on islands outside of Rhodian influence.⁹⁸ This may be an indicator of the Rhodians's wish to not only identify themselves with the monument but to say specifically that their ships and island were graced by the goddess who contributed to their victory.

The exact victory being celebrated has not yet been concretely identified. Andrew Stewart argues that the monument was not built for the Rhodian victories at Side and Myonessos in 190 BCE, as long believed, but instead was built after the victory at Propontis in 154 BCE during the Bithynian War.⁹⁹ During this conflict the Bithynian fleet was destroyed during a storm, Stewart takes this as evidence for the windswept nature of the Nike and establishes her as an agent of Zeus Cloud-Gatherer. This enhances the previously established connection between Nike and Zeus, and positions her not only as a goddess of victory but as a deliverer of victory blessed by the highest of gods. This would further enlighten the location of the statue on Samothrace, rather than in Rhodian territory, as it is in closer proximity to Propontis where this victory occurred.

Nymphs

In ancient Greece, nymphs were plentiful, minor deities who were divided into many, overlapping groups. Here, I define the Nereids as a subgroup of nymphs, although that definition may be somewhat controversial,¹⁰⁰ since the ancient Greeks often referred to them interchangeably and their domain overlaps with the maritime Haliai (of the sea) and fresh water

⁹⁸ Stewart 2016, 402.

⁹⁹ Stewart 2016, 405-8.

¹⁰⁰ Primarily disputed by Barringer (1995, 2 FN 10), she argues that nereids are a separate group.

Oceanids (daughters of Oceanus).¹⁰¹ They can also be confused with Aurai (breeze) nymphs in representations as they are both represented close to water, although Nereids are shown at least partially under water and Aurai are depicted as hovering above the sea.¹⁰²

The popularity of nymphs in Greek religious life differed greatly depending on the region. In Corinth, nymphs were popular since its founding and they appear to have maintained a distinctly aquatic nature throughout the history of the city. In fact, Pausanias claimed the city was originally named after the Oceanid nymph, Ephyra, who watched over the city's main water supply.¹⁰³ Within Corinth, all of the water-spring deities were nymphs and around many water sources are cult spaces dedicated to other female goddesses, including Hera and Aphrodite.¹⁰⁴ The nymphs were typically tied to a single spring and when it was damaged, they were considered to be injured as well.¹⁰⁵

In Attica there was increased interest in nymphs with the introduction, around 490 BCE, of the forest god Pan, with whom they were associated,¹⁰⁶ and the production of Aeschylus's play *Nereids* around the same time.¹⁰⁷ On the Acropolis, an inscription from a fisherman dedicating the first of his catch to the Syra nymphs is an indication of their importance as the first catch was typically dedicated to Poseidon.¹⁰⁸ The nearby sanctuary, the Hill of the Nymphs on the

¹⁰¹ Soph. *Philoct.* 1470; see also Callim. *H. in Dian.* 13.

¹⁰² Benton 1970.

¹⁰³ Paus. 2.1.1.

¹⁰⁴ Kopestonsky 2016, 721-2.

¹⁰⁵ Kopestonsky 2016, 713.

¹⁰⁶ Kopestonsky 2016, 712.

¹⁰⁷ Barringer 1995, 40.

¹⁰⁸ *IGA* 7; see also Rouse 1902, 58.

southwest side of the Acropolis, also grew in importance throughout this period. These were appropriate locations for cult sites sacred to nymphs given that they bathed Athena in Triton's waters after her birth,¹⁰⁹ and the Nereid Thetis's assistance to Jason and the Argonauts, the champions of Athena.¹¹⁰

The Hill of the Nymphs served two purposes, first as a space to worship nymphs, the second as a space dedicated to marriage and the bride, who was known in Greek as *nymphē*.¹¹¹ Identified through an inscription reading HIEPON NYMΦ[ΩN] ΔΕΜΟ,¹¹² dating to the fifth century BCE, the hill site has been excavated since 1835 with most of the work taking place after 2000.¹¹³ A number of figurines left as votive offerings for successful marriage and fertility were found dating as early as the late seventh century but with large concentrations in the late sixth and fifth centuries. This space is echoed on the south slope of the Acropolis by the Shrine of Nymphē serving as a space for brides to dedicate their *loutrophoroi* to the goddess.¹¹⁴ *Loutrophoroi* were vessels containing the water necessary for a bride's ritual bath before marriage. The use of life-giving freshwater during the bridal bath signified fertility, conversely the use of seawater was associated with preparing the body for burial.¹¹⁵ In Euripides's *Hecuba*, the titular character bathes her deceased daughter Polyxena with seawater, signifying her permanent virginity and barrenness.¹¹⁶ This double meaning of the word nymph/e in ancient Greece, and also the use of

¹⁰⁹ Apollon. 4.305-311.

¹¹⁰ Apollon. 4.833-81.

¹¹¹ Kopestonsky 2016, 715.

¹¹² *IG* I3 1065.

¹¹³ Dourou 2018.

¹¹⁴ Kopestonsky 2016, 715.

¹¹⁵ Beaulieu 2016, 15.

¹¹⁶ Eur. *Hec.* 609-614.

water to signify the journey between virgin and married woman, further highlights the role of nymphs and water as attendants to momentous changes in the lives of women.

The continent of Europe owes its name to one such mythical life change. First referenced in the *Iliad*,¹¹⁷ Europa was a Phoenician princess taken by Zeus, in the form of a bull, across the sea to Crete. This journey not only represented her literal migration to the Greek world but also a symbolic journey from girl to woman with the change in sexual status to accompany it.

Surviving fish plates from the Black Sea region depict this journey and show Nereids accompanying Europa through this transformation.¹¹⁸ They all come from funerary contexts, suggesting a connection between that bridal journey and the one to the afterlife in colonial Greek thought. The connection between Nereids and rebirth is referenced in the legend of Ino, a princess of Thebes, who plunged to her death in the sea and was reborn as the goddess Leucothea who, with the Nereids, protected sailors.¹¹⁹ She often took the form of a shearwater seabird, and in this form saved Odysseus.¹²⁰

The Nereids, along with Hera and Athena, were also protectors of the Argonauts. Thetis's husband, Peleus, was among them and she with her sisters were summoned by Hera to help guide the *Argo* through the rocks on the way to the Ausonian Sea.¹²¹ The Persian navy also entreated Thetis for safety during the Persian wars when they were struck by a storm while sailing for Greece,

¹¹⁷ Hom. *Il.* 14.321.

¹¹⁸ Barringer 1991, 659.

¹¹⁹ Pind. *O.* 2.22; see also Apollod. 3.4.

¹²⁰ Hom. *Od.* 5.333-355.

¹²¹ Apollon. 4.757.

ἡμέρας γὰρ δὴ ἐχείμαζε τρεῖς. τέλος δὲ ἔντομά τε ποιεῦντες καὶ
καταεἶδοντες γόησι οἱ Μάγοι τῷ ἀνέμῳ, πρὸς τε τούτοισι καὶ τῇ Θέτι καὶ
τῆσι Νηρηΐσι θύοντες, ἔπασσαν τετάρτη ἡμέρη, ἢ ἄλλως κως αὐτὸς ἐθέλων
ἐκόπασε. τῇ δὲ Θέτι ἔθουον πυθόμενοι παρὰ τῶν Ἴώνων τὸν λόγον. ὡς ἐκ
τοῦ χώρου τούτου ἀρπασθεῖη ὑπὸ Πηλέος, εἴη τε ἅπασα ἡ ἀκτὴ ἡ Σηπιὰς
ἐκεῖνης τε καὶ τῶν ἀλλέων Νηρηίδων.

*Finally the Magi made offerings and cast spells upon the wind, sacrificing also
to Thetis and the Nereids. In this way they made the wind stop on the fourth
day—or perhaps it died down on its own. They sacrificed to Thetis after
hearing from the Ionians the story that it was from this place that Peleus had
carried her off and that all the headland of Sepia belonged to her and to the
other Nereids.¹²²*

Another to undergo the transformation with the assistance of nymphs is Theseus, son of Poseidon. While en route to Crete to save Athenian youths from the Minotaur, King Minos challenges Theseus to dive into the depths and gain favor from Theseus's father.¹²³ Dolphins escorted him into the depths, where he met Amphitrite, the Nereid wife of Poseidon, who gave him the bridal crown given to her by Aphrodite and sent him back to the surface safely.¹²⁴ This legend reflects Theseus's change in sexual status and portrays him as a bride, from Athenian youth through his ritual bath and crowning, ending in his defeat of the Minotaur and his rape of Ariadne. The story ends with Theseus's human father, Aegeus, plunging to his death in the sea at the miscommunication of Theseus's death.

¹²² Hdt. 7.191.

¹²³ Bacchyl. *Dith.* 17.75-80.

¹²⁴ Bacchyl. *Dith.* 17.90-120.

Nymphs, and more specifically Nereids, are unmistakably tied to ritual purification, marriage, and sexual status along with death and reincarnation. These various Greek myths also illuminate the relationship between voyages across the sea and changes in sexual status.

Conclusion

Divine women in the Greek world largely tasked themselves with protecting sailors and restoring them home. Having goddesses to save you from a perilous fate would have been a source of great comfort to those on the water, evidenced by dedication of votive anchors, and on the land, as referenced by Sappho.

We can see from the archaeological evidence of the temples, statues, and inscriptions addressing or thanking female deities for assistance in maritime matters, that they played no small part in the everyday religious lives of Greek mariners. The temple spaces of Hera at Perachora and Aphrodite on Kos and at Knidos also played important parts in the economic well-being of those areas, as spaces for collecting taxes from merchants, fishermen, and others who made a living on the sea.

For the time period under consideration here (6th-1st centuries BCE), the inscriptions and literary evidence also speak to the wide acceptance of female deities as protectors against harsh seas from Athens to Persia. Athena's maritime influence was felt through the Aegean earlier with her assistance to the Argonauts and the building of the Temple of the Jasonian Athena in Kyzikos. Her influence continues to her association with Aphaia on Aegina and absorbing Nike's cult in Athens. Nike began as a companion to Zeus and rose to prominence as a herald of naval victory

in her own right and was venerated on Samothrace as an important goddess for sailors. Their respected positions are in direct opposition to those of mortal women, who were often derided for taking on maritime roles.

CHAPTER III
MORTAL WOMEN

Introduction

Mortal women assumed various roles within the ancient Greek maritime world. Warrior women, although a rarity in the ancient world, were held in high regard in their country of origin. However, their Greek enemies saw them as objects of derision and an affront to masculine pride. Papyrus fragments and inscriptions show that some women were able to gain sufficient financial capital to participate in the grain trade and some were engaged on a smaller scale in crafts that supported maritime commerce.

Women in Naval Engagements

Artemisia I of Halicarnassus, 5th century BCE

Queen Artemisia I of Halicarnassus (Karia) was a major figure during the second Persian invasion of Greece and is one of the best-known naval commanders from the ancient world, male or female. She was the daughter of Lygdamis, the *satrap* (governor) of Karia, and a Cretan mother.¹²⁵ Upon the death of her husband, whose name is unknown, she inherited the satrapy and ruled over Karia and nearby islands of Kos, Nisyros, and Kalymnos. Her exploits were recorded in the *Histories* of Herodotus, who saw “no need to mention any of the other [naval] captains except Artemisia.”¹²⁶

¹²⁵ Hdt. 7.99.2.

¹²⁶ Hdt. 7.99.1.

Although Halicarnassus was founded, ca. 900 BCE, by Greeks, likely from Troezen and Argos,¹²⁷ in the late sixth century BCE it came under the control of the Persian Empire, into which Artemisia and Herodotus were both born. Herodotus had a personal interest in recording the “great and marvelous deeds, some displayed by the Hellenes, some by the barbarians” due to his mixed Greek and foreign heritage.¹²⁸ Born in 484 BCE, he would have been very young during the Battle of Salamis in 480 BCE. This young exposure influenced his later work and moved him to glorify Artemisia, who would have been a great source of pride to the people of Halicarnassus. Herodotus also generally represented non-Greek women as having larger roles in public than many other writers in the Greek sphere.¹²⁹ Herodotus’s Karian background influenced his portrayal of women in Asia Minor who had public lives and were able to move into powerful positions, like Artemisia.

Artemisia is said to have brought five ships to the Persian fleet during the crossing of the Hellespont, 480 BCE, and led men from Karia, Kos, Nisyros, and Kalymnos.¹³⁰ Herodotus also relates that her Karian ships were considered some of the best, second only to those manned by the Phoenicians.¹³¹ As a commander, she counseled against naval engagement with the Greeks, considering it unwise, and drew the praise of Xerxes

¹²⁷ Vit. 2.18.2.

¹²⁸ Hdt. 1.1.0.

¹²⁹ Dewald 1981.

¹³⁰ Hdt. 7.99.2.

¹³¹ Hdt. 7.99.3; specifically from the town of Sidon.

for speaking against his plans, although he still moved forward with the battle to disastrous ends,¹³² similar to the counsel of Cassandra during the Trojan War. While being pursued by Greeks during the Battle at Salamis (480 BCE), Artemisia ordered her ship to ram an ally to trick her pursuer into believing she was on the Greeks's side, allowing her to escape.¹³³ Being too far away to know whom she had rammed, Xerxes praised Artemisia and said "My men have become women, and my women men."¹³⁴ While this shows that Persians did not hold women and men in the same regard, Artemisia's high social status and knowledge of naval engagement earned her great respect with Xerxes, while her cunning had found her safety.

As Artemisia's success against and notoriety among the Greeks grew, 10,000 drachmas¹³⁵ were offered to whomever could capture her alive.¹³⁶ This high sum attests to the misery the Greeks felt over their sustained embarrassment by a woman. As Athenian women were mostly excluded from public life during this period, only a foreign woman could raise the hackles of the conservative populace to put up such a sum. Fifty years later, the Athenian general Xenophon wrote of his conviction that women were created to work indoors and were unsuited for military service, indicating not much had changed.¹³⁷

¹³² Hdt. 8.68A.1-8.69.2.

¹³³ Hdt. 8.87.1-4.

¹³⁴ Hdt. 8.88.3.

¹³⁵ Thuc. 3.17.4.

¹³⁶ Hdt. 8.93.2.

¹³⁷ Xen. *Oec.* 7.22-23.

While the Greeks looked down on a woman in command, women were held in higher status in ancient Persia and were able to exercise a considerable amount of influence over the decisions of the king through persuasion.¹³⁸ The sway of women was derided among the Greeks and was regarded both as a flaw of monarchy as well as a reflection of the effeminate nature of Persian men.¹³⁹ Maria Brosius expresses the idea that juxtaposing the Persian monarchy against Greek democracy required “stressing the strangeness and otherness”, and that the persuasion women held over the king “proved the weakness of his rule.”¹⁴⁰ Since Greek women were excluded from political and military decision-making, Xerxes’s willingness to listen to Artemisia’s counsel lessened his status in the eyes of a Greek. In Athens, military and political matters were purely the realms of men.¹⁴¹ Walter Penrose raises the point that “monarchical or tyrannical governments in other Greek-ruled locations allowed elite women to hold power that would have been impossible for women to attain at Athens.”¹⁴²

Artemisia I demonstrates that in Asia Minor foreign women could attain levels of power and leadership not readily available to those in the Greek Mainland. Her wise, and ignored, counsel points to her status as a naval commander whose gender was not as important as her abilities.

¹³⁸ Brosius 2002.

¹³⁹ Brosius 2002.

¹⁴⁰ Brosius 2002.

¹⁴¹ Brosius 2002.

¹⁴² Penrose 2016, 13.

Hydna, 5th century BCE

Among the allied Greeks facing Artemisia were Skyllias of Skione and his daughter Hydna. At first, Skyllias was allied with the Persians and recovered shipwrecked goods near Mt. Pelion for them, taking a handsome cut for himself.¹⁴³ Upon joining the Greeks, he revealed the Persian shipwreck and their naval movements. Fik Meijer suggests Skyllias and Hydna were actually double agents who had purposefully scuttled the ships in order to bolster the Greek's chances.¹⁴⁴ As told by Pausanias, in the second century CE, there was a statue erected at Delphi to commemorate their exploits,

παρὰ δὲ τὸν Γοργίαν ἀνάθημά ἐστιν Ἀμφικτυόνων Σκιωναῖος
Σκύλλης, ὃς καταδῦναι καὶ ἐς τὰ βαθύτατα θαλάσσης πάσης ἔχει
φήμην· ἐδιδάξατο δὲ καὶ Ὑδναν τὴν θυγατέρα δύνεσθαι.
οὔτοι περὶ τὸ ὄρος τὸ Πήλιον ἐπιπεσόντος ναυτικῶ τῶ Ξέρξου
βιαίου χειμῶνος προσεξιργάσαντό σφισιν ἀπώλειαν, τὰς τε
ἀγκύρας καὶ εἰ δὴ τι ἄλλο ἔρυμα τᾶς τριήρεσιν ἦν ὑφέλκοντες.
ἀντὶ τούτου μὲν οἱ Ἀμφικτύονες καὶ αὐτὸν Σκύλλην καὶ τὴν παῖδα
ἀνέθεσαν

*Beside the Gorgias is a votive offering of the Amphictyons, representing Skyllias of Skione, who, tradition says, dived into the very deepest parts of every sea. He also taught his daughter Hydna to dive. When the fleet of Xerxes was attacked by a violent storm off Mount Pelion, father and daughter completed its destruction by dragging away under the sea the anchors and any other security the triremes had. In return for this deed the Amphiktyons dedicated statues of Skyllias and his daughter.*¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Hdt. 8.8.

¹⁴⁴ Meijer 2015.

¹⁴⁵ Paus. 10.19.1-2, trans. Wycherley, Ormerod, and Jones 1918.

The statue of Hydna was said to have been taken from Delphi to Rome by Emperor Nero, likely in 67 CE when he visited the sanctuary.¹⁴⁶ It has been argued that the Esquiline Venus is a marble copy of the now lost bronze statue of Hydna (fig. 3),¹⁴⁷ though this interpretation has been challenged.¹⁴⁸ This is supported by a general consensus that the figure depicted is securing her hair in a fillet for swimming (or bathing) and has removed her garments before entering the water. The women depicted on an amphora by Andokides, 525-520 BCE, (fig. 4) have similarly prepared themselves for swimming, as demonstrated by the fish in the center, and are depicted in the nude with their hair tied back in a fillet. Skyllias likely considered it important that Hydna learn to swim and dive, as the activity was common amongst the Greeks (Plato considered knowing how to swim a basic achievement)¹⁴⁹ and there were no barriers to women participating.

¹⁴⁶ Paus. 10.19.2.

¹⁴⁷ Klein 1907.

¹⁴⁸ Ridgway 1984, 46 n. 7.

¹⁴⁹ Plat. *Laws* 3.689d.



Figure 3. Esquiline Venus, Capitoline Museums MC 1441 (Reprinted from Nguyen 2009).



Figure 4. Type A Amphora by Andokides, 525-520 BCE. Louvre F 203 (Reprinted from Nguyen 2007b).

Hydna was already influential in Roman art, serving as the inadvertent inspiration for Ovid's Scylla in the *Metamorphoses*, 8 CE, where Scylla is presented as a sea nymph malformed by Circe who was jealous of Glaucus's love for her. Athenaeus, in the third century CE, states that this tradition started with Aeschiron of Samos in the fourth century BCE,¹⁵⁰ who wrote an iambic poem about Glaucus, a sea deity, being in love with Hydna.¹⁵¹ Athenaeus provides the only surviving fragment of poetry from Hedyle of Attica, third century BCE, who was inspired by the earlier poem of Aeschiron. The poetess combined the legendary Scylla with the earlier poem's story and the patronymic for Skyllias to give Hydna a divine character,

τὸν Γλαῦκον ἐρασθέντα Σκύλλης ἐλθεῖν αὐτῆς εἰς τὸ ἄντρον ἢ
 κογχου δωρημάτα φέροντ' Ἐρυθραίης ἀπο πέτρης, ἢ τοὺς ἀλκυόνων
 παῖδας εἴ' ἀπτερυγούς, τῇ νύμφῃ δύσπιστος ἀθύρματα δάκρυ δ'
 ἐκεῖνου καὶ Σεῖρην γείτων παρθένος οἰκτίσατο· ἀκτὴν γὰρ κείνην
 ἀπενήχετο καὶ τὰ σῦνεγγυς Αἰτῆς

*Glaucus, desiring Scylla, came to her cave
 Bearing the love-gift of a shell from an Erythraean rock
 And the still-unfledged children of the halcyon
 As baubles for the nymph, in vain.
 Even the maiden Siren, a neighbor, pitied his tear,
 Since he swam away to her promontory and the places
 Around Aetna.¹⁵²*

¹⁵⁰ Lowe 2011.

¹⁵¹ Ath. 7.48.

¹⁵² *Suppl. Hell.* 456 = Ath. 7.297a–b, trans. from Lowe 2011.

This transformation from Hydna the diver to Hydna the beloved of Glaucus, and finally to Scylla the sea monster, suggests that Hydna's assistance with the sinking of Persian ships was a natural way to liken her to Scylla attacking ships and sailors.

Artemisia II of Caria, 4th century BCE

Artemisia II, daughter of Hekatomnos, satrap of Karia between 395 and 377 BCE, married her brother Mausolos and ruled Karia with him from 377 BCE until his death in 353 BCE and on her own until 351 BCE. We know of her exploits partially from the architect Vitruvius's description of the secret harbor built by Mausolos, written in the first century BCE, which also mentions some of her exploits demonstrating the ingenuity of the construction.¹⁵³

The secret harbor was extremely useful for Artemisia II when she became satrap upon the death of Mausolos in 353 BCE. Her inheritance is presumed to have left the Rhodians outraged at the prospect of being under the jurisdiction of a woman¹⁵⁴ as they promptly outfitted their fleet and sailed to Laria to remove her from power.¹⁵⁵ Artemisia hid her fleet in the secret harbor and waited for the Rhodians to disembark from their ships. She ordered her fleet to sail past them, tow their fleet out to sea, and leave them defenseless without a means of escape. She then set out for Rhodes in the stolen ships, deceived the city into admitting her forces, and killed the leaders who had stood against

¹⁵³ Vitr. 2.8.13.

¹⁵⁴ Mausolos had gained control of Rhodes in 355/354.

¹⁵⁵ Vitr. 2.8.14.

her.¹⁵⁶ She also is said to have erected a statue of herself in the city of Rhodes that was later covered over by the Rhodians.¹⁵⁷

Simon Hornblower refers to Vitruvius's story as "worthless."¹⁵⁸ His argument is based mainly on Richard Berthold's assumption that a puppet government established by Mausolos would have been unlikely to turn on the Hekatomnid dynasty that supported it.¹⁵⁹ I would reject this argument based on the lack of evidence for the existence of a "pro-Karian party" in Rhodes at this time and no evidence that Mausolos established any sort of new government after taking over the island or deposed leaders who resisted him. Hornblower also undercuts his own argument by accepting the story of Polyaeus about Artemisia II capturing Latmus, where she distracted the citizens into leaving the city and sent in her soldiers.¹⁶⁰ This demonstrates more that she had a *modus operandi* of conquering cities by tricking the residents rather than that she was incapable of successfully tricking the Rhodians at sea.

Arsinoe II, 3rd century BCE

Although she never served on board a ship, Arsinoe II had considerable impact on the development and power of the early Ptolemaic navy. She was honored in life and death as a benefactor of Egyptian sailors.

¹⁵⁶ Vitr. 2.8.15.

¹⁵⁷ Vitr. 2.8.15 relates that Rhodian religious tenets would not allow them to simply remove the statue.

¹⁵⁸ Hornblower 1982.

¹⁵⁹ Berthold 1978.

¹⁶⁰ Berthold 1978, 133.

Arsinoe was born in 316 BCE as the daughter of Ptolemy I Soter and his second wife, Berenike I. In 300 BCE, Arsinoe was married to Lysimachus, one of the Diadochi and her father's contemporary, as his second wife.¹⁶¹ Nothing else is known about her life until the 280s BCE, when she is mentioned as the queen of Macedon. After this, in a bid to secure her own son as heir, she accused Lysimachus's first son, Agathokles, of conspiracy leading to Lysimachus's death. In the ensuing aftermath Agathokles's widow, Lysandra, convinced Seleukos, a Diadochus and founder of the Seleucid Empire, to invade Macedon and kill Lysimachus in early 281 BCE.

Arsinoe II fled by sea to her half-brother Ptolemy Keraunos in Kassandreia; he was the first son of Ptolemy I by his first wife although he had been disinherited. Their subsequent marriage quickly turned sour and he had two of her sons murdered, while Arsinoe was exiled to the sea yet again and sought refuge with her younger brother Ptolemy II (309-246 BCE) in 280 or 279 BCE.¹⁶²

Back in Egypt, Arsinoe and Ptolemy II married soon after her return, which earned her the epithet Philadelphos, "brother-lover". Likely the marriage was intended to help consolidate the power of the Ptolemaic dynasty in its early years, although their union was ultimately very successful leading to years of naval domination.¹⁶³

¹⁶¹ Carney 2013, 31.

¹⁶² Carney 2013, 66.

¹⁶³ Burstein 1982.

Theocritus said in 277 BCE that Ptolemy II Philadelphos's navy had "the finest ships sailing the ocean,"¹⁶⁴ and many consider Arsinoe II highly influential over the Ptolemaic navy during her reign. At the height of their power, the Ptolemaic navy had upwards of 336 warships at their disposal, far larger than any other.¹⁶⁵ This was also a period of naval innovation with new warships like the *eikoseres*, "twenty", and *triakonteres*, "thirty", being built for Ptolemy and Arsinoe.¹⁶⁶ These large ships were an outgrowth of new naval techniques during this period, including blockading harbors with siege machinery and grapple-and-board tactics instead of the previous maneuver-and-ram approach.¹⁶⁷

W. W. Tarn credits Arsinoe for the Egyptian victory in the First Syrian War, 274-271 BCE: "The way she pulled round the lost war against Antiochus I and turned it into a sweeping Egyptian triumph might rank, if we knew the details, as one of the biggest things a woman ever did."¹⁶⁸ Out of reverence for Arsinoe's success in building a strong navy, Egyptian sailors left seashells in the temple of Agathe Tyche (Good Fortune) on Delos, with whom Arsinoe was often associated.¹⁶⁹ After her death, *nauarch* Kallikrates had a temple built for Arsinoe's worship, where he also served as the first

¹⁶⁴ Theoc. *Id.* 17.90-91.

¹⁶⁵ *Ath.* 5.203d.

¹⁶⁶ *OGIS* 39.

¹⁶⁷ Murray 2014.

¹⁶⁸ Tarn 1927, 51.

¹⁶⁹ Miano 2018, 170.

priest, at the mouth of the Nile on the western shore.”¹⁷⁰ This temple is referenced by the poet Posidippus of Pella in the third century BCE,

καὶ μέλλων ἄλα νηϊ̄ περᾶν καὶ πείριμα καθάπτειν
χερσόθεν, Εὐπλοίαι χαῖρε ἔδος Ἀρσινόηι,
πόρτιαν ἐκ νηοῦ καλέων θεόν, ἣν ὁ Βοῖσκου
ναυαρχῶν Σάμιος θήκατο Καλλικράτης
ναυπύλε, σοὶ τὰ μάλιστα κατ’ εὐπλοίαν δὲ διώκει
τῆσδε θεοῦ χρήζων πολλὰ καὶ ἄλλος ἀνήρ·
εἴνεκα καὶ χερσαῖα καὶ εἰς ἄλα δῖαν ἀφιεῖς
εὐχὰς εὐρήσεις τὴν ἐπακουσομένην.

“When you are about to cross the sea in a ship and fasten a cable from dry land, give a greeting to Arsinoe Euploia, summoning the lady goddess from her temple, which Samian Kallikrates, the son of Boiskus, dedicated especially for you, sailor, when he was nauarch. Even another man in pursuit of a safe passage often addresses this goddess, because whether on land or setting out upon the dread sea you will find her receptive to your prayers.”¹⁷¹

Posidippus also refers to Arsinoe with the epithet Kypris, although there is no obvious connection to Cyprus other than through an association with Aphrodite.¹⁷² Arsinoe was also associated with Athena Nike,¹⁷³ and these connections to seafaring goddesses further strengthened her ability to provide seafarers with favorable winds and safe journeys.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁰ Carney 2013, 97.

¹⁷¹ P. Mil. Vogl. VIII 309, AB 39, trans. by Stephens 2004. Posidippus was living in Alexandria and involved in the Ptolemaic court during the life of Arsinoe.

¹⁷² Ath. 7.318d.

¹⁷³ Fraser 2001, 1.35.

¹⁷⁴ Stephens 2004.

Women in Maritime Trade

Shipping

The Greek elites who came to Egypt under Ptolemy II Philadelphus¹⁷⁵ took advantage of the freedoms allowed to women in Egyptian society,¹⁷⁶ and there was a corresponding increase of women engaged in trade and owning ships carrying goods on the Nile.

Agathokleia, a lover of Ptolemy IV,¹⁷⁷ is recorded as having owned ships engaged in the grain trade in the 21st and 8th years of his reign (221-204 BCE), and presumably in between.¹⁷⁸ Her ships, therefore, operated in the late third century BCE with one dating to around 227 BCE, indicating it had been received before Ptolemy IV assumed rule.

The first carried 2000 *artabae* and the second 2500.¹⁷⁹ Agathokleia was from a prominent family in her own right, as indicated by the fact that she served as a Ptolemaic *kanephoros* (ritual procession leader) in 213/212 BCE.¹⁸⁰

The evidence of receipts preserved in papyri indicates that, during the reign of Ptolemy VI (180-164 and 163-145 BCE),¹⁸¹ his consort Kleopatra II owned at least 10 boats

¹⁷⁵ Whitehorne 1995.

¹⁷⁶ Lefkowitz 1983.

¹⁷⁷ Pomeroy 1995.

¹⁷⁸ Hauben 1975.

¹⁷⁹ Smith 1842, One *artaba* is equal to approximately 25 liters; assuming an average capacity of 40 liters these ships would have ranged from 1250 to 1500 amphoras per load.

¹⁸⁰ Rowlandson and Bagnall 2009, 30.

¹⁸¹ Ptolemy VI ruled from 180-164 BCE, then from 163-145 BCE, having briefly abdicated in favor of his brother Ptolemy VIII.

engaged in the grain trade on the Nile.¹⁸² These receipts have all been dated to either 4 April 155 BCE or 1 April 144 BCE,¹⁸³ with evidence of her ships still transporting grain on 5 January 147 or 136 BCE,¹⁸⁴ dating cannot be precise as it is uncertain which ruling period was being used. Other women who owned large grain ships at this time had also served as *kanephoros*: Philotera, Berenike, and Archeboula.¹⁸⁵ These three women each owned a single ship, which Sarah Pomeroy believes to be an indication that the women were courtesans who received the ships as gifts from wealthy lovers, potentially the Pharaoh.¹⁸⁶

Because the Nile was central to much of Egyptian commerce and culture, many affluent families included boats, land, or other property for riverine trade in marriage contracts. One such contract between Greeks in Egypt, dated to 310 BCE, lays out the consequences of divorce and the wife's right to claim any property "on water" in order to exact payment of 2000 drachmas.¹⁸⁷ With Greek women representing one-third of landowners in Ptolemaic Egypt, but owning only 16-25% of the land,¹⁸⁸ it seems logical that they had a vested interest in access to trade and agriculture in a way not allowed to women back in Greece proper.

¹⁸² Hauben 1986; see also P. Erasm II.

¹⁸³ P. Lille I 23; see also P. Sorb. Inv. 689; P. Sorb. Inv. 690.

¹⁸⁴ P. Sorb. Inv 110a.

¹⁸⁵ Pomeroy 1984, 54.

¹⁸⁶ Pomeroy 1984, 54.

¹⁸⁷ P. Eleph. 1.

¹⁸⁸ Knapp 2011, 89.

Maritime Merchants

In the fifth century BCE an Athenian comic poet, Pherekrates, poking fun at the Periklean ideal that women should be excluded from public life, claimed that there were no women fishmongers.¹⁸⁹ Pherekrates also said there were no women millers, even although there is strong archaeological evidence for their existence,¹⁹⁰ which drives home his point that women were said to stay at home while in reality they led visible public lives as merchants of many kinds. While women at the time were restricted to only entering into contracts below the value of one *medimnos* of barley,¹⁹¹ that did not stop them from entering into various trades to support their families. An inscription from third-century BCE Athens indicates that a woman named Euphrosyne had her own workshop weaving nets for fishing.¹⁹²

Women at Sea

As ancient Greeks began to colonize the Mediterranean, women were needed to make the long voyages in order to ensure the success of the colonies and establish families in the new city.¹⁹³ While colonial migration began in earnest in the Neolithic period, the

¹⁸⁹ Pherecr. *Fr.* 70.

¹⁹⁰ Brock 1994.

¹⁹¹ This value fluctuates but is around 50-70 liters of dry capacity (grain). According to Herodotus the satrap of Assyria received one *medimnos* of silver as income per day, Hdt. 1.192-3.

¹⁹² Ziebarth 1897, no. 5.3-5.

¹⁹³ van Dommelen 2012, 396.

main stage for large scale Greek migration was from the eighth to fifth centuries BCE.¹⁹⁴ The reasons for women migrating across the Mediterranean included military service of their husbands and increased economic opportunity. Cretan mercenaries often took their families with them when moving to a new city;¹⁹⁵ in Miletus, inscriptions indicate that approximately 4000 Cretan families moved there and were granted citizenship.¹⁹⁶ These women were not just along for the journey, they often sharpened weapons and collected missiles for use by the soldiers.¹⁹⁷

One of the strongest pieces of archaeological evidence for women travelling by sea are the female skeletal remains on the first-century BCE shipwreck found off the coast of Antikythera, Greece.¹⁹⁸ Studied by osteoarcheologist Argyro Nafplioti, she deduces the remains of at least one woman on board the ship.¹⁹⁹ The ship was carrying a number of marble and bronze statues, some glasswork, jewelry, and the famed Antikythera mechanism. Due to the cargo on board, many suggest it was carrying eastern goods back to Rome for a patron, potentially from Sulla's sack of Athens in 86 BCE.²⁰⁰ It has also been posited that the woman was a bride also travelling to Rome; since no passenger ships existed during this time, she would have had to travel aboard a cargo ship.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁴ van Dommelen 2012, 395.

¹⁹⁵ Loman 2004, 50.

¹⁹⁶ Loman 2004, 50 no. 111.

¹⁹⁷ Plut. *Eum.* 9; see also Loman 2004, 51, n. 122.

¹⁹⁸ Marchant 2016.

¹⁹⁹ Nafplioti 2012.

²⁰⁰ Kaltsas et al 2012.

²⁰¹ Kaltsas et al 2012.

Piracy and Slavery

Some women were not lucky enough to have left their homes under protection as raids by pirates often happened in smaller coastal cities that lacked adequate defenses. If they were fortunate, like the women of Theangela on Delos, a kind benefactor would purchase them from a slave market and return them home.²⁰² Timessa of Arkesine, which is located on the island of Amorgos, is the only woman known to have been honored as a benefactor of her own city after ransoming those taken by pirate slave traders. She was granted a crown of olive branches along with “privileged” seating at a local festival.²⁰³ An inscription from Aegiale on the island of Amorgos dated to the late third century BCE tells of the brothers Hegesippos and Antipappos who offered themselves in exchange for the women and children taken hostage in order that they might be returned unharmed.²⁰⁴ In a Delian inscription from the second century BCE, Damon, son of Demetrios, thanks Aphrodite for rescuing the dedicator from pirates.²⁰⁵ These and others tell of the dangers of living near the sea and the somewhat frequent occurrences of abduction into the slave trade by pirates.

²⁰² *IG* 11.4.1054; *SEG* 3.666 (late third century BCE).

²⁰³ *IG* 12.7.36 (second century BCE).

²⁰⁴ *IG* 12.7.386 (second century BCE).

²⁰⁵ *ID* 2305.

Teuta, Queen of the Pirates, 3rd century B.C.E.

Teuta came from the Illyrian tribe of the Ardiaei, who are said to have been pushed south by Celtic pressure and gained control over a large area of land in the eastern Adriatic by 230 B.C.E.²⁰⁶ In 231 B.C.E., Demetrius II of Macedon allied with King Agron and the Illyrians in his campaign against the Aetolians, and was provided with 5,000 men aboard *lemboi*, the preferred ship of pirates.²⁰⁷

After the death of Agron in 231 B.C.E., Teuta became queen regent ruling for his young son.²⁰⁸ According to Polybius, in second century BCE, she began to

χρωμένη δὲ λογισμοῖς γυναικεῖοις καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸ τὸ γεγονός
εὐτύχημα μόνον ἀποβλέπουσα, τῶν δ' ἐκτὸς οὐδὲν
περισκεπτομένη πρῶτον μὲν συνεχώρησε τοῖς κατ' ἰδίαν πλέουσι
λήζεσθαι τοὺς ἐντυγχάνοντας, [9] δεύτερον δ' ἄθροίσασα στόλον
καὶ δύναμιν οὐκ ἐλάττω τῆς πρότερον ἐξέπεμψε, πᾶσαν παραλίαν
ἀποδείξασα πολεμίαν τοῖς ἡγουμένοις.

*“grant letters of marque to privateers, authorizing them to plunder all whom they fell in with; and she next collected a fleet and military force as large as the former one, and dispatched them with general instructions to the leaders to regard every land as belonging to an enemy.”*²⁰⁹

²⁰⁶ Badian 1952.

²⁰⁷ Badian 1952.

²⁰⁸ App. Ill. 2. The boy's mother was Agron's first wife.

²⁰⁹ Plb. 2.4, trans. Shuckburgh 1965.

The main source for the exploits of Teuta is Polybius's *Histories* with a stated purpose of displaying the "superior greatness of Rome."²¹⁰ However, Walbank points out that Polybius's Greek heritage left him uncertain of Roman superiority and that the work invites readers to "pass moral judgement on the government exercised by Rome."²¹¹

Eventually, the Roman Senate sent Gaius and Lucius Coruncanius as ambassadors to parley with Teuta in 230 B.C.E.²¹² about the growing number of pirates attacking Italian merchant vessels.²¹³ During their meeting Teuta assured the ambassadors that "no injury should be inflicted on Roman citizens by Illyrian officials" but that she would not prevent private citizens from continuing to take plunder at sea. After which Lucius informed Teuta with "plainness of speech" that the Romans were more than happy to punish private pirates at the hands of the state. Polybius reports that his speech so angered Teuta that she had Lucius assassinated, and the reports of this infuriated the Romans into assembling a fleet against the Illyrians.²¹⁴

Demetrius II of Macedon surrendered Corcyra to his new allies the Romans, setting off a cascade of surrender along the Illyrian coastline.²¹⁵ Teuta attempted to elude defeat by holding the town of Rhizon but was unsuccessful. The requirements of surrender offered by the Romans in 228 B.C.E. included paying a tribute, the loss of land, and never

²¹⁰ Polyb. 1.2.

²¹¹ Walbank 1984.

²¹² Badian 1952.

²¹³ Polyb. 2.8.

²¹⁴ Polyb. 2.8.

²¹⁵ Badian 1952.

sailing more than two unarmed ships past the town of Lissus.²¹⁶ Demetrius also gained control of the regency and supplanted Teuta as de facto ruler of Illyria.²¹⁷ Having been removed from power, Teuta all but disappeared from the historical record and the Illyrians never again engaged in piracy to the same extent.

Conclusion

The stories of mortal women's involvement with the sea reflects class divisions in ancient Greece and nearby areas. While royal and elite women were allowed opportunities in military matters and trade, lower class women kept to more appropriate occupations like weaving nets. This also tells of the wide variety of women's roles around the sea beyond being passive spectators to the lives of male sailors and merchants.

The Artemisia's of Karia, although non-Greeks, both were respected rulers known for their exploits at sea. Artemisia I was also an advisor to Xerxes, although his ignorance of her advice cost him potential victory. Hydna breaks the mold for expectations of Greek women in the fifth century BCE by assisting with the war effort and taking an active role in thwarting the Persian navy.

²¹⁶ Polyb. 2.12.

²¹⁷ Badian 1952.

Hellenistic women in Egypt are best represented in the records due to the amount of surviving papyri including contracts and receipts that highlight daily lives to a better degree than monumental inscriptions. Arsinoe II was able to use her influence as queen to build a strong navy, while women like Agathokleia and Kleopatra II took advantage of their close relationship with the pharaoh to build wealth from Nilotic trading ships.

While there is some documentation of Greek women travelling oversea, like the Cretan wives, much needs to be inferred. Other accounts come from women abducted by pirates and rescued from slavery, sometimes by other women like Timessa of Arkesine and Theangelea of Delos. Teuta's pirates, meanwhile, fought with the Romans and ultimately caused the capture of the Illyrians into their empire.

The strongest evidence for mortal women at sea although comes from the female remains found aboard the Antikythera wreck. Although not much is known about the woman, it is categorical proof that women did travel across the sea and were not bound to the home.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

Throughout this thesis I have established women as more than spectators in the maritime world of ancient Greece. This involvement with the sea helps reframe the participation of ancient women with society at large. As discussed in the introduction, Greek men, especially in Athens, were not always in favor of women participating in public life, with some scholars using this as indication that women were not active outside of the home and especially at sea. My evidence has shown multiple examples of women in the ancient Mediterranean defying this idea from naval captaincy to maritime trades. This demonstrates the importance of not applying Periklean Athenian ideals to the whole of Greek history and nearby regions. It also shows that impartial evidence, like receipts and contracts, should hold as much weight as other texts when compiling a comprehensive view of women in the ancient world.

I have shown how that by the third century BCE, women's economic activities were already being attested to in ways that would have been unacceptable if fifth century Periklean ideals were uniform across the Mediterranean in the ensuing centuries. Euphrosyne, in Athens, had a successful business weaving fishing nets; on Greek islands, women like Theangela of Delos and Timessa of Arkesine were able to raise enough money to ransom fellow citizens who had been kidnapped by pirates. Later,

Hellenistic women in Egypt like Kleopatra II and Agathokleia had the opportunity to grow their wealth and status with gifted ships engaged in the grain trade.

Divine women also played important roles in the maritime economy, usually by providing protection for merchants. The ritual *phialai* at the Heraia at Perachora, dating from the fourth century to the second century BCE, demonstrate the importance of that site in Corinthian maritime trade and their supplication to the goddess for fair winds in support of their commerce. Aphrodite's worship likewise shows her role in commercial shipping, as Aeximenes and Phaeinos both considered her an important part of their success in trade. Her temple at Knidos further illustrates her interest in shipping as its move was likely to capture more tax from passing merchants, increasing the ability of the temple to fund city works.

Divine women were also important in protecting and reuniting the family units of maritime travelers and traders in the ancient world. Sappho attests to the supplication of Hera, Aphrodite, and the Nymphs in her works, which provides a unique female voice in a predominantly male chorus of ancient writers. Her perspective shows that divine women were important to mortal women who saw reflections of themselves in the goddesses and were drawn more to their worship rather than to male deities. Although Poseidon was the chief god of the sea, Sappho prefers to implore women for the safe return of her brothers and to reunite the family.

Additionally, Goddesses and minor deities guided people on the journey to marriage, often figuratively described as a sea journey. Aphrodite and the Nymphs both play an important role in the story of Theseus as they help the young man reach Crete and Ariadne, along the way providing a ritual bath in the sea where he is crowned like a young bride. The woman aboard the Antikythera wreck journeyed in a similar way across the sea as part of her likely marriage but unfortunately her journey was not as blessed by divinities.

Athena was also called upon to assist sailors, although she was more concerned helping marines under sail and in battle. This divergence from the familial focused Hera and Aphrodite, speaks to the diverse needs of the Greeks and how there was appeal in separating types of entreaties to different deities in order to ensure the requests would be heard rather than concentrating efforts on one source that might not fulfill one's desires. Nike, even once absorbed into the Athena cult, was mainly concerned with heralding triumphs, and was not entreated to protect sailors but rather thanked after victory to celebrate.

The most recognized of the mortal women who engaged in maritime warfare is Artemisia I of Karia, with her efforts during the Persian Wars still well-known from Herodotus. She is an excellent example of how women outside of Athens challenge the gender expectations scholars derive from that city's ideals. This is best exemplified by the 10,000-drachma reward offered to whomever could capture her alive by the Greek

allied forces. During the Battle of Salamis, she demonstrated the reputed wily nature of females and rammed an allied ship in order to ensure her escape from a Greek ship. The Greeks themselves seem to have had no real issue with women supporting them although, as Hydna, the diver, was active in scuttling Persian ships and was rewarded with a statue in Delphi.

Likewise, Artemisia II of Karia went against the expectations of proper behavior for women when the Rhodians rebelled against her assuming power upon the death of her husband. Her actions in utilizing the secret harbor to capture the Rhodian ships and use them as decoys in recapturing the island, echoing the same wily nature shown by Artemisia I. Teuta meanwhile did not engage in any scheming, instead challenged the Romans directly by not acting against privateers and beheading their envoy Lucius Coruncanius, a decision which led to her defeat. Arsinoe II rose above mortality and was worshipped as a divine figure in Ptolemaic Egypt. Her successes in building the navy there were celebrated in her life and death by her association with Aphrodite Euploia and Agathe Tyche to bring good winds and fortune to Egyptian sailors.

The study of women and the ancient Mediterranean will likely continue to grow, as modern scholars seek out the stories of women involved with Greek society at large and continue to uncover different aspects of the maritime world in the process. It is important for scholars to not apply fifth-century Athenian ideals to the entire history of the Greek

world and ignore impartial evidence of women's participation in order to fulfill a preconceived narrative.

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