Plato Laws 833C–834D and the Bears of Brauron

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These seven verses sung by the chorus of aristocratic Athenian women in Aristophanes’ Lysistrata (641–47), together with their scholia, constitute the literary evidence for the Arkteia, the festival celebrated by maiden arktoi in honor of Artemis at Brauron. Supposed problems with the text of verse 645 and the apparent lack of agreement between what this verse says about the Arkteia and what the scholia add have occasioned debate concerning the celebrants and the celebration. In particular the age of the arktoi and the significance of the krokotos, the saffron-colored robe mentioned at 645, have been subjects of dispute. L. Kahil has brought into the discussion the scenes decorating many of the ‘festival issue’ krateriskoi found in abundance at Brauron and in lesser quantities at Artemis’ other cult sites in Attica. It has nonetheless proved difficult to


2 Three scholia survive on the passage, in the Ravenna codex, the Leiden codex, and at Suda s.v. “Arktois ἡ Βραυρωνίως.” W. Sale, “The Temple-legends of the Arkteia,” RhM 118 (1975) 265–84, examines the scholia and reconstructs their stemma.

construct a portrait consistent with the archaeological and literary evidence, without doing violence to the text of *Lysistrata* 641ff. I will argue that a neglected passage of Plato's *Laws* makes such a portrait possible without rejecting the text of Aristophanes, and that the *arktoi* were between the ages of ten and fourteen or fifteen.

The question of the girls' age has affected scholarly views on the original significance of the Arkteia and its fate in classical times and later. Our ancient sources tend to hover around the age of ten, and they seem to agree on one point, that participation in the Arkteia was a prerequisite to marriage. We can deduce from laws concerning heiresses the youngest age at which a girl could marry. At Gortyn this was the age of twelve. This extremely tender age probably was necessitated by the system of property and inheritance law at Gortyn, which included legitimate daughters as heiresses regardless of the existence of legitimate sons. The choice of age twelve may well reflect the facts that the overriding concern of marriage was the procreation of male offspring, citizens and heirs, and that the twelfth year was according to Greek medical writers the earliest age observed for menarche.

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connection between Artemis and Pan see Ph. Borgeaud, *Recherches sur le dieu Pan* (Rome 1979) 229–31 *et passim*.


6 Because they may reckon either inclusively or exclusively, the age of ten can mean either the tenth year of life (exclusive: from the ninth to the tenth birthday) or the eleventh (inclusive: from the tenth to the eleventh birthday). Cf. C. M. Tazelaar, *Mnemosyne* IV.20 (1967) 127–53, who warns (128), "Consequently one must always choose between two possibilities. This choice even to a Greek might have presented difficulties."


Was there a legal provision concerning the marriage age for epi-
klērois at Athens? The age at which epi-
kleroi and orphans ceased to be
under the care of their guardians was specified but unfortunately is
lost in a lacuna at Arist. Ath. Pol. 56.7. ‘Fourteen’ is restored for
want of a better proposal,10 but the medical writers supply a positive
argument in support: they indicate the fourteenth year (exclusive) as
the modal age for menarche.11 What evidence we have suggests that
Athenian girls married as young as age fourteen, although men of
learning agreed that a later age, in accord with Spartan custom, was
preferable.12

Because the Arkteia at Brauron was a penteteric celebration,13 re-
strictions limiting the participants’ age would need to span at least four
years in order that every girl have the opportunity to take part before
her marriage. Two of the scholia to 645 (Leiden, Suda) support pente-
teric celebration when they observe that girls participated between
their fifth and tenth birthdays—the source of the debate over the age
of the arktōi.14 For according to the text of 643–45 which with few
exceptions is favored by editors of Lysistrata, the chorine was an aletris
at the age of ten, and then at some unspecified date thereafter donned
the saffron-colored robe as a bear at the Brauronia. The age indicated
here and the ages specified by the scholia do not overlap.

Various theories have been advanced to reconcile the text with its
scholia. Brelich suggested that the discrepancy reflected a change in
cult practice which saw the lowering of the age group—this on the
principle that as initiation rites lose their original significance the age

10 The choice is limited by the surviving final alpha of the cardinal: [ἐπτ]ακαθεκέτις
and [ἐννε]ακαθεκέτις would also be possible.
11 Arist. HA 581a; Hippoc. 30.502; Soranus Gynaec. 1.20; Ruf. In Oribas. 18; Gal. De
sanit. tuen. 6.2.16; Oribas. Ecl. Medic. 132.1. Cf. Amundsen and Diers (supra n.9) 127.
12 Demosthenes’ sister, betrothed at five, was to be married when she should come
of age in ten years (Dem. 27.4, 28.15, 29.43), while Ischomachos married a girl who
was as yet unprepared to manage a home because of her youth—she was not yet fifteen
(Xen. Oec. 7.5–6). Hesiod (Op. 698) cautioned that girls should wed in the fifth year
after puberty. Plato (Leg. 785b, 833d, Resp. 460ε) and Aristotle (Pol. 1335a28–32)
proposed that girls should marry between the ages of sixteen and twenty. Spartan
custom preferred mature brides (Plut. Lyc. 15.3, οὐ μικρὰς οὐδὲ ἀώρους πρὸς γάμον
ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀκμαζόντας καὶ πεπείρουσιν). Hippokrates (Verg. 1.16) and Aristophanes (Lys.
595–97) advised, for different reasons (health and fleeting beauty respectively), that
girls wed as young as possible.
13 If the penteteric sacrifice at Brauron presided over by the hieropoioi (Arist. Ath.Pol.
54.7, Poll. 8.107) and Aristophanes’ πρωκτοπενετητρίς θεωρία (Pax 872–76, but cf.
schol.) belong to the Arkteia and not some other festival at Brauron.
14 Leiden: ἐπιλεξομέναι παρθενοὶ οὐ ξεσβίβηται δέκα έτῶν οὔτε ξέλατους πέντε.
Suda: οὔτε πρεσβύτακες έτῶν οὔτε ξέλατους έτει. Tazelaar (supra n.5) 129 has shown
that the construction έτοι . . . έτων μέχρι . . . , a construction very similar to that used
in the scholia, should be interpreted as from birthday to birthday.
of the participants tends to drop. Sourvinou observed that the solution may rest in the Ravenna codex reading καταχεύοσα at 645 (rather than κατεχουσα ΓΒC, κατ’ εχουσα Bentley). The following text could result:

ειτ’ ἀδετησ ἦ’ δεκετης ουσα τάρχηγετι
καταχεύοσα των κροκωτον ἄρκτος Ἡ Βραυρωνίως.

Then I was an aletris; at the age of ten, for the Archegetis [i.e. Artemis], I was a bear, shedding the saffron robe at the Brauronia.

The chorine was a bear at the age of ten, rather than older than ten, and she took off, rather than wore, the krokotos.

Sourvinou offered four observations in support of the Ravenna reading. (1) The Ravenna codex is superior and its reading is the lectio difficilior. (2) Aeschylus’ description of Iphigeneia as she is raised above the altar (Ag. 239, κρόκου βαφας δ’ ες πέδων χέουσα) is very close to the Ravenna text, while Iphigeneia’s connections with Artemis’ cult at Brauron are well known if not completely understood. (3) The ritual krateriskoi decorated with figures of young girls, nude or dressed in a short chiton, executing stately dances or competing in foot races, could illustrate the literary references to the ritual act of letting the robe fall, those wearing the short chiton not yet having done so. (4) The arktoi, now aged ten, at least overlap with the upper limit of the age group reported in the scholia.

Sourvinou’s text, however, presents difficulties. It suffers from severe asyndeton; it employs two present participles (ουσα and κατα-
χέουσα) where one might expect a present participle followed by an aorist, and it does so without a connective (τὰρχηγήτη must be crasis for τῇς τα ἀρχηγήτης); the unbalanced juxtaposition of short and long sentences is extremely awkward; and καταχέω is used of disrobing, a sense not otherwise attested in Aristophanes (although it occurs in Homer, Il. 5.734), who commonly employs ἔκδοω for the removal of clothing (including four instances in Lys., 662, 686, 920, 925).

Moreover, would the Athenian audience have associated the title ἀρχηγήτης with any goddess but Athena? Epigraphic and literary evidence suggests not,20 and we now know that ἡ Ἀρχηγήτης could designate Athena Polias in official usage.21 In fact Athena’s rôle in the play as an agent provocateur of marital abstinence seems as compelling as Artemis’ if we keep in mind who the Athenian ringleaders are.22

For as Lewis persuasively argued, Lysistrata was modeled after the contemporary priestess of Athena Polias, Lysimache,23 thus adding weight to Papademetriou’s suggestion that Myrrhine too can be identified with a real Myrrhine, the first priestess of Athena Nike.24 These two ‘portrait’ characters would have served to remind the audience, if such a reminder was necessary, of this virgin goddess’ importance to the Athenian polis. Stinton recognized that the attribution of the epithet to Artemis was problematic, despite the scholium gloss τῇ δεσποινῇ Ἀρτέμιδι ἦ Δήμητρι, and proposed at 645 an emendation for which there is no manuscript support (καὶ for καὶτ') and a different punctuation:25

εἰτ’ ἀλετρὶς ἦ δεκέτις οὖσα τὰρχηγήτη καὶ χέουσα τὸν κροκωτόν ἄρκτος ἦ Βραυρωνίως.

Then at the age of ten I was an aletris for the Archegetis (Athena), and [at age ten] shedding the saffron I was a bear at the Brauronia.

20 See Stinton (supra n.18) 12.
22 I should like to thank the anonymous reader of GRBS for bringing this important point to my attention. On Artemis’ rôle as exemplary virgin in Lys. see M. B. Walbank, CQ N.S. 31 (1981) 281.
23 D. M. Lewis, BSA 50 (1955) 1–12.
24 Known to us from a funerary inscription from Zographos, SEG XII 80; J. Papademetriou, ArchEph 1948–49, 146–53. C. W. Clairmont, “The Lekythos of Myrrhine,” Studies in Classical Art and Archaeology: Festschrift P. H. von Blankenhagen (Locust Valley 1979) 103–10, argues that IG IIa 12196 (most recently SEG XXIX 262), a grave lekythos found near Syntagma Square in Athens, belongs to the grave of this same Myrrhine.
25 Stinton (supra n.18) 13. Walbank (supra n.22) 277, 279, adopted Sourvinou’s text and extended Brauronian Artemis’ patronage to each of the four titles (arrephoros, aletris, arktos, and kanephoros), without successfully defending the association of the epithet ἀρχηγήτης with Artemis.
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There is, however, another solution, which does not require that we tamper with the generally preferred text of *Lysistrata* 641–47.

Brauron was not the only sanctuary where Athenian girls acted the she-bear in service to Artemis before their marriage. A festival similar to the Brauronian Arkteia was celebrated in honor of Artemis at her sanctuary overlooking Mounichia harbor. The foundation legends for the two festivals are strikingly similar in outline:

**Brauron:** A she-bear comes to Brauron and is tamed. One day, the bear scratches a maiden with whom she is playing. The maiden’s brother(s) becomes incensed and kills the bear. A plague falls upon Athens. The oracle at Delphi is consulted and Apollo orders that Athenian maidens must henceforth act the she-bear. And so they do.

**Mounichia:** A she-bear appears in the Peiraieus and harms many people. Certain Athenians kill the bear. A plague falls upon Athens. The oracle at Delphi is consulted and Apollo replies that an Athenian maiden must be sacrificed by her father to Artemis. An Athenian, Embaros, consents and appears to do so, but instead sacrifices a goat. Athenian maidens thereafter act the she-bear in honor of Artemis Mounichia.

In detail the two accounts differ as to location (Brauron, Peiraieus) and bear-killer (brother, Athenians). Furthermore, the Mounichian legend clearly seeks to explain the origin of the *dictum* "Εμβαρός είμι" (probably tracing the genealogy of Artemis Mounichia’s priesthood) and of the sacrifice of a goat dressed in girl’s clothing.

Sale examined the foundation legends of the Arkteia, Brauronian and Mounichian, and determined that the scholia for the Brauronian Arkteia are an amalgamation of legends belonging to several traditions, including the local cult at Brauron, the Arkteia at Mounichia, and the Iphigeneia legend (and cult at Aulis?). He noted that the
Leiden scholium for 643–45 opens with a self-contained *aition* which "may show signs of Munychian influence, for it attributes the Arkteia to Munychia as well as Brauron, and we shall see that one of our sources for Munychian legend agrees ... in making the Athenians the killers of the bear."⁴⁰ It is within this *aition* that we find the troublesome age limits ("not older than ten years or younger than five").⁴¹ The Suda scholium gives an abbreviated version of the Leiden Mounichian *aition*, including the age limits for the *arktoi*.⁴² The Ravenna scholium preserves neither any elements which Sale could attribute to Mounichian tradition nor the age limits. Can it be that the age limits preserved in the scholia for Aristophanes’ Brauronia belong rather to the Mounichian rites?

That the other sources for the Mounichian Arkteia do not include mention of the age limits is admittedly an objection. There is, however, evidence thus far overlooked in discussions of the problem which suggests that Brauron hosted an older group of *arktoi*. In Plato’s *Laws*, when the discussion of how the new polis might best educate its youth begins to consider the celebration of festivals, the Athenian suggests that girls, who have since the age of seven (μετά δὲ τῶν ἐξέπτη) received training in gymnastics, horsemanship, archery, javelin and discus throwing, and slinging,⁴³ take part also in contests in the foot race, fencing, and, if they so desire, as jockeys in the horse races (833c–834d). The Athenian goes into some detail concerning the girls’ footraces (*στάδιον, διάνυσος, ἐφίππιος, δόλυχος*). Two age groups are distinguished: prepubescent girls are to compete in the nude, while girls between the ages of thirteen and twenty (or the time of their marriage) compete dressed in proper attire (*πρεπούσῃ στολῇ*). Although Plato may not always have been echoing actual practices in his *Laws*, it has been taken for granted that he here followed Spartan custom, both as to the training of the girls and as to their attire or lack of it.⁴⁴

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³⁰ Sale (supra n.2) 271 and n.8.
³¹ άρκτον μμισάμεναι τὸ μνετήριον ἐξετέλον. αἱ ἀρκτενόμεναι δὲ τῇ θεῷ κροκοτῶν ἡμιφεὴντο καὶ συνετέλον τὴν θυσίαν τῇ Βραυρωνίᾳ Ἀρτέμιδι καὶ τῇ Μοῦνχιᾳ. ἐπιλεγόμεναι παρθένοι οὔτε πρεσβύτεραι δέκα ἑτῶν οὔτε ἐλάττων πέντε. ἐπετέλον ἕπειρην αἱ κόραι ἐγκυμίωσομέναι τὴν θεόν, ἐπείδη λιμῷ περιπετώσκασιν οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι. ἄρκτον ἠμέραν ἀνηρρηκότες τῇ θεῷ.
³² S. V. 'Αρκτος ἤ Βραυρωνίων: ἀρκτενόμεναι γυναῖκες τῇ Ἀρτέμιδι ἐφτινῇ ἐπέτελον, κροκοτῶν ἡμιφεὴς, οὔτε πρεσβύτεις ἐτῶν οὔτε ἐλάττων ἐτῶν ἀπομειωσόμεναι τῇ θεόν.
³³ Leg. 794c, 804d–805a, 813d–814c; cf. Resp. 452a–d.
³⁴ G. R. Morrow, Plato’s Cretan City (Princeton 1960) 382–83. We have evidence of two sorts for the athletic training and competition of Spartan girls: somewhat programmatic accounts of the Lykourgan legislation emphasizing the eugenic concerns of physi-
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Before the excavations at Brauron and Kahil’s publication of the krateriskoi, evidence for girls’ athletic training and competition in Attica was meager. Plutarch mentions a ‘ball-court of the arrephoroi’ on the Akropolis; here presumably girls took their exercise while serving Athena and Aphrodite. Ball-playing seems to have had a particular (ritual?) association, at times erotic, with youths and maidens. As early as the Odyssey (6.99-109) we find Nausikaa, the parthenos par excellence, playing ball with her attendants. South Italian vases depict young women playing ball with winged Erotes. Balls were among the emblems of youth dedicated by maidens to Artemis on the eve of marriage (Anth. Pal. 6.280) and by young men to Hermes apparently upon graduation from the ephebic corps (Anth. Pal. 6.282). At Sparta the term σφαρέις was applied to males who had just made the transition ἐκ τῶν ἐφήβων ἐς ἄνδρας, the title probably deriving from some competitive ball game that formed an important element of their training. More to the point is an Attic black-figure lekythos found on Salamis, dated ca 490-470 and attributed by Haskell to the Beldam painter’s workshop. The lekythos depicts three girls, dressed in short chitons, racing around (or away from?) a volute altar. The scene is clearly modeled after a race similar or identical to that on the krateriskoi.

With the evidence provided by the krateriskoi, it is now reasonable to consider that Plato’s thoughts on girls’ athletics may not have been without Attic precedent, at least for the foot races and perhaps
training in gymnastics. Many krateriskoi depict girls engaged either in stately, rhythmic dances or in foot races. They are either nude or dressed in a short, mid-thigh length chiton. The setting for these performances has been identified as one of Artemis’ sanctuaries (probably Brauron) by the presence of Artemis’ tree, the palm, in conjunction with a volute altar. Their ritual use (as libation vessels, thymiaferia, or merely commemoratives) and their connection with the celebration of the Arkteia at Brauron have not been disputed. The girls are arktoi and the dances and foot races were performed during the celebration of the Arkteia.

Plato’s recommendations in the Laws suggest that we might recognize two age groups in the vase paintings. If the parallel with Plato may be followed precisely, we see on the krateriskoi arktoi below the age of thirteen competing nude while those older than thirteen are ‘properly dressed’ in short chitons. An age group for the arktoi which includes thirteen-year-olds is thus indicated. Can we determine the upper and lower age limits of the group?

Lysistrata 643–45 indicates that the approximate age of ten, either the tenth year of life or from the tenth birthday, should be regarded as one of the termini. If, to pursue the parallel in the Laws, our arktoi now include thirteen-year-olds, we may identify ten as the

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40 Kahil 1977, 87. For the distribution of krateriskoi see supra n.3.
41 Cf. Kahil 1965, 24–25; 1977, 88. Analysis of the clay will be necessary before the production centers of these vessels can be identified.
42 Kahil 1977, 86 proposed that the girls on the krateriskoi appeared to be between eight and thirteen years old. Two fragmentary red-figure kraters of the same shape as those from Brauron but of Athenian workmanship (special commissions?), dating ca 425 B.C., have been connected with the Arkteia. One shows girls racing in the nude (Kahil 1977 fig. B, pl. 19), the other girls racing dressed in short chitons (fig. A, pl. 18). Although Kahil (1976, 128) noted that the nude girls appear to be older than the clothed on the red-figure vases, it is at best difficult to determine the ages of children in Greek art with any degree of accuracy beyond the broad categories of infant, child, and adolescent. It is at least certain that the nude girls on the red-figure vase are not all of the same age. Of the eight surviving figures seven are of the same height (and presumably the same approximate age) while one is substantially shorter (and last in the race, as might be expected of the youngest in the group). Enough survives of six of the older girls to show that they have three distinct hair styles, while the shortest/youngest seems to have a fourth. I suggest that the artist was attempting to depict arktoi of age ten to thirteen—a time of rapid development for girls: while a ten-year-old might still appear a child, a thirteen-year-old can look very grown-up indeed.
43 That is, the fourteenth year of life, commonly reckoned as the time of menarche: Tazelaar (supra n.5) 129 n.5.
44 The verb δεκατεύεται was applied to the Arkteia. The lexicographers explained this: (1) the arktoi were ten years old (Harp. and Hesych. s.v. δεκατεύεται, Anecd.Bekk. 1 234 s.v. δεκατευομένων) or (2) Greeks customarily dedicated to the gods a tithe of what was most excellent (Harp., Anecd.Bekk.). The first usage (to indicate age) is otherwise unattested and probably derives from Ar. Lys. 645. On the second usage cf. infra 128.
lower age limit. Although I think we should reckon from the tenth birthday (i.e., "from my ninth to my tenth birthday I was an aletris, from my tenth birthday I was an arktos"), I do not believe the evidence allows us to determine the matter so finely.

Plato advised that the girls compete up to the age of twenty or until their marriage at no younger than eighteen. The arktoi are to celebrate the Arkteia before their marriage. As we have seen, there is reason to think that Athenian law allowed epikleroi to marry at age fourteen, and we know of Athenian girls who married at that age. An upper age limit for the arktoi of fourteen or fifteen seems likely. Plato's more advanced upper age limit was perhaps occasioned by his opinions concerning the ideal marriage age for girls. We should note finally that while a four-year age span would allow every girl one opportunity to participate in the penteteric Arkteia, a five-year span (such as that reported by the scholia for Mounichian Artemis) would give every girl a second chance should she be unable to participate at her first opportunity.

If the arktoi were between the ages of ten and fourteen or fifteen, Aristophanes sacrificed neither rhetorical balance nor ritual correctness in his composition of verses 641ff. Their organization is straightforward. At the age of seven the chorine was an arrephoros; then (είτα) at ten she was an aletris; thereafter (είτα) she was an arktos. Aristophanes did not fix the age of the arktos more precisely because the chorine could have served at any time between the ages of ten and fourteen or fifteen. The age and ritual service of the kanephoros are problematic. That Aristophanes did have a specific ritual in mind is indicated by ισχάδων ὀρμαθός. What it was remains uncertain, but it seems likely that the service took place between acting the bear at the Brauronian Arkteia and the girl's marriage.

Recognition of two age groups in the nude and clothed figures on the krateriskoi accords well with known Greek practice, for athletic and choral competition was frequently by age group. At the Heraia at Olympia, our closest parallel for the competitions at Brauron, the celebrants were divided into three age groups: αἱ νεόταται, αἱ τῆ

45 Stinton (supra n.18) 12.
46 Cf. Brelich (supra n.4) 279–90; Sourvinou, CQ (supra n.4) 342; Walbank (supra n.22) 279–80.
47 Walbank's suggestion (supra n.22) 279–80 that the kanephoroi depicted on fourth-century reliefs from Brauron are to be identified with Aristophanes' kanephoroi seems to me unlikely: the kanephoroi in the reliefs are clearly adults. For these see J. D. Kondis, Delitio 22 (1967) pl. 104a, b, 105a; cf. I. Krauskopf, AA 1977, 13–37 (cylindrical bridal trousseau baskets).
48 Cf. Theoc. 2.66–67 with schol.
Clad in knee-revealing chitons, the girls competed within their groups. Nudity, which was the law for both athletes and their trainers at the Olympic games, seems not to have been a feature of the Heraia. Why did the arktoi of age ten to thirteen compete nude? That menarche was felt likely to occur in the fourteenth year of life suggests that nudity was ritually preferable but for reasons of modesty girls who had reached that age covered up. Two factors may lie behind the nude competition. Before marriage Greek girls seem customarily to have dedicated childhood clothing and toys to the goddesses of marriage and childbirth. The thinking may have been 'off with the old, on with the new' at Brauron. This might help explain why at Mounichia the sacrificial goat was dressed in girl's clothing. Perhaps the krokotos was mentioned by Aristophanes because it marked for his audience the fact that the arktoi were marriageable and had exchanged their girlish garb for that of an adult. Pollux (7.55–56) records that parthenoi wore short chitons (χιτωνίσκοι) while married women wore the κροκωτόν ἵματιον. That the saffron-colored ἕνδυμα or ἵματιον was typical of Athenian matrons is made clear in Aristophanes where the krokotos is donned or doffed accordingly as the actor wants to be taken for a woman or not. Our krokotos-clad bride of legend, Iphigeneia, illustrates that the color had hymenaeal associa-

49 Paus. 5.16.2–8. Hera may have been associated with the race also at Sikyon (Paus. 2.11.2, Hera Prodromia) and at Thera (IG XII.3 513, dedication to Hera Dromia, time of Augustus or Tiberius). Calame (supra n.4) 213–20 compared Hera's and Artemis' interest in girls on the verge of marriage.

50 Paus. 5.6.7–8. J. A. Arieti's suggestion, "Nudity in Greek Athletics," CW 68 (1975) 431–36, that nudity was the rule for male competitors in order to expose their sexual sophrosyne is probably inapplicable to girls.

51 Kahil 1965, 30 and n.80 (but cf. 1977, 97), stressed the possible funereal connection with the worship of Iphigeneia at Brauron, since depictions of nude women in a ritual context are rare apart from the nude mourners on geometric funerary vases and the tradition of honoring the dead with funeral games often appears in the foundation legends of public games. Cf. I. Chirassi, Miti e culti arcaici di Artemis nel Peloponneso e Grecia centrale (Trieste 1964) 28 n.75.

52 Anth.Pal. 6.280, snood, maiden's clothing (or doll's clothing?), ball, and cymbal to Artemis Limnatis πρὸ γάμου; IG V.1 225–26, bronze cymbals to (Artemis) Limnatis at Sparta; Arch. fr.18 Βήργκ, veil to Hera; Anth.Pal. 6.276, snood to Artemis; Paus. 2.33.1, girdles of Troizenian maidens to Athena Aptouria πρὸ γάμου.

53 P. Vidal-Naquet, PCPhS n.s. 14 (1968) 59, has suggested that, "In Crete ceremonies of initiation to the virile class appear to have been held at both Malla and Deros, including nudity rites which preceded the conferring of hoplite arms," invoking I.Cret. 1 ix 1.11 Παναίσιος, 996 ἐνδυμαζόμενος; I xix 1.18 ἐνδυμαζόμενας. Hesych. s.v. ἄγκρτας. Cf. H. van Effenterre, BCH 61 (1937) 327–32; R. F. Willetts, Cretan Cults and Festivals (London 1962) 175–78.

54 Thesm. 939–42, 945–46, Eccl. 331–32.
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tions. Indeed, saffron-colored fabrics are still frequently used in traditional Greek bridal costumes. Finally, in the fourth century Athenian wives dedicated the krokotos to Artemis Brauronia.

Second, there may have been an element of exhibitionism in the ritual nudity of the arktoi. Apart from their participation in public religious celebrations, Greek girls seldom had the opportunity to see and be seen by prospective suitors. Plato envisioned public dances for the youths and maidens of his new city so that they could view one another “each of them naked, within the limits of sober modesty” (Leg. 771E–772A). This custom seems to have belonged to the traditions of Chios and Sparta, where girls are said to have undertaken athletic training unattended. If we are to believe Xenophon of Ephesos, matches were commonly made during the procession and festival in honor of Artemis Daitis at Ephesos. Girls in myth were frequently raped (‘married’) while celebrating festivals of Artemis, the mythological topos perhaps arising from the custom of initiating matches during public festivals. The literary testimonia suggest that part, probably the central part, of the Arkteia was participation in a mystery rite of initiatory character. Nonetheless, the possibility that while parts of the Arkteia perhaps were to be seen by initiates alone, other parts, as at Eleusis, were less restricted is indicated by the

55 Cf. L. Bodson, 'Iepâ Zώια, Contribution à l’étude de la place de l’animal dans la religion grecque ancienne (Brussels 1975) 133. J. Peradotto, Phoenix 23 (1969) 245–46, has suggested that Iphigeneia’s sacrifice, as recounted by Aeschylus, is the ritual reversal of the sacrifice at the Mounichian Arkteia. Iphigeneia, who has worn the krokotos on her supposed wedding day (a conflation of wearing the krokotos = service as an arkts which in turn anticipated marriage), is compared to a she-goat as she is raised above the altar (Ag. 232). However we interpret Ag. 239, mention of the krokotos would remind the mostly Athenian audience that fate did not hold marriage in store for this arkts.

56 Benaki Museum nos. 95 and 96 (Astypalaia), 112 (Nisyros).


58 Lacey (supra n.7) 158–63; J. P. Gould, JHS 100 (1980) 46–51.


60 1.2.2; cf. Calame (supra n.4) 181–82.

61 E.g. Plut. Thea. 31.2 (Helen, dancing at the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia); Hom. II 16.179–83 (Polymera, dancing in honor of Artemis); Pl. Phdr. 229b–c, Ap. Rhod. 1.211–15 (Orythia, celebrating Artemis’ rites); Hdt. 4.145, 6.138, Philoch. FGrHist 328F 100–01 (kanephoroi parthenoi or gynaikes at Brauron). That the girls’ families were not present to protect them might foreshadow the marriage situation. Cf. Calame (supra n.4) 261–62.

depiction of scenes from the festival on the widely distributed krateriskoi. Aristophanes (Pax 872–76) implies that men were present at one pentetereic procession from Athens to Brauron, although we cannot be sure whether the participants were arktoi on their way to celebrate the Arkteia.63 Finally, Pamphila’s troubles in Menander’s Epitrepontes began at the festival of Artemis Tauropolos at nearby Halai Araphenides.64

The question remains whether Plato could have modeled his program on a contemporary ritual practice at Brauron, or had he to resurrect a tradition from the past? The kraters range from the late sixth century to possibly as late as the late fifth,65 at best nearly half a century before Plato wrote the Laws. There is evidence that the sanctuary at Brauron suffered serious flood damage at some time during the fourth century B.C.66 Exactly when this occurred and whether the damage proved to be the deathblow to the sanctuary are unclear. The inventories of Artemis Brauronia found on the Akropolis date from 353/2 to 334/3 and record, as Linders has shown, offerings dedicated and stored at Brauron; this suggests that the temple was at least staffed with annual boards of epistatai and was open for dedications in the middle of the fourth century.67 The mud left by the receding waters was never removed from the great stoa. An unpublished law of the nomothetai, dated by letter forms to the third century B.C., orders an inspection and inventory of the sanctuary so that necessary repairs can be made. Papademetriou concluded that this law addressed the flood damage.68 Edmonson has suggested that the earliest phase of the Brauronion on the Akropolis dates to the fourth century and was intended as a replacement for the temple

64 451–53, 517–19 Sandbach. This sanctuary at Loutsa was closely connected with that at Brauron; cf. Eur. IT 1449–57. J. Travlos in Neue Forschungen in griechischen Heiligtümern (Tübingen 1976) 197–205, argues that Artemis’ association with a chthonic Iphigenia at Aulis, Halai, and Brauron explains the adya, associated with chthonic ritual, at the three temples; followed by Kahil 1977, 95–97. See contra M. B. Hollinshead, Legend, Cult and Architecture at Three Sanctuaries of Artemis (Diss. Bryn Mawr 1979), arguing that a cult of Iphigenia at Aulis and Halai is not certain and that the adya were not related to cult but were used for storage.
65 Fragments found in a well of the late fifth century in the agora: Kahil 1965, 22–23; R. Holloway, Hesperia 35 (1966) 83 pls. 27f.
66 J. Papademetriou, Ergon 1957, 38; CJ 58 (1962/3) 70–71; Scientific American 208.6 (1963) 120; cf. BCH 83 (1959) 596; 84 (1960) 669.
67 IG II 1514–25, 1528–31; SEG XXI 553–57; Linders (supra n.57) 70–73.
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at Brauron.69 This need not mean, of course, that Artemis did not occupy that land on the Akropolis before then, merely that the architectural improvements date to the fourth century.70 Athena Nike's history on the Akropolis would have been somewhat similar. In short, we cannot say with certainty whether the temple at Brauron was functioning as a ritual center throughout the fourth century, although private dedications, most notably votive portrait statues of boys and girls, continued to be offered there down into the third century B.C.71

Didymos' commentary on Demosthenes preserves what may be considered the latest reference to the Arkteia by a classical author. According to the grammarian, what Demosthenes called δεκατεύσας in his speech against Medon was the same as what Lysias called ἀρκτεύσας in his speech on behalf of Phrynichos' daughter.72 If Didymos' equation is correct, Demosthenes' reference to δεκατεύσας implies that an Arkteia (Mounichian or Brauronian?) was celebrated in the first half of the fourth century.73 If not, Lysias is our last classical author to mention the festival. There are passages in Plato which suggest that a contemporary Athenian model was lacking.74

Apart from the mention of ἐπιλεγόμεναι παρθένωι in the Leiden scholium, the testimonia for the Arkteia are unanimous that participation was required of every Athenian maiden.75 A penteteric festival celebrated by all girls before their marriage suggests the possibility

69 C. N. Edmonson, AJA 72 (1968) 164-65.
71 Kondis (supra n.47) 190, 203.
72 Harp. s.v. δεκατεύς: ἰπποστένους δ' ἐν τῷ κατὰ Μέδοντος περί τινος παρθένου λέγοντος οὕτως “οὐ δεκατεύσας ταύτῃν οὐδὲ μνήσασιν,” Διδύμος ὁ γραμματικός περὶ τούτων βιβλίων γράφας φησιν ὅτι τὸ δεκατεύασιν Λυσιαῖ ἐν τῷ περὶ τῆς Φρυνίου θυγατρὸς ἀρκτεύασι εὑρήκει. We learn from Poll. 8.53 that Demosthenes' speech involved a marriageable ἐπικλερος. Was δεκατεύσαι raised in connection with her marriageability?
73 Elsewhere Demosthenes employs the verb to mean a tithe (22.77, 24.185); cf. supra n.44.
74 Leg. 794D, 805D–E; Resp. 451E–452B.
75 Various πᾶσα παρθένοι, αἱ κόραι, αἱ ἐαυτῶν παρθένοι. Kondis (supra n.47) 182–83 believed that the Leiden statement reflected a gradual change in cult practice whereby participation came to be restricted to girls of aristocratic or religiously conservative families. Cf. Jeanmaire (supra n.4) 259–60 and Walbank (supra n.22) 277. The restriction, however, probably belongs to the Mounichian festival. Certainly participants had to be children of citizens, as did ephebes (Arist. Ath. Pol. 42). δεκατεύς applied to the arktoi need not mean a tithe of maidens in the strict sense of one in ten (cf. Kondis 183 n.90): they were selected to the extent that they had to meet certain requirements (age and citizenship) and the celebrants were dedicated or regarded as sacred to the goddess. Cf. C. Montepaone, SSR 3 (1979) 356.
that a system of age grades for girls may once have been operative in Attica. Could *Lysistrata* 641ff reflect an Attic age grade, outlining the ritual possibilities for girls belonging to a group aged seven to fourteen or fifteen?76 In a treatise of Hippokrates or rather of his school, human physical development is organized into periods of seven years; the second group, aged seven to fourteen, are called παίδες.77 Aristophanes began his strophe with a seven-year-old ἀρεφερος and closed with a κανεφερος who describes herself as a παίς καλή.

Tazelaar identified two age-grouping classifications for boys at Sparta. One, clearly ‘hebdomadic’ (ages 0–7, 7–14, 14–20), reflected physical development while the other (0–7, 7–12, 12–18, 18–20) followed legal lines, state education beginning at the age of seven.78 The literary testimonia suggest that some type of organization, possibly by age grades, functioned for Spartan girls as well. Alkman’s chorinai describe themselves as ἀνέφαι (52), mirroring the term applied to members of a Spartan agela.79 Pindar referred to a choir of Spartan maidens as an agela.80 The chorinai of Theokritos 18, twelve Spartan maidens, characterize themselves as Helen’s age-mates (συνομάλλει<e>&</e>κες, 22), four-times-sixty maidens, a female corps of youth (πετράκας ἐξήκοντα κόραι, θῆλυς νεολαία, 24). If, as has been proposed,81 a course of training parallel to that of Spartan boys was provided girls, we might suggest that girls, like boys, were organized into ‘hebdomadic’ age grades.82

Plato advised that formal education should begin for boys and girls after the age of six (*Leg.* 793E–794c) and that pupils of grammatistai and paidotribai should begin their studies at the age of seven (*Ax.* 366D). Aristotle (*Pol.* 1336a23–b36) would begin a child’s education at home at age five and send him away to school at age seven. Xenophon observed that in contrast to most cities, where a boy was no
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longer obliged to attend school when he ceased to be a παῖς, in Sparta under the Lykourgan system youths were subjected to a continuous course of work (Lac. 3.1). Plato confirms this, applying the term μετράκιον to the age group exempt from school attendance (Lach. 179Α). The pseudo-Hippokratic treatise On Sevens uses μετράκιον of a group aged fifteen to twenty-one. Apparently at both Sparta and Athens a boy’s formal education traditionally began at the age of seven and, at least in Athens, ended at the age of fifteen.83

Aristophanes Lysistrata 641ff may well preserve for us the traces of a tradition which substituted ritual participation for the formal education of Attic girls aged seven to fourteen. In turn, the rhetorical balance and symmetry of this passage are clarified by what Plato adds to our understanding and interpretation of the scenes on the krateriskoi. We see the arktoi, Athenian girls aged ten to fourteen or fifteen, as they perform one part of the celebration of the Arkeia at Brauron. Divided into two age groups, they compete in foot races and in choral performances, garbed as befits their age. Their wedding day looms before them, their marriageable status perhaps marked by the assumption of the krokotos.84

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