

CLAS 0210

Sport in the Ancient Greek World



Class 29

Friday 9 April, 2010

The erotic in
Greek sport

Leni Riefenstahl's *Olympia* (1936)



Myron's *diskobolos*, ancient and modern



Victorian bathing

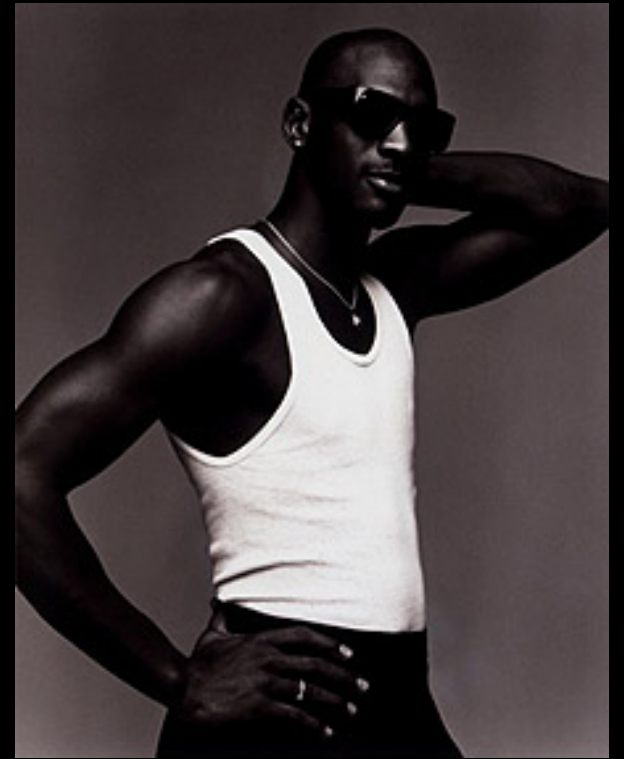
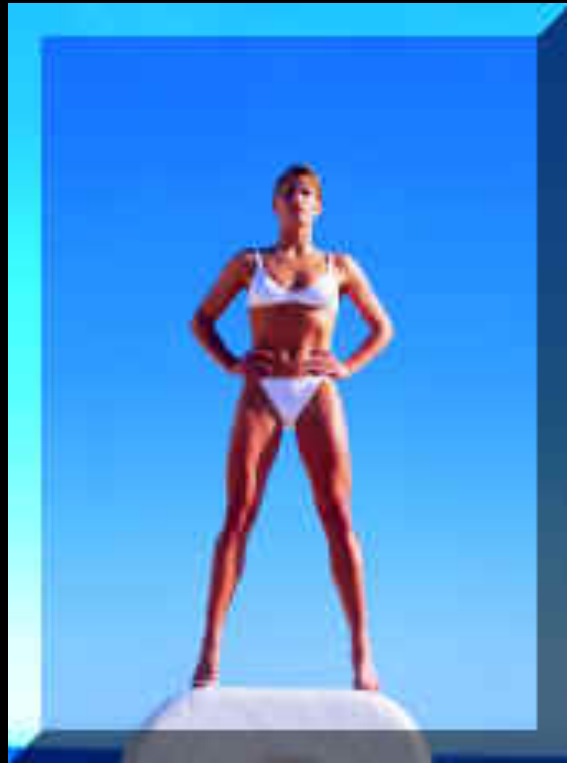




Mosaic from the late Roman villa at
Piazza Armerina, Sicily









Pelops and Hippodameia





Herakles, the he-man

The most popular hero to be honored with statues in the gymnasium

The archetypal model of the Greek athlete



The gymnasium: the convergence of military and athletic motives for training
Masculinity = active physicality

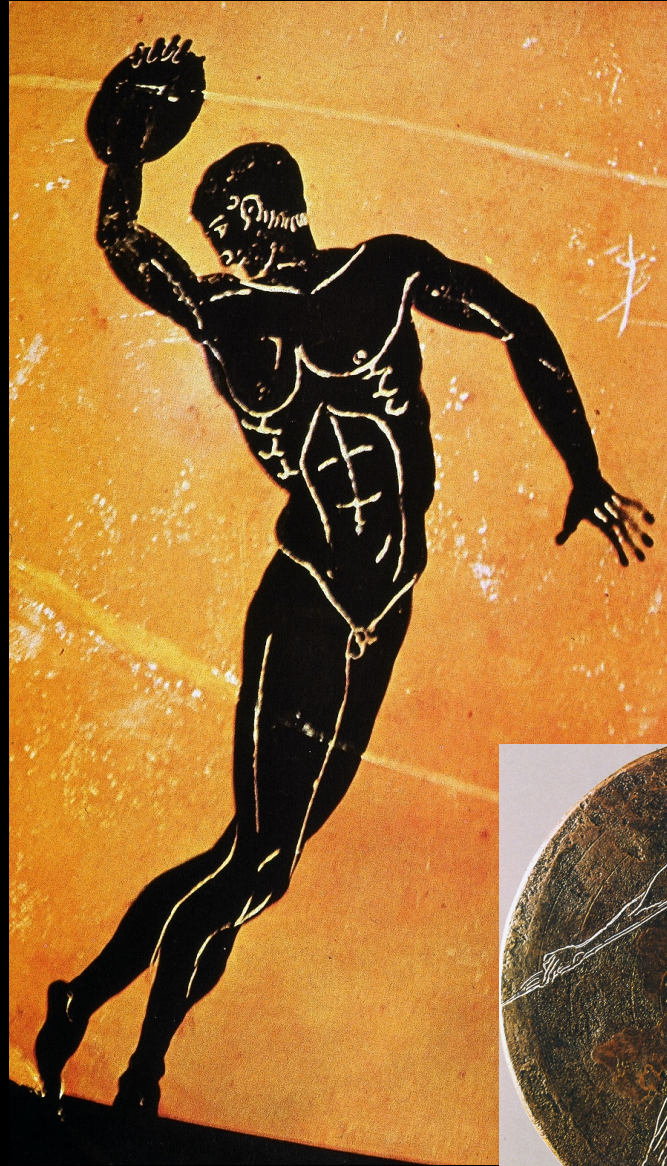
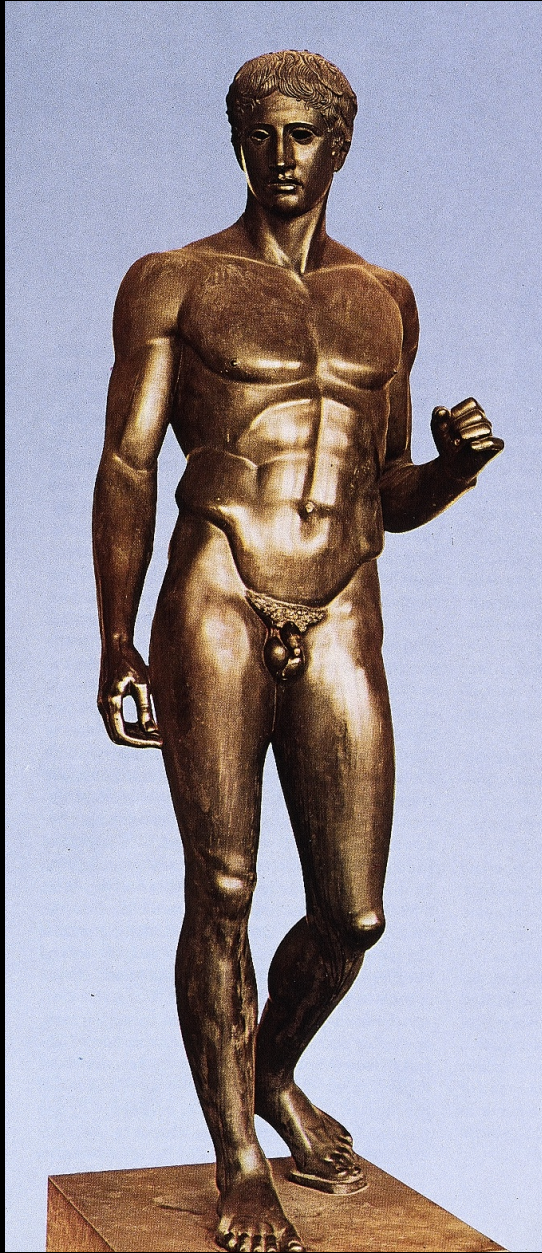
The soldier and the athlete were
one and the same person



- hoplitodromos



hoplitomachia



Greek homosexuality

Culturally the norm for Greek men to have heterosexual relationships with wives/mistresses/courtesans...

...but also single-sex relationships:

erastes (“lover”): usually the older, mature man

eromenos (“beloved”): usually a youth

palaestrita



The gymnasium as an opportunity for same-sex encounters





plate 530-430 BCE,
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

javelin



alabastron for
oil, in a bag

pickaxe, for preparing
the track or jumping-pit



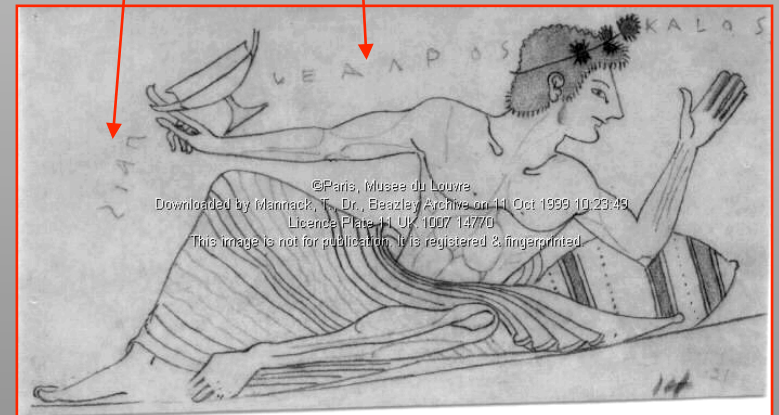
Erastes crowns eromenos with victory wreaths

Tunnel into stadium at Nemea



kalos =
“good”, “sexy”,
“desirable”

“pais Leagros kalos” =
“the boy Leagros is sexy”



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Literary evidence

Aeschines, *Against Timarchos*

Theognis

Plato, *Phaedrus*

Plato, *Charmides*

Plato, *Symposium*

Aristophanes, *Peace*