

JOSINE BLOK : **An Athenian woman's competence: the case of Xenokrateia.**

The famous dedication by Xenokrateia to the river god Kephisos and other divinities not far from the city of Athens in c. 400 BC (NM 2756; *IG I*<sup>3</sup> 987; *IG II*<sup>2</sup> 4547) is a rare example of a sizeable, public ego-document by a citizen woman. Close reading of the iconography of the votive relief, of the dedicatory epigram and the inscribed offering list, and comparison with other private foundations allow reconstructing Xenokrateia's sense of her identity and the religious, intellectual and economic competences she must have had to bring this dedication about. As a literate, self-confident and pious Athenian citizen, mother, widow and heiress, she spent on estimation several hundred drachmas on her dedication, *pace* the law quoted at Is. 10.10. The plot of land involved was either her own property or a place already sacred to Kephisos and the Nymphs, to which she added her own dedication. For the latter possibility, a double relief dedicated by Kephisodotos to the hero Echelos and other deities (NM 1783) provides additional evidence.

Xenokrateia's dedication is exceptional for the detailed, qualitative analysis it allows, but it is not exceptional in quantitative terms: numerous dedications by women show them using similar competences. This approach to the evidence, initiated in recent scholarship, may open new windows on women's agency in classical Athens.

**Mots-clés :**

Xenokrateia – private foundation – citizenship – identity – competence – literacy – numeracy – votive relief – dedication – women's agency – Is. 10.10 – classical Athens