

CLAS 0210

Sport in the Ancient Greek World



Class 27

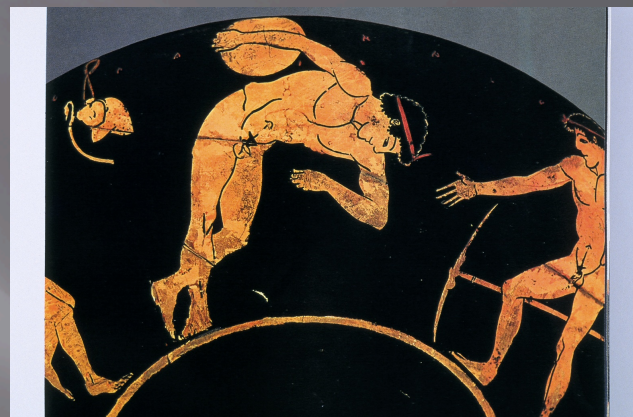
April 5, 2010

Women in ancient
Greek sport

Absence of females



Nudity universal for all male contestants





foot massage

rubbing on oil

disrobing



- ▶ Minoan and Mycenaean boxers and wrestlers are depicted clothed

- ▶ Homeric heroes put on a loincloth to compete

- ▶ So how and when did total nudity become the norm?

The boxing boys
from Santorini



Nude practice and contest in the gymnasium
[remember, Greek word **gymnos** = naked]



Texts on women in Greek sport:
see *Arete* Ch. VII, #149-162

Inscription found at Patras:

“I, Nikophilos, set up this statue of Parian marble to honor my lovely sister Nikegora, winner in the girls’ race”

- ▶ Date — ?
- ▶ Place — ?
- ▶ *Which* girls’ races?



Peleus

Atalanta

Hippomenes and
the golden apples

diazoma
(loincloth)



▣ Black-figure
vase, ca. 500
BC, Munich.

Pelops and Hippodameia



In celebration of his defeat of Oenomaus...

Pelops founded the **Olympic Games** —
to honor Zeus

Hippodameia established the **Heraia** —
to honor Zeus's wife Hera

See Pausanias 5.16.2-7 (**Arete** # 158)

Temple of Hera, Olympia

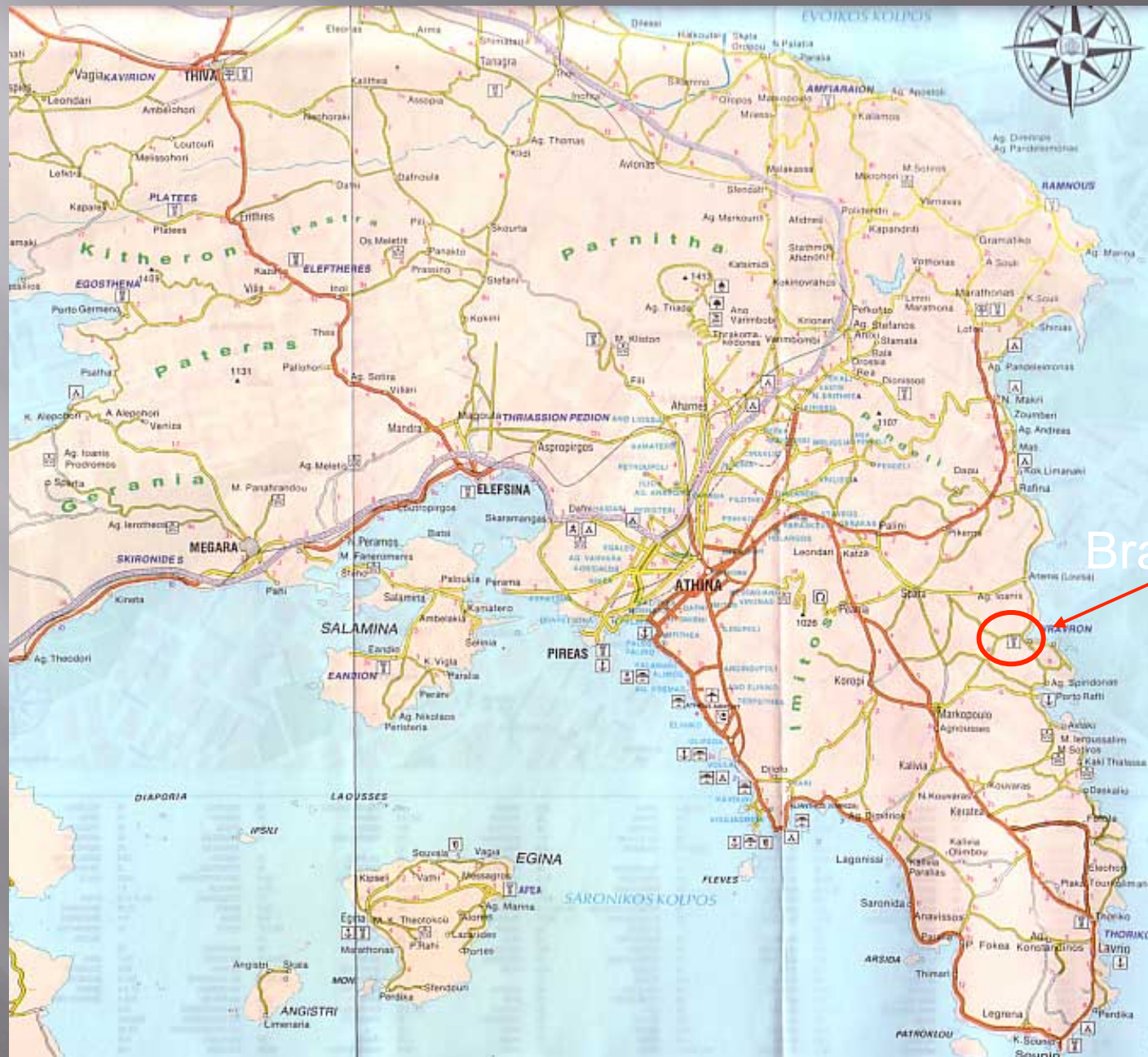




Bronze figurine of female runner,
wearing a *chiton*. (6th century BC).

Praxiteles' Amazon,
5th century BC





Brauron

Brauron (in Attica)



4-yearly “**Bear Festival**”
for **Artemis**, goddess of
wild animals and virgin
girls





Foto: Guy Debognies

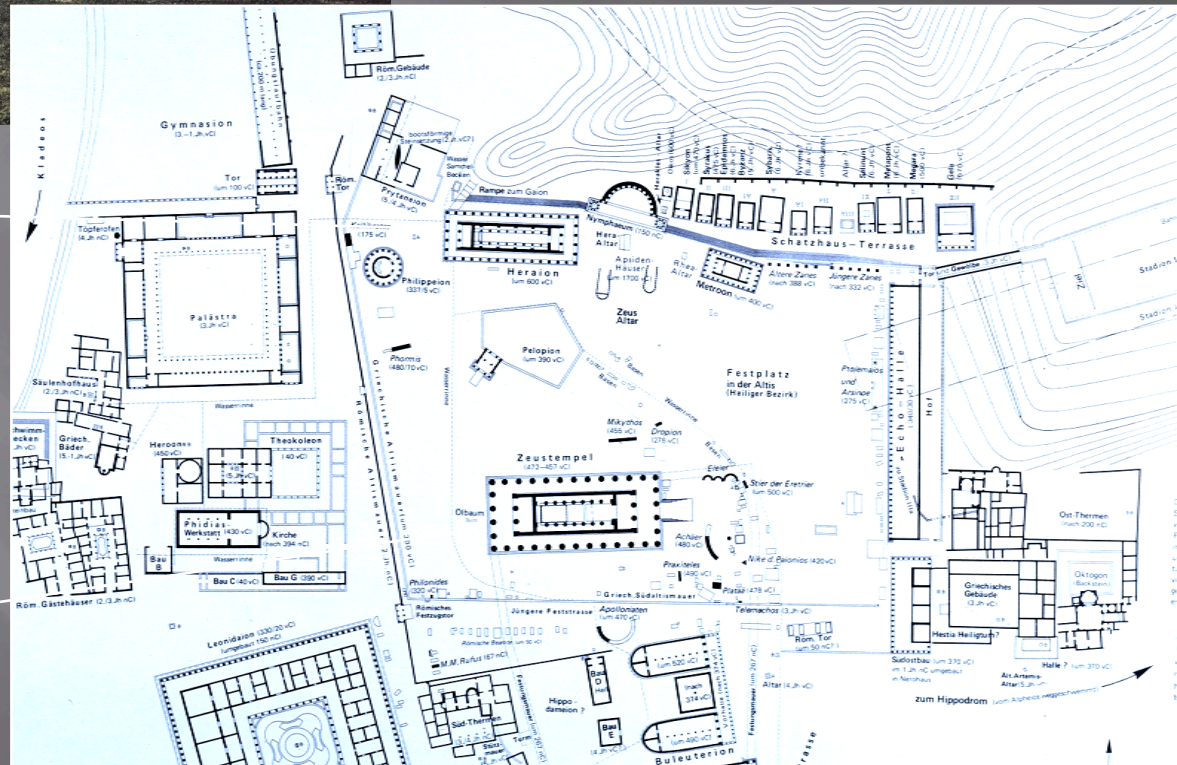
Statuettes of young girls
("little bears"
from Brauron





Hera temple
(200 "Hera-feet")

Stade races:
Olympic Games and
Heraia use feet of
different lengths



Zeus temple
(200 "Zeus-feet")

Stadium at Olympia



Pausanias gives us valuable information about women spectators at Olympia...

...or, rather, the lack of them.

See *Arete* #149:

- proscription on female attendance at the Games
- the story of Kallipateira, after which...
- all trainers, like the athletes, must attend in the nude

But what about *Arete* # 150?

“They do not prevent virgins from watching the Games”

Orsippos of Megara
15th Olympiad (720 BC)

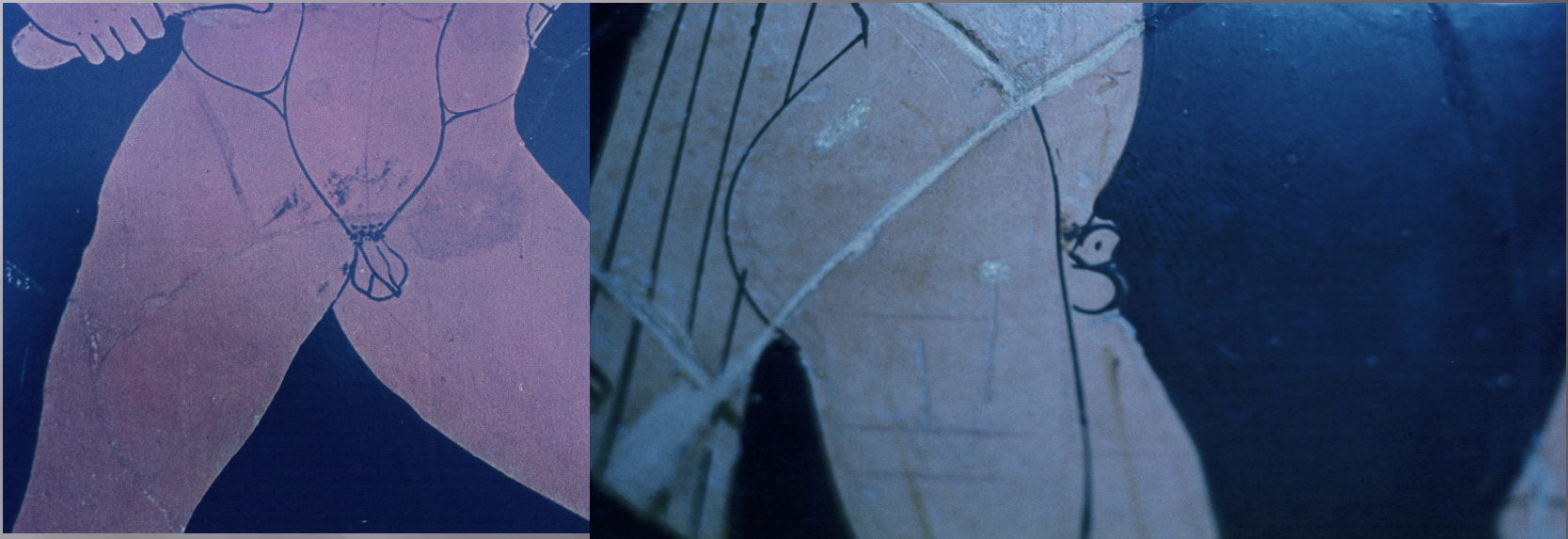
Discarded or accidentally dropped his loincloth
while running in the stade race

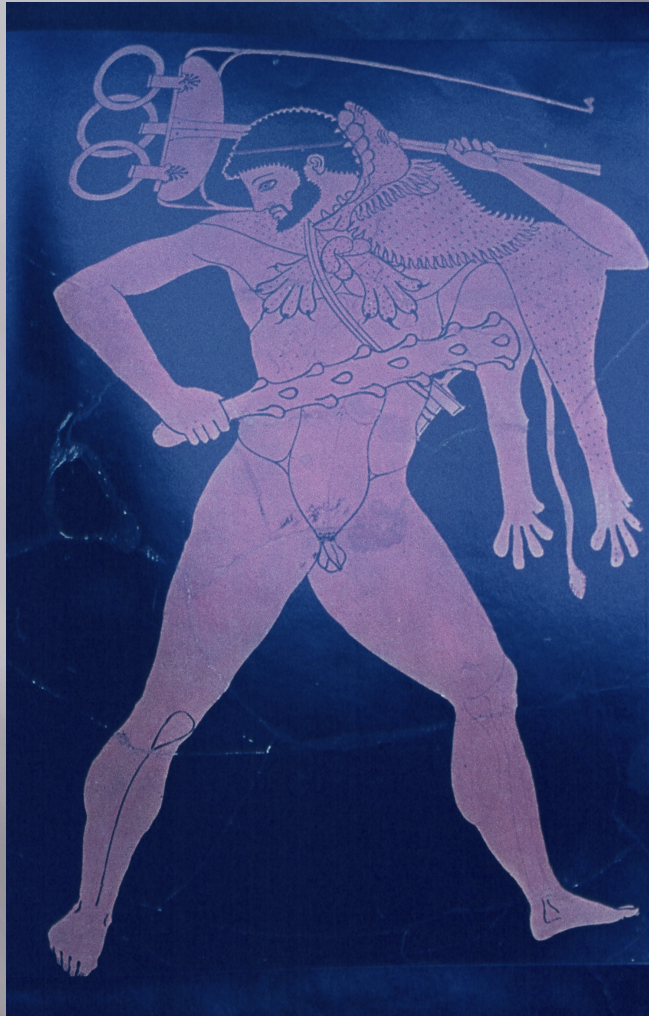
See:

Pausanias 1.44.1 (*Arete* #3)

Thucydides 1.6.5-6 (*Arete* #5)

Infibulation





Infibulated Herakles



Infibulated satyr

