FRAGMENTED POSSESSION: POLITICS OF WOMANHOOD IN ANCIENT GREECE

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İstanbul 2014

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PARÇALANMIŞ SAHİPLİK: ANTİK YUNAN'DA KADINLIK POLİTİKALARI

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Tezin Onaylandığı Tarih : 19.09.2014

Toplam Sayfa Sayısı : 82

Anahtar Kelimeler (Türkçe)	Anahtar Kelimeler (İngilizce)
1) Parçalanmış Sahiplik	1) Fragmented Possession
2) Terk Etme Hali	2) Abandoning Status
3) Antik Yunan Kadını	3) Ancient Greek Woman
4) Antik Yunan Ataerkilliği	4) Ancient Greek Patriarchy

ÖZET

Antik Yunan'a ait tarihi ve edebi belgeler incelendiğinde, toplumda kadınlığın ikincil cinsiyet olarak kabul edildiği görülür. Bir Yunan kadınının tüm hayatı, içinde yaşadığı toplumun kuralları ile sınırlandırılıp şekillendirilmiştir. Antik çağdan itibaren kadına atfedilen ve bugün dahi geçerliliğini koruyan "sessizlik", "edilgenlik", "duygusallık", "evcimenlik" gibi kadınlık özelliklerinin kadını maruz bıraktığı, bilindik toplumsal durum(lar)a ek olarak; Antik Yunan'da –belki de günümüzün "modern" toplumlarında dahi– kadının sürekli maruz kalmasına rağmen, üzerine henüz konuşulmamış bir toplumsal durumu daha vardı: "parçalanmış sahiplik".

Bu tezde dinini, evliliğini, ailesini, mülkünü, mirasını, hukuk tarafından korunma hakkını ve kimliğini sürekli olarak terk etmeye zorlanmış Antik Yunan kadınının (üzerine konuşulmamış toplumsal durumu olarak) "terk etme hali" ve "parçalanmış sahipliği" incelenmiştir.

ABSTRACT

Under the light of historical and literary documents of Ancient Greece, it can be observed that the Greek woman was secondary to man in Ancient Greek society. The entire life of an Ancient Greek woman was limited to and shaped by societal restrictions. In addition to the characteristics of femininity that have been attributed to women since the ancient times and are still valid even today, such as "silence", "passivity", "sensitivity", "domesticity", etc.; there was another social state in Ancient Greece –that

can be encountered even in today's "modern" societies– that has not been spoken about, although Greek women were continuously subjected to it: "fragmented possession".

Acknowledgments

I wish to express my gratitude to my thesis supervisor Assistant Professor Rana Tekcan for her guidance and invaluable contribution during the writing process. I am thankful to her for her generosity in sharing her time, sources and works as well as her continued support, patience and understanding in every stage of this process. The writing of this thesis represents only part of her guidance and encouragement that made the research possible for me.

Furthermore, I would like to thank my family, especially my mother Selin Nezahat İnce and my beloved sister Ezgi İnce for their enthusiastic support and understanding during this tough process.

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Introduction

Although gender roles are based on norms or standards created by specific societies and differ from one another, scholars have suggested some common stereotypes for femininity throughout their studies of analyzing these gender roles such as domesticity, passivity, sensitivity, silence, subordination, etc.

The purpose of this study is to put forward a fresh term that should be taken into account as women's unspoken social state: "fragmented possession". This term is contextualized in women's position in Ancient Greek society.

"Fragmented possession" may be defined as the stifling of women's possibility for total possession. In other words, it is women's being forced to exchange their possessions in order to exist in society. Throughout this study, it is seen that possession does not mean "the act of possessing something" in a simple way. It sometimes turns into "the power for making a decision", sometimes into "the act of abandoning something", sometimes into "the act of choosing an alternative", etc. However, the Greek women were never the "subject" of this act of possessing; rather, they were the object i.e. they did not personally possess (or abandon their possessions), but were externally forced to possess (or abandon their possessions).

Throughout the study, the concept of "fragmented possesion" is

investigated under four different titles: “religion”, “marriage and family”, “law” and “social classification and labor” which are considered as the basic domains of Ancient Greek society. The study is not limited to any particular time period of Ancient Greek history (such as the Archaic, Classical or Hellenistic period) but is confined by the code of “fragmented possession” to which the Greek women were continuously subjected in the Ancient Greek world -especially in the Athenian society which has been considered by historians as the city-state where the modern foundations of democracy were laid-. As a variant of Athenian society, Spartan society is included in the last section of the study in order to show the certain differences between the Athenian and Spartan women.

In addition to Greek literary texts, Greek pottery and architecture are also used as sources throughout the analysis.

Chapter 1: The Matter of Gender in Ancient Greece

Even though women played almost no public role other than a religious one in the political and social life of Ancient Greece, they dominated life of the imagination to a degree almost unparalleled in the Western tradition. Some Greek writers and philosophers like Euripides, Smyrnaeus and Plato used the female in a fashion that bore little resemblance to the lives of actual women as they tried to understand, express, criticize, and experiment with the problems and contradictions of their culture.

Women in Ancient Greece were believed to have strong emotions with weak minds. They were given a "kyrios", or guardian, to protect them from not only damaging themselves but also damaging others. This guardian, the closest male birth relative or when applicable, husband, controlled most of their life, as their citizenship entitled them only to the possibility of marriage and to their husbands' religious associations (Blundell 114). In his essay titled "Women, Money and The Law in Ancient Athens", Ancient Greek history researcher J.C. Thompson says although the Ancient Greek women were allowed to possess their own clothing, jewelry, and slave, as well as to procure other inexpensive items, they were forbidden to possess property, buy anything of considerably value, cross the threshold into a verbal or written contract, or boast any political or economic benefits (1).

Women were married soon after puberty to men of their fathers' choosing. Love was not necessary for marriage, as the only two purposes for

marriage were the administration and conservation of property and procreation. Women did not usually marry out of their classes, as marriage ceremonies, for the most part, took place between close families. The rich married the rich. The poor married the poor (Blundell 66-67).

As one can see, women did not play a very large public role in Ancient Greece. Even if they are occasionally portrayed as "companions" to men or "arbiters" in public life in a few Greek literary texts, Ancient Greek reality was different.

For example, *Medea* tells the story of a divorced woman who exacts revenge on her ex-husband by murdering everyone he cares about in order to ruin his life. In Apollonius of Rhodes' *The Argonautica*, Medea accompanies her husband Jason through an adventure to get the "Golden Fleece", which is to his benefit. She plays a big role in defeating a terrifying monster that stands in Jason's path and eventually kills her own brother so the two can escape. In reality, none of this would have even been thought of. Aside from the magical powers Medea had, as her grandfather was Apollo, a husband would never expect comradery from his wife. Medea plays an important role in her relationship with Jason, but real Greek women never had this kind of role in their relationships in the Ancient Greek world.

Additionally, Euripides' *Medea*, opens in a state of conflict. Jason has abandoned his wife, Medea, along with their two children for the daughter of Creon, the King of Corinth. Creon, who fears Medea will seek revenge

on Jason, nearly banishes her and their children from Corinth. However, using her sly wit and cunning, Medea exhibits numerous pleas to Creon so as to escape exile: “I kneel to you, I beseech you by the young bride, your child. […] I beg you! Will you cast off pity and banish me? […] My home, my country! How my thoughts turn to you now!” (27). It is through Creon’s pity that she escapes her predicament of immediate exile.

Medea does not escape exile entirely, but does acquire one more day to ready her and her children for exile. She uses this day to construct a demonic plan of murder and deceit to make Jason suffer. This plan is carried to its fullest. In short, she poisons a coronet and dress, and she sends her two innocent children with these as gifts for Jason’s new bride. As the new bride gladly accepts them, the poison takes effect, and she falls to a gruesome death. As her father, Creon, embraces her, he too leaves the world. Even her own children cannot escape from Medea’s rage. Enacting what is perhaps the greatest sacrifice next to taking one’s own life, they are slain in one final act to take vengeance on Jason. After it all, Medea rises above Jason in a chariot of dragons holding the bodies of her children, protected by Apollo. In the end, then, a woman rises above a man.

Euripides’ *Medea* catapults the question of Greek literature versus Greek reality to a whole new level like Apollonuis’. Never would women triumph over men, nor would men suffer so much pain from women. Never would women be the determiner of destiny.

The myth of the warrior Amazons is another example of a fictional reversal on the Greeks' real vision of women in Ancient Greece. In the few lines of Homer's *The Iliad*, the Amazons are said to be "equal to men" (3: 63). With her significance in the Trojan War, Penthesilea is certainly the most well-known Amazon warrior. In Quintus Smyrnaeus' *Fall of Troy*, Penthesilea is the daughter of Ares and Otrera. Growing up amidst the Amazons, she becomes known for her intelligence, inventiveness, bravery and skill with numerous weapons. Penthesilea's youth is spent largely on hunting. During one such hunt, Boreas, god of the North Wind, blows her lance off. The lance strikes Penthesilea's sister, Hippolyte, and kills her. Grief-stricken, Penthesilea sets out to pay the penalty of her sorrowful act. She visits King Priam of Troy, looking for his absolution. When Penthesilea arrives in Troy, the city has been under the siege of Greeks for ten years. Hector, the great Trojan hero who was formerly Troy's champion, has just been killed in battle. King Priam strikes a deal with Penthesilea: in return for her purification, the Amazons will defend Troy against the Greeks siege. It is a good deal for Priam, as the Amazons are known to fight with great brutality. For Penthesilea, fighting against the Greeks is a good way to ensure her own death as the Amazons believe that the only way to find peace in the next life is to die in a battle. For the Greeks have dominated the Trojan forces, it seems Penthesilea will certainly attain her death wish. With lance at the ready, and attended by her personal guards of twelve Amazons, Penthesilea rides out from Troy's gates. On the battlefield, these women kill

many legendary Greek warriors. Looking out across the battlefield, the Greek hero Achilles sees Penthesilea and the Amazons celebrating amidst the bloodshed. Achilles and Penthesilea clash in heated combat first on horseback, then on foot. Except for his famously vulnerable heel Achilles is impervious to harm thanks to protection from the Greek god Zeus, so Penthesilea is too often on the defense. Despite her extraordinary courage, she eventually grows tired from the relentless assault. Achilles takes advantage of her fatigue and, in an instant, plunges his sword deep into her breast. The moment that Achilles kills his Amazon rival is when he falls in love with her. After removing the fallen Amazon's helmet, the hero is so overwhelmed by her beauty that he begins to cry. Despite Penthesilea's having been fictionalized as a legendary female image in the male public sphere (battlefield) , it is certain that women in real Greek society were restricted from participating in outside events in which men were involved. It is not known whether these tales come from a time when women were strong and powerful or writers dreamt of more strong and powerful women while they were writing about the Amazons as the origins of Amazons are still unknown. Whether they existed at all or not is doubtful. They may have been a purely fictititous race concocted by the male dominated society of Ancient Greece to boost their inflated ego further. However, the well-known thing is that the social life for women was only achieved in boundaries "within [their] husband[s]' house and the domain of [their] [husband[s]' power" (Lacey 153). Living and working at home, various responsibilities

were imposed on women as Maryln B. Arthur also says “the functions of wife and mother that women had always performed were now construed as a necessity and a duty” (Peradotto and Patrick 40).

Plato, the Greek philosopher and the writer of philosophical dialogues, also demonstrated his ideas for women to play a greater role in Greek society. However, this demonstration was nothing more than a public display of his own opinions which means these opinions were not applied to the Ancient Greeks’ real life at that time. In *The Republic*, Plato projects women as being able to vote and as having authoritative positions such as judges and priests. In an excerpt from Plato’s *The Republic* entitled “The Equality of Women in the State”, Plato’s character Socrates argues the idea of women as “guardians” (characterized as superior intellectuals, which ruled the State) against Glaucon’s apparent disagreement (153).

Plato begins by stating that women are in many ways superior to men via weaving and pancake making. Using his infamous Socratic method, he makes Socrates begin by asking simple questions requiring simple answers. However, Glaucon’s answers do not seem to hold true to his principles. Ultimately, he brings Glaucon to the conclusion that in the administration of the State neither a woman as a woman, nor a man as a man has any special function, but the gifts nature are equally diffused in both sexes; all the pursuits of men are the pursuits of woman also (155).

In short, it is possible to say that Plato finds numerous faults with the

Greek society's treatment of women, and corrects them in *The Republic*, reaching a conclusion that women are not different from men as the Greek society makes them out to be. While this work neither had a major impact on the everyday life of Greece, nor reflected the existing state in the Greek society at that time, it was a step in the right direction since Socrates as a renowned philosopher expressed his thoughts on the matter at hand.

Medea, *Penthesilea* and *The Republic* exhibit different portrayals of women in Greek society. *Medea* tells the story of a sadistic woman whose life has been ruined by a man, and thus, she develops a plot of vengeance against him. *Penthesilea* is the fictionalization of a brave, strong and fierce female warrior going out of the private sphere in which the Ancient Greek women are continuously forced to stay. *The Republic* contains a very positive preposition for women. Plato establishes their equality as leaders in the State. As it is already stated at the very beginning of the section, these Greek writers and philosophers really used the female in a fashion that bore little resemblance to the lives of actual women. Perhaps creating a new context in which women were represented would engage readers to think more critically about women's place in society.

In Ancient Greece, the states were run by men. Ancient Greek men spent a lot of their time involving in politics and philosophy outside their houses. They also spent time in the fields overseeing the crops. They sailed, hunted, and traded; so all of these activities took them away from home.

They also enjoyed wrestling, horseback riding, and the Olympic games, and had parties that their women were not allowed to attend (Garland 85-89).

Women, on the other hand, had little freedom. Wealthy women hardly ever left the house. They sent slaves to the marketplace instead of themselves. They were allowed to attend weddings, funerals, and some religious festivals. Their main job was bearing children and running the house when the men of the house were absent. Women supervised slaves who did all the cooking, cleaning, and tending of the crops. Male slaves guarded the women when the men were away. Except in Sparta, girls were not sent to school and taught only the basics of reading and math at home (Garland 84-85).

Homes were divided into areas for the men and women. The “andron” was a room reserved for males to entertain their male guests. The room had a separate entrance to the street, so male guests did not have to meet any women of the house. On the other hand, women lived in a special section of the house called the “gynaeceum” (Peppas 14). Greek women were under the control and protection of their father, husband, or a male relative for their entire lives. They had no role in politics. The only public job that women were allowed to do was priestesshood. Marriages were arranged by the parents of the intended couples. Girls married between the ages of 14 to 18, while men typically married when they were in their 20s or even 30s. Divorces were easily arranged. They were granted on many grounds; for

instance, if wives could not bear children or committed adultery, divorce was legally required (Blundell 66-69).

In depicting the status of men and women in Greek society, Aristotle's *Politics* can be taken as a more realistic and reflective account since it remains in support of a male-dominated universe. The only credit given to women is that they are a step up from slaves. Aristotle begins by saying that there must be a coming together of those who cannot live without each other. He gives men and women as examples. This union is solely to continue the human race, as "this is a union which is formed, not of deliberate purpose but because in common with other animals and plants, mankind have natural desire to leave behind them an image of themselves" (26).

Next, Aristotle says that within a coalition of two beings, there must be one ruler and one subject in order to survive. The ruler, or master, is the one who can foresee with his mind while the subject or slave works with the body. In the coalition of the household, Aristotle describes three parts: 1- Master ruling over slave, 2- Father, and 3- Husband. The husband and father are to rule over the wife and children. To rule over the children is noble, while to rule over the wife is constitutional (49). For he proclaims the male is "by nature fitter for command than the female, just as the elder and full grown is superior to the younger and more immature" (49). According to Aristotle, a man's "forte" is his commanding presence, while a woman's is

that of obedience. Although, demeaning the role of woman, he does give them the benefit of being a step up from a slave, as a woman has some deliberative faculty, but no authority whatsoever (51): “Silence is a woman’s glory (52), but this is not equally the glory of man” (52-53).

Aside from literary works, Greek pottery also depicted women. Most of these women were either dancing girls or prostitutes. This shows that men had little respect for this class of women, as they were pictured as slaves to men’s desires:

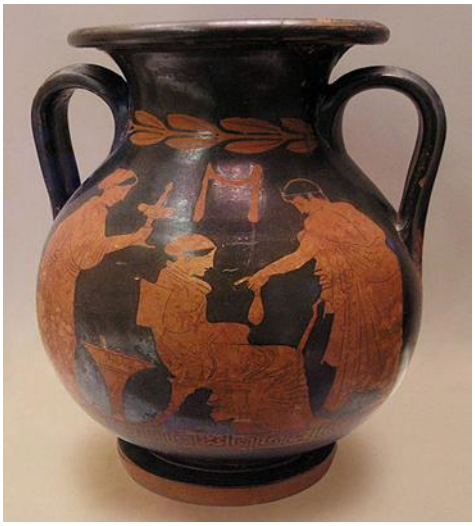

Fig.1. “Courtesan and her client”, *Greek Terracottas*

Vase scenes portraying women inside their houses tend to be sparing in specific details. The common presence of Greek terracottas suggest that women also spent much of their time by caring for their appearance to fit in the ideal codes of Greek female beauty:

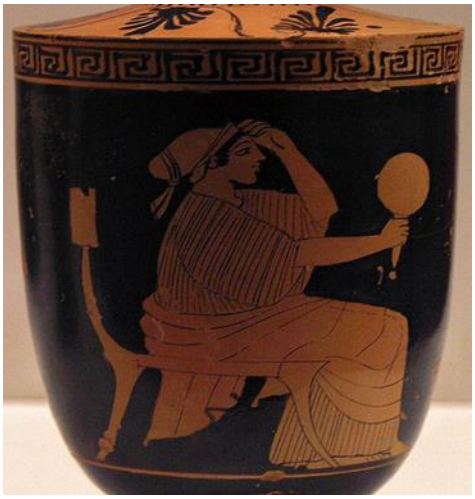

Fig.2. “Women with mirror”, *Greek Terracottas*

Chapter 2: Women's Fragmented Possession

> To three ancient nations the men of the 20th century owe an incalculable debt. To the Jews we owe most of our notions of religion; to the Romans we owe traditions and examples in law, administration, and the general management of human affairs which still keep their influence and value; and finally, to the Greeks we owe nearly all our ideas as to the fundamentals of art, literature, and philosophy, in fact, of almost the whole of our intellectual life. (Davis 1)

Through these words in his book named *A Day in Old Athens: A Picture of Athenian Life*, William Stearns Davis declares the importance of Ancient Greece for today's world. In Ancient Greek society, there were various "codes" determined by patriarchy. Ideal appearance, ideal jobs, ideal characteristics, or in short; stereotypes of Ancient Greek femininity, were all determined and coded by masculine authority. Although these stereotypes changed from one city to another, it is possible to say that there was such a striking one among them that it was seen in almost all cities and communities in the Ancient Greek world: fragmented possession.

When the women in Ancient Greece are investigated, it is seen that they had to abandon something throughout their lives to become acceptable in the society. This "becoming ideal" was a burden on women, as it was the only way for them to keep on surviving in the society they belonged to. In other words, it was not possible for women to have total possession in any

part of their lives. As it is also stated in the introduction, here the act of possessing does not simply mean “the act of owning something”. Throughout the study, fragmented possession presents itself under different guises such as “the power for making decision”, “the act of abandoning something”, “the act of choosing an alternative”, etc.

So, it is possible to say that “fragmented possession” means Ancient Greek women’s various abandonments (determined by masculine authority in the society) throughout their lives in order to survive. In the following sections, the “ideal” to which Greek women needed to adhere and their consequent and inevitable fragmented possession in various domains of the society such as religion, marriage, family, law, social classification and labor will be investigated.

2.1. Religion

Ancient Greek religion was a mixture of old Minoan beliefs (Central Asian gods that the Indo-Europeans brought to Greece, and West Asian ideas they got from their neighbors). Like all of their descendants, Ancient Greek people believed that there were invisible, powerful gods and spirits that could control what happened to them. The most important spirits and gods were natural ones. Ancient people belived that they would have enough food and health to live as long as they controlled those transcendental beings successfully, that is why they prayed and sacrificed for those beings. For example, when an earthquake or a plague hit a town,

ancient people thought it must have been something the whole town or the rulers of the town had done wrong, i.e. the King Oedipus' killing his father.

As Walter Burkert (a German scholar of Greek mythology and culture) indicates, for most people in Ancient Greece, the gods were always around them, paying attention to everything they did, and an important part of success in life was keeping on the right side of the gods. Although most people of the archaic period did not think much about life after death, they began to think about afterlife more as the time passed. By the Hellenistic period, about 200 BC, lots of people thought that good people went to heaven and bad people went to hell (6-9).

Despite the fact that Ancient Greek women were strictly controlled in most areas of Greek society and isolated from public life by the patriarchal authority, they had significant public roles in Greek religious rituals. They participated in ancient rituals along with men.

> Men's criticism of women is worthless twanging of a bowstring and evil talk. Women are better than men as I will show…Consider their role in religion, for that, in my opinion, comes first. We women play the most important part, because women prophesy the will of Zeus in the oracles of Phoebus. And at the holy site of Dodona near the sacred oak, females convey the will of Zeus to inquirers from Greece. As for the sacred rituals for the Fates and the Nameless Ones, all these would not be holy if performed by men, but prosper in women's hands. In this

> way women have a rightful share in the service of the gods. (Lefkowitz and Fant 14)

These sentences of Melanippe in one of Euripides' fragmentary play *Wise Melanippe* can be accepted as an explicit description of women's position in Ancient Greek religion. Ancient Greek women's wandering around the polis without their male partners (kyrios, husband, father, etc.) was not something approved by the Ancient Greek society. Even with their partners, women rarely left their house as they were occupied only with domestic work, so any events of birth and death and all religious festivals meant an opportunity for women to leave the house. As some examples of the attic red-figure vases from Ancient Greece show, women were allowed to stand as "walk-ons" in regiments of religious festivals (Boardman 140) and as "kanephoroi" who carried sacred baskets during the procession of sacrifice in the "Panathenaea" (an annual Athenian festival) (Pomeroy 75). Furthermore, many archeological finds dating at archaic times demonstrate that women served as priestesses at the temples (Fuchs 155).

Even if religion is considered as the only public office open to the Ancient Greek women, it should be thought that religion did not give women a chance for total possession, either. For example, scholars like Sarah Pomeroy, Sue Blundell and Fustel De Coulanges who are known for their detailed studies on the Ancient Greek culture believe that priestesshood in Ancient Greece opened a door for women to leave the

“gynaikeion” (the section of an Greek house reserved for women). On the other hand, it is important to remember that priestesshood in Ancient Greece called for spending a lifetime confined to the columns of temples which means it turned into another “private space” for priestesses, and to make matters worse, those women had to preserve their virginity as long as they lived. So, it is acceptable to say that Greek women’s so-called public religious role was also under the control of “fragmented possession”which means going into the religious service did not exempt women from all the codes and ideals of Greek femininity. Even though those religious activities allowed women to go out of houses, this going out was finite and it resulted in another confinement at the temples and cost an abandonment of active sexuality.

In order to understand Ancient Greek women’s fragmented possession in religion in a more detailed way, it is better to investigate the Greek religion under two titles as the private religion (cult of ancestors in each Greek oikos) and the public religion (Greek polytheism).

2.1.1. Private Religion (The Cult of Ancestors)

It is widely known that the Indo-European race from which Ancient Greek and Roman people descended never believed that death was the end of human life. They believed it was the beginning for human’s coming into existence for a second time. In other words, the oldest generations of Ancient Greek people considered death did not mean perishment of beings,

but meant a simple exchange of life. At the same time, this exchange occured neither through “metempsychosis”, nor “ascension” (Coulanges 17). In Ancient Greece, the belief of ascension (rise of the spirits upwards to the heaven) dates to such a later time that Phocylides (the Greek gnomic poet of Miletus) who lived in 500s BC was the first poet who talked about ascension in his poems (Coulanges 17). In short, according to the Greek’s oldest beliefs, the spirits would not be raised to the “divine sky” to spend their second lifetime, but would stay with and accompany their living descendants (Cicero 16) (Euripides, Alcestis 37).

All these beliefs about death resulted in “ancestor worship” that would turn into the “private religion” of each oikos in the Ancient Greek society and brought on the veneration of ancestors through blood lineage.

The Links between Fire Worship and Ancestor Worship, written by J.W. Jamieson –a scholar of Indo-European cultural history, shows how the structure of private religion was based on blood-lineage and heredity. Jamison explains that “family” in Indo-European cult does not refer to the typical nuclear family of the 21st century, with a husband, wife and children. Furthermore, it was something more than what we today call an extended family. Rather, the Indo-European family extended to three or four generations of related people, included not only those related by blood or marriage, but also their servants, bondsmen and retainers, as well as free men who had voluntarily placed themselves in the service and protection of

the family. The family had a hierarchical structure, at the head of which was the “Paterfamilias” (senior male) (37). The total economic, political, and social control of the oikos was kept by the Paterfamilias; furthermore, he was the “high priest”, “the pope” of the private, unique religion of his oikos. Each oikos had its own secret cult and rituals isolated from the outside, public world (37-38).

In his book *Antik Site: Yunan’dan Roma’ya Kadar Tapınma, Hukuk ve Kurumlar*, Fustel de Coulanges investigates the tradition of ancestor worship and show that each oikos could trace its ancestors back to a single “founder”. The bones of the founder were said to be buried beneath the hearth of oikos, so this hearth turned into the focal point for religious worship for the founder’s descendants. The central act of worship was a communal meal attended by all the members of oikos and presided over by the Paterfamilias. It was believed that the ancestors’ spirits would also attend these meals. In return, the ancestors’ spirits would bestow protection and blessings on the living members of their oikos (20-25).

In the religious structure of ancestor worship, women’s fragmented possession was prominent. The most essential principle of private religion was that the members of an oikos could worship only the spirits to whom they were related by blood. Furthermore, the funeral rite of a dead relative was led by only the “consanguineous” Paterfamilias of the oikos. Only the members of oikos were allowed to be involved in the cuisine rituals as it

was believed the ancestors' spirits would accept the offerings only when they were offered by their consanguineous descendants. At this point, it is important to remember that the leader of all these rituals in the religion of oikos was Paterfamilias, so the women (neither wives nor daughters) were able to sustain the religion. In other words, as it is also stated in *The Vedas* – the most ancient sacred writings of Hinduism from which the private religion of the Ancient Greek oikos derived– continuity of the religion of oikos could be possible only through the continuous reproduction of proper sons (Griffith 49).

The thing that united the members of ancient oikos was something more magnificient than birth or physical power: it was the religion of oikos. In other words, ancient oikos was not only a natural union, but also a religious "shelter" (Herodotus 4: 280). Ancient women's participation in this "shelter" was ensured either by their fathers or husbands.

Daughter(s) in an oikos involved in her father's religion and worshipped his ancestors; in other words, her father's ancestors were her gods, as well. When the son from next door neighbor wanted to marry her, marriage did not simply mean a transition from a house to another for her. It meant a total abandonment of her own oikos and religion and it meant involvement in her husband's cult. In other words, she had to abandon her own gods she had worshipped since she was born; she had to change her religion and conform to different traditions and say differents prayers.Worshipping her husband's

gods without abandoning her father's was not in question as in this religious system it was forbidden to be a simultaneous worshipper of two different cults (Wilson 551).

Furthermore, marriage ceremony itself was a religious, glorious ritual through which the bride was accepted by her new oikos and religion. The woman became a worshipper, a servant of her husband's oikos and religion as soon as marriage ceremony finished.

Daughters' abandoning status in their fathers' oikos resulted in their being treated as "potential abandoners". Hence, women were never accepted as equal to men as in Ancient Greek society the actual reason that originated the oikos was the continuation of the religion. This may be considered as women's getting caught in a vicious circle: first, they were forced to abandon their fathers' religion; then, they were treated as potential abandoners as if the decision had been made by them.

2.1.2 Public Religion

The gods and goddesses at the peak of Olympus have a central position in the Ancient Greek world. Herodotus, Homer and Hesiod were the authors who drew the genealogical tree of these gods and goddesses; however, this process probably started before Homer and Hesiod. For instance, Zeus, the father of all gods, goddesses and men, can be met in Minoan and Mycenaean cultures, too. Nonetheless, Homer and Hesiod recorded numerous stories about the gods and goddesses, and their works reflect

many of the beliefs about these gods and goddesses held by the Greeks.

The Greeks used myths to explain what they did not understand. Other myths taught moral lessons or simply told entertaining stories. Since most myths are older than writing, we do not know how people exactly came to believe in myths, but we know that myths have been passed down from generation to generation by word of mouth, and Greek poets told epic stories based on these myths.

The image of "goddess" in Ancient Greek mythology (public religion) is probably the most concrete manifestation of the poetics of womanhood in Ancient Greek society. However, before analyzing women's fragmented possession in Greek mythology, I strongly believe that it is important to understand how the women's possession started to be fragmented in public religion(s).

Not only Greek mythology, but also the other mythologies all around the world start with the philosophy of "matriarchy" that is believed to rule over the world before patriarchy. The political, economic, social and religious principles of matriarchal societies were based on "agriculture". The importance of agriculture raised the idea of a lifecycle by emphasizing the birth/blossom-maturity/ripeness-death/harvest and rebirth/reblossom progress of all living beings. In matriarchal societies, the "Great Mother", "Mother Goddess", or "Earth Mother" was the most supreme divine being who had the "mysterious" power of procreation. She was the source of life

and food on earth. People had to bear children and produce food in order to survive and be permanent on earth. They knew they were depended on the Great Mother's blessings, so they routinely worshipped her to attain them.

The queen in matriarchal societies was the personification of the Great Mother and had a glorious economic, social and religious power and authority. In other words, matriarchal world-view made women precious and allowed them to reach at the highest positions in societies. It made them "Paterfamilias" and equal to men as legal inheritors. In matriarchal societies, it was believed that new generations would be descended maternally and children's care was up to mothers and maternal uncles.

When man's role in procreation (insemination) was understood, the queen started to choose a different husband for herself every year and announced him as the year's "blessed king". Every spring, when the sowing-time came, the blessed king of previous year was sacrificed and the queen's priestesses ate his flesh in order to have his power of fertility; cultivated lands were irrigated by his blood.

Around the 2400s BC, some offensive tribes in which people believed and worshipped "Father God" imagined as a "successful warrior" started to invade many matriarchal societies and laid the foundations of a new social and political system in which patriarchy prevailed, so women's possession in society started to be fragmented from then on, as the new system raised a

completely different social order that transmitted from father to son.

From then on, the classification of divine authorities in myths as “gods” and “goddesses” obviously referred to gender discrimination in societies. Considering each god and goddess had his/her own particular mission, it is accepted that gods ruled masculine public space(s) while goddesses ruled feminene private ones.

In Ancient Greek public religion, gender difference is also noticeable and similar to the Greek private religion as the public religion did not give women any opportunity for total possession, either. Women were not allowed to go beyond the boundaries drawn by the Greek patriarchy even in an “imaginary” context which means it was impossible for women to leave their abandoning status even if they were accepted and worshipped as deities. The goddesses with their roles, missions and symbols are adequate enough to understand how a strong patriarchal ideology prevailed in the Ancient Greek public religion and see the fragmentation of women’s possession in this context.

For instance, Hera is described as the goddess of marriage and childbirth, so it is emphasized that these offices are women’s interest and mission. Most goddesses like Athena, Artemis and Hestia are glorified by “virginity”, so it is underlined that virginity is an obligation for women. Furthermore, the idea that women are “evil-minded” and “dangerously” feminine comes into being through Pandora’s (the first mortal woman)

"attractive" body. When all these examples are taken into consideration, it is obvious that Greek mythology was basically fictionalized gender stereotypes that fragmented women's possession.

In Ancient Greek mythology, Hera was Zeus' wife, so "the queen of the Olympians" and the goddess of marriage. She was worshipped throughout Greece and the oldest and most important temples were consecrated to her. Her subjugation to Zeus and depiction as a jealous shrew are mythological reflections of one of the most profound changes ever in human spirituality. The evidence of cave art and artifacts that come from tens of thousands of years ago indicate that humanity was focused on the fertility of female body. Thousands of years later, Ancient Greeks (the oldest people's European descendants) also worshipped the "female great power" in a different context. It is possible to say that the goddess Hera with her limited and external power is a reflection of the handover of power and authority (from the Great Mother to the Father).

In many sources, it is stated that Hera took her power and greatness from her husband Zeus as "she was folded in [his] arms" (Rosenberg 43). Here the most thought-provoking point is Hera's passivity which means she does not personally "possess", but rather "reflects" power. In other words, the belief of Great Mother and her internal, eternal and total possession of power turns into Hera and her external, limited and fragmented one throughout Ancient Greek public religion. Although it is sometimes claimed

that the source of Hera's power is herself, it can be disproved by Zeus' preventing her from bearing any child who could rival him in power. Besides the fragmentation of the Great Goddess' internal, eternal and total possession of power, there is also a shift in the possession of absolute power towards the Sky God. For instance, the mythological (motherless) birth of the goddess Athena from Zeus' head can be considered as the most significant moment that allows us to talk about this shift which means the Sky God was able to do anything the Great Mother did from then on. The goddess Hera, then, was began to be described as an "ideal wife" staying with her husband and ruling by his side. This stereotype was loyal, tenacious and unselfish in service to a more authoritive figure. In this relationship she provided her husband with the essential emotional and practical support to help him concentrate on his mission(s). This was long considered as the traditional role of the ideal wife which means women's possession of the greatest power was fragmented and changed into the one assumed to be "a promoting ingredient" that made the absolute masculine power flawless.

Once the Great Mother's possession of absolute power was fragemented through the goddess Hera in the Ancient Greek public religion, the other goddesses in this religion also got their share of this fragmentation. Aphrodite was one of them. She was the goddess of love and beauty and was said to have been created from the foam of the sea. Aphrodite is often pictured with a mirror and a magical girdle which caused everyone who saw

her to fall in love with her. She is also shown riding on a mussel shell with pearls falling at her feet. She can be considered as an archetype representing the choice to give away part of your self, spirit or integrity for financial gain (prostitution). This definition can also include the selling of talents and ideas. The shadow aspect of the prostitution is linked to the use of sex and seduction as a means of gaining control over a person. According to Caroline Myss, an American author of numerous books like *Anatomy of the Spirit* and *Invisible Acts of Power*, women all have this archetype as they give their power away to others when they are fearful. They also constantly modify their behaviour so they will appeal to other people (40). In other words, this archetype reminds us to regain power over themselves by finding ways to improve their self esteem and discovering the beauty within this Goddess'cult ritualized prostitution and despite her beauty and the ability to make anyone fall in love with her, she still suffered from jealousy and low self worth. From this point of view, it is not wrong to say that Aphrodite, as a goddess whose possession of flesh and spirit are fragmented and seperated from each other (the most beautiful flesh vs. the most sufferring spirit), can be considered as a "warning figure" created by the Ancient Greek patriarchy for women in society in order not to let them become "fallen" females.

Athena was the goddess of "wisdom", "war", "patriotism" and "good citizenship". She was the protector of Athens, as she was the patron deity of

the city. There were two sides of her character: she could be mighty and terrible, or gentle and pure. Her Roman name was Minerva, and the Romans ranked her third among their gods, under Jupiter (Zeus) and Juno (Hera). However, it is known that all these issues like "war", "wisdom", "citizenship", "patriotism" are considered as "manly" ones and associated with "public space" in patriarchal societies to which Ancient Greece belonged, as well. From this point of view, it will not be wrong to estimate that it was unusual for Ancient Greeks to accept and embrace a woman ruling over "manly issues". Athena's depicted appearance and myth of birth contend that this kind of estimation is reasonable: she was the favorite daughter of Zeus, and her share of wisdom was given to her by him. As, she was called the "mind of god", and women were not associated with these faculties like "wisdom" and "mind", she must have been given birth by a "wise" father, rather than by a "romantic" mother. In her book named *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, J. E. Harrison says Athena's birth "is a desperate theological expedient to rid her of matriarchal conditions" (302). According to some patriarchal Ancient Greek poets' (like Hesiod) scenario, Zeus was once married to Metis, who was known for her wisdom. When Metis became pregnant, the Earth told Zeus that a son born to Metis would overthrow him, so he swallowed Metis. At the time, Zeus had a terrible headache, and commanded help from Hephaestus. Hephaestus slashed Zeus' head and Athena sprang forth, "fully armed" (Hesiod 8). At this point, it is possible to say that Athena's birth from Zeus' head without a

mother, let her become an “authority” and “power” over something that had previously been only a male realm. When Zeus swallowed Metis, he was able to assimilate Athena’s “crafty” wisdom. Therefore, Athena did not have any loyalty to a mother figure, which probably played a major role in her self-description as “misogynist”. In other words, as a goddess ruling over “public space”, Athena had to abandon having a mother, first.

Second, she had to abandon looking like a woman. Athena –with her “gray eyes” is always depicted as being accompanied by an owl -symbol of wisdom and capability of seeing in the dark. Furthermore, she is depicted as wearing armor and helmet covering all her body and hair. By covering her hair and body, Athena was forced to abandon her femininity, hence she gained the “ideal” appearance to have and rule “manly” faculties.

Another interesting point about Athena is her being depicted as a “virgin” goddess. There are no instances of her having any lovers. It is possible to accept that her being described as a “virgin” was another touch to let her survive in the public sphere (Pantel 24). As a figure in public sphere, she had to abandon being “touched by men”.

In short, all these “minute, innocent and kind touches” turned Athena into a man-like deity and “bypassed” all the “unacceptable irregularities” of her in the public sphere of Ancient Greek society. In other words, even as a deity, Athena was not allowed to have a total possession of a mother, of feminine appearance, or active sexuality in order to “survive” in the Greek

patriarchal public sphere.

Artemis was another "virgin" goddess (of the hunt) in the Ancient Greek public religion. She was an important archetypal figure for young "independent" and "unmarried" women as she represents the only circumstance under which she could remain "unmarried" in the Ancient Greek society. She was so unconcerned by love or marriage affairs that "nor does laughter-loving Aphrodite tame in love Artemis […] for she loves archery and the slaying of wild beasts in the mountains" (Hesiod and Homer 119). So, she became a prime example of this "chaste" archetype as soon as she promised her father Zeus that she would remain eternally virgin on the condition that he let her stay unmarried which means she symbolized another "ideal" for the Ancient Greek women: "marriage is the only means through which women are supposed to experience having sex; if a woman stays unmarried, she has to protect her virginity." As it is seen, even as a deity with transcendental power(s), the goddess Artemis, too, had to abandon the experience of having sex for the sake of her wish to stay unmarried.

The goddess Hestia also shared the same experience with Artemis. In Greek mythology, Hestia was the goddess of the hearth, the symbol of the house, around which the newborn children of oikos had been carried before they were received into the oikos (Hamilton 35). Similar to her nephew Artemis, she also rejected to get married: "Shy Hestia too shums busy

Aphrodite/ This lady was firstborn to cunning Cronus/ […] / both Poseidon and Apollo pursued her/ She was unwilling, stubbornly refused them/" (Hesiod and Homer 407), so "ordinarily" and "inevitably": "the shining goddess swore a powerful oath/ On the head of Zeus/ her aegis-holding father/ to stay untouched – and this has had fulfillment/" (Hesiod and Homer 407) which means even as a goddess, she also abandoned the experience of having sex in return for staying unmarried like Artemis.

2.2. Marriage and Family

The earliest historical records indicate that the institution of marriage played an important role in Ancient Greek society; for instance, even in the religious context marriage was accepted as the ideal status to become the "proper" authority and that was the reason why the father of the gods, Zeus married Hera and despite all the ups and downs including Zeus' unfaithfulness, their marriage lasted forever. In Ancient Greece, besides virgin priestesses, all respectable women became a wife as they were given no genuine alternatives other than marriage.

In *Works and Days*, Hesiod states that a man should marry at about thirty, while the girl is much younger, perhaps two years past puberty, around fourteen to sixteen (143). Furthermore, in *Politics*, as a more contemporary evidence regarding the Classical period to which Hesiod definitely did not belong, Aristotle says young girls were being forced into marriage and pregnancy on puberty recommending that no marriage for

girls under 18 and boys under 37 (227). This could have stemmed from the fact that Aristotle was 37 years old, when he married his 18-year-old bride Pythia.

In Ancient Greece, before the process of marriage, even the process of getting married (wedding ceremony) was full of women's abandoning status and fragmented possession. In other words, the Ancient Greek wedding ceremony itself was like a "preview" that projected the bride's "upcoming doom" to which she would be inevitably exposed as soon as all those festivities were over.

Before the Ancient Greek people invented the Olympian gods and goddesses (public religion), all the wedding rituals and ceremonies that will be told in the following lines had been domestically witnessed. However, when they invented and started to worship the Olympian gods, wedding rituals and ceremonies inevitably became communally witnessed ones as they believed that all marriages were supposed to be blessed by those divine powers, especially the goddesses of marriage, family and childbirth, to be continuous and durable.

In his book named *The Greek Way of Life*, Robert Garland detailly investigates the institution of marriage in Ancient Greece and states that Greek marriages were only sanctioned between a citizen and the daughter of a citizen, and were constituted by the acts of "betrothal", "ekdosis" and "gamos". The betrothal was nothing more than a necessary verbal contract

between the groom- to-be and the bride's father or guardian **(**kyrios) so as to ensure the legitimacy of marriage and the reproduction of children (157). Throughout the betrothal, the "dowry", a necessary component of marriage consisting of the daughter's share of the father's legacy, was also agreed upon. It is known that the dowry was represented between five and twenty percent of the father's wealth. The handing over of the dowry signified the transfer of the daughter's guardianship from her father to her future husband, which was sealed by a binding handshake (158-159) and phrase: "I hand over this woman to you for the ploughing of legitimate children" (Blundell 101). The dowry given to the husband to-be meant the bride would have to abandon all her rights upon her father's inheritance and pass the control of her property to her husband-to-be when her father died. The phrase stated above underlined the main goal of marriage once more and emphasized the fact that the bride would have to abandon the marriage (her husband was legally allowed to get a divorce) when she was unable to bear those legitimate children. This agreement was as strong as any written contract, since from then on, the daughter was regarded as married.

As the betrothal marked a pledge, the ekdosis marked a transformation of the bride as she made a transition from a child to an adult, from a virgin to a wife. Actions that symbolized this transfer included cutting of the bride's hair, removing the girdle she wore since puberty, and taking a ritual bath in water from a sacred spring.

In the ekdosis, the daughter was given away by the father to her husband. The bride and groom prepared for the wedding with offerings, dedications, and sacrifices. All of these rites were for purification and conciliation. The bride offered locks of her hair to the virgin goddess Artemis hoping that Artemis would ease her passage from virginity to womanhood and the bride's girdle was also taken off and consecrated to Artemis or Athena (Blundell 105). This pre-wedding ritual was one of the few events in which Ancient Greek women were allowed to participate.

After the bride had made her sacrifices, the bride and groom both took a ritual bath which was believed to induce fertility (Avagianou 6). Sacred spring water for the bath was carried in a "loutrophorus"(someone carrying the bath water) (Rehm 15). The bride was then assisted in adorning herself for the public ceremony that began with a feast at the house of her own family. She showed up veiled and both she and the groom wore a crown of garland to mark the occasion.

Later that night, the bride, groom, and the groom's best friend were carried into the couple's future home by chariot. This procession itself began with the painful ritual departure, a drama of the pain the bride felt leaving her family. The groom grabbed her wrist treating her as a "symbolic captive", and to her the procession reflected a crisis that needed to be endured and overcome, as it was her final transition from childhood to marriage. The bride's being treated as a "symbolic captive" can be considered as a tradition emphasizing the fact that her marriage had nothing

more than a means through which she was going to fulfill the social duties given to her meaning that she had to abandon all her dreams, hopes and expectations (if she had any) about her new oikos as she was included in this oikos not by her own will but by divine providence.

To indicate the initiation into her new home, the bride ate a quince or an apple demonstrating that her livelihood came from her husband from then on. The bride and groom were showered with fruits and nuts to be blessed with prosperity and fertility (Rehm 17). Finally, through the physical union of the bride and groom in the nuptial bed, marriage (gamos) was completed. In addition to their abandoning status throughout the wedding ceremony, women's abandoning status also continued throughout the marriage itself:

Before the Olympian gods, the private religion of oikos (the cult of ancestors) was the main organizer of marriage. In other words, the first institution regulated by the private religion was probably marriage. As it has already been stated under the previous title, women had to or were forced to abandon their paternal gods (actually their fathers' dead ancestors) and worship their husbands' as soon as they got married. It is necessary to note that both the oikos and the private religion of the oikos transmitted from man to man, but women also belonged to the religion of the oikos as long as they joined the religious rituals of their oikos. As "parthenoi" (unmarried daughters), they were present at their fathers' religious rituals. As soon as they got married, they had to be present at their husbands'.

Both before and after the invention of Olympian Gods, neither abandoning their fathers' religion nor performing all the roles given to them during the wedding ceremony were enough for women to be fully accepted into their new oikoi. Bearing healthy children was the essential responsibility of women both for being a full member in their new oikoi and for achiving the main goal of the marriage; otherwise, their husbands were legally able to get a divorce which means women were forced to abandon their marriages if they were unable to meet the requirements of the marriage that would form a true oikos of which the importance was also explained detailly by Aristotle in his work *Politics* based on his observations about the Greek -especially Athenian- practices. He says not every state is a polis, nor every household is an oikos and adds that Greek societies are "true political" societies because they are polis-societies composed of true oikoi (55). Conversely, they are societies composed of oikoi because the oikoi belongs to polis. "Barbaroi" (non-Greeks) live in non-polis societies composed of households that are not true oikoi (133). For Aristotle, a true oikos is a specific form of "koinwnia" (community, association) which integrates people into a common life that enables them to become, as members of an oikos, members of a polis as well. So with all its dependent relatives, slaves, parents and children, a true oikos serves the polis (22-27). From this point of view, it is possible to think that Greek women's bearing healthy children was something more than simply meeting the requirements of the Ancient Greek marriage. As it is also seen in Aristotle's work, bearing healthy

children was considered as the essential component of a true oikos that would serve a true social and political system as a whole.

Women's abandoning status in marriage and family was not limited to abandoning of their marriage when they could not bear healthy children and contribute to form a true oikos, but was extended even to the separated rooms of family houses:

In a family house, women had a completely separate area called "gynaeceum" (Bernard 60) in which young girls grew up in the care of a nurse. Except for nursing their children, women also engaged in spinning thread, weaving and other domestic works in the gynaeceum which means being forced to abandon the rest of the house, women were confined to the ideal works and duties given to them by the Ancient Greek patriarchy. Furthermore; like all these ideal works and duties given to Greek women, there were even codes of ideal female beauty in Ancient Greek society. For instance, the most important determiner of Ancient Greek ideal beauty was a pale complexion. If outside the houses is considered as public sphere, it is evident on many Greek terracottas that the trend of pale skin made women abandon the public sphere and confined them to the roofed courtyards of family houses even when they went out of the houses to take a little breath:

Fig.4. “Women in Courtyard”, *Greek Terracottas*

It has been already stated that the most significant function of the Ancient Greek marriage and oikos was something social and it was the production of new “legitimate” citizens. However, the second function of the Ancient Greek marriage and oikos was economical and it was not something that could be disregarded. This second function of the Greek marriage and oikos was its being the almost only determiner in the law of inheritance and property in ancient times. This will be investigated in a more detailed way in the following section; however, it will be also proper to talk about the economic function of marriage and family in this section as it also determined the Ancient Greek women’s abandoning status throughout their marriages.

Ancient Greek marriage, especially in the city of Athens, even at the highest levels, was endogamous, within a close circle of relatives, in order

to preserve family property from fragmentation. More generally, for the same reason, it was common to limit family size; and that could often lead to the absence of male heirs through death, and the redistribution of the property among the wider group of relatives, who also had duties to prosecute a man's murderer. But in general there is little evidence for extended family groups being important in the classical age. Another function of the family raises one of the central problems in our understanding of Athenian social values: the family clearly served as the means of protecting and enclosing women. Women in the city of Athens were citizens, with certain cults reserved to them -not to foreign women-, and they were citizens for the purposes of marriage and procreation, otherwise they lacked citizenship.

They could not enter into any transaction worth more than one "medimnos of barley" (Powell 226); they could not own any property, with the conventional exception of their clothes, their personal jewellery and personal slaves. At all times they had to be under the protection of a kyrios, a guardian; if they were unmarried, their father or closest male relative, if they were married, their husband; if they were widowed, their son or other male relative by marriage or birth.(Powell 226). This meant Ancient Greek women belonged to their oikos, so they were under the legal protection of the oikos and they were continuously forced to abandon the possession of inheritance and property throughout their marital and familial status. In other words, the structure of Ancient Greek marriage and oikos always

fragmented Greek women's possession(s) as they were under the control and protection of their fathers, husband or "guardians" for their entire life.

2.3. Law

The legal system in Ancient Greece, actually the lawgivers, put women in a lower status in the society. The lower status of women was also seen in the law of divorce, property and inheritance, but the initial point was the problem of defining women's social status in the legal system. In other words; women's fulfilling the requirements of "true citizenship" was of great importance for them to find themselves a place under the roof of law –especially in Athens–. However, Greek women's accomplishment of being granted the true citizenship did not mean that their possession of legal rights would not be fragmented or true citizenship would make them leave their abandoning status under the law.

It is clear that the concept of democracy in Ancient Athens differ considerably from the one(s) in today's modern societies. For example, it is evident that Ancient Athens was totally a male city-state with all its headmen and Athenian women did not directly get involved in Athenian democracy (Jones 3-43). So, it is not difficult to guess that the Ancient Athenian laws about women were not made with the aim of giving them new rights, but made for the sake of protection and continuity of the oikos which was already under the Athenian male's control. Although the philosophers like Aristotle and Platon said that women in the Ancient Greek

society were functional as much as men, they did not refrained from declaring that politics was a very masculine issue (Aristotle 12, Platon 455).

In the early days in Ancient Athens, citizenship had been granted only to Athenian males. In the time of Pericles, women in Ancient Athens were granted Athenian citizenship on condition that they were derived from citizen parents and afterwards they had citizen husbands (Lacey *Ancient* 107). Even in that case, women's citizenship did not mean that they shared the same legal rights with men, but meant they were occupied with bearing legal male inheritors for the sake of Athenian oikos (Lacey *Ancient* 105). In Pericles' laws of citizenship, although the male Athenian citizens were not allowed to marry aliens (non-Athenian women), there were some exemptions in the issues of inheritance. For example, when a female Athenian citizen was not able to bear a legitimate son for her citizen husband, the husband was legally allowed to adopt another woman's son on condition that this woman would not be a hetaira, courteasan, or slave (Redfield *Homo Domesticus* 207).

The main goal in Periclean laws and exemptions was the protection and contiunity of Athenian oikos, hence the state. After the Sicilian defeat in the Peloponnesian War, being born of legally married parents was not a condition for newborn (male) children in Athens to be Athenian citizen. This originated from the decline in male population in Athens due to the war. Therefore, Athenian men's children not only from their legal wives but

also from their mistresses were granted Athenian citizenship from then on.

It is possible to think that the city-state of Athens cannot solely represent the whole Ancient Greek world, but it should be taken into account that the documents from outside Athens so far are few and scattered. For instance, some of them belong to Sparta and they are particularly interesting for us to see that Spartans, too, did not marry foreigners and each child derived from Spartan parents was granted a Spartan citizenship (Clauss 21-143). According to laws in the city of Gortyn, women in Gortyn had almost equal legal rights with men (Schuller 81), but their testimony was invalid in courts (Schuller 83). In addition to Greek women's abandoning status and fragmented possession in the law of citizenship, their possession was also fragmented and they were forced to abandon in the laws of divorce, inheritance and property.

As it is stated before, the cult of ancestors was the main and mere determiner and organizer in the establishment of the oikos in the very early times in Ancient Greece. A dead ancestor was a divine existence and would stay happy as long as they were served food and gifts by his living descendants. The descendants believed that if they had not served their ancestors those offerings, the ancestors would have become "fallen", "unhappy" devils. In other words, the Ancient Greeks thought that the happiness of a dead ancestor was not related to his conduct during his life, but directly related to the attitude of his living descendants towards him

(Coulanges 25). As the reliable continuity of the oikos was belived to be the "vital element" for the reliable continuity of the polis, the cult of ancestors also became a "vital element" that would let the oikos continue reliably. Therefore, each Ancient Greek man who was the leader in his oikos wanted to be certain of the reliable continuity of his religion, hence his oikos.

In accordance with those fears, staying unmarried was considered as a kind of "impiety" and unhappiness, and as the cult of ancestors was a kind religion of which the rituals were led by the (oldest) men in the oikos, the birth of a son as a descendant who would serve his dead ancestors was very important both for the men and the oikos.

Before the written laws, the cult of ancestors was adequate for preventing the citizens from staying unmarried. However, when the written laws came into existence, staying unmarried was legally labeled as an improper status deserving punishment. For instance Lykourgos' constitution in Sparta, plainly debarred unmarried Spartans from all the rights of citizenship (Plutarch 17). As it seen, marriage in Ancient Greece was taken into account as an obligation for Ancient Greeks, and it meant neither pleasure nor unity of two people coming together to share the happiness or difficulties of life. It literally meant "producing true descendants" who would safely continue the oikos. An expression that was a part of Ancient Greek marriage ceremony can be considered as an evidence for understanding the significance of producing "legitimate" children in

Ancient Greek tradition: “For the sake of legitimate children’s seed” (Blundell 131).

At this point, it is not difficult to understand that Greek men were legally allowed to divorce their “infertile” wives who were not able to fulfill the obligations of Ancient Greek oikos. For instance, in *Histories*, Herodotus mentions a Spartan king who divorced his infertile wife:

> At Sparta, Anaxandridas the son of Leo was no longer king: he had died, and his son Cleomenes had mounted the throne, not however by right of merit, but of birth. Anaxandridas took to wife his own sister's daughter, and was tenderly attached to her; but no children came from the marriage. Hereupon the Ephors called him before them, and said - "If thou hast no care for thine own self, nevertheless we cannot allow this, nor suffer the race of Eurysthenes to die out from among us. Come then, as thy present wife bears thee no children, put her away, and wed another. So wilt thou do what is well-pleasing to the Spartans." Anaxandridas however refused to do as they required, and said it was no good advice the Ephors gave, to bid him put away his wife when she had done no wrong, and take to himself another. He therefore declined to obey them. (206)

However, if the husband had been the infertile one, the wife would not have been allowed to divorce her husband. In such a case, the wife had to have an intercourse with one (actually the closest one) of the male relatives

of her husband as the oikos could only continue throughout a son from the father's side (Coulanges 54). The son from such an intercourse was treated as if the husband's own and was able to become the leader of the oikos when the husband died (Coulanges 55).

The birth of a daughter could not fulfill the aim of marriage. She was able to lead neither the religious rituals of the oikos, nor the oikos itself as she was considered as a "potential abandoner". So, the son was the savior of the oikos as Aeschylus also declared (Coulanges 57).

From this point of view, it is possible to say that in Ancient Greek society, there would have been no option for women to abandon their marriage unless they had fullfill the obligation of bearing legitimate sons for their husbands' oikos to which they also belonged. In other words, their possession of marriage was fragmented by the patriarchal Greek society forcing them to be divorced, or to have an "unwilling" sexual intercourse with one of their husband's relatives for the sake of proper continuation of the Ancient Greek oikos, so the state.

It is a well-known fact that in ancient times, there were many races that could not possess the right of property into their own cultures. There have been many discussions about the "collective ownership" seen in those races. For Teuton, Sami or Slav people, for example, it was possible to own the products, but not the territories. In other words, those people had the right of ownership on the products they produced, not the territories on which they

produced. However, from the ancient age on, the Greek legal system had entitled its citizens the right of property. Ancient Greeks had certain ownership on the territories on which they produced, but they were obliged to use their products in a collective way. There were three institutions established through certain rules in Ancient Greece: the religion, the oikos, and the right of property. Moreover, it is obviously seen that there was a stong interaction among these institutions. For instance, it is impossible to talk about the cult of ancestors (private religion of each oikos) without taking its sanctions on the right of property into consideration, as each oikos had its own house and ancestors who lived and died at that house. Once a dead ancestor was buried under the territory on which his oikos lived, his grave became an "altar" for his living descendants and this place of altar would have had to be permanent unless there had been a state of war or natural disaster. As long as the oikos subsisted, the altar would place near the oikos. In other words, the house to which the oikos belonged took the possession of the territory. So, if the property ownership had been abolished, the house would have stayed uncontrolled, the oikoi would have mixed with each other and the dead ancestors would have been abandoned which meant an inevitable "curse" for the society. From this point of view, it is not difficult to imagine that the women, as the "potential abandoners" of their fathers' oikos, were deprived of the right of property.

In his orations, Demosthenes often said that the daughter(s) had no right of inheritance or property. Moreover, when the regulations on the law of

property and inheritance in Ancient Greek world were taken into consideration, it is obvious that the Greeks intented to find some “insidious” ways in order to reconcile the religion-based restrictions over the women’s right of property and inheritance with the women’s natural sense of demand for becoming inheritors of their fathers’ properties.

For instance, in the archaic times of Ancient Greece when the cult of ancestors was the main determiner in all social and legal issues in the society, Athenian law of inheritance (actually the cult of inheritance at that time) forced the daughters to marry the legal inheritors of their fathers’ property. In other words, if the dead father had left a daughter and a son as inheritors behind him, the daughter would have married her brother to be a part of her father’s inheritance. However, it should be stated that the cult did not allow the daughter to get married to any relative from the mother’s side as the legal inheritor should have been a male in blood lineage from the father’s side. If the dead father had left only one daughter as inheritor behind him, his closest male relative would have become the legal inheritor automatically. If the daughter had been married to a man outside her father’s oikos, and wanted to be a part of her father’s inheritance at any rate, she would have to get a divorce (of course with her husband’s consent) and marry her father’s closest relative who would become the legal inheritor of her father’s property. There was another insidious way to reconcile the religious system with the woman’s right of property and inheritance: if a father had only a daughter, and wanted to extend his ancestors at any rate,

he could have done this through his daughter. In such a case, he married his daughter off to a man with only one condition: the son given birth from this marriage would be kept by the bride's father and this son would have been treated as if he had been the bride's father's own son, and he would keep on worshipping his maternal grandfather's ancestors. So, when the bride's father died, he would automatically become the legal inheritor of his inheritance even if the son's biological father was alive. In such a case, the son's mother (the dead father's daughter) would not be a part of her father's inheritance.

Although it is seen that there were several steps taken to make Ancient Greek women inheritors of their fathers' properties, it is not difficult to see that these steps were actually taken for the sake of reliable continuity of the oikos again, not for the sake of women's rights. In other words, Ancient Greek women were considered as the "unsuitable" members of the oikos in order to possess their fathers' inheritance, so their possession of their fathers' inheritance was fragmented by the cult or the law by forcing them to make one of these difficult choices: "marry your brother", "marry your closest relative from your father's side", or "give your own child to your father".

In addition to the Ancient Greek double standards in the laws of citizenship, divorce, property and inheritence, the laws about adultery also had double standards in being tough on women, but mild on men as adultery

was regarded as a kind of female sin.

In Draco's legislation, women's status belonging was intentionally emphasized and any married or unmarried kyrios was legally allowed to kill another man who forced his wife, mother, sister or daughter (any woman under his legal protection) for adultery. As those who were under the protection of any kyrios were regarded as the belonging of an oikos, they were also under the protection of law, so went unpunished (Lacey 118). By doing so, Draco actually set several legal definitions that would remain in force for centuries and he surrounded oikos with sharper boundaries and left free women (the ones who did not belong to any oikos) no place in law to demand justice even if they were raped. So, free women were forced to abandon the protection of law.

The legislation of Draco was largely replaced by that of Solon a generation later (594 BC). Solon introduced milder laws about adultery, such as permitting the husband to abuse punish seducer with impunity or accepting financial compensation, in order to provide alternatives for the redemption of the injured man's honor without the need to resort to murder (Lacey 119). In the same way, and in order to avert abuses of Draco's laws of adultery, he introduced a law which stated that when a man was caught with a woman practicing some form of prostitution, either organized or freelance, he would not be accused of adultery (Lacey 119-120). It is possible to say that like Draco, he also left free women alone in the public

sphere. In other words, Solon was the protector of the citizen, the oikos and the polis; not of women, which means that he also fragmented women's possession of legal protection in each social status to which they belonged.

2.4. Social Classification and Labor

In Ancient Greece, women took their social and legal status from their fathers, husbands or other social guardians in accordance with their relations to those men in the society. So, there were three social classes applied to Ancient Greek women: female citizens, prostitutes and slaves. On the other hand, there was another class of women who had particular priviliges that no other Greek women had in the society. Those women were priestesses.

In Ancient Greece (especially in Athens), marriage was a significant and radical change in Ancient Greek women's social and legal status both because of their being regarded as the producers of potential male citizens in the society and the immunity given to them under the holy, protective roof of oikos. In other words, married women who were the wives of Athenian citizens also granted Athenian citizenship thanks to their husbands, so possessed the right of legal protection. However, this possession was a fragmented one as it did not let them get rid of their abandoning status inside the oikos as it has already been stated in the previous chapter. In other words, this was a fragmented possession due to the fact that while they were legally protected outside the oikos, they were not protected inside it (issues of property, inheritance, divorce, adultery, etc. under the roof of oikos).

It is also known that neither (citizen) wives nor other women in the society allowed to be a part of Ancient Greek public life and they were confined to a harem-like life. Even in their houses, they were forced to spend their times in "gynaeceum" (seperate area for women in Ancient Greek houses) that was usually placed upstairs and had no connection with the outside World (Brödner 301-302).

Female citizens living in gynaeceums were occupied with bearing and nursing children, daily domestic works, spinning thread, weaving, etc. When their husband left home during wartime, the wives would become Paterfamilias and take the whole control of the oikos into their hands (Lacey 153). Of course, even such a possession did not mean a totally independent life for them. For example, their going out by themselves was not welcomed even when they became the Paterfamilias of their oikos in the absence of their husbands and they were expected to be accompanied by a "gynaikonomos" in their oikos who were the slaves exercising supervisory functions on female citizens' public conducts (Friedell 226).

When Aristotle's explanations about ideal wifehood are taken into consideration, it is possible to say that all these ideals (actually restrictions) imposed on the female citizen turned them into "citizen slaves" in some way:

> An [ideal wife should be the mistress of her home, having under her care all that within it, according to the rules we have laid down. She

> should allow none to enter without her husband's knowledge, dreading above all things the gossip of gadding women, which tends to poison the soul. She alone should have knowledge of what happens within. She must exercise control of the money spent on such festivities as her husband has approved […] keeping, moreover, within the limit set by law upon expenditure, dress, and ornament […] and remembering that beauty depends not on costliness of raiment. Nor does abundance of gold so conduce to the praise of a woman as self-control in all that she does. […] But in all other matters, let it be her aim to obey her husband; giving no heed to public affairs, nor having any part in arranging the marriages of her children. Rather, when the time shall come to give or receive in marriage sons or daughters, let her then hearken to her husband in all respects, and agreeing with him obey his wishes. It is fitting that a woman of a well-ordered life should consider that her husband's wishes are as laws appointed for her by divine will, along with the marriage state and the fortune she shares. If she endures them with patience and gentleness, she will rule her home with ease; otherwise, not so easily. (142)

On the other hand, wives of poorer classes were freer than wives of wealthy class. Epigraphs from 4-6 centuries BC show that as poor families could not afford slaves, poor wives had to work in the fields or on stalls in the marketplace alongside men to contribute to their family budget which

means that bearing and nursing children and daily domestic works were not their only interest (Arias 156-163).

At this point, it is ironically possible to say that female citizen were not able to possess wealth and freedom simultaneously. They had to be poor enough 60ort he sake of wandering around freely, doing other works but for domestic ones or they had to be "domestic captives" 60ort he sake of wealth.

As Athenaeus –a Greek architect and sculptor– also said: "Now we have courtesans 60ort he sake of pleasure, but concubines 60ort he sake of daily cohabitation and wives 60ort he purpose of having children legitimately, and of having a faithful guardian of all our household affairs" (13: 916), female citizens, unquestionably, were not the only class of women on the Ancient Greek stage.

Among those women, "hetairai" were the highestly educated ones (courteasans) who did not function simply as courtesans, but functioned as social companions to Ancient Greek men in the public space. Those women were not citizens of Athens. From the earliest times on, Athenians adopted a very pragmatic approach to prostitution. For example, the great lawmaker Solon legalized brothels. In Ancient Greece, prostitution had levels and hetairai were unquestionably in the first and highest rank and Aspasia –a hetaira from Miletus who had an affair with Pericles– was probably the most famous one among all hetairai:

> It is agreed that she was Milesian by birth, daughter of Axiochus … some say that Aspasia was courted by Pericles for her astute grasp of politics. For Socrates occasionally visited her with his disciples, and his intimate friends brought their wives to listen to her, though she had charge of a business that was anything but seemly or even respectable, since she supported and trained adolescent courtesans. […] And Plato's Menexenus, even if its opening sectiom was written in jest, contains relevant information, at least insofar as it mentions that Aspasia associated with many of the Athenians as a teacher of rhetoric. (Plutarch 99)

Hetairai were more than simple prostitutes. Above all, they were more educated than all the other women in society including female citizens:

> Of my own wit, most likely nothing, but yesterday I heard Aspasia composing a funeral oration about these very dead. For she had been told, as you were saying, that the Athenians were going to choose a speaker, and she repeated to me the sort of speech which he should deliver –partly improvising and partly from previous thought, putting together fragments of the funeral oration which Pericles spoke but which, as I believe, she composed. (Bell 34)

Next, they were freer than any other women in the society as they were placed in the public space along with their patrons. This was so remarkable that they were always envied by socially restricted, unfree women of wife

class. However, hetairai also shared a common ground with the other women in the society: fragmented possession.

Despite their education and independence, hetairai were not regarded as "true citizens". So, all their legal possessions they would probably have were fragmented. As prostitutes, they had to abandon being protected by law as they would never be granted citizenship. As the institution of marriage was regulated by constitutions and getting married to non-citizens was not acceptable in any Ancient Greek polis –of course, especially in Athens – the status of hetairai can be taken into account as another kind of vicious circle for this class of women: they were never allowed to get married and be protected economically under the roof

of holy oikos; so, they had to keep on working as prostitutes to survive economically. In other words, they were chained by the patriarchal society and its institutions in such a way that there was no exit for them.

There was another class of women who were forced to abandon throughout their lives, so their possession was also fragmented: the slaves.

In Ancient Greece, there were three types of slavery: debt-dependent slaves, state serfs and private-property slaves. Debt-dependent slavery meant a debtor's giving his own or a third person's (i.e. his children's) body as the pledge of his debt. State serfdom meant a serf working under the heel of a patron in his estate, but also a property of state who cannot be sold without the approval of state. Although state serfs' status partly

corresponded to private-property slaves' in terms of being treated as properties, their living conditions distinguished them from private-property slaves. For example; as state serfs were dependent on the land where they worked rather than on the patrons they worked for, their patrons did not have a mere and total monopoly on serfs' destiny. Private-property slaves, on the other hand, were their patrons' personal possessions, so they could be bought and sold by their patrons' own will.

> Let us first speak of master and slave, looking to the needs of practical life and also seeking to attain some better theory of their relation than exists at present. […] Property is a part of the household, and the art of acquiring property is a part of the art of managing the household; for no man can live well, or indeed live at all, unless he be provided with necessaries. And so, in the arrangement of the family, a slave is a living possession, and property a number of such instruments; and the slave is himself an instrument which takes precedence of all other instruments. […] The master is only the master of the slave; he does not belong to him, whereas the slave is not only the slave of his master, but wholly belongs to him. (Aristo 1: 30-31)

In other words, this type of slavery meant a continuous and violent domination by the people alienating and dishonouring the slaves. It was continuous as those slaves had no possible deal they could made with their patrons in return for their emancipation. It was violent as their patrons were

able to torture them physically. It was dominating as those slaves had to do whatever their patrons ordered. It was dishonourable as they were continuously and intentionally humiliated by their patrons. It was alienating as they had no birthrights, as they did not belong to the society they lived in and as they were treated as aliens with no social identity:

> Hence we see what is the nature and office of a slave; he who is by nature not his own but another's man, is by nature a slave; and he may be said to be another's man who, being a human being, is also a possession. And a possession may be defined as an instrument of action, separable from the possessor. But is there any one thus intended by nature to be a slave, and for whom such a condition is expedient and right, or rather is not all slavery a violation of nature? There is no difficulty in answering this question, on grounds both of reason and of fact. For that some should rule and others be ruled is a thing not only necessary, but expedient; from the hour of their birth, some are marked out for subjection, others for rule. (Aristotle 31)

As Nick Patterson also says in his essay “Slavery and Social Death”, such an experience that may be defined as “social death” is a hardly imaginable and traumatic state (Fisher 3-6).

While male slaves were assigned to agricultural and industrial work, female slaves (no matter which type of slaves they were) were assigned a variety of domestic duties which included shopping, fetching water,

cooking, serving food, cleaning, child-care, and wool-working. In wealthy households, some of the female servants had more specialized roles to fulfill, such as housekeeper, cook or nurse. They would also serve their patrons as prostitutes without an extra charge unlike the other prostitutes. From this point of view, it is possible to say that slave women, who were given a "shelter" under which they somehow tried to survive, were turned into a kind of property of the oikos -especially the male master of the oikos- ; so, they were protected in the public space by the "holy" roof of the oikos; however, it should be kept in mind that those women were not legal beings: they did not possess anything, could not get married, or testify in courts; they were "naturally inferior" properties:

> Again, the male is by nature superior, and the female inferior; and the one rules, and the other is ruled; this principle, of necessity, extends to all mankind. Where then there is such a difference as that between soul and body, or between men and animals (as in the case of those whose business is to use their body, and who can do nothing better), the lower sort are by nature slaves, and it is better for them as for all inferiors that they should be under the rule of a master. (Aristo 1: 33-34)

Another class of women in Ancient Greece was the class of priestesses. These women of the Ancient Greek (public) religion had some particular priviliges that any other Greek women did not in the society. In return for their religious service; they were often paid money, given the right of

owning property; but most importantly, they were respected for their contributions to the society regardless of their womanhood.

Priestesshood was the only public office that was allowed to be held by the Ancient Greek women (Blundell, *Sacred* 1). Priestesses performed religious rituals "crucial to the definition and defense of each polis' territorial frontiers" (Blundell 4). Another interesting point about priestesshood in Ancient Greece was its impossiblity to be reached by the poor women in the society regardless of their legal citizenship. For example, in Athens, Athena Polias was the most famous and prestigious group of priestesses which was avaliable for only the elite women who had hereditary ties to the original royal oikoi in Athens. The mother superior of those priestesses presided over many religious festivals including the most important one called "The Great Panathenaea". At this point, it is possible to say that the public power given to those women by the religious office of priestesshood was actually the public power of their patriarchal, noble Athenian oikoi and women who did not come from noble Athenian oikoi had to abandon the opportunity of being a priestess which means the opportunity of having power in the male public space.

On the other hand, this one and only public space held by women also reaffirmed some patriarchal ideals to which women had to fit: priestesses were expected to have a celibate life (Blundell 6) like all unmarried women in the society who belonged to an oikos were expected to protect their

virginity. In other words, the women who were noble enough to reach this position of priestesshood had to abandon any kind of sexual life which meant they had to abandon the total possession of a life free from all the ideals and expectations which we can call patriarchal burdens on women's shoulders.

Chapter 3: Spartan Women

Scholars place Spartan women in a different and unique place in terms of their social status. Of course, they were not as free as contemporary women, but their status should be investigated in the context of the conditions of ancient times.

Spartan women's main role in the society was as wives and mothers. Their fathers chose their husbands for them, and their most respectable achivementwas producing healthy sons. They did not have the right to vote and they could not be elected to public office. Nevertheless, they enjoyed the status and rights that were exceptional in Ancient Greece and became the "exemptions" of the Ancient Greek world.

The greater freedom and status of Spartan women began at birth. The laws of Sparta required female newborns and children (who were healthy enough and had no disability to produce healthy generations) to be given the same care as male ones -in contrast to other Greek cities like Athens, where females were more likely to be rejected and killed at birth. Furthermore, although for a shorter period of time than Spartan boys, Spartan girls, unlike their equals from the other city-states, were allowed to attend the Spartan public school since women's physical and mental health was considered important for the sake of producing healthy generations (Clauss 103). Throughout Spartan women's lifetime, it is understood that they would engage in sexual practices much like their male counterparts. Even Aristotle

blamed the fall of Sparta on their women and found the sexual freedom of Spartan women dishonorable and claimed that Sparta would forever be plagued with bad luck as long as women held power: “Again, the license of the Lacedaemonian women defeats the intention of the Spartan constitution, and is adverse to the happiness of the state” (28). However, the reason behind Spartan women’s sexual freedom was understandable and in harmony with Spartan ideals: Spartan women were the products of state, so they belonged to everyone in the society for the sake of the state. In other words, the state was regarded as “sacred” in Sparta, so Spartan people led their lives for the sake of the survival and continuation of their state which means Spartan people’s existence was devoted to the state and this devotion began at birth. Children were examined as soon as they were born and the weak or disabled ones were killed by being thrown down from the cliffs on Mount Taygetus (Freeman 295). When the other ones who were healthy enough to be allowed to live were seven years old, they were put through the Spartan national education which was mainly based on military service. Those children were trained hard by the continuous military exercises, so they were prevented from evolving worldy senses and they were accustomed to the tough (military) life of Sparta (Plutarch 111-112). For all these reasons, it is not difficult to estimate that Spartan marriages (like Athenian ones) were also arranged for producing healthy children who would become Spartan soldiers. The state needed them to survive, so the act of producing healthy children had no moral restrictions in Sparta. Unlike

Athens, illegal affairs were normally, even kindly, received for the sake of the state. Sexual purity, decency, or faithfulness were not ideally approved qualifications. So, the old husbands' letting their young wives have sexual intercourse with other young, healthy men to produce healthy children was a socially accepted case (Clauss 143).

In addition to these "priviliges", Spartan women, unlike their equals from other city-states in Ancient Greece, were also known for having greater legal standing as property owners. In his *Politics,* Aristotle declares that twenty-five percent of Spartan lands belongs to Spartan women (47). Furthermore; the example of the King Agis I, a king of Sparta reigned 30 years (930 BC - 900 BC) in Sparta, also shows us that Spartan women must have been the right of property as the king asked for money from his mother and sister in order to achieve his social reforms (Plutarch 6: 313).

Typical domestic, "feminene" chores, women in other Greek city-states were expected to do, were considered distasteful for Spartan women as they were well educated and brought up to become proper mothers for the state, manage "kleroi" (state-owned property) and participate in religious festivals. Anton Powell reflects on the uniqueness of Spartan women when he says:

> We have already encountered three facts which may have caused Spartan women to be more assertive outside the home than those of other cities; their financial position, their outdoor training and the

absence abroad of many men in the period of Sparta's Empire.

(Figueira 148)

As it is seen, it is possible to say that Spartan women were more dominant in their society in contrast to their equals from other Greek cities: they were given a good education both in arts and athletics, they were continuously encouraged to develop their intellect, they owned more than a third of the land, they married at a later age than their sisters in other cities and they were free to take charge of almost everything outside the army as their husbands spent most of their time with other men in the military barracks. However, it should also be stated that the overt power of men in other Greek cities was replaced in Sparta by the unspoken but palpable control of the state.

Conclusion

It is a well-known fact that the oldest people (before Hellenes) who lived in the geographic area called Greece today were matriarchal and worshippers of a Mother Goddess as their primary (public) deity. When Hellenes came to the area, they brought along their patriarchal culture and Sky God as their public deity. So, Hellenes blended with the people who already lived there and produced a society where their own language and religion predominated. While the resulting language was an Indo-European one with some traces of the native language, the resulting religion was an unbalanced combination in which the masculine aspects of the new gained dominance over the feminine ones of the old (Coulanges 20).

Therefore, Ancient Greek society that turned into a patriarchal one created stereotypes for its women based on divine and heroic orders. While the divine order subjected female duties to their male counterparts, the heroic order depicted some characters (like Penelope) in order to code the ideal roles for Greek women. Through women in literature like Clytemnestra and Medea, the moral fault and weakness of women, in other words, what the Ancient Greek women should not be(come) was demonstrated. In accordance with the sources from Ancient Greek world, modern-day scholars studying gender issues in Ancient Greece have described Greek women's social state as "controlled", "confined", "surrounded" and "isolated". However, no one has talked about women's

"fragmented possession" although it was prominent and noticeable enough to summarize –if necessary– Greek women's social state.

We can define "fragmented possession" as a social state in which women are continuously forced to abandon something in order to possess something else for the sake of survival in the society they belong. Although this thesis is confined to the boundaries of Ancient Greek society, fragmented possesion was not specific to Ancient Greek women. It is suprising to see that contemporary women still plagued by "fragmented possession". It may even be possible for us to place it at the center of present day feminist struggle; especially when we think that women still struggle for a world in which their possession is respected and whole not fragmented. In other words, "fragmented possession" is such a comprehensive state that it can still describe the most basic problems of choice women –just like their ancient sisters– face in religion, marriage, family, law, social classification and labor.

For instance, in many modern religious belief systems –like Islam and Christianity– if a man wants to marry a woman who does not belong to his own religion, the woman is expected to abandon her own faith and join the religion of her husband-to be:

> "And do not marry polytheistic women until they believe. And a believing slave woman is better than a polytheist" (Quran 2: 221).

> "Take care not to make a covenent with the inhabitants of the land to

which you are going, or it will become a snare among you" (Holy Bible, Exodus 34: 12-16).

As Ancient Greek women were subjected to "fragmented possession" throughout their marriage, some modern marriage traditions and ceremonies also symbolize women's "fragmented possession". Arranged marriage, dowry, or the sentences like "Allah'ın emri, peygamberin kavli ile kızınızı oğlumuza istiyoruz" can be considered as the first signals of future "fragmented possession" that women are going to experience in their marriage. In a similar way, Christian wedding ceremony has the bride being handed over by her father to her husband-to be and this is also a reminder of an Ancient Greek father's role during the ekdosis. This transition, both in Ancient Greek and modern societies can be regarded as a symbol of women's act of abandoning their home, their oikos; in other words, a symbol of their "fragmented" possession.

Furthermore, contemporary women's on-going struggle for integrating their career, marriage, family and social life also reminds us of Ancient Greek women's confinement within the boundaries of their oikoi by being isolated from the Greek public sphere as soon as they married.

Although it has not been talked about, "fragmented possession" was probably the most deeply experienced social state of Ancient Greek femininity. In other words, the statement "modern societies owe much to Ancient Greece for today's concept of democracy" holds true once again,

when we look at women's issues both in the ancient and modern worlds through the lense of women's "fragmented possession".

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