



The Vatican runner

copy of an hypothétic honorary statue of an *Heraia* participant

Roma,

Vatican Museo, 2784,

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PHERENIKI

Date of birth she was born in 450-460 a.C.

Places of birth and living: she was born and lived on the island of Rhodes

Family, Husband(s) and/or romantic relationship: she was the daughter of the famous Diagoras of Rhodes and from her marriage she had three children, all athletes. Her more famous son is Pisidoras that was a runner

Physical characteristics:

She must be strong and athletic

Personality:

Loving mother, determinate, brave and courageous. She is also intelligent and cunning because she manages to deceive men about her personality.

Hobbies:

Sport - Train her son

Experiences: Pherenike's husband died while teaching her children to wrestle and play in the Olympics, so she began teaching boxing to replace her husband. She entered the games dressed as a man and when the judges discovered her, they kicked her out but did not give her any punishment. Since then, men entered the stadium naked to make sure they were men.

Texts where she appears (Title, author, date):

Phereniki is mentioned in Joshua J. Mark's work, "Phereniki, Coach of the Olympic Games", translated by Babeth Etienne-Cartwright. She also appears in Stefano Fabbri's "Women who pretended to be man", with another name: Callipatera. (Marco Gambino)

How did she change the life of antic women?:

She refused to submit to the law of men and defies the ban on women participating in the Olympic Games to support and encourage her son whom she trained and who won.

Aphorisms and quotes related to her (+ Sources)

Pausanias - *Greece Description* - 5,7-8

[7] Κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἐς Ὀλυμπίαν ὁδόν, πρὶν ἢ διαβῆναι τὸν Ἀλφειόν, ἔστιν ὄρος ἐκ Σκιλλοῦντος ἐρχομένῳ πέτραις ὑψηλαῖς ἀπότομον· ὀνομάζεται δὲ Τυπαῖον τὸ ὄρος. Κατὰ τοῦτου τὰς γυναῖκας Ἑλεῖοις ἔστιν ὠθεῖν νόμος, ἣν φωραθῶσιν ἐς

τὸν ἀγῶνα ἐλθοῦσαι τὸν Ὀλυμπικόν, ἣ καὶ ὅλως ἐν ταῖς ἀπειρημέναις σφίσιν ἡμέραις διαβᾶσαι τὸν Ἀλφειόν. Οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ ἀλῶναι λέγουσιν οὐδεμίαν, ὅτι μὴ Καλλιπάτειραν μόνην. Εἰσὶ δὲ οἱ τὴν αὐτὴν ταύτην Φερενίκην, καὶ οὐ Καλλιπάτειραν καλοῦσιν.

[7] We find on the road to Olympia, before crossing the Alphaeus, a mountain which, on the side of Scillonte, has very high and very steep rocks; it is called Mount Typaeos. The law among the Eleans dictates that women who are surprised at the Olympic games, or who only dare to cross the Alphaeus on days when it is forbidden to them, be thrown from the top of this mountain. Callipatira is, they say, the only woman who allowed herself to be taken in; others name her Pherenice, and not Callipatira.

[8] Αὕτη, προαποθανόντος αὐτῇ τοῦ ἀνδρός, ἐξεικάσασα αὐτὴν τὰ πάντα ἀνδρὶ γυμναστῇ, ἤγαγεν ἐς Ὀλυμπίαν τὸν υἱὸν μαχοῦμενον. Νικῶντος δὲ τοῦ Πεισιρόδου, τὸ ἔρυμα ἐν ᾧ τοὺς γυμναστὰς ἔχουσιν ἀπειλημένους, τοῦτο ὑπερπηδῶσα ἡ Καλλιπάτειρα ἐγυμνώθη. Φωραθείσης δὲ ὅτι εἴη γυνή, ταύτην ἀφιδᾶσιν ἀζήμιον, καὶ τῷ πατρὶ καὶ ἀδελφοῖς αὐτῆς καὶ τῷ παιδὶ αἰδῶ νέμοντες ὑπῆρχον δὴ ἅπασιν αὐτοῖς Ὀλυμπικαὶ νῖκαι. Ἐποίησαν δὲ νόμον ἐς τὸ ἔπειτα ἐπὶ τοῖς γυμνασταῖς γυμνοὺς σφᾶς ἐς τὸν ἀγῶνα ἐσέρχεσθαι.

[8] Her husband having died before her, she took all the fittings of a gymnastic master, and took her son to Olympia to fight in the games. Pisirodos (that was the name of the young man) having won the prize, Callipatira, by crossing the barrier which keeps gymnastics masters confined, allowed his gender to be recognized. However, she was sent back without punishment, out of consideration for her father, her brothers and her son, who had all been crowned at the Olympic games; but a law was passed stating that henceforth gymnastics masters would only appear naked for these exercises.

Communication: Artworks where she appears (Tittle, artist, year)



Screenshot from the video game Assassin's Creed: **Odyssey**.Ubisoft. 2021

Sitography : Wikipedia

<https://www.worldhistory.org/trans/fr/2-72/phereniki-femme-entraîneur-aux-jeux-olympiques/>

<https://www.fhw.gr/olympics/ancient/en/204a.html>

<http://womenofhistory.blogspot.com/2016/08/pherenike-of-rhodes.html>

Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s0Fz2ICEW7o>

<https://olympics.com/en/original-series/episode/the-incredible-story-of-a-mother-who-risked-her-life-to-see-her-son-compete>

Quotation about Phereniki:

<http://ancientolympics.arts.kuleuven.be/sourceEN/D156aEN.html>

Questions for a kahoot : (don't forget the suggested answers)

What sport did Phereniki's son do?

Running ☒

Football

Tennis

Gym

A woman competed in Ancient Olympic Games

True ☒

False

Why did Ancient athletes compete naked?

To be more comfortable

To tan more easily

To be sure to be men ☒

To impress their opponents

Which author wrote about Phereniki? (Marco Gambino)

1) Joshua J. Mark (correct answer)

2) William Shakespeare

3) Virginia Woolf

4) Jane Austen