

# "The Only Woman in All Greece": Kyniska, Agesilaus, Alcibiades and Olympia

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KYNISKA OF SPARTA WAS THE FIRST WOMAN to win an Olympic victory, but, because women were banned during the festival, she was not allowed to be present at the games in which she was proclaimed the winner of the four-horse chariot race in 396 and again in 392 B.C.<sup>1</sup> Kyniska's victory epigram is known from an inscribed marble base at Olympia, and it also exists in full in the *Palatine Anthology*:

*Spartas men basilees emoi pateres kai adelphoi;  
harmasi d' okupodon hippon nikosa Kuniska  
eikona tand' estesa; monan de me phami gunaikon  
Hellados ek pasas tonde labein stephanon.*

Kings of Sparta were my fathers and brothers,  
and I, Cynisca, winning the race with my chariot  
of swift-footed horses, erected this statue. I assert  
that I am the only woman in all Greece who won  
this crown.<sup>2</sup>

This sounds proud and assertive, and Pausanias says Kyniska was ambitious to win at Olympia, but Xenophon and Plutarch say that her brother, King Agesilaus, pressured her to compete. Hence a long-standing problem and debate. Kyniska or Agesilaus? Was the victory engendered by the princess or engineered by the king? Ambitious sister or manipulative brother? Proud pioneer or political pawn?

Recent scholarship has viewed Kyniska from the perspective of women's history, sport history, or Spartan history with its early fourth-century "crisis."<sup>3</sup> Some scholars relate Kyniska's chariot racing to internal factors in Sparta, to concentrations of property leading to conspicuous status-seeking displays, and to Agesilaus' concern about his Spartan rivals.<sup>4</sup> Some grant Kyniska a prominent place in timelines of women's sport,<sup>5</sup> but Manfred Lämmer said her equestrian success "had hardly any sporting value."<sup>6</sup> Mark Golden, stressing the role of sport in a "discourse of difference," detects "traces of the play of gender" in Agesilaus' possible influence. He sees Kyniska's win, like the races at the Heraia, not as progress or liberation but as reinforcing females' inferior status.<sup>7</sup> Tom Scanlon feels that Agesilaus used a female victory to challenge the significance of male chariot victories. He admits that Kyniska and other female equestrian victors "won some political capital for the fatherland, but also the prospect of some visibility as women attracted them to the competition, as Cynisca's proud epigram attests."<sup>8</sup> In her 2002 book, *Spartan Women*, Sarah Pomeroy calls Kyniska "the first female star in Greek athletics." She is convinced that Kyniska was "an expert in equestrian matters" with a "single-minded devotion to racing"—an ambitious and knowledgeable horse-breeder "champing at the bit" to compete at Olympia.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, Kyniska's Olympic career was exceptional, a notable aberration, but was she truly a wealthy, competitive woman acting on her own? Should our interest in women's history lead us to see Kyniska as a champion of women's rights in sport?

This paper reexamines Kyniska, the ancient evidence (i.e., the epigram, Xenophon, Plutarch, Pausanias), and the ancient context from the traditional but not irrelevant perspectives of political and military history. It sets Kyniska's Olympic participation against traditions of equestrian competition by elite males from Sparta and rival states, including Alcibiades. It relates her competition not just to internal Spartan developments but also to Sparta's foreign relations with Elis and Athens (e.g., the exclusion of Sparta and the punishment of Lichas in 420, the war between Sparta and Elis c.400). An assessment of Kyniska's activities in light of the careers of her brothers, Kings Agis and Agesilaus, suggests more than athletic motivations behind her competition.

## Who was Kyniska?

For a royal Spartan Olympic victor, very little is known about Kyniska beyond her wins and dedications at Olympia. She was the daughter of the Eurypontid king, Archidamus II, and probably half-sister to King Agis II (427-400) and full sister to King Agesilaus (400-360).<sup>10</sup> Her unobscure name, "puppy" or "small hound," came from her grandfather, probably a reference to elite hunting pastimes at Sparta.<sup>11</sup> She may have had sporting experience in Sparta's female physical education system,<sup>12</sup> and she perhaps drove a (two-horse) chariot in the Hyakinthia as a girl,<sup>13</sup> but those are speculations. A dedication to Helen bore her name,<sup>14</sup> and Pausanias saw a hero shrine for her; but we should be wary of enthusiastic extrapolations from the limited details.<sup>15</sup> We are not certain when she was born or when she died. Her father died in 427 and her brother Agesilaus was approximately forty-eight years old in 396, so Kyniska was at least 40-50 in 396—no longer a young princess.<sup>16</sup> We do not know if she was a wife or mother, as would have been expected.<sup>17</sup> Barren, bored and eager for alternate breeding success? More speculation and uncharitable.<sup>18</sup>

If ambitious, how could Kyniska have managed to compete? In ancient sources and modern works Spartan women are noted (or notorious) for their strength of character, independence, influence, and their accumulation of property and resources.<sup>19</sup> Kyniska probably inherited part of the estate of King Archidamus in 427,<sup>20</sup> and the family of Lysander, lover of Agesilaus, had (*xenia*) ties in Cyrene, a possible source of good chariot horse stock.<sup>21</sup> It is conceivable then that Kyniska practiced agonistic hippo trophy. Also, the indirect route for absentee and even state or corporate equestrian victors had always been there, for owners did not have to be present at Olympia to be declared victors.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, would even a royal heiress have acted outside Sparta without consultation or approval by male relatives? Let's review the evidence.

## Evidence

Yes, impressive monuments commemorated Kyniska's victories, and the epigram on her base at Olympia sounds proud.<sup>23</sup> The first words, however, are "Sparta," "kings," "fathers," and "brothers" with Kyniska there in the first line only as "my" (*emoi*). Pomeroy perceives Kyniska's "voice" in the epigram, and the last sentence, with "I" and "only," represents Kyniska as speaking.<sup>24</sup> However, the epigram—the seemingly "rock-solid" evidence, written in stone as it were—was probably composed by a male. It is classified as anonymous in the *Greek Anthology*, and Pausanias (3.8.2) refers to the epigram as written "by some man or other."<sup>25</sup> At best, the epigram was commissioned with instructions by Kyniska (or by her brother). Also, the poem's features are formulaic.<sup>26</sup> As David Young has shown, similar claims to be the "first" or the "one" or "only" person to do something are found in inscriptions claiming "record-setting" victories by many athletes. As the "only woman in all Greece" to win at Olympia, Kyniska set what Young calls a "gender record,"<sup>27</sup> but was that what motivated her competition?

The earliest prose source is Xenophon, Agesilaus' long-time friend.<sup>28</sup> He returned to Greece with Agesilaus in 394, was given an estate at Skillos, and was a Spartan *proxenos* at Olympia.<sup>29</sup> Xenophon perhaps knew Kyniska, but he credits Agesilaus with initiating his sister's pursuit of Olympic victory. He states that Agesilaus appropriately kept hounds and war-horses (*hippous polemisterious*):

[B]ut he persuaded his sister Cynisca to breed chariot horses, and showed by her victory that such a stud marks the owner as a person of wealth, but not necessarily of [manly] merit (*Kyniskan de adelphen ousan peisai harmatotrophein kai epideixai nikoses autes, hoti to thremma touto ouk andragathias, alla ploutou epideigma esti*).<sup>30</sup>

Xenophon goes on to say that Agesilaus felt victory at Olympia meant little; it was better to be a good king. Xenophon is probably harmonizing this incident with his characterization of Agesilaus as virtuous, modest, and economically conservative—an ideal "Spartan."<sup>31</sup> Agesilaus' aims may have been partly economic and domestic, but, as suggested below, he perhaps also had Elis and Alcibiades in mind.

About five centuries later, A.D. c.100, Plutarch similarly praises the modesty of Agesilaus' lifestyle and house (including modest wooden figures carried by his daughter

in a festival procession), and he adds:

*Ou men alla horon enious ton politon apo hippotrophias dokountas einai tinas kai mega phronountas, epeise ten adelphen Kuniskan harma katheisan Olumpiasin agonisasthai, boulomenos endeixasthai tois Hellesin os oudemias estin aretes, alla ploutou kai dapanes he nike.*

However, on seeing that some of the citizens esteemed themselves highly and were greatly lifted up because they bred racing horses, he persuaded his sister Cynisca to enter a chariot in the contests at Olympia, wishing to show the Greeks that the victory there was not a mark of any great excellence but simply of wealth and lavish outlay.<sup>32</sup>

Clearly using Xenophon (note the same verbs: *peitho*, persuade, and *(epi)(en)deiknumi*, show), Plutarch, here and in one of the *Spartan Sayings*, suggests that, while inspired by domestic trends, Agesilaus wanted to send a message "to the Greeks"—not just to the Spartans.<sup>33</sup>

We should resist the temptation to go too directly to the latest and least credible of our sources on Kyniska—Pausanias,<sup>34</sup> who omits Agesilaus' role and credits Kyniska with ambition and initiative:<sup>35</sup>

Archidamus also had a daughter, whose name was Cynisca; she was exceedingly ambitious to succeed at the Olympic games and was the first woman to breed horses and the first to win an Olympic victory (*philotimotata de es ton agona esche ton Olumpikon kai prote te hippotrophese gunaikon kai niken aneileto Olumpiken prote*).<sup>36</sup>

Around A.D. 150-170 Pausanias saw Kyniska's victory monuments and inscriptions (though he did not copy them) and those of other Spartans,<sup>37</sup> but he lived in a sporting world quite different from that of Classical Greece. He recounted inflated traditions from the perspective of an age familiar with greater opportunities for female sport and with wealthy, assertive Hellenistic queens and Roman empresses.<sup>38</sup>

The sources for Kyniska, then, grew with time, and her motives were credited to her *post eventum* by male authors. Plutarch followed Xenophon's near contemporary comments, but Pausanias, as in Hellenistic biography, elaborated upon the epigram's few words. A woman pressured by her brother to win at Olympia became more and more independent, ambitious, and admirable.

## Context: Politics and Chariots

Let's turn to the historical context (see chronology below). Kyniska's competition came at the end of decades of increasing strife between Sparta on the one hand and Elis and Athens on the other through the fifth century. After a long early history of cooperation and alliance with Sparta in both sport and politics,<sup>39</sup> Elis became synoikised as a *polis* (c.470) with a democratic constitution, and it grew closer to Athens by the mid fifth century.<sup>40</sup>

Famous for horse breeding from early times, Elis may have resented Sparta's growing enthusiasm for equestrian competition in the fifth century.<sup>41</sup> The list of known Spartan Olympic *tethrippon* victories does suggest a dramatic increase in horse raising and chariot racing from about 448 on. Pausanias (6.2.1) remarks that Spartans became the most ambitious (*philotimotata*) breeders of horses among the Greeks "after the Persian invasion,"<sup>42</sup> and

it is possible that Persian horses acquired from the Battle of Plataea (Herodotus 9.81) contributed to this development. Stephen Hodkinson relates the development to other signs of internal shifts in demography, concentrations of land ownership, and the pursuit of status. Certainly there was a remarkable string of victories, as Spartans won the *tethrippon* in every Olympiad but one (7 of 8) from 448 to 420.<sup>43</sup> However, in the same period Sparta grew increasingly concerned about the ambitions and friendship of Athens and Elis, both of which had strong equestrian traditions and reputations. Conspicuous display and victories at Olympia and influence over—and even exploitation of—the sanctuary were parapolitical devices in interstate relations.<sup>44</sup> Perhaps internal status rivalry and external state rivalries were mutually reinforcing.

Kyniska's older brother, Agis was king of Sparta (427-400) as Spartan-Elean tensions mounted (421-400) and led to open conflict and warfare. Sparta felt deserted when Elis (over a conflict over Lepreon) joined Athens (and Argos and Mantinea) in an anti-Spartan alliance in 420, terms of which were to be inscribed on a pillar at Olympia.<sup>45</sup> As Thucydides (5.49-50) recounts, Elis soon fined and then banned Sparta from sacrificing or competing at Olympia in 420 (allegedly for entering Elean territory during the sacred truce). As a recent study has commented: "The prestige of Olympian Zeus was great, but Elis was exploiting it shabbily."<sup>46</sup>

It is uncertain how long Sparta was banned from Olympia, perhaps until 400.<sup>47</sup> Sparta was upset by the ban, and her string of chariot victories was jeopardized. Not to be deterred, Lichas, a Spartan from a noble hippotrophic family with personal and political ties to Argos, entered his chariot in 420, misrepresenting it as a Theban or Boeotian entry.<sup>48</sup> When the team won, Lichas crowned the charioteer with a ribbon in his enthusiasm, revealing his improper presence. He was flogged, even though he was "an old man."<sup>49</sup> Simon Hornblower recently characterized this situation as "one of the most tense and dramatic moments in the history of the Olympic games."<sup>50</sup> Fearing violence from Sparta, Elis posted guards for the games, with support also arriving from Athens, Argos and Mantinea, but Sparta did not attack during the games. Adding further insult, Elis refused to permit Agis to sacrifice and pray for victory in war at Olympia a few years later (c.414). As Xenophon suggests, Sparta had more than one reason to want revenge.<sup>51</sup>

Sources agree that Sparta was angry about the ban and the incident with Lichas and about the later affront to Agis. Technically the Peace of Nicias (421-413) was upheld, but, whether the ban was continuous or not, a Cold War environment ensued between Sparta and Elis and Athens. Both during the awkward peace and after the Peloponnesian War, Olympia was a stage for interstate rivalry. Lichas won via Thebes in 420, but Alcibiades won dramatically in 416, and Sparta did not win again until 396.

## Alcibiades

To contextualize Kyniska, we also need to turn to Athens and the career of Alcibiades, who in the 420s married into the rich, hippotrophic family of Callias II. His wife's suggestive name was Hipparete—"equestrian excellence"—and his father-in-law was Hipponikos III.<sup>52</sup> A hawkish provocateur, Alcibiades undermined the Peace of Nicias<sup>53</sup> by pushing both Athens' alliance with Elis, Argos and Mantinea in 420 and Athens' covert involvement in the Battle of Mantinea against Sparta in 418. While Sparta was banned (or unsus-

cessful), Alcibiades' participation in the Olympics of 416 was unprecedented in scale and tone. In a splashy display, he entered more chariots and won more placements than ever before, and he promoted his fame beyond any Pindaric or Spartan sense of modesty (*aidos*). Rather than a statue at Olympia, his self-advertisement (and self-adulation) included a commissioned victory ode by Euripides applauding his record, "which no other Greek has had," a record won "without labor":

I am amazed at you, son of Cleinias. Victory is a beautiful thing but the most beautiful thing, which no other of the Hellenes (*medeis allos Hellanon*) has had, you have had, to be first and second and third in the chariot race and to go without labour (*aponeti*), crowned with the laurel of Zeus, to make the herald cry your name aloud.<sup>54</sup>

Advocating the Sicilian Expedition, in 415 Alcibiades made a self-serving appeal to his hippotrophic fame won through conspicuous expensive public display (*megaloprepeia*).<sup>55</sup> He subsequently deserted the expedition and headed to Sparta for two years.

Kyniska and Agesilaus certainly would have been aware of Alcibiades' Spartan sojourn, and his tales of Olympic glory perhaps inflamed hippotrophic ambitions or envy in Sparta. King Agis grew jealous of Alcibiades' popularity.<sup>56</sup> Perhaps restless, and apparently uninhibited as a guest by propriety, Alcibiades was forced to leave because of his rumored (and not improbable) seduction and impregnation of Agis' wife, Timaea. Timaea supposedly referred to her baby son Leotyichidas in private as "Alcibiades."<sup>57</sup> As Paul Cartledge puts it: "This was surely the most sensational scandal of the Athenian War and perhaps the greatest domestic scandal in all of Spartan history. What is more, the rumour may even have been true."<sup>58</sup> Later, in the succession controversy, Agesilaus charged that Leotyichidas was illegitimate.<sup>59</sup> Alcibiades went from Sparta to Persia, but he returned to Athens after 411 to bedevil Sparta's naval efforts; then he went back to Persia. Hating Alcibiades and fearing that Athens' hopes would persist as long as he lived, Agis—or Lysander to please Agis—probably arranged his murder in Phrygia in 404.<sup>60</sup> He was not to come back again to rally Athens and insult Sparta. Sparta, however, still had to purge the memory, the record, of the man.

In the "Elean War" of c.402-400 a still resentful Agis had further conflicts with Elis: he led campaigns that ravaged the countryside and included fighting at Olympia, and he fomented revolts in Elis, forcing Elis to surrender. Sparta ordered the independence of outlying cities from Elis, and the peace arrangements let Spartans sacrifice and compete at Olympia; but Elis was left as the supervisor of the games.<sup>61</sup> In late spring or summer of 400 Agis died, and Agesilaus, his half-brother, succeeded him.

## Agesilaus

Rather short, and lame from birth, Agesilaus was an over-achiever. Not expected to become king, he underwent the paramilitary training in the *agoge*.<sup>62</sup> Alcibiades was everything Agesilaus was not as a young man—good-looking, famous, successful, immodest and immoral. Perhaps understandably, Agesilaus lacked enthusiasm for the Greeks' adoration of athletes with their impressive bodies. He felt athletic training was of little value to the state, and he saw horse racing as merely a wasteful matter of wealth. Instead, he favored hunting and military training, and he especially appreciated the value of skilled cavalry.<sup>63</sup>

Agesilaus' accession, assisted or manipulated by Lysander, was controversial. Countering an ominous oracle warning that a lame king would bring troubles, Agesilaus charged that Leotychidas was a bastard son (i.e., of Alcibiades).<sup>64</sup> When he became king, Agesilaus inherited Agis' estate, Sparta's enmity against Elis and Athens, and the family's resentful memories of Alcibiades. In the fall of 400 Sparta declared war on Persia. Agesilaus was busy with politics and war, but plans for an indirect attack on Alcibiades' reputation probably emerged between 400 and 396.<sup>65</sup>

Most scholars feel that if Agesilaus did pressure Kyniska to compete, he had a domestic Spartan agenda involving morality, economics, military resources, or political rivals.<sup>66</sup> Following Xenophon, some suggest that Agesilaus pushed Kyniska to win to discredit agonistic hippotrophy within Sparta. If so, it simply did not work: horse raising remained an indisputable indicator of wealth, and after Kyniska's wins Spartans apparently won the chariot race in 388 and 384.<sup>67</sup> Moreover, Alcibiades had already demonstrated what everyone already knew, that entering chariots at Olympia was about money, not skill.<sup>68</sup> Did class struggle really make Agesilaus feel threatened by agonistic hippotrophic Spartan rivals and their prestige? He had discredited his rival Leotychidas, and his wealth and social status as a Eurypontid king were beyond doubt.<sup>69</sup> Rather, it seems reasonable that one of his motives was that he wanted Spartans to conserve and better utilize resources. As he himself apparently argued, his participation in and encouragement of military hippotrophy was based on his military agenda.

Cartledge tries to explain Agesilaus' "apparently eccentric attitude" to chariot racing, that he consciously abstained himself but entrusted Kyniska to risk the honor of the household at Olympia. Rejecting Xenophon's notion of moral considerations, he feels Agesilaus wanted to "project an image" of being above displays of wealth and grasping for status in popular contests that, despite his wealth, he preferred to uphold his "aura of ordinariness." He seems to suggest that Agesilaus allowed Kyniska to participate: he might have disliked her monuments (see above) but her competition supposedly fit Agesilaus' "Panhellenist" posture in the 390s.<sup>70</sup> On this issue, Cartledge prefers to interpret Agesilaus as a man with "greatness of soul" (*megalopsuchia*) but, in light of the recent history of the family, Agesilaus probably was significantly involved, politically and personally, with Kyniska's competing at Olympia. Also, his agenda and his audience were not purely internal to Sparta. Plutarch says Agesilaus wanted to show "the Greeks," and Agesilaus' use of a female family member suggests that he also had Alcibiades in mind.

In the 390s Alcibiades was gone but not forgotten. The memory of his hubristic insults was still irritating. At Athens in 399 the public trial of Socrates, a friend of Alcibiades and Xenophon, raised the issue of state rewards for wealthy equestrian victors, who, as Socrates said, did not need support from the state.<sup>71</sup> In 397 Isocrates' court speech for Alcibiades' son (*Biga* 16.33) repeated Alcibiades' crowing about his victories. As well as the claim that Alcibiades spurned competing in gymnastic events even though he was naturally gifted and strong of body, Alcibiades II repeated commonplaces about wealth, hippotrophy, and *megaloprepeia*. Alcibiades was still making headlines. How could Sparta and Agesilaus' royal family get even with a dead man and exorcise the haunting ghost of Alcibiades' equestrian glory? Olympia, the site of Alcibiades' display, was not immune to

the politics of enmity and gesture; it offered a Panhellenic forum for political statements—a perfect stage for upstaging Alcibiades.

### Why Agesilaus Did Not Compete Himself

Even before leaving for the east, Agesilaus never considered competing at Olympia himself. He would not personally condone chariot racing, and losing would be too embarrassing. Also, realistically, just winning would not be enough. Alcibiades had raised the bar on "firsts."<sup>72</sup> His record could not be outdone; his fame had to be undone. But how? Why not have Kyniska enter? If she lost, it was just a woman losing. If she won, she scored a "first"—something unique—for Sparta. How much better to have Kyniska declared the "only" woman winner "in all Greece," making a mockery of Alcibiades' claim to excellence.

### Agesilaus and Homer

Where did Agesilaus get the idea of using a female competitor in a male sporting domain? It might have been Kyniska's idea, or perhaps the myth of Atalanta came to mind; but I suggest that Agesilaus drew his inspiration from epic poetry. To understand Greek sport, it is always a good idea to start with Homer. Spartan education was lean on the liberal arts, but Agesilaus knew his Homer.<sup>73</sup> Before sailing to Asia Minor in 396, Agesilaus attempted to offer sacrifice at Aulis. This was part of his conscious imitation of Agamemnon as the leader of a Panhellenic force against an Asian enemy.<sup>74</sup> Later at Ephesus, when Agesilaus allowed rich men to provide cavalry horses to get out of military service, he said that he was following the example of Agamemnon.<sup>75</sup> In the account of the chariot race in *Iliad* 23, the chariot team of Menelaus included the mare Aithe, a mare "eager to race" which was given by a rich draft-dodger (Echepolos) to Agamemnon and thence lent to Menelaus.<sup>76</sup> During the race Antilochus threatened his male team lest they be beaten by a team of mares. What shame that would bring!<sup>77</sup> There it was. Chariots and gender insults—a great idea.<sup>78</sup> Centuries later, Kyniska's win had its own rather Homeric elements of gender, honor, rivalry, insults, and trickery.<sup>79</sup> Lent by a brother king, the mare Aithe, eager to compete and driven by the cuckolded Spartan king Menelaus, was revived as the princess "puppy," eager to race and driven to compete by Agesilaus, a Spartan king and the brother of a cuckolded Spartan king. Sparta exorcised the Olympic specter of Alcibiades' record as Kyniska's chariot raced around the Olympic hippodrome to victory, dragging Alcibiades' glory in the dust.<sup>80</sup>

### Why a Second Win

With a proven team, Kyniska won her second and last victory in 392. One wonders why Kyniska, if so ambitious and still alive, stopped at two wins. If she wanted to score another "first", being a female triple winner would have been emphatic—a record that would last.<sup>81</sup> Rather, it was probably Agesilaus who wanted the second win from Kyniska. He had been off in Ionia in 396, but he returned in 394 (to deal with the Corinthian War of 395-386), and he probably attended the Olympics of 392. When his guest-friend, the son of Pharnabazus, who was enamored of an Athenian youth, asked him to help, Agesilaus went to a lot of trouble to make sure that a tall boy, Eualkes' son, was allowed to enter the

boys' *stadion* race at Olympia in 392,<sup>82</sup> so Agesilaus probably was present in person at the festival.<sup>83</sup> Also, some adult male had to declare the chariot for Kyniska. Agesilaus was not there to compete himself, but to enjoy the moment, to see what he had inspired. As a decorous, "Panhellenic" spectator, he could watch Kyniska's team drive home the message, showing that the first victory was not a fluke. All it took was money. Even a woman could win--twice! Victory and vengeance are sweet.

## Conclusions

Kyniska certainly was the "first woman in all Greece" to win an Olympic victory, but she had no major impact on the regulations and operation of the Ancient Olympics. Her anomalous success did not alter the enduring ban on women at the games. Axiomatically a matter of wealth, chariot racing had been and remained almost exclusively the sport of kings and very rich males. There was another fourth-century Spartan female Olympic victor, and there were a few Hellenistic and Roman female equestrian winners (see endnote 37), but women still could not attend the games.

Kyniska's chariot racing was not intended to liberate the games, empower female athletes, or force discourse about gender roles in sport.<sup>84</sup> Hardly sport for sport's sake, it had a political and personal Spartan agenda. Her victory perhaps was a beginning in women's Olympic sport, but it was also the end, the culmination, of Sparta's conflicts with Elis and chaffing over Alcibiades. Agesilaus used his sister to show that Olympic chariot victories were won by wealth and not by manly excellence.<sup>85</sup> Furthermore, Kyniska's victory was a vehicle for vengeance: an insult to the family via a female was avenged via a female, but it was male shame and honor at stake—or at the post.<sup>86</sup> Agesilaus wanted to discredit Elis and Alcibiades by, in effect, emasculating the Olympic chariot race. For hippotrophic and patriarchal Athenians and Eleans, that the reigning Olympic champion was a woman was their worst nightmare.

Probably pushed by her brother, Kyniska skirted the rules of the Olympic men's club and won. Her victory monuments were prominent and permanent, hounding Elis and Athens for centuries. Whether or not in conscious defiance of the Athenian gender ideal in Pericles' dictum<sup>87</sup>—that women "were not to be talked about for excellence or fault among males"—Kyniska's success, her representation, at Olympia is still being talked about.



## Chronology

- 448-424** Nearly continuous string of Spartan Olympic chariot wins
- 431 ... 404** Peloponnesian War
- 427** Death of Archidamus, Eurypontid king of Sparta; Kyniska inherits property
- 427-400** Agis II, Eurypontid king of Sparta
- 421** Messenians and Naupactians dedicate Nike by Paionios at Olympia
- 421-413** Peace of Nicias
- 420** Elis allies with Athens, Argos, and Mantinea vs. Sparta
- 420** Sparta invades Elean territory and is excluded from Olympia
- 420** Lichas of Sparta; incident at Olympia
- 418** Battle of Mantinea; Athenian volunteers, affront to Sparta
- 416** Alcibiades' win, with multiple entries, and display at Olympia
- 415** Alcibiades' hippotrophic argument in debate with Nicias
- 415-413** Sicilian Expedition
- 414-412** Alcibiades in Sparta, then leaves for Persia (412-411)
- 413** Revival of war between Athens and Sparta
- 411** Oligarchic Revolution of 411; Alcibiades recalled to fleet at Samos
- 410-408** Battles of Cyzicus, Chalcedon and Byzantium
- 407** Alcibiades returns to Athens; expelled after Battle of Notium in 406
- 405** Alcibiades in Thracian Chersonese
- 404** Peloponnesian War ends
- 404** Spartans arrange murder of Alcibiades in Phrygia
- 404-403** Thirty Tyrants and Spartan garrison at Athens
- 403** Restoration of democracy at Athens
- 402-400** Spartans under Agis invade Elis; fighting at Olympia; peace arrangements
- 400-359** Agesilaus becomes Eurypontid king of Sparta
- 400** Dispute of Persia and Sparta about Ionian cities leads to war
- 399** Trial of Socrates
- 397** Isocrates' *Biga*; trial of Alcibiades the Younger
- 396** Agesilaus takes command of offensive against Persia in Asia; incident at Aulis
- 396** Kyniska's first Olympic victory
- 396** Olympic judging scandal; appeal by Leon of Ambracia
- 396-395** Agesilaus campaigns in Asia Minor; trains army; recruits cavalry at Ephesus
- 394** Agesilaus recalled to Greece to deal with Corinthian War (395-386)
- 392** Kyniska's second Olympic victory; Agesilaus secures entry of son of Eualkes
- 390** Agesilaos invades Isthmus; disrupts Argives holding of Isthmian games
- 388** First of the Zanes at Olympia; athletes warned not to win by money
- 388** Dionysios of Syracuse sends several chariots but fails at Olympia
- 372** Troilos of Elis wins two equestrian events while Hellanodikes
- 368** Euryleonis of Sparta wins *synoris* at Olympia

<sup>1</sup>Versions of this paper were presented at conferences of the North American Society for Sport History (2002) and the American Historical Association (Association of Ancient Historians session, 2003). The dates of her wins are not certain, but I follow the arguments and dates (396?, 392? B.C.) in Luigi Moretti, *Olympionikai. I vincitori negli antichi agoni olimpici* (Rome: Accademia Nazionale Lincei, 1957), nos. 373, 381, 114-115. On the testimonia and dates, also see idem, *Iscrizioni Agonistiche Greche (IAG)* (Rome: Angelo Signorelli, 1953), no. 17, 40-44. On the context and chronology of Spartan events, I generally follow Paul Cartledge's excellent *Agesilaos and the Crisis of Sparta* (London: Duckworth, 1987), and I want to thank Dr. Cartledge for reading and providing helpful comments on this essay. Unless otherwise indicated, all dates are B.C., abbreviations follow the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, and translations are from the Loeb Classical Library (LCL).

<sup>2</sup>On the inscription, three hexameters followed by a pentameter, in early fourth-century lettering on a black, round stone pedestal, see *Inscripfen von Olympia (IvO)* no. 5.160 (= *IGV* 1.1564a = Moretti, *IAG* no. 17). *Anth. Pal.* 13.16, trans. W. R. Paton, LCL; see Joachim Ebert, *Epigramme auf Sieger an gymnischen und hippischen Agonen* (Berlin: Akad.-Verl., 1972) (ASAW, Phil.-hist. Kl. 63.2), no. 33, 110-112.

<sup>3</sup>Kyniska in publications on women's sport: Matthew P. J. Dillon, "Did Parthenoi Attend the Olympic Games? Girls and Women Competing, Spectating, and Carrying Out Cult Roles at Greek Religious Festivals," *Hermes* 128 (2000): 464-465; Giampiera Arrigoni, "Donne e sport nel mondo greco: Religione e società," in *Le donne in Grecia*, ed. Giampiera Arrigoni (Rome: Laterza, 1985), 100-101; Monika Frass, "Gesellschaftliche Akzeptanz 'sportlicher' Frauen in der Antike," *Nikephoros* 10 (1997): 122-123; Betty Spears, "A Perspective of the History of Women's Sport in Ancient Greece," *Journal of Sport History* 11 (1984): 40, 43; Allen Guttmann, "Cynisca," in *International Encyclopedia of Women and Sports*, eds. Karen Christensen *et al.*, 3 vols. (New York: Macmillan Reference, 2000), 1: 295.

<sup>4</sup>Stephen Hodkinson, "Inheritance, Marriage and Demography: Perspectives upon the Success and Decline of Classical Sparta," in *Classical Sparta: Techniques Behind Her Success*, ed. Anton Powell (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1988), 96-100. In his masterful study of Agesilaos, even Cartledge (*Agesilaos*, 149-150) finds it challenging to explain the relationship between Agesilaos and Kyniska's chariot racing. See below. Matthew Dillon, in *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece* (London: Routledge, 1997), 195, 271n49, just accepts the influence of Agesilaos and cites the testimonia.

<sup>5</sup>E.g., a site created by Susan J. Bandy (<http://raw.rutgers.edu/womenandsports/>) and her "The Female Athlete as Protagonist: From Cynisca to Butcher," *Aethlon: The Journal of Sport Literature* 15 (1997): 84-85. Allen Guttmann, in *Women's Sport: A History* (New York: Columbia University 1991), takes no position on who initiated the competition, but he comments that "[i]t was a chariot owned by a Spartan princess that ended the male monopoly on Olympic olive branches" (p. 26). Mary R. Lefkowitz and Maureen B. Fant, in *Women's Life in Greece and Rome*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore, Md.: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), state she may have owned the horses herself, but: "[w]omen victors in athletic contests all appear to have been sponsored by men and to have had professional charioteers" (no. 202, 161n55).

<sup>6</sup>Manfred Lämmer, "Women and Sport in Ancient Greece: A Plea for a Critical and Objective Approach," in *Women and Sport: An Historical, Biological, Physiological and Sportsmedical Approach*, Vol. 14: *Medicine and Sport*, eds. Jan Borms *et al.* (Basel: S. Karger, 1981), 16-23. He suggests that the equestrian success of Kyniska and other women "served far more to satisfy a need for family propaganda—usually within the context of domestic politics" (p. 19).

<sup>7</sup>Mark Golden, *Sport and Society in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1998), 133-134, on Kyniska. On females, Golden concludes:

Women . . . were kept from competitive comparisons that might challenge prevailing hierarchies. Indeed, in their nearest regular contact with men in panhellenic athletics, they used the same stadium at Olympia but ran a shorter race. The implication is that they themselves must fall short. For them too horse-racing was exceptional, open to their participation and victory both because they competed only indirectly, through their animals, riders, and charioteers, and because superiority might be represented as reflecting resources alone (p. 139).

<sup>8</sup>Thomas F. Scanlon, *Eros and Greek Athletics* (New York: Oxford University, 2002), 22.

<sup>9</sup>Sarah Pomeroy, *Spartan Women* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2002), 19-24 ("star"), 21 ("championing"), 22n79 ("devotion"), 23 ("expert"). Like others, Pomeroy views Kyniska in the context of internal, domestic Spartan history, and she relies heavily on Pausanias' characterization of Kyniska as very ambitious (see below).

<sup>10</sup>Paul Poralla and Alfred S. Bradford, *A Prosopography of Lacedaimonians from the Earliest Times to the Death of Alexander the Great*, 2nd ed. (1913; Chicago: Ares, 1985), Kyniska no. 459, Agis no. 26, Agesilaus no. 9. See Cartledge for genealogies of Spartan kings (Fig. 7, p. 101) and the ancestry and family of Agesilaus (Fig. 3, p. 21; Fig. 9.1, p. 146). It is uncertain whether Kyniska was the daughter of the noble mother of the elder brother Agis, Lampito, "a woman of noble birth" (Plut., *Ages.* 1.1) or—more likely—of Archidamus' second wife, Eupolia (meaning "well-colted"), the daughter of Melesippides and the the mother of the much younger Agesilaus. With their equestrian allusions, the names Eupolia and Melesippides might tempt one to suggest competitive hippotrophic aspirations for the non-royal family, but that may be too speculative (see next note). For a popular biographical treatment, see Paul Cartledge, *The Greeks: Crucible of Civilization* (New York: TV Books, 2000), 141-150; or his *The Spartans: An Epic History* (London: Channel Four Books, 2002), 209-214.

<sup>11</sup>Herodotus (6.71.1) mentions her grandfather Zeuxidamos (father of Archidamos II), whom some Spartans called Kyniskos (Poralla no. 345). Probably in line with family traditions, Agesilaus kept hounds on his estate (Xen., *Ages.* 9.6). On the activity and its significance, see Ephraim David, "Hunting in Spartan Society and Consciousness," *Echos du Monde Classique/Classic Views* 37, n.s. 12 (1993): 393-413. Pomeroy finds Kyniska's name "unusual" and speculates unnecessarily that it may have been "a nickname for an especially tomboyish woman" (*Spartan Women*, 21). Cartledge (*The Greeks*, 14) disagrees. See Christopher J. Tuplin, "Kyniskos of Mantinea," *Liverpool Classical Monthly* 2 (1977): 5-10, on the name and on Kyniskos, son of Kyniskos, of Mantinea, Olympic boy boxing winner in 460 (?), who had a victor statue by Polykleitos (Paus. 6.4.11; Moretti, *Ol.* no. 265). Cartledge (*Agesilaos*, 149-150) suggests that another Kyniskos (Poralla no. 460), a harmost in the Thracian Chersonese in 400, may have been a relative, perhaps even a son, of Kyniska, but we cannot know if there was any family connection. Pomeroy (*Spartan Women*, 21) also sees allusions "to equestrian interests in the female line" in the names of Kyniska's relatives, e.g., her mother and her niece Eupolia. Since names like Hipparete and Xanthippe occur at Athens, the city of Athena Hippias, which Pomeroy contrasts with Sparta on female equestrianism, it is more likely, following Hodkinson's scenario (below), that such names reflect the status aspirations of elder males of ambitious but non-royal families. In naming his daughters Eupolia and Proauga (or Prolyta; see Cartledge, *Agesilaos*, 149) Agesilaus was probably following family traditions rather than encouraging or responding to the girls' interest in equestrian competition.

<sup>12</sup>On Spartan girls' physical training, nudity, contests, processions, etc., see Plut., *Lyc.* 14-15, Xen., *Lac.* 1.4, Pl., *Resp.* 458d, Eur., *Andr.* 599, and other sources collected in Scanlon (*Eros*, chap. 5—"Only We Produce Men': Spartan Female Athletics and Eugenics," 121-138); and Dillon ("Did Parthenoi Attend," 465-466). On choruses of Spartan *parthenoi*, also see Matthew Dillon, *Girls and Women in Classical Greek Religion* (London: Routledge, 2002), 211-215. Also, now see Pomeroy, *Spartan Women*, 12-27, on Spartan female physical education and sport, and their possible military aspects and value. The functions of most of the activities, as Scanlon clarifies, were eugenic, initiatory, prenuptial and erotic. The agenda was pragmatic and cultic—not sport for the sake of sport.

<sup>13</sup>Ath., *Deip.* 4.139f, citing Polycrates; see Scanlon, *Eros*, 346n69; or Nigel M. Kennell, *The Gymnasium of Virtue: Education and Culture in Ancient Sparta* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995), 65. Pomeroy (*Spartan Women*, 19) feels that "there can be no doubt that Sparta's excellence in equestrian affairs had repercussions for Spartan women." She (pp. 19-21) collects physical and literary evidence to make a case for extensive Spartan female equestrianism, both in knowledge and practice, in both driving and riding horses: "At the Hyacinthia, Spartan girls drove expensively decorated light carts, and had an opportunity to display their equestrian skills before the entire community. Some raced in chariots drawn by a yoke of horses" (p. 20). Wendy J. Raschke, in "A Red-Figure Kylix in Malibu: The Iconography of Female Charioteers," *Nikephoros* 7 (1994): 157-179, discusses the question of the possibility of female charioteers. She (p. 172n60) sees the passage in Athenaeus as ambiguous about whether

the Spartan girls actually raced the chariots themselves. She (pp. 170-173) argues that Kyniska bred horses but did not personally race as a charioteer. It is quite probable that elite Sparta women rode and drove horses in Sparta and that this enhanced their autonomy, but Pomeroy also agrees (p. 22) that Kyniska used a driver to compete at Olympia.

<sup>14</sup>A small Doric capital found at the Menelaion in Sparta with Kyniska's name on it apparently once was the base for a dedication to Helen (*IGV* 1.235). Scanlon (*Eros*, 23) notes that Helen was associated with the coming of age of Spartan girls, and he suggests an analogy to Damodica of Cyme who won a chariot victory and also bore a son. However, a dedication to Helen would not be unusual at Sparta, we do not know when or why it was made, and there is no evidence that Kyniska married or bore children.

<sup>15</sup>Pausanias (3.15.1) mentions a hero shrine for Kyniska by the Platanistas and adds that she was the first woman to raise horses and to win the Olympic chariot race (see below). Pomeroy states that Kyniska was the first female athlete to be honored as a hero, and she adds: "The heroön would have been built after her death and would have served as an inspiration to other women" (*Spartan Women*, 23). On the heroization of women, including Kyniska, as "generally not a classical phenomenon," see Dillon, *Girls and Women*, 289-290.

<sup>16</sup>Moretti, *IAG* 41, 43, suggests she was born around 440; and Pomeroy suggests she was close to 50 in 396: "Cynisca entered her horses at the earliest possible moment and won her victories in two successive Olympiads, in 396 and 392. No wonder Pausanias (3.8.2) calls her ambitious. Cynisca must have been champing at the bit herself for several years, hoping she would have an opportunity to race her horses at Olympia before she died" (*Spartan Women*, 21). Pomeroy and Moretti assume Sparta was banned from Olympia continuously from 420-400 (see below), but why did an ambitious Kyniska not compete at Olympia in 424?

<sup>17</sup>See endnote 11 above on Kyniskos. Pomeroy comments on Kyniska's exclusion from the games: "Of course it is possible that even at her advanced age Cynisca was technically a parthenos [a virgin, or an unmarried woman]. Perhaps she had been widowed at a young age. In any case, no husband nor children are recorded for her, and her brother's attempts to manipulate her . . . suggest that she did not have a husband. Her single-minded devotion to racing may not have left any time for wifely duties" (*Spartan Women*, 22n79).

<sup>18</sup>Charles D. Hamilton, in *Agesilaus and the Failure of Spartan Hegemony* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991), 12-14, notes that Archidamus' second marriage, to Eupolia, was unpopular. The Ephors opposed it and fined Agesilaus, apparently because Eupolia was short, not beautiful, and from a respectable but not rich family. Agesilaus later distributed part of his inheritance to his mother's poorer relatives; see Plut., *Ages*. 2.3, 4.1. Assuming Eupolia was her mother, Kyniska may have been rather plain, or physically flawed like Agesilaus (see below); that, compounded with her mother's family background, and the likelihood that Agesilaus would not become king, may have made her a less appealing match when of marriageable age.

<sup>19</sup>E.g., Arist., *Pol.* 1269b; Plut., *Lyc.* 14; Hodkinson, "Inheritance"; Stephen Hodkinson, in *Property and Wealth in Classical Sparta* (London: Duckworth, 2000), 99-103, discusses the influence of inheritance and marriage patterns on the Spartan crisis in the early fourth century. He argues that a system of "universal female inheritance" was a factor contributing to increasing inequalities in land ownership, with related patterns of social stratification, and the pursuit of status through wealth, as in hippotrophy, from the mid fifth century on. On the resources and influence of Spartan women, now also see Pomeroy, *Spartan Women*, especially chap. 4—"Elite Women," 73-94. Other discussions include James Redfield, "The Women of Sparta," *Classical Journal* 73 (1977-1978): 146-161; and Paul Cartledge, *Spartan Reflections* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 106-126, published originally as "Spartan Wives: Liberation or Licence?" *Classical Quarterly* 31 (1981): 84-105.

<sup>20</sup>Cartledge (*Agesilaos*, 115, 145) states that she and Agesilaus shared in the paternal inheritance, assuming she was Agesilaus' full sister. Hodkinson ("Inheritance," 82) suggests that daughters got half the portion due to a son, and that the inheritance possibly took place before the death of the father at the time the daughter married.

<sup>21</sup>Cartledge, *Agesilaos*, 29. Another possibility, consistent with the argument here that Agesilaus influenced or even supported Kyniska, is that the family acquired chariot horses as war booty when Agis ravaged the countryside of Elis in the Elean War (see below).

<sup>22</sup>See Nigel Crowther, "Athlete and the State: Qualifying for the Olympic Games in Ancient Greece," *Journal of Sport History* 23 (1996): 34. Pausanias (6.13.9) records a famous incident at a late sixth-century Olympic horse race in which a mare threw its rider but finished the race in first place without a rider, and the owner was proclaimed the victor.

<sup>23</sup>Kyniska's monuments (Paus. 6.1.6) included a group—a chariot, charioteer and horses in bronze, and a victor statue of Kyniska, located near the Temple of Hera, between votives of Spartan male victors and of Troilos of Elis. Troilos is well known for being both a Hellanodiktes and a double equestrian victor in the same Olympiad in 372 (Paus. 6.1.4-5; *IvO* 166; Moretti, *IAG* no. 19, *Ol.* nos. 412-413), and the placing of his statue close to that of Kyniska may not have been coincidental. Kyniska's second monument, located in or near porch of the Temple of Zeus, included smaller-than-lifesize bronze horses (Paus. 5.12.5). Moretti, *Ol.* 114, suggests a possible association with a small base signed by Apelleas found at Olympia (*IvO* 634). On Apelleas, son of Kallikles, of Megara, see Moretti, *IAG* 43-44. Discussing the monuments, Pomeroy feels that Kyniska "seems to have been vain and by no means modest" (*Spartan Women*, 22n81). Hodkinson suggests that, with both a model chariot and a statue, Kyniska's "self-glorification was doubly ironic: first, because her brother Agesilaos had supposedly urged her to emulate male participants precisely in order to discredit the sport; secondly, because he also scorned the making of personal statues as being appropriate to wealth rather than virtue (Xen., *Ages.* 11.7; Plut., *Ages.* 2.2)" ("Inheritance," 99). Cartledge feels that "Agesilaos might well have been suspicious of the tone of the epigram and would undoubtedly have disapproved mightily of the portrait statue of Kyniska" (*Agesilaos*, 150).

<sup>24</sup>Pomeroy, *Spartan Women*, 141-142: "Another text where a woman's voice may be heard is the epigram composed in honor of Cynisca's chariot victories. . . . Cynisca is depicted as speaking in the first person. If she did not write the epigram herself, she may well have commissioned the poet and given orders about the content." Also see *ibid.*, 135. On the shift from first to third person and back again, and on the "play of presence and absence" in the epigram, see Leslie Kurke, "The Economy of *Kudos*," in *Cultural Poetics in Archaic Greece*, eds. Carol Dougherty and Leslie Kurke (New York: Oxford University, 1998), 146, 160n66.

<sup>25</sup>Noting that the epigram for Pausanias was written by Simonides, Pausanias (3.8.2, trans. William H.S. Jones and Henry A. Ormerod, LCL) assumes that someone (i.e., some male poet) wrote Kyniska's for her:

The Spartans seem to me to be of all men the least moved by poetry and the praise of poets. For with the exception of the epigram upon Cynisca, of uncertain authorship (*hostis de*), and the still earlier one upon Pausanias that Simonides wrote on the tripod dedicated at Delphi [Thuc. 1.132], there is no poetic composition (*para andros poiētou*) to commemorate the doings of the royal houses of the Lacedaemonians.

Cf. Ebert, *Epigramme auf Sieger*, 110-111. On the later victory epigram of Berenice II written by some poet, possibly Posidippus, see below. Moretti (*IAG* 44) raises the possibility that Kyniska's family or the Spartan state established Kyniska's monuments after her death. Like the heroön at Sparta, Kyniska's monuments at Olympia may represent sincere votives or state propaganda.

<sup>26</sup>Pomeroy finds it "metrically competent; straightforward in the "Laconic" style; and of course written in the Doric dialect" (*Spartan Women*, 22).

<sup>27</sup>According to Pausanias, 8.26.4, even the inscription on the tomb of Koroibos of Elis, victor in the sprint in 776, claimed that he was the "first" Olympic victor. David C. Young, "First with the Most: Greek Athletic Records and Specialization," *Nikephoros* 9 (1996): 175-197, especially 180-181 on Kyniska, shows that victors (e.g., Theogenes, Alcibiades) kept and cherished records of their achievements.

<sup>28</sup>Xenophon (e.g., *Symp.* 2.17, *Mem.* 3.12.1-8; 3.5.13,15,18, *Cyn.* 12.1-9) and Agesilaus (in Xenophon's works; see below) agreed in favor of military training and militarily-oriented games, cavalry, and hunting with dogs; and they both disliked extravagance, treachery, agonistic hippotrophy, and traditional athletic training.

<sup>29</sup>Plutarch (*Ages.* 20.1) states that Agesilaus respected Xenophon and told him to have his sons brought to and educated at Sparta.

<sup>30</sup>Xenophon's comment comes from the encomiastic *Agesilaus* (*Ages.* 9.6, trans. Edgar C. Marchant, LCL) and not the *Hellenica*.

<sup>31</sup>Scanlon correctly points out that Xenophon "uses a term for excellence meaning 'manly valor,' *andragathia*, which is even more marked by connotations of gender than Plutarch's *arete*" (*Eros*, 346n70). Xenophon must have agreed with Agesilaus' action and felt that it flattered him, or he would have omitted any mention; he provides Agesilaus with a moral rather than a more personal, emotional motive (see below).

<sup>32</sup>Plut., *Ages.* 20.1, trans. Bernadotte Perrin, LCL.

<sup>33</sup>*Sayings of Spartans, Agesilaus* 49 (*Apoph. Lac.* 212B), trans. Frank C. Babbitt, LCL: "Seeing that some of the citizens thought themselves to be somebody and gave themselves great airs because they kept a racing stud, he persuaded his sister Cynisca to enter a chariot in the races at Olympia, for he wished to demonstrate to the Greeks that this sort of thing was no sign of excellence, but only of having money and being willing to spend it."

<sup>34</sup>Pomeroy in *Spartan Women* cites Pausanias twice (pp. 21, 23) without reservation as evidence of Kyniska's equestrian ambition. However, she makes a brief, dismissive reference to Xenophon and Plutarch on Kyniska's relationship with Agesilaus: "Whether Agesilaus was actually inspired by mean-spiritedness or by sibling rivalry, or by the lofty motives Xenophon and Plutarch ascribe to him, the anecdote suggests that he thought his sister's horses had a good chance to win" (p. 23). Pomeroy goes even further in saying the Kyniska "defied her brother" (p. 76), and she seems to take Agesilaus' attitude to his sister as hostile: "The sudden appearance of female victors in the chariot races at Olympia beginning in 396, the new craving for expensive imported dresses, and even Agesilaus' scoffing remark about Cynisca seem suitable to the conspicuous consumption characteristic of the nouvelles riches" (p. 93). Similarly: "With the increase in private wealth, much of it in the hands of women, and with their keen interest in athletics and knowledge of horses, it was natural that Spartan women would own racehorses. Cynisca was a member of the first group of extremely wealthy women who begin to become evident after the Peloponnesian War (see chap. 4)" (p. 23).

<sup>35</sup>Pausanias (6.1.6) notes Kyniska's monuments with no mention of ambition, and he, again with no reference to ambition, says that she was the first woman to raise horses and to win at Olympia (3.15.1). However, Pausanias at 6.2.1 (see below) claims the Spartans became the "most ambitious" (*philotimotata*) of all Greeks about hippotrophy, and at 3.8.1 he, perhaps by generalization, claims Kyniska was "most ambitious" (*philotimotata*) to win at Olympia.

<sup>36</sup>Paus. 3.8.1, trans. William H.S. Jones and Henry A. Ormerod, LCL. Note that Pausanias (3.8.3-5) discusses Agis and the problems with Elis, which preceded and, I suggest, to some degree inspired Kyniska's competition.

<sup>37</sup>Pausanias comments that "[a]fter Cynisca other women, especially women of Lacedaemon, have won Olympic victories, but none of them was more distinguished for their victories than she" (3.8.1). Pausanias notes a statue near the Bronze House at Sparta of a Spartan woman named Euryleonis, who won the *synoris* at Olympia, perhaps in 368 (3.17.6). Moretti (*Ol.* no. 418) states the date is uncertain, but it was later than Kyniska. The next female victors were prominent Hellenistic women, including Belistiche and Berenice II. Belistiche of Macedon, courtesan of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, won the four-foal chariot at Olympia in 268 and the *synoris* for foals in 264. See Paus. 5.8.11; Moretti, *Ol.* nos. 549, 552, *IAG* 42; and Sarah Pomeroy, *Women in Hellenistic Egypt: From Alexander to Cleopatra* (New York: Schocken, 1984), 53-55. Berenice II (c.273-221), wife of Ptolemy III Euergetes (247-221), with her wealth (she inherited Cyrene) and political power, competed and won races in Greece, and Callimachus prepared an *epinikion* for her Nemean win. See Elaine Fantham *et al.*, *Women in the Classical World: Image and Text* (New York: Oxford University, 1994), 144-145; Dillon, "Did Parthenoi Attend," 464-465; and Peter J. Parsons, "Callimachus: Victoria Berenices," *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 25 (1977): 44-46. An epigram (*P. Mil. Vogl.* VIII.309, xiii 31-34) for Berenice, possibly by Posidippus, claims that she surpassed the fame of Kyniska: "When we [statues of her horses] were still the horses of Macedonian Berenice, People of Pisa, < 11 > we brought her the crown of Olympic victory, which has well-known fame, and with it we took away the ancient glory of Cynisca in Sparta (XIII 31-34)" (trans. Mary R. Lefkowitz, "New Hellenistic Epigrams about Women," *Diotima*, "Epigrams in honor of Berenice II, for

her chariot victories," <http://www.stoa.org/diotima/anthology/epigrams.html>). Further on female equestrian victors after Kyniska, especially in the Hellenistic era, see Moretti, *LAG* 41-43; Harold A. Harris, *Sport in Greece and Rome* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972), 177-179; Lefkowitz and Fant, *Women's Life*, nos. 203-206, pp. 161-162; Konstantinos Mantas, "Women and Athletics in the Roman East," *Nikephoros* 8 (1995): 128-129; Arrigoni, "Donne e sport," 108-109; Golden, *Sport and Society*, 87-88, 133-134; Scanlon, *Eros*, 346n69; and Dillon, "Did Parthenoi Attend," 464-465.

<sup>38</sup>By Pausanias' time, Olympia allowed non-Greek participation, and authors had become more accustomed to ambitious royal women and greater women's involvement with sport (e.g., as competitors, gymnasiarchs, patrons, spectators). Hellenistic and, to a degree, Roman society continued Egyptian and Near Eastern traditions about women in society, which included more legal rights and public roles than in Classical Greece. By Roman times maidens raced in Domitian's Capitoline Games (Suet., *Dom.* 4.4; Dio. 67.8.1), women and Vestals attended the arena games, females used the baths (and possibly parts of some gymnasia), prostitutes ran in the Floralia, female gladiators fought, and more. The Roman world saw an expansion of female sport from the first century A.D. on, which seems to have been related to certain emperors' agendas and to a general antiquarianism in the Early Empire. See Hugh M. Lee, "SIG<sup>3</sup> 802: Did Women Compete Against Men in Greek Athletic Festivals?" *Nikephoros* 1 (1988): 103-117; idem, "Athletics and the Bikini Girls from Piazza Armerina," *Stadion* 10 (1984): 45-76; Mantas, "Women and Athletics," 125-144; and Dillon, "Did Parthenoi Attend," 462-464, 479. Frass ("Gesellschaftliche") also offers a good discussion of the effect of social values on attitudes to female exercise and competitive sport in Greece and Rome. On Pausanias as a source, see Christian Habicht, *Pausanias' Guide to Ancient Greece* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), especially chap. 5—"The Roman World of Pausanias," 117-140; and Jas Elner, "Structuring 'Greece': Pausanias's *Periegesis* as a Literary Construct," in *Pausanias: Travel and Memory in Roman Greece*, eds. Susan E. Alcock et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 3-20, especially 8-18 on Olympia. Further on problems with Pausanias as a source for women's sport, see my "Virgins and Victors: Females and Ancient Olympia," in *Olympisch bewegt; Festschrift zum 60. Geburtstag von Prof. Dr. Manfred Lämmer*, eds. Ellen Bertke et al. (Cologne: Institute für Sportgeschichte der Deutschen Sporthochschule Köln und Carl und Liselott Diem-Archiv, 2003), 145-154.

<sup>39</sup>With legendary ties back to Lycurgus of Sparta and the refounding of the Olympics in 776 or 884, Elis in its supervision of the Olympics enjoyed early support and participation from Sparta. Spartans were prominent in victor lists, and Sparta possibly influenced Olympic nudity and the Heraia; see Scanlon, *Eros*, 98-120. For an excellent treatment of Spartan athletic competition, male and female, gymnastic and equestrian, and inside and outside Sparta, see Stephen Hodkinson, "An Agonistic Culture? Athletic Competition in Archaic and Classical Spartan Society," in *Sparta: New Perspectives*, eds. Stephen Hodkinson and Anton Powell (London: Duckworth, 1999), 147-187.

<sup>40</sup>Cartledge (*Agesilaos*, 248-253) provides a clear summary of the complex relations between Elis and Sparta. Also see Augusta Hönle, *Olympia in der Politik der griechischen Staatenwelt von 776 bis zum Ende des 5. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen: Fotodruck Präzis Barbara v. Spangenberg KG, 1968), chap. 5, 120-168, and especially 159-168 on increasing tensions. Athens' growing presence at Olympia could not have pleased Sparta. On Theseus in the western pediment and possible pro-democratic messages of the Temple of Zeus (c.470-457), see Wendy J. Raschke, "Images of Victory: Some New Considerations of Athletic Monuments," in *The Archaeology of the Olympics*, ed. Wendy J. Raschke (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), 45-47. Also, Phidias of Athens was hired to create the statue of Zeus for the Temple, and Kleoitias of Athens designed the starting mechanism in the hippodrome (Paus. 6.20.14), both in the fifth century. Cf. Sparta's dedication of a gold shield from spoils from the Battle of Tanagra in 457 (Paus. 5.10.4).

<sup>41</sup>See Hönle, *Olympia*, 146-159; and Geoffrey E. M. de Ste. Croix, *The Origins of the Peloponnesian War* (London: Duckworth, 1972), 354-355 and appendix 27. On Elis, Sparta, and Athens as the top three states with the most known victories in the Games, see Nigel Crowther, "Elis and the Games," *L'Antiquité Classique* 57 (1988): 301-310, who notes that, while Elis had the most recorded equestrian victories in general (including six in the *tethrippon*), the greatest rivals for chariot race victories were Athens (with twelve) and Sparta (with sixteen).

<sup>42</sup>Pausanias (6.2.1) mentions statues set up by the Spartans Xenarces, Lycinus, Arcesilaus, and Lichas his son.

<sup>43</sup>Hodkinson, "Inheritance," 96-98; see his Table 4.3, based on Moretti's work, which, despite some source problems, indicates that 10 of 15 wins after 450 were won by 8 of 11 victors. Hodkinson (pp. 98-100) sees other indications of an upsurge in hippotrophy: a dedication to Athena (*JG* V 1.213; Moretti, *IAG* no. 16, pp. 36-40) that mentions numerous equestrian victories by Damonon and his son at games in Lakonia and Messenia; a shift in Spartan dedications after 450 from the traditional model of the chariot to the establishment of statues of victors, thus emphasizing the status of the owner; an increase in names with hippotrophic references; and literary references to Spartan hippotrophy. On Damonon, now see Dillon, "Did Parthenoi Attend," 464n22.

<sup>44</sup>It is noteworthy that in 432 the Peloponnesian League apparently considered appropriating wealth from Olympia and Delphi to gain resources against Athens; see Thuc. 1.121.3, 1.143.1.

<sup>45</sup>Thuc. 5.47; Xenophon, *Hellenica* 3.2.21. Thucydides notes that the oaths renewing the treaty of alliance were to be scheduled prior to the Olympic and Great Panathenaic Games, and that all members jointly were to establish a bronze pillar at Olympia inscribed with the terms of the alliance. Nicholas F. Yalouris, *Ancient Elis, Cradle of the Olympic Games* (Athens: Adam Editions, 1996), 35-37, reconstructs the history of Elis and Sparta before and during the Peloponnesian War, as recorded in Thucydides and Xenophon. As Yalouris notes (p. 197n111), Elis' hostility to Sparta led them to approve the Nike of Paionios, celebrating the defeat of Sparta by the Naupactians and Messenians at Sphakteria in 425, which was placed prominently in front of the Temple of Zeus in 421.

<sup>46</sup>See Jim Roy, "Thucydides 5.49.1-50.4: The Quarrel between Elis and Sparta in 420 B.C. and Elis' Exploitation of Olympia," *Klio* 80 (1998): 366. Roy demonstrates that Elis used its control of Olympia to make contentious charges against Sparta in order to push its own political and territorial interests. Eleans arranged an Olympic hearing and ruled in their own favor, without Spartan representatives present. As he notes, Sparta did not forget Elis' actions in 420: "Continuing Spartan resentment at being barred from Olympia by the Eleans is mentioned by all three ancient sources for the outbreak of the Spartan-Elean war at the end of the fifth century (Xen., *Hell.* 3.2.21-22; Diod. Sic. 14.17.4; Paus. 3.8.3)."

<sup>47</sup>Against what he calls "the current orthodoxy" (e.g., Hönle, *Olympia*, 155) in favor of a continuous exclusion, Simon Hornblower, in "Thucydides, Xenophon, and Lichas: Were the Spartans Excluded from the Olympic Games from 420 to 400 B.C.?" *Phoenix* 54 (2000): 212-225, suggests the ban on Sparta lasted only for the Olympiad or was revoked by 416. A sport historical argument might suggest that a continuous ban best explains Sparta's lack of chariot or other Olympic victories from 420 to 400. Spartan enthusiasm for chariot racing after c.450 was very strong, there were numerous regular wins until 420, and another string of wins began in 396. However, on the absence of Spartan victors 420-400, see Hornblower, especially 214, 221. If Hornblower's argument is accepted, and Kyniska was not blocked from entering a chariot earlier, there is even more reason to believe that Agesilaus, as a new king, was "using" his sister.

<sup>48</sup>Lichas was the son of Arcesilaus, a two-time Olympic victor; Moretti, *Ol.* nos. 305, 311. On Lichas, see Poralla no. 392; Moretti, *Ol.* no. 339; and Jean Pouilloux and François Salviat, "Lichas, Lacédémonien, Archonte à Thasos et le Livre VIII de Thucydide," *Comptes rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-lettres* (1983): 376-403.

<sup>49</sup>Thuc. 5.50; Xen., *Hell.* 3.2.21; Paus. 6.2.3; also see Paus. 3.8.3; and Diod. Sic. 14.17.1. On the possibility that Thucydides was an eyewitness at Olympia, see Michael Clark, "Thucydides at Olympia," in *Text and Tradition: Studies in Greek History and Historiography in Honor of Mortimer Chambers*, eds. Ronald Mellor and Laurence Tritle (Claremont, Calif.: Regina Books, 1999), 115-134.

<sup>50</sup>Hornblower, "Thucydides," 212.

<sup>51</sup>Xen., *Hell.* 3.2.22-23. On the significance of revenge as a motive in Sparta's later invasion of Elis, see Caroline Falkner, "Sparta and the Elean War, ca. 401/400 B.C.: Revenge or Imperialism?" *Phoenix* 50 (1996): 17-25. Falkner suggests that "in addition to satisfying a need for vengeance, the conquest of Elis gave Sparta control of the coastline of the north-west Peloponnese and access to the Adriatic and the routes to the west" (p. 17). Hornblower feels that whether the ban was continuous or not, Sparta nursed

a grievance for years: "It is entirely plausible that the Spartans should have long resented even a short-term ban which had been lifted many years previously. . . . After all, Xenophon mentions the quadruple alliance of 420 as another of Sparta's grievances against the Eleans, and this alliance lasted only until the winter of 418/7 (Thuc. 5.78)" ("Thucydides," 223n27).

<sup>52</sup>Plut., *Alc.* 8.1-3.

<sup>53</sup>Thuc. 5.43 ff.

<sup>54</sup>Eur. apud Plut. *Alcib.* 11, frag. 755 Page *PMG*, trans. C. Maurice Bowra, "Euripides' Epinician for Alcibiades," *Historia* 9 (1960): 68-79. In comparison with Kyniska's epigram, note that Alcibiades' ode claims a record held by "no other Greek." However, the ode does not mention his horses, and the use of *aponeti* does not try to disguise the fact that this was a display of wealth rather than of physical or moral virtue. As Plutarch (*Alc.* 2.1) wrote, Alcibiades' character was dominated by his love of victory and his love of preeminence. On *megaloprepeia*, see Leslie Kurke, *The Traffic in Praise: Pindar and the Poetics of Social Economy* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1991), 163-256.

<sup>55</sup>Thuc. 6.16.1-2: Alcibiades related his Olympic displays to wealth, glory, and advantages for Athens. On Alcibiades as a chariot-racer and politician, see my *Athletics in Ancient Athens* (Leiden: Brill, 1987), A4, 115-116, 130-131, 136-137, 163-168; and Hönle, *Olympia*, 206-208.

<sup>56</sup>Chameleon-like according to Plutarch (*Alc.* 23.3-6), Alcibiades, whose nurse had been a Spartan woman (*Alc.* 1.2), became popular as he adopted a Spartan lifestyle and provided good military advice. On Alcibiades at Sparta, see Jean Hatzfeld, *Alcibiade*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1951), 206-214. As Walter M. Ellis, in *Alcibiades* (London: Routledge, 1989), 67-68, notes, when Agis and Alcibiades became enemies, Alcibiades was no longer welcome or safe at Sparta.

<sup>57</sup>Plut., *Alc.* 23.7-9; *Ages.* 3.1-2. Plutarch suggests Alcibiades claimed that he seduced Timaea because he wanted his descendants to rule Sparta. Cartledge (*Agesilaos*, 113) notes, from Thuc. 8.6.3, that "Alcibiades" was originally a Spartan name, and that Alcibiades' family had ritualized guest-friendship (*xenia*) ties at Sparta. Agis disavowed the child but later accepted him as his own. It is uncertain how early Agesilaus started to think of contesting the succession, but he probably came to see Alcibiades' adultery as both an insult to the family and a threat to his own prospects.

<sup>58</sup>Cartledge (*Agesilaos*, 113) agrees that Agis was probably not the natural father of Leotychidas. Further on Timaea and Alcibiades, see Hatzfeld, *Alcibiade*, 217-218n3; and Hamilton, *Agesilaos*, 26 and note 85 with testimonia and modern bibliography.

<sup>59</sup>One might even suggest a reference, an implied contrast to Leotychidas, in Kyniska's epigram, opening as it does with a declaration of her (and Agesilaus') royal Spartan pedigree as daughter (and son) of Archidamus.

<sup>60</sup>Athens under the Lysander-backed Thirty had not forgotten Alcibiades. Plutarch, *Alcib.* 38-39, trans. Bernadotte Perrin, LCL, at 38.2 states: ". . . a vague hope still prevailed that the cause of Athens was not wholly lost so long as Alcibiades was alive." Lysander got a dispatch from the authorities at Sparta (38.4): ". . . bidding him put Alcibiades out of the way; either because they were too alarmed at the vigour and enterprise of the man, or because they were trying to gratify Agis." On the various accounts of Alcibiades' death, see Ellis, *Alcibiades*, 95-97.

<sup>61</sup>Xen., *Hell.* 3.2.21-31; Paus. 3.8.3-5; Diod. Sic. 14.17.4-12. Pausanias (5.20.4-5) records the story of the later discovery in the roof of the Temple of Hera of the corpse of one of the defenders of the Altis against Sparta. For a recent discussion of the vexing problems of dating the events, see R. K. Unz, "The Chronology of the Elean War," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 28 (1986): 29-42. Cartledge (*Agesilaos*, 249-252) relates Agis' campaign against Elis to personal revenge and also to political considerations and economic needs. On Sparta's enduring desire for revenge for the events of 420, see endnotes 46 and 51 above.

<sup>62</sup>Hamilton psychologically relates Agesilaus' character to his deformity, his experience in the *agoge*, his awkward accession, and various personal insults (*Agesilaos*, 7-39—chap. 1, "The Character and Personality of Agesilaus" and passim). Hamilton views Agesilaus as a man of "deep-seated emotions—especially hatred, resentment, and unbridled ambition," someone capable of "nursing a political grudge (e.g., against Lysander or Thebes) for more than a quarter-century" (pp. 7-8).

<sup>63</sup>Agessilaos' views are consistent with the criticism of athletics in Tyrtaeus' military poetry, which suggests that individualistic athletic achievement is less useful to the state than military dedication and skill. See Tyrtaeus frag. 12.1-2, 10-14; and West, *Iambi et Elegy*, 2:157. Accounts of Agessilaos' life include several suggestions that, like Epaminondas and Philopoemen later, he was critical of competitive athletic training. Of like mind with his friend Xenophon, he favored military-oriented training and competitions. In early spring of 395, according to Xenophon, *Hell.* 3.4.16, he brought his forces together at Ephesus, and he organized a training program with prizes for the best hoplite and cavalry units, military practice in gymnasia and hippodromes, and practice for javelin throwers and archers. Sources repeatedly suggest that he devalued and derided agonistic hippotrophy as merely a matter of wealth and expenditure, quite removed from excellence (*arete*). See Cartledge, *Agessilaos*, 149-150. On Agessilaos' release of men from military service for providing horses, see below.

<sup>64</sup>Paus. 3.8.9-10. On the accession, see Cartledge, *Agessilaos*, 20, 111-115; and Hamilton, *Agessilaos*, 26-29.

<sup>65</sup>In the spring of 396 Agessilaos at the age of forty-eight was appointed to lead the renewed war against Persia and he sailed east. In late summer his sister won at Olympia.

<sup>66</sup>The internal dynamics of Spartan politics around 400, including the role of leaders such as Lysander, kings such as Pausanias, and possible factions supporting or opposing Agessilaos, are complex and uncertain. As Falkner states, "On the available evidence it is difficult to assign a particular policy to any individual or group in post-war Sparta" ("Sparta," 17n3).

<sup>67</sup>Agessilaos' timing was also ironic: whether continuously banned or not, apparently Spartans had not won or competed at Olympia for over twenty years. A move to reduce chariot racing would have made more sense before 420 or after 396.

<sup>68</sup>E.g., Arist., *Pol.* 1289b33-35. Recall Herodotus' story (6.125) that Croesus enriched Alcmeon, son of Megakles I, which enabled him to become an Olympic chariot victor in 592.

<sup>69</sup>Hodkinson comments:

Behind Agessilaos' criticism of chariot-horse breeding and personal statues there clearly lurked a fear that his rivals might outstrip him in prestige. To this threat he himself responded not by spurning horse breeding but by rearing many horses for the army (Xen. *Agess.* 9.6). He thus took advantage of another avenue for gaining status by horse breeding which had opened up in 424 when Sparta began to use a cavalry of its own for the first time (Thuc. 4.55) ("Inheritance," 99).

Indeed, Agessilaos often had to deal with factions, including Lysander's intrigues, but he faced no serious rivals in 396. His problems concerned political and military control rather than hippotrophic prestige; see Hamilton, *Agessilaos*, 32-38, 42-43.

<sup>70</sup>Cartledge, *Agessilaos*, 149-150; Cartledge, *The Greeks*, 150; cf. Cartledge's suggestion (*The Spartans*, 213-214) that Kyniska may have acted on her own and that Agessilaos wanted to diminish her accomplishment. As he admits, Kyniska apparently caused Agessilaos no political problems, "and her posthumous heroization presumably had his support" (*Agessilaos*, 150). Agessilaos may have been "Panhellenic" in the 390s, but 396 was also his first opportunity, as king, to deal with Elis and Olympia.

<sup>71</sup>Pl., *Ap.* 36d-e.

<sup>72</sup>Among Spartans, king Demaratus (Moretti, *Ol.* no. 157) had already "scooped" the precedent of a royal victory graciously credited to the Spartan state in 504. Herodotus (6.70) notes that Demaratus gained great popularity by declaring his Olympic chariot victory as won by Sparta; he was the only king to do so. As Isocrates (*Biga* 16.34) suggested, Alcibiades had outdone even what even great cities could do in terms of resources and success, so responding as a state, via a corporate chariot, would not suffice. Nevertheless, hippotrophy remained a significant device for competitive display in interstate rivalries, notably by tyrants and kings including Dionysius of Syracuse and Philip II of Macedon. Dionysius in 388 tried and failed to surpass Alcibiades. He followed the game plan—a lavish entourage and multiple chariot entries, but the wealthy but unpopular absentee competitor met with hostility from Lysias, and his teams were wrecked and lost (Diod. Sic. 14.109). He could not even buy a non-equestrian win. Men sent by Dionysius tried to bribe the father of Antipater of Miletus, winner of the boys' boxing in 388, to

have the boy declare for Syracuse. Instead, Antipater declared that his family was from Miletus and that he was the "first Ionian" to set up a statue at Olympia (Paus. 6.2.6; Moretti, *Ol.* no. 385).

<sup>73</sup>Agesilaus would have known of the funeral games of Patroclus, including the role of Menelaus, king of Sparta, in the chariot race. He may also have relished the portrayal of Epeios as a great boxer but not a great warrior.

<sup>74</sup>Xen., *Hell.* 3.4.3-4; Plut., *Ages.* 6.4-6; Paus. 3.9.2-3; see Hamilton, *Agesilaus*, 30-32, 95-96; and Cartledge, *Agesilaos*, 212, 290-291, 357.

<sup>75</sup>Consistent with a program of encouraging military hippotrophy and cavalry training, Agesilaus, at Ephesus and needing cavalry, ordered wealthy individuals in the area to contribute a horse and a man, with the reward that they themselves would be excused from military service (Xen., *Hell.* 3.4.15-16; *Ages.* 1.23-24). Plutarch, *Ages.* 9 and *Sayings of the Spartans, Agesilaus* 12 (209b-c), adds that Agesilaus said he was following the example of Agamemnon, who accepted a good mare for releasing a rich but inferior man from military service.

<sup>76</sup>*Il.* 23.295. Centuries later, Pausanias (5.8.3) discussing legendary Olympic games, referenced Menelaus' use of Agamemnon's Aithe.

<sup>77</sup>Antiochus urges on his team with threats, initially of shame based on gender (*Il.* 23.407-409, trans. Richmond Lattimore): "But make your burst to catch the horses of the son of Atreus nor let them leave you behind, for fear Aithe who is female may shower you in mockery." In addition to the fact that the only mortal females present at these games were there as prizes (23.263, 704-705), the issue of gender was at play elsewhere in the chariot race (23.373-401). When the mares of Eumelus were leading with the stallions of Diomedes close behind, Apollo caused Diomedes to lose his whip and Eumelus increased his lead; but in response Athena smashed the yoke of Eumelus' chariot, causing him to crash. With the assistance of a divine female, Diomedes and his stallions went on to win first prize—a skilled woman and a tripod.

<sup>78</sup>It seems that matters of military needs, the value of cavalry, gender issues, and even Homer were on Agesilaus' mind; he probably pondered such matters before and after he pressured Kyniska to compete.

<sup>79</sup>At the dawn of Greek sport literature, a character argued that it was shameful for males to lose to females, a female chariot horse showed remarkable competitiveness, a rich man provided race horses rather than fight in war himself, placements in chariot racing were hotly contested as a matter of honor, and an entry resorted to trickery to move ahead in the standings.

<sup>80</sup>Indeed, 396 was an embarrassing year for Elis and the games. According to Pausanias (6.3.7), two of the three Hellanodikai gave the win in the *stadion* to Eupolemos of Elis, while the third chose Leon of Ambracia. When Leon appealed to the Olympic Council, the judges who gave the win to Eupolemos were fined. See Moretti, *Ol.* no. 367; and Nigel Crowther, "'Sed quis custodiet ipsos custodes': The Impartiality of the Olympic Judges and the Case of Leon of Ambracia," *Nikephoros* 10 (1997): 149-160. If Kyniska's win took place on the previous day, perhaps it is more understandable that Elean judges were anxious to acclaim an Elean victor?

<sup>81</sup>Cf. the sixth-century triple winners Euagoras of Sparta (Moretti, *Ol.* nos. 110, 113, 117) in 548, 544, 540; and Cimon I of Athens (nos. 120, 124, 127) in 536, 532, 528.

<sup>82</sup>Xen., *Hell.* 4.1.40; Plut., *Ages.* 13.3. On the son of Eualkes of Athens, see Kyle, *Athletics*, A77 and 119.

<sup>83</sup>Agesilaus was not above interfering at other Panhellenic games. According to Xenophon (*Hell.* 4.5.1-2,4) Argos had taken over Corinth and was holding the Isthmian Games in 390 when Agesilaus took over the sanctuary by force and stayed there while Corinthian exiles held sacrifices and games. After Agesilaus and the Spartans left, the Argives returned and completed their staging of Isthmian Games. Similarly, Agesipolis in 388 waged war against Argos by way of Nemea and ignored claims that a holy truce was in place (Xen., *Hell.* 4.7.3).

<sup>84</sup>That she was the "first" is not in doubt, but her motivation should not be assumed by retrojecting a perhaps anachronistic female agenda. As Cartledge cautions, "I hope that I may at least have made readers hesitate before seeking to enlist the women of ancient Sparta as allies in the just cause of feminism" (*Spartan Reflections*, 126).

<sup>85</sup>Scanlon (*Eros*, 22) suggests that the story of Agesilaus' influence "would seem to be at odds" with the epigram, but that Olympia was not the place to make his point about wealth rather than excellence: "That would have impugned the excellence not only of his sister, but of every Greek who ever won in the hippic events at Olympia!" However, the word "woman" in the epigram, and the statue of Kyniska herself, impugned those victories—with intentional Laconian understatement. Agesilaus' influence furthered his economic and personal agenda.

<sup>86</sup>With a reputation for traditional virtues, Agesilaus would not have approved of Kyniska's competition if her aim had been to liberate females. Like Xenophon, who felt that women's work tasks sufficed for their "exercise" (*Oik.* 10.9), Agesilaus was a traditional sexist. According to Xenophon, *Hell.* 3.4.19 (cf. *Xen. Ages.* 1.28; *Plut. Ages.* 9, *Sayings of the Spartans*, 13 [209c]), in 395 Agesilaus tried to inspire courage in battle in his men by teaching them contempt for their enemy. Natives caught by Greek raiding parties were put on sale naked so that the Greeks could see that they were pale and flabby from riding in carriages and not exposing their skin to the sun. The message was that fighting such men would be like fighting women. In 395 at Ephesus and in 396 and 392 at Olympia, he used "females"—his sister and effeminate pale Persians—to show contempt for his rivals and enemies.

<sup>87</sup>Thuc. 2.45.2