What the Greeks knew

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• Part II: Athens
What the Greeks knew

• Burial customs
  – Prehistoric inhabitants of Greece: Inhumation
  – Hittites: Cremation
  – Acheans/Mycenae: Inhumation
  – Late Mycenae (1000 BC): Cremation
  – Greeks/Athens (till 8th c): Cremation
  – Athens (8th on): Inhumation
What the Greeks knew

- Painting
  - Athens develops an artistic language
  - The geometric style (11th c BC)
  - The narrative style (7th c BC)
    - Mythology (inherited from Mycenae)
    - Homer’s poems (that deal with Mycenaean history)
  - Horses are prominent
  - Painting predates sculpture by centuries
What the Greeks knew

• Painting
  – The geometric style (11th c BC)

Monumental geometric amphora
(8th c BC)
Athens National Museum
Chariots 8th c BC
(Metropolitan Museum)

Horse and deer
720 BC
(Berlin Museum)

7th c BC - Herakles fighting the centaur Nessos
(Metropolitan Museum)
What the Greeks knew

• Vases

Geometric birds, 700 BC (Getty Villa)

Geometric animals, 475 BC (Getty Villa)
What the Greeks knew

• Painting
  – Orientalizing style (7th c BC)

7th c BC, Louvre, Paris)
What the Greeks knew

• Painting
  – Narrative style (7th c BC)

Melian amphora (7th c BC)
(Athens National Museum)
What the Greeks knew

• Painting
  – “Chigi vase” (650 BC)

(Villa Giulia, Roma)
What the Greeks knew

• Painting
  – “Euphronios Krater" (Euphronios, 6th c BC)

Hermes directing Sleep and Death as they transport Sarpedon, the dead son of Zeus, to Lycia for burial.
What the Greeks knew

• Painting
  – Kleitias: "Vase Francois" (570 BC)

(Museo Archeologico, Firenze)

Hunt of Calydonian boar
Funeral games of Patroclus
Wedding of Peleus and Thetis
Achilles pursuing Troilus.
Battle of pygmies and cranes.
What the Greeks knew

- **Painting**

  Nakio runners (530 BC)  
  (Metropolitan Museum)

  Andokides 530 BC  
  Red on black!  
  (Metropolitan Museum)

  Euphronion 515 BC  
  (Metropolitan Museum)
What the Greeks knew

• Painting

Women weaving
(530 BC, Metropolitan Museum)
What the Greeks knew

6th c BC vases
(Boston Museum of Fine Arts)
What the Greeks knew

Athenian School – Duris Cup
(Royal Museum, Berlin)
What the Greeks knew

Kissing couple (highly unusual) on Greek vase of 460BC
(Art Institute of Chicago)
What the Greeks knew

Eretria epinetron: scenes from the women's quarters (430 BC)
(Athens National Museum)
What the Greeks knew

- Archaic sculpture

Calf-bearer (590 BC)
Acropolis Museum, Athens

Rampin Horseman (560 BC), oldest equestrian statue
What the Greeks knew

- Archaic sculpture

The Piraeus Apollo, the oldest known bronze statue of Greece (530 BC) (National Museum, Athens)

Poseidon of Artemision (bronze of (5th c BC) (National Museum, Athens)
What the Greeks knew

- **Kouros (nude statue): harmony, sublime**

Colossal kouros from the Dipylon, oldest known kouros (7th c BC) (National Museum, Athens)

590 BC (National Museum, Athens)  530 BC (Acropolis Museum, Athens)  600 BC (Metropolitan, New York)
What the Greeks knew

• Base of a kouros

Relief base from a kouros base: kids playing a game (490 BC) (National Museum, Athens)
What the Greeks knew

• Funerary monuments

Polyxena Sarcophagus (500 BC)
(Canakkale Archaeological Museum)
What the Greeks knew

• Funerary monuments

Polyxena Sarcophagus (500 BC)
(Canakkale Archaeological Museum)
What the Greeks knew

• Funerary monuments

Funerary stele of Hegeso (410 BC) (National Museum, Athens)

Funerary stele of the Ilisos (4th c BC) (National Museum, Athens)
What the Greeks knew

• Funerary monuments

Funerary monument of Aristonautes (4th c BC) (National Museum, Athens)
What the Greeks knew

• Temple
  – Not a meeting place but exclusively religious
  – Not a place of worship but the house of the deity
  – Deities receive daily offerings of food and drink
  – Deities receive a share of the harvest
  – Deities receive a share of the profits of war
  – Kouroi and korai dedicated to the deity as votive offerings
  – First use of an external (not internal) colonnade
What the Greeks knew

• Temple
  – Originally built of wood
  – The timber architecture is transferred to the stone architecture (gabled roof, architraves, etc)
  – The interior of the temple is reserved to the divinity
  – Decoration focused on the exterior, which is visible during worship
  – The column as an element of beauty
  – Oldest extant temples: Paestum and Agrigento
What the Greeks knew

• Temple

(Pixelle: http://trashformer.free.fr/spip/article.php3?id_article=6)
What the Greeks knew

• Agora
  – The meeting place (same function as the temple in Mesopotamia, Palestine, Egypt)
What the Greeks knew

Lydia's electrum coins 575 BC
Silver coins 500 BC
Achemenid coins 500 BC

Greek drachmas

Sicilian coins (Syracuse, 400 BC)
Greek Society

• Athens 431 BC
  – Male citizens
    • Aristocracy (Eupatridae, descendants of first Greeks)
      – Political rights
      – Land ownership
      – Ran the polis
      – 5-10% of population
    • Workers, traders, paesants, craftsmen
    • Enjoyed freedom never known before in history
    • But social and economic inequality
    • 50,000 adult males
    • 20-30% of the population
Greek Society

- Athens
  - 493 BC: Themistocles: naval (not territorial) supremacy, trade (not war)
  - 479 BC: Greece liberated from Persian occupation
  - 461 BC: Pericles promotes the ideal of democracy and turns the state into a patron of the arts
Greek Society

- Athens 431 BC
  - Resident aliens (metoikoi: Thracians, Phrygians, Lydians, Syrians, Jews, Phoenicians, Egyptians, Arabians)
    - Free men
    - No political rights
    - No land ownership
    - Ran the economy
    - Paid taxes
    - 25,000 (male) metics
    - 15-20% of population
Greek Society

- Athens 431 BC
  - Slaves
    - Athens a slave-based society (from sex to domestic chores to labor)
    - Not free
    - No political rights
    - No land ownership
    - Not based on racial or ethnic grounds
    - Anyone could become a slave (even Plato)
    - Did not pay taxes
    - 100,000 slaves
    - 40-50% of population
Greek Society

• Athens 431 BC
  – Women
    • No rights outside the household
    • Typical newlyweds: groom over 30 and bride under 16 (often 12-13)
    • Stereotype: women have strong emotions and weak minds, thus they need to be protected from themselves and men need to be protected from them
    • Every woman had a "kyrios" (guardian): nearest male relative or husband
    • Women could not own property
    • Female citizens could marry male citizens but still had no rights
Greek Society

• Athens 431 BC
  – Women
    • Only prostitutes, slaves and concubines are allowed to leave the house alone
    • Women can attend only special religious functions for women
    • Women cannot socialize with men
    • Women receive no education
    • Wives are assumed and expected to be dumb
    • Heteras (courtesans/ geishas) provide the (intellectual, social, sexual) entertainment
    • Men can also use prostitutes, concubines and female slaves
Greek Society

• Athens 431 BC
  – Sex
    • No Athenian law prohibits an adult male from having sex with a minor (boy or girl)
    • Sexual immorality: excess and passivity (but nothing to do with the gender or the age)
    • The man is liable for adultery (the woman is merely ridiculed)
    • Solon enacts a law that authorizes a father to sell an unchaste daughter into slavery
Greek Society

- Athens 431 BC
  - Homosexuality
    - Widespread and pederastic: older male to younger male, older woman to younger woman
  - Pedagogical function

Zephyros and Hyakinthos
Tarquinia, circa 480 BCE.
Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

Kylix by Douris (5th c BC)
Metropolitan Museum
Greek Society

• Athens 431 BC
  – Athenian empire (478-404)
    • Evolution of the Delian League (478 BC), originally created to defend Greece from the Persians (the NATO of the Aegian Sea)
    • Athens dominates because of superior fleet
    • Athens controls Black Sea agriculture and the flow of grains through the Hellespont/Dardanelles straight
    • Athens imposes puppet democratic governments on other cities
    • Other cities pay tribute to Athens and make donations to goddess Athena
Greek Society

• Athens 431 BC
  – Athenian empire (478-404)
    • Goddess Athena (the temple) acquires land that it leases to Athenian citizens
    • Athenian fleet and Athenian garrisons protect the other cities
    • 150 subject city/states
    • Brain-drain of metoiko from the other cities: commerce, banking, craft, culture (Herodotus)
    • No assimilation of conquered people
Greek Society

• Athenian empire (478-404)/ Decline
  – Arrogance of a tyrant
  – No interest in the West
  – Lenghty conflict with Sparta + Persia (460-404 BC)
  – Repercussions: Civil wars throughout the Greek world
  – Destruction of Athenian empire
  – New hegemonic power: Thebes (371 BC - 346 BC)
  – Macedonia (346 BC - 317 BC)
  – Battle of Chaeronea (338 BC): Philip II of Macedonia defeats Athens and Thebes
Greek Society

• Athenian empire
  – Between the Persian Wars and the defeat at Chaeronea, Athens was never at peace for more than a decade (at war two years out of three)
Greek Society

- Athenian empire: the USA of the Greek world
  - Strength: Fleet, Airforce
  - Nemesis: Sparta, Soviet Union
  - Allied against: Persia (Persian Wars), Germany/Japan (WW 2)
  - Postwar empire: Delian League, NATO
  - but...
    - ...an alienated Persia supports Sparta, whereas Germany/Japan incorporated in the USA empire
  - Winner: Sparta, USA
Greek Society

• Syracuse
  – Wealth and culture to match Athens (480-400 BC)
  – 480 BC: defeats Carthage
  – 474 BC: defeats the Etruscans
  – 415 BC: defeats Athens
Greek Society

• Greek Technology
  – Barely more advanced than neolithic technology:
    • Agriculture
    • Metallurgy
    • Pottery
    • Textile-making
  – No significant technological improvements
  – No significant improvement in manufacturing
Greek Society

• Greek warfare
  – Phalanx warfare (allows a smaller, disciplined force to defeat a larger mob force)
  – Triremes (sea formations) (from Phoenicians)
  – Iron weapons (from Celts)
  – Catapult (Dionysius the Elder of Syracuse, 400 BC)
  – Persians wars (499-479BC)
    • End of the Archaic era and beginning of the Classical era
Greek Society

• Greek warfare
  – The trireme allows Themistocles to defeat the Persians at Salamis in 480 BC and to establish Athens' naval power
  – It indirectly launches Athens' golden age
  – It also indirectly fosters Athens’ democracy because poor oarsmen are vital to the naval triumphs of the trireme navy
Greek Society

- Colonization
  - Euboea: Pitheicusae (Ischia), Cumae (th c BC)
    - Trading metal with the Etruscans (iron, copper, silver)
  - Chalcis: Messina
  - Corinth: Syracuse
  - Achaea: Sybaris
  - Phocaea: Massalia/Marseille (600 BC)
  - etc
Greek Society

• Colonization
  – A colony could be founded by more than one Greek city
  – The colony was largely independent
  – Colonies often at war with each other and with Carthage and Etruscans
  – Syracuse one of the most powerful Greek cities from 485BC to the second Punic War (218-201)
  – Second Punic War caused destruction of most Greek cities in Italy (Sicily became Rome’s first overseas province)
Greek Society

• Colonization
  – Colonization caused by population explosion and limits of productive land in Greece
  – Colonization caused by lack of natural resources (wood, minerals, cereals)
  – Emigration of poor Greeks in search for usable land
  – Profit margin of Athenian trade as venture capital to invest in colonies
  – Eastern Mediterranean as a laboratory-experiment for capitalism and imperialism
Greek Society

- Exploitation of colonial cities
  - Taxation to maintain army and to police the (Greek) world
  - Taxation on resident aliens
  - Taxation to support temple-building
  - Benefits to colonial cities: no need to invest in their own army, focus on economy and culture
Greek Society

• Rest of the world
  – Phoenicians and Egyptians: the civilized world “is” the Mediterranean
  – Four great barbaric people: Persians, Celts, Scythians, Libyans
Greek Society

• Trade:
  – 450BC: Piraeus largest port in the western world
  – Athens exported: arms, luxury articles, wine, olive oil, ceramics, art, books
  – Athens imported:
    • cereals (Egypt, Libya, Ukraine), fish, cheese, fruit
    • iron, copper, wood, wax, ivory, wool, papyrus
    • tiles (Corinth), furniture (Miletos), carpets (Persia), textiles (Egypt), perfumes (Arabia)
    • slaves
  – Trader (emporos) mostly from the poor classes
  – Sea trade as a low-class plebeian occupation
  – Largest trade till 15th century Italy
Greek Society

• Banks
  – The polis temple as a bank to fund the city's ventures (lender at low interest rate)
  – 450 BC: first bank at Athens (Antisthenes & Archestratos)
  – Banking + trade = speculation

• Athens
  – Capitalistic/imperialistic capital of the Greeks --> Cultural capital of Greeks
  – (Athens as today's USA, Greece as today's western world, the Eastern Mediterranean as today's world)
Greek Society

• The city state
  – Zeniths of civilization frequently rest upon the city state
    • Sumeria
    • Greece
    • Rinascimento in Italy