

CLAS 0210

Sport in the Ancient Greek World



Class 28

April 7, 2010

Women in ancient
Greek sport (continued)

Nudity in athletics

Absence of females



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

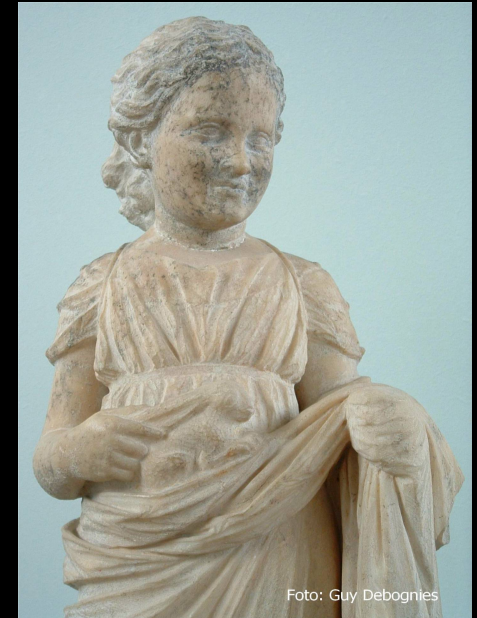
diazoma
(loincloth)



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



Brauron (in Attica)



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



In celebration of his defeat of Oenomaus...

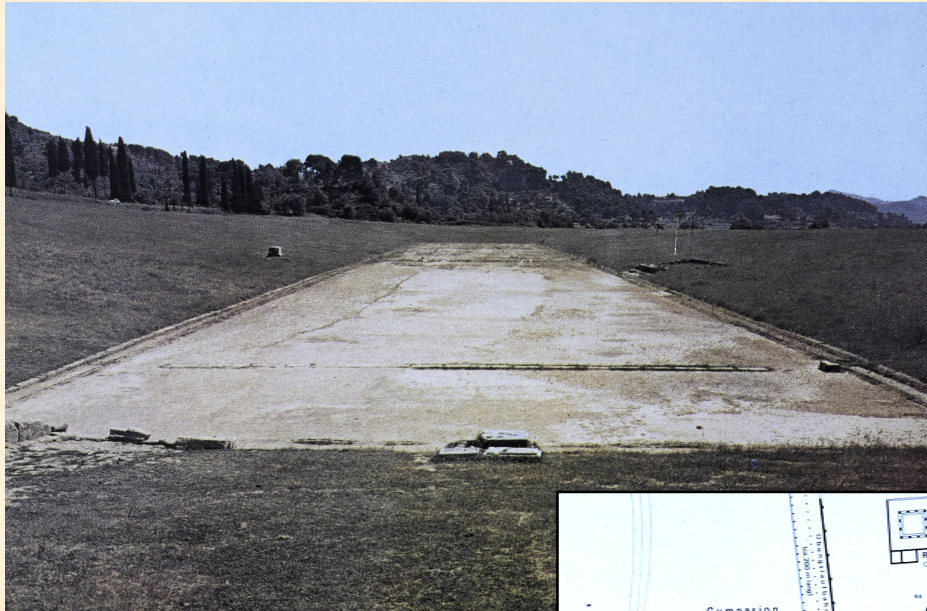
Pelops founded the **Olympic Games** —
to honor Zeus

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

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

chiton

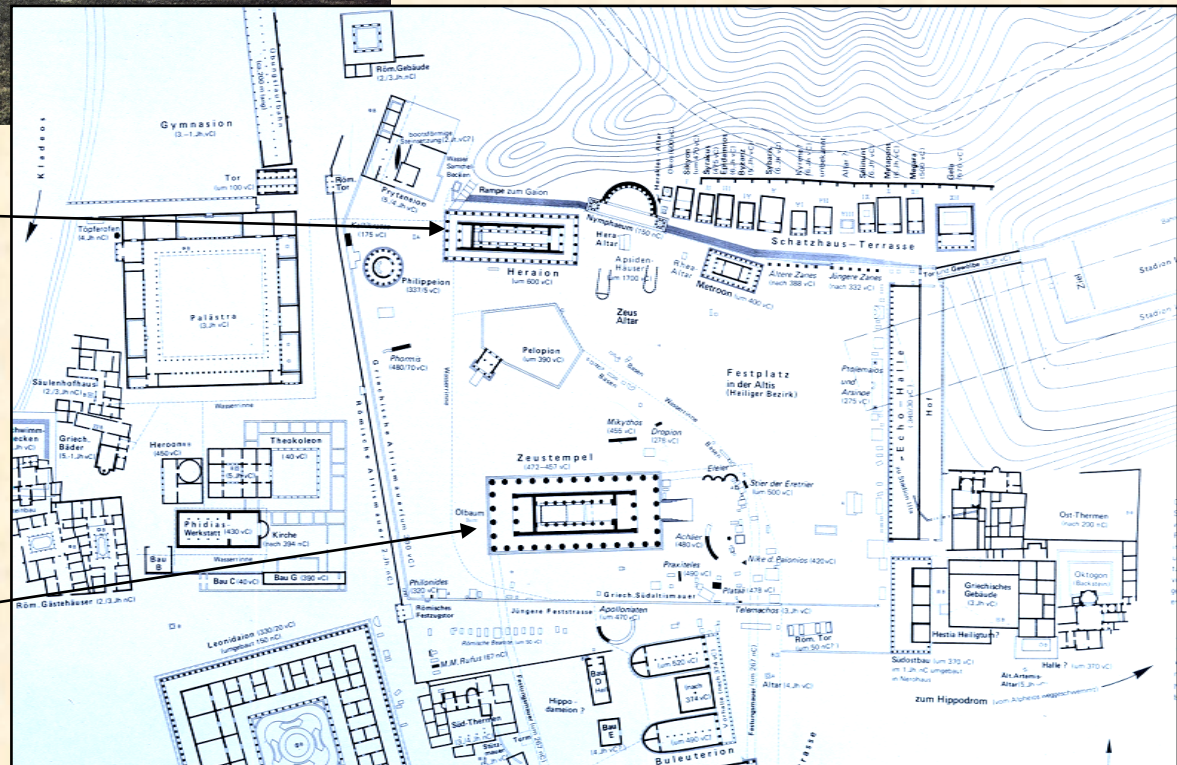




Stade races:
Olympic Games and
Heraia use feet of
different lengths

Hera temple
(200 “Hera-feet”)

Zeus temple
(200 “Zeus-feet”)



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

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

See *Arete* #149:

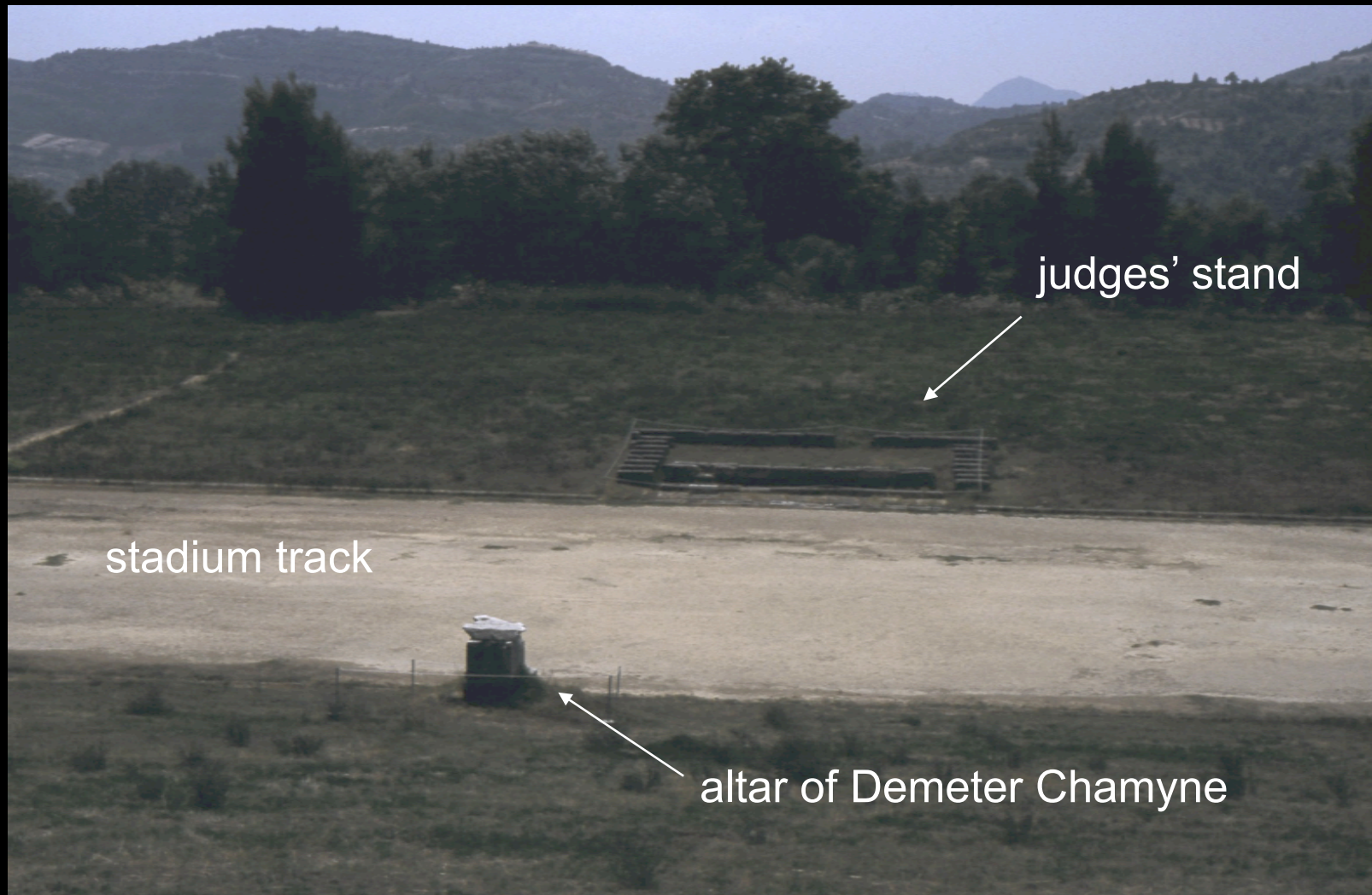
- proscription on female attendance at the Games
- the story of Kallipateira, after which...
- all trainers, like the athletes, must attend in the nude

But what about *Arete* # 150?

“They do not prevent virgins from watching the Games”

Suetonius

Stadium at Olympia



The story of Kyniska, the Spartan woman

- statue base of 396 BC found at Olympia (*Arete* 151b)
- Pausanias 3.8.1. (*Arete* 151a)
- Plutarch, *Agesilaos* 20.1 (*Arete* 151c)

Spartan athletic training

- *Arete* 152, 153, 154
- Lykourgos (founder of the Spartan constitution)
- Plato's ideal city-state

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]

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



Kyon (dog) + *desmos* (leash) → *kynodesmai* (dog's leash)

“The cord with which they tie up the foreskin, they call the dogleash”
(Pollux, *Onomastikon* 2.4.171)



Infibulated Herakles



Infibulated satyr