ART 381, HANDOUT 3: EARLY AND HIGH CLASSICAL ART AND ARCHITECTURE

EARLY CLASSICAL OR TRANSITIONAL

I. Sculpture

The Severe Style: another name for the new, more naturalistic sculpture of the Early Classical Age (ca. 480-450 BCE). Statues now stand in a hipshot stance which moves them out of the rigid frontality of Archaic sculpture, and the drapery is much heavier and covers the body in thick, doughy folds (Delphi Charioteer). The name "Severe Style" describes the heads of the figures, which have heavy-lidded eyes, a full lower lip, and a brooding and serious expression (Apollo, Olympia; Kritian Boy). Early Classical sculpture was interest in depicting the human figure in action poses, although the action may not be truly realistic (Zeus from Cape Artemesion). Some Early Classical sculpture also shows an interest in depicting emotion realistically (Seer from East Pediment at Olympia).

Kritios' or Kritian Boy: statue of a young boy dedicated on the Acropolis ca. 485-475 BCE. Although nude like an Archaic Kouros, he stands in the new hip-shot stance (often called contrapposto or "counterpoise, an Italian term). The name derives from a 19th century German scholar's belief that this statue was made by a sculptor named Kritios (who made the figure of Harmodios in The Tyrannicides--it is now merely a conventional nickname for the statue.

Delphi Charioteer: bronze statue once part of a chariot group depicting a victory in the games at Delphi. It honored a Sicilian who is usually thought to have won the chariot race in either 478 or 474 BCE (so the statue can be said to be c. 470), and the sculptor was likely a Peloponnesian artist. A fine example of Early Classical drapery, albeit on a guy.

Zeus from Cape Artemesion: fine bronze statue found off Cape Artemesion in a shipwreck; it dates to ca. 460 BCE. Shows a striding Zeus hurling his thunderbolt. Meant to be seen from the side in profile, it shows the Early Classical period's desire to depict the illusion of motion.

Riace Warriors: bronze statues of two buff warriors (one older-A, one younger-B) from a sculptural group, likely a victory monument, dated ca. 450 BCE. Made by Argive artists. Found in the harbor of Riace in south Italy.

The Ludovisi "Throne": likely an altar facing, this three-sided relief once belonged to the Ludovisi family and was made in southern Italy ca. 470 BCE. It depicts the birth of Aphrodite on its main face, a nude hetaira (prostitute) on one short side playing the pipes, while a draped (and older?) woman burning incense is on the other short side. It was made for a sanctuary of Aphrodite, and the two women probably encapsulate the
female experience (as it were). The style has "lingering Archaic" decorative qualities in the drapery, but otherwise shows the new Classical style.

II. Architecture and Architectural Sculpture

**Temple E, Selinus**: well-preserved Doric Temple built ca. 450 B.C. Had sculpted metopes across each porch of the interior building. These are limestone with marble faces and limbs for the female figures. They depict scenes of various myths (Zeus and Hera, Artemis and Actaeon).

**Temple of Zeus, Olympia**: large Doric temple built ca. 470-460 B.C. It had a well-known gold and ivory cult statue of the seated god, but this was made by Phidias ca. 430 BCE. Notable for its sculpture. It had six carved metopes over each porch of the inner building depicting 12 deeds of Herakles (who traditionally founded the Olympic Games). The West Pediment shows a Battle of Lapiths and Centaurs watched by a central Apollo, the East the Chariot Race between Oinomaus and Pelops, with Zeus at the center.

**Temple of Zeus or Poseidon, Paestum**: located beside an Archaic temple of Hera dated c. 550-520 BCE, has 6 X 14 columns (foundation is 65 X 27 yards), but is otherwise similar to the Temple of Zeus at Olympia. The columns have 24 flutes (like Ionic columns!) and entaiss, but are stumpy (4.3 Lower diameters in height). No sculpture. Built ca. 460 BCE.

IV. Painting

**Polygnotos of Thasos**: an innovative wall and panel painter of the second quarter of the fifth century BCE. Apparently spread his figures over the surface on different groundlines, creating the illusion of a deeper space than earlier Greek painting. Also known for depicting the emotions or the psychology of the scene. Worked with Mikon of Athens on the Theseion at Athens (ca. 470 B.C.); also decorated a building at Delphi (the Lesche or clubhouse of the Knidians) and the Stoa Poikile at Athens.

**The Tomb of the Diver, Paestum**: painted tomb made for a man c. 480-470 BCE, it has a "lingering Archaic" style, but gives us hints of what panel and wall painting looked like c. 480 The lid shows an interesting seen of the dead man diving into a lake seen in "birds' eye" view, the walls have a symposium similar to those painted on Attic red-figure vases.

V. Terms and Names

**The Oath of Plataea**: traditionally, before the Battle of Plataea in 479 BCE, the Greeks vowed not to rebuild sanctuaries defiled by the Persians until the Persians were defeated. Although its veracity has been doubted, it is true that the Athenian Acropolis was not rebuilt until after 450 BCE.

**The Delian League**: a league of allied states led by Athens which continued the wars against the Persians after 479 BCE. Mainly made up of Ionian city-states, its treasury was
transferred from Delos to Athens in 454 BCE; thereafter the league became an Athenian Empire.

HIGH CLASSICAL

**High Classical**: a style ca. 450-425 BCE best seen in the Parthenon. In sculpture and painting characterized by thin drapery which models the anatomy while achieving pleasing patterns of folds, and by ideal and serious faces.

"Rich" style: a style of sculpture and painting in Greece ca. 425-375 BCE. Develops out of the style of the Parthenon's pediments. Characterized by richly and dynamically patterned drapery. This is often very thin and reveals the body beneath almost as if it is nude. Best seen on the Nike Temple Parapet. A similar style is used in painting by the Meidias Painter in red-figure.

The "Quiet" Style: a style of sculpture and painting which develops out of the style of the Parthenon pediments and runs parallel to the "Rich" style. It also is characterized by thin drapery with many folds, but is less dynamic than the "Rich" style and less revealing. It appears on tombstones (Hegeso) and the Erechtheion korai.

II. Historical figures.

**Perikles**: leader of Athens ca. 450-429 B.C. Oversaw the building program in Athens which included the Parthenon, Propylaia and the Hephaisteion.

III. Painting.

**Achilles Painter**: late student of the Berlin Painter, a leading red-figure and white ground painter in the time of the Parthenon (ca. 450-430 B.C.). Best known for his red-figured Achilles amphora (c. 440) but also painted notable white-ground lekythoi.

**White-ground technique**: appears in the late 6th century BCE in Athens and became popular in the 5th. The area to be painted was covered with a chalky white slip and the figures were painted on in pastel colors, either before or after firing. The end result is likely somewhat akin to contemporary wall-paintings.

**White Ground Lekythoi**: flasks for perfumed oil that were popular funerary gifts during the second half of the fifth century B.C. Pastel colors were painted on a powdery white slip after the vase was fired.

**Skiagraphia**: "shadow painting," a term used to characterize the style of Apollodoros of Athens and Zeuxis of Herakleia, both active in the late 5th century B.C. This implies that they used shading in their paintings. Zeuxis also decorated the palace of the Macedonian king Archelaos (ruled 413-399).
Skaenographia: "set painting," a term used to characterize the work of Agatharchos of Samos, active in the second half of the fifth century B.C. This seems to imply that he used some sort of linear perspective to establish the illusion of the third-dimension. Agatharchos is also said to have painted Alcibiades' house at Athens.

IV. Sculptors and Sculpture

Polykleitos: Argive sculptor active in the third quarter of the fifth century B.C. His work is known only through Roman copies. He was known for his male athletes, notably the Doryphoros (Spearbearer) of around 440 BCE, about which he wrote a tract to explain its ideal proportions (it was hence called the "Canon"). His “school” (sculptors he trained) remained active until around 350 BCE.

Phidias: the artist most closely associated with the Parthenon, usually assumed to have designed its sculptural program. Known for his chryselephantine (gold and ivory) cult statues in the Parthenon (440) and the Temple of Zeus at Olympia (430). Trained in Argos.

Alkamenes: pupil of Phidias, likely worked on the Parthenon, later did the cult statues for the Hephaisteion (c. 415 BCE). His group of Prokne and Itys survives from the Acropolis, and is stylistically close to the Parthenon pediments. It also looks similar to the Korai of the Porch of the Maidens attached to the Erechtheion, and some scholars have attributed them to his workshop.

Paionios: sculptor who made a Rich style statue of Victory dedicated at Olympia around 420 BCE.

Attic Grave reliefs: the classical series of grave reliefs begins around 440 B.C. and continues down to 317 B.C., when their production was outlawed. They are valuable because they mirror contemporary developments in sculpture in the round (such as the Polykleitan “Chairedemos and Lykeas” gravestone of ca. 420 BCE), and they show us something of funerary beliefs. Some of them ("Cat" stele, Hegeso) are fine works of sculpture in their own right. Other relief sculpture, such as record and votive reliefs, show the same stylistic development.

V. Architects

Iktinos: main architect of the Parthenon (447–438 BCE), about which he wrote a tract, later worked at the Telesterion at Eleusis (430s), and, perhaps, participated in the design of the Temple of Apollo at Bassai (420s).

VI. Buildings

Parthenon: built on the Acropolis between 447 and 438 B.C., with its pedimental sculpture completed in 432 BCE. Iktinos and Kallikrates were the architects; the sculptural program presumably was coordinated by Phidias, who made the
chryselephantine cult statue. The temple was 8 X 17, with a dominant ratio of 4:9 expressed in its parts. It had many visual "refinements," such as entasis and a curved stylobate. It also had several Ionic features, including a sculpted frieze (depicting the Panathenaic procession) which ran around the exterior of the interior building. On the exterior of the colonnade, 92 sculpted metopes depicted (mainly) mythological battles, while the pedimental groups show (west) the Contest of Athena and Poseidon to be Athens patron-deity, and (east) the birth of Athena).

**Propylaia:** the monumental gateway to the Acropolis designed and built by Mnesikles in Athens 437-431 BCE. It remained unfinished due to the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War. Its porches are Doric, but the columns of the interior passageway are Ionic.

**Temple of Athena Nike:** a small Ionic temple built ca. 425 B.C. at the extreme western end of the Acropolis. Has a continuous sculpted frieze including a scene (southern face) of Greeks battling Persians (the Battle of Marathon?), also was surrounded by a balustrade with notable reliefs of Nikai bringing Athena sacrificial bulls, a primary monument of the "Rich" Style.

**Erechtheion:** an Ionic building on the Acropolis constructed ca. 420-405 BCE. It contained shrines of many deities, including Athena Polias (the city goddess of Athens) in its east cella, Erechtheus and Kekrops (local heroes) and Poseidon. Of odd form due to its cultic requirements, it is notable for the beauty and elaboration of its carved decoration, and for its Porch of the Maidens.