CITIZENSHIP IN CLASSICAL ATHENS

What did citizenship really mean in classical Athens? It is conventionally understood as characterised by holding political office. Since only men did so, only they have been considered to be citizens, and the *polis* has appeared primarily as the scene of men's political actions. However, Athenian law defined citizens not by political office, but by descent. Religion was central to the *polis* and in this domain women played prominent public roles. Both men and women were called 'citizens'. On a new reading of the evidence, Josine Blok argues that for the Athenians their *polis* was founded on an enduring bond with the gods. Laws anchored the *polis*'s commitments to humans and gods in this bond, transmitted over time to male and female Athenians as equal heirs. All public offices, in various ways and as befitting gender and age, served both the human community and the divine powers protecting Athens.

JOSINE BLOK is Professor of Ancient History and Classical Civilisation at Utrecht University and a member of the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences. She has won wide acclaim for her innovative work on archaic and classical Greece, notably on the Greek *polis*, and is a winner of the prestigious VICI award for groundbreaking research issued by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research. She has been a Visiting Fellow at various universities including Oxford and Paris Sorbonne, and is the founder and current chair of the European Network for the Study of Ancient Greek History.

CITIZENSHIP IN CLASSICAL ATHENS

JOSINE BLOK

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
4843/24, 2nd Floor, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, Delhi – 110002, India
79 Anson Road, #06-04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521191456

DOI: 10.1017/9781139017916

First published 2017

Printed in the United Kingdom by Clays, St Ives plc

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

ISBN 978-0-521-19145-6 Hardback

Contents

Tables

Preface

First, we should give our city a name,
something grand and notable;
and then sacrifice to the gods.
Peisetairos creates a new *polis*, in Aristophanes,
Birds, 809–11[1]

This book investigates the nature of citizenship in classical Athens: how the Athenians thought about citizenship and how they put it into practice. The questions underlying this study emerged when I noticed that the ancient Greek ideas about citizenship that have most influenced modern conceptions have been those of Aristotle in the *Politics*, and that, conversely, modern conceptions influenced the way scholars read Aristotle and approached citizenship in Athens. Yet, when we compare Aristotle's views with evidence on the historical reality of classical Athens, we find that he painted a very partial picture of what it was to be a citizen. The aim of this book is to arrive at a picture of citizenship in Athens that comes closer to what the ancient evidence tells us. Before actually trying to do so, I should like to explain in a few words why I think this matters.

In *Politics*, Aristotle offers a famous definition of a citizen as a member of a community (*polis*) who is in a position to participate in political office. Athenian law, however, defined citizens on the criterion of their descent from an Athenian parent. Women were excluded from political office, but the vocabulary for citizens at Athens shows symmetrical words for male and female citizens. This evidence implies that in some way women and men were both considered to be citizens, despite women's exclusion from politics. And while cult was an important domain of public roles for women citizens, it was demonstrably equally so for men. All

[1] Πρῶτον ὄνομα τῇ πόλει / θέσθαι τι μέγα καὶ κλεινόν, εἶτα τοῖς θεοῖς / θῦσαι μετὰ τοῦτο. Transl. J. Henderson (Loeb ed.).

of this is not easily compatible with the Aristotelian notion of citizenship. What did scholars make of this discrepancy?

Since in the 1980s classical studies, in line with the humanities and social sciences, developed a strong focus on the cultural foundations of society, classical scholars are more or less agreed that in ancient Greece religion was deeply intertwined with all aspects of the *polis*. 'Embeddedness' – a term typically gaining currency since the 1980s – captures the anchorage of societal institutions in the values, practices and beliefs of the community, an approach changing the perception of religion and politics both as domains in their own right and in their mutual relationship. François de Polignac argued (1984) that the *polis* was based, socially and spatially, on the organisation of its cults and the location of its sanctuaries. The concept '*polis* religion', coined by Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood (1990), highlights the embeddedness of religion in the social structures of the Greek *polis*. Although recent critiques emphasise the autonomy of Greek religious experience also beyond that framework, they do not invalidate the significance of the concept for understanding the *polis* itself. Given that religion was so central to the *polis*, it is difficult to believe that citizenship was only a political and not at all a religious concept. Nonetheless, that is the picture that still prevails even in the best work in the field. In the study of ancient Greece, the *conceptual* disengagement between the domains of politics and religion remains, ultimately, profound.

A second problem I encountered in classical scholarship are the prevalent views of women's roles in ancient Greece and in classical Athens in particular. Although there is plenty of evidence for women taking public roles alongside men in cult and speaking in public on occasions when men were present, scholars have persistently assumed that women in ancient Greece were essentially outsiders of their society, not merely because separation of male and female spheres and a domestic life for women were highly valued, but primarily because women were excluded from political participation. Where citizen women are reported to be involved in *polis* activities, such evidence is usually understood as the exception proving the rule, while the rule itself is not questioned. Where the evidence highlights women's participation in cult, the significance of this fact for the *polis* more broadly tends to be undervalued. Of course, this perspective is not mistaken *in toto*. Politics *were* eminently important in ancient Greece, and so was the possibility to participate in them. Women *did* have a societal scope on average more limited than that of the men of their class. What is wrong, in my view, is the absolute weight these elements have acquired in

the prevailing perceptions, leading to a distorted view of female citizens' lives and of the ancient *polis* in general.

Looking critically, I realised that the Aristotelian conception of citizenship was a central tenet in both strands of classical scholarship and that the fact that they held this view played an essential role in the problems I just described. Most ancient historians, including myself, were 'raised' on this view of Greek citizenship, and apparently this conception is tenacious. But it is definitely not the only way to understand citizenship at Athens, and the extant evidence elicits also quite different questions from those we usually ask. Cult clearly was essential to Athenian citizenship, so what does this mean for the conception and organisation of public office at Athens and for the meaning of gender for such roles? If citizenship was a matter of participation in the first place, why was it based on descent? In other words, what exactly did descent 'mean' for citizenship?

In the introductory chapter, my first objective is to deconstruct current approaches to Athenian citizenship by identifying their constitutive elements, notably different estimation of sources, the impact of modern ideas of citizenship and problems of vocabulary and definitions of citizenship. Important literary evidence on Athenian notions and practices of citizenship will be compared to Aristotle's definition of the citizen in *Politics*. I shall analyse this text quite extensively, to clarify why I think using his conception for understanding the historical situation at Athens is misleading, despite the significance of *Politics* as a philosophical analysis of the *polis* and despite much excellent historical scholarship that is primarily drawing on the *Politics*. Following this discussion, evidence on descent, cults, politics and gender as components of Athenian citizenship will be used to formulate new, elementary questions about citizenship at Athens and to outline the ways in which this book will attempt to answer those questions in the subsequent chapters.

Given that the *polis* was the defining framework of classical Greek society, comprehending the principles of citizenship, i.e. membership of and participation in the *polis*, is essential for our understanding of ancient Greece more widely. Classical Athens is a particularly significant but also an exceptional case, both for its democratic constitution and for the wealth of evidence that allows us to study it in detail. This book is meant primarily for ancient historians and classicists working on ancient Greece; the Greek evidence is cited in the footnotes to facilitate critical engagement with my arguments. Translations are provided in the main text, either my own or following the most recent translations in the Loeb Classical Library (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA/London, indicated as

Loeb ed.). In this way, I also hope to reach an audience beyond the circle of professional Hellenists. In modern debates on citizenship, democratic Athens plays an important role for historical comparison. Our notion of citizenship at Athens therefore has a substantial impact also on how we think about citizenship today.

Acknowledgements

On finishing this book, I deeply appreciate the opportunity to express my gratitude to all those who have supported me in the many years of its gestation. Many people gave me generously the gifts of their friendship, their time, their attention, their critical faculties, their encouragement and, let me not forget, their money. I wish to thank here all of them and some in particular.

Parts of this book were presented as papers to audiences in Europe and the United States; I thank my hosts warmly for inviting me and the audiences for their comments. Some of these papers provided the groundwork for this book, but since they were written and published my views have developed, and I have revisited the evidence or reconsidered the arguments. More importantly, the argument developed in this book brings it all together in a whole that is more than the sum of its parts. This book thus largely supersedes these earlier publications, but it is useful to explain here briefly how they are connected. For parts of the research for this book, furthermore, I collaborated with others, whose contributions I would gladly acknowledge.

A lecture on 'gender' in Oxford (1998) was the first try-out of some of my questions about Greek citizenship, a paper that Hans-Joachim Gehrke translated into German for a presentation, first in Freiburg-im-Breisgau and next elsewhere in Germany (published in *Historische Zeitschrift* 2004). In 2000, the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) granted me a so-called Aspasia award for a pilot project on Greek citizenship, consisting of my own work on citizenship vocabulary (published in *Klio* 2005, revised here), Olaf Borgers's investigation of the visual representation of citizenship on Attic vases (published in *BABesch* 2008) and a conference on Solon, which André Lardinois and I organised together in December 2003 (published volume at Brill, Leiden/Boston 2006, paperback edition 2011).

Appointed in 2001 to the chair of Ancient History at Utrecht University, my inaugural lecture in 2002 (published Utrecht 2002 and in *Lampas* 2003, all in Dutch) presented some of the ideas underlying this book in a nutshell: citizenship based on *hiera kai hosia*, the congruencies between citizen roles of men and women in cult, modes of participation of citizens and metics, the fundamental role of the *gene* as models of 'pure' citizen descent and the transmission of eligibility for priesthood among them, and the meaning of all of this for Pericles' Citizenship Law. At that time, these ideas were hardly more than a hypothesis.

A large grant from NWO (the so-called VICI award, 2004–9) allowed me to develop these ideas with four PhD students and with Stephen Lambert, who in 2005 joined our forces. I am immensely grateful to all of them for their collaboration and to NWO for giving us the opportunity to do so. Floris van den Eijnde explored the creation of the socio-cultural landscape of Attica between 1000 and 600. Covering the prehistory of this book, he shows (in diss. Utrecht 2010; book to appear shortly) that the nucleus of what was to become citizenship based on cult emerged and spread in the early archaic age around the practice of dining, especially on sacrificial meat. Sara Wijma investigated the participation of metics in Athenian cults, on which I had done some preliminary work (published in *Historische Anthropologie* 2007). In her book, *Embracing the immigrant: The participation of metics in Athenian polis religion (5th–4th century BC)* (Stuttgart 2014) she shows in detail how participation in *hiera kai hosia* as the defining model of participation in the *polis* accommodated and integrated non-Athenians to a significant extent, both at *polis* level and in the demes. In a series of articles, Evelyn van 't Wout argues that *atimia* was not a fixed legal penalty, but entailed the exclusion of the *atimos* person from the position in the *polis* that should be his or her due. She demonstrates that citizenship as community membership depended on social acceptance and was always negotiable. Saskia Peels has explored the semantics of the adjective *hosios* in depth. Analysis of *hosios* was a part of my work right from the start and my results are laid down in several articles (2009–14) and reconsidered in this book, but I only describe the essential elements. As a linguist, Saskia Peels explains *why* the semantics of *hosios* work the way they do and how the value term *hosios* was used in persuasive discourse and sacred laws, commending certain behaviour because the gods valued it, in her book *Hosios: A semantic study of Greek piety* (Leiden/Boston 2015). For all of them as PhD students, my approach to citizenship was their point of departure, their results helped testing its validity

and provided useful material to which I recurrently refer here, but in all essential respects their works are their own.

No one has contributed to this book and supported my efforts on it as much as Stephen Lambert. It was *agathe tyche* in the shape of our mutual friend Adele Scafuro that brought Stephen, whose work on the phratries and the *gene* I admired, to Utrecht at the right moment. On joining the project, he contributed to it in many ways, but especially by an investigation of the structures and practices of priesthood at Athens before and after Pericles' Citizenship Law, to see if my hypothesis on the connection between this law and priesthood was valid (published in *Historia* 2010). Besides our individual work for the project and other topics, we co-authored one publication. The material I had gathered on the Attic *gene* and the case for allotment as the means of selection for *genos* priests was so vast, joined with his work on Attic prosopography and priesthoods, that we decided to write the article together (published as Blok and Lambert in the *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 2009). Stephen and I have read and commented on each other's work intermittently, especially concerning the citizenship project, but also subsequently. Last but not least, he has helped me tremendously with the final text of this book. I am deeply grateful for everything I learned from him, notably on epigraphy, and most of all for the friendship we developed over the years.

Friendship and collegiality are also the hallmark of the European Network for the Study of Ancient Greek History, an academic haven and breeding ground of new ideas rolled into one. In papers at our annual meetings since 2000, I tried out many of the ideas for this book and always received constructive criticism. I thank Kostas Buraselis, Gunnel Ekroth, Lin Foxhall, Hans-Joachim Gehrke, Maurizio Giangiulio, André Lardinois, Nino Luraghi, Irad Malkin, Christian Mann, Oswyn Murray, Christel Müller, Thomas Heine Nielsen, Vinciane Pirenne-Delforge, François de Polignac, Kurt Raaflaub, Robert Rollinger, Rosalind Thomas and Marek Węcowski for all they have given me over the years.

Many colleagues and friends read parts of this book or otherwise gave me helpful advice, some of whom even despite disagreement with my views for which, of course, no one but I carries any responsibility. I am especially grateful to Karen Bassi, Bas van Bavel, Jaap Mansfeld, Glenn Most, Maarten Prak, Scott Scullion, Violaine Sebillotte Cuchet, Ineke Sluiter and Henk Versnel for giving my work their time and attention. A special word of thanks I owe to Robert Parker for recurrent discussions of *hosios*, and to P.J. Rhodes for generously giving his comments on passages of this book or matters of evidence. Robin Osborne's critical

comments did much to improve the final text. Floris Cohen kindly read the drafts and offered supportive advice.

A special tribute I owe to the Fondation Hardt at Vandoeuvres and to all who make working there so wonderful. The Fondation, where much of the material for this book was collected and drafts of the text were made, has been a hospitable refuge from my increasingly demanding academic duties in the past years. I am also grateful to the Netherlands Institute at Athens for hosting me so wonderfully when I visited Athens. Emmy Mestropian-Makri was of invaluable help in getting permissions from Greek institutions, notably for the photo of the relief in the National Archaeological Museum at Athens adorning the cover of this book.

I can hardly find words to express my love for and gratitude to Wessel, Julia and Matthijs Krul, who truly 'share in everything' and whose warm loyalty encouraged me time and again. Wessel and Matthijs read parts of this book and gave their constructive comments. I dedicate this book to my husband, my daughter and my son, all three my fellow historians, and to the loving memory of my father, who so much enjoyed to see my work growing.

Abbreviations

Abbreviations of classical authors and texts follow those in S. Hornblower and A. Spawford, *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (3rd ed.; Oxford 2003), supplemented by those in LSJ; abbreviations of epigraphical corpora not included below follow those of the Packard Humanities Institute (www.epigraphy.packhum.org); abbreviations of journals follow *L'année philologique* (www.annee-philologique.com).

Ag. 16	A.G. Woodhead (ed.), *Agora* XVI: *Inscriptions*: *The decrees* (Princeton 1997)
Ag. 19	G.V. Lalonde, M.K. Langdon, M.B. Walbank (eds), *Agora* XIX: *Inscriptions*: *Horoi*, *poletai records*, *and leases of public lands* (Princeton 1991)
AIO	Attic Inscriptions Online (www.atticinscriptions.com)
APF	J.K. Davies, *Athenian propertied families, 600–300 B.C.* (Oxford 1971)
DAA	A.E. Raubitschek, *Dedications from the Athenian Acropolis: Catalogue of the inscriptions of the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.* (Cambridge, MA 1949)
FRA	M.J. Osborne, S.G. Byrne, *The foreign residents of Athens: An annex to the lexicon of Greek personal names: Attica* (Leuven 1996)
FGrH	F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (Berlin 1923–30; Leiden 1940–58)
FHG	C. Müller, *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum* I–IV (Paris 1841–70)
Harrison	A.R.W. Harrison, *The law of Athens* (2nd ed.) I–II (Oxford 1968–71, repr. London/Indianapolis 1998)
IG I^3	*Inscriptiones Graecae* I: *Inscriptiones Atticae Euclidis anno anteriores*. 3rd edn (Berlin 1981, 1994). Fasc. 1, D. Lewis (ed.), *Decreta et tabulae magistratuum* (nos 1–500); fasc. 2, D. Lewis, L. Jeffery (eds), *Dedicationes. Catalogi. Termini. Tituli sepulcrales. Varia. Tituli Attici extra Atticam reperti. Addenda* (nos 501–1517)

IG II²	*Inscriptiones Graecae* II and III: *Inscriptiones Atticae Euclidis anno posteriores*, 2nd edn, Joh. Kirchner (ed.) (Berlin 1913–40)
IG II³	*Inscriptiones Graecae* II, III³: *Inscriptiones Atticae Euclidis anno posteriores*; I: *Leges et decretae*; S.D. Lambert (ed.) (nos 292–572), V.N. Bardani and S.V. Tracy (eds) (nos 1135–1461) (Berlin 2012)
K-A	R. Kassel, C. Austin, *Poetae Comici Graeci* (Berlin 1983–)
LfrgrE	*Lexicon des frühgriechischen Epos* (Hamburg 1955–2010)
LGPN	M.J. Osborne, S.G. Byrne, *A lexicon of Greek personal names*, II: *Attica* (Oxford 1994) supplemented with *Athenian Onomasticon Search* (www.seanb.org)
LIMC	*Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologicum Classicum* (Zürich 1981–)
LR	D.F. Leão, P.J. Rhodes (eds) *The laws of Solon: A new edition with introduction, translation and commentary* (London/New York 2015)
LSCG	F. Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées des cités grecques* (Paris 1969)
LSJ	H.G. Liddell, R. Scott, H.S. Jones, R. McKenzie, *A Greek–English lexicon, with a supplement* (9th edn; Oxford 1996)
LSS	F. Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées des cités grecques: Supplément* (Paris 1962)
ML	R. Meiggs, D. Lewis, *A selection of Greek historical inscriptions to the end of the fifth century B.C.* (Oxford 1969)
NGSL	E. Lupu, *Greek sacred law: A collection of new documents* (Leiden/Boston 2005; Religions in the Graeco-Roman World, vol. 152)
Nomima	H. van Effenterre, F. Ruzé, *Nomima : Receuil d'inscriptions politiques et juridiques de l'archaisme grec* I–II (Rome 1994–5)
OCT	*Oxford Classical Texts*
OR	R. Osborne, P.J. Rhodes, *Greek historical inscriptions* (in press)
Osborne I–IV	M.J. Osborne, *Naturalization in Athens* I–IV (Brussels 1981–3)
Parker, *PS*	R.T.C. Parker, *Polytheism and society at Athens* (Oxford 2005)
PHI	The Packard Humanities Institute – Searchable Greek Inscriptions (www.epigraphy.packhum.org)

Rhodes, *CAAP*	P.J. Rhodes, *A commentary to the Aristotelian Athenaion Politeia* rev. edn (Oxford 1993)
RO	P.J. Rhodes, R. Osborne, *Greek historical inscriptions 404–323 BC* (Oxford 2003)
Schwenk	C.J. Schwenk, *Athens in the age of Alexander: The dated laws and decrees of 'the Lykourgan era' 338–322 B.C.* (Chicago 1985)
SEG	*Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*
Syll.^{3}	W. Dittenberger, *Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum* 3rd ed., F. Hiller von Gaertringen, J. Kirchner, H.R. Pomtow, E. Ziebarth (eds) I–IV (Leipzig 1915–24)
TLG	*Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (www.stephanus.tlg.uci.edu)