

Notes on Quiz #3: Greece Emerging from the Dark Age

1. Spartan women

- a. went to war alongside the men
- b. exercised and ate well
- c. never married
- d. were nude at all times

Because the biological role of the mother was important to producing strong warrior children, Spartan girls were trained to be as physically fit and as well nourished as the boys. Housework and clothes-making were performed by lower classes, freeing Spartan women to train in the gymnasium, manage the household, play music, and rear children. Women could bear children of men other than their husbands, though if they were helots' children, they could not be citizens, and adultery was not as strictly proscribed as elsewhere. Pomeroy believes they also engaged in homosexual liaisons in order to prevent unwanted children from heterosexual fornication for pleasure. — Women controlled their dowries and inheritances, so that by the fourth century, two-fifths of Spartan land and property were controlled by women, many living luxurious lives. Increasingly later Spartan women displayed their wealth with clothing, purchases like racehorses, and jewelry and cosmetics; Agis's attempts to restore Lycurgan discipline failed through women's resistance to archaic austerity.

2. All of the following are true of archaic Athenian Greek burials EXCEPT:

- a. Washing and dressing the dead was always done by male relatives of the dead
- b. Male graves significantly outnumber female graves
- c. Male graves contain spears and shields; female graves contain cooking pots, spindle whorls, and jewelry
- d. Depictions of funerals show women beating their heads and tearing their hair, while men are rigid and restrained

Grave goods of Athenian women included spindle whorls, cooking pots, and other items indicating they still performed household chores that Spartan women had offloaded to lower classes. Depictions of funerals show kinswomen tending to the dead (washing, anointing, and dressing the corpse) and as chief mourners, engaging in public lamentation as an important part of the death rituals. — Burial grounds from early periods show many more male graves than female; this is partly due to men being more likely to be honored with a public burial, but Pomeroy suggests female infanticide is also to blame (again, unlike Sparta, where we are told all the girl babies were kept and only boy infants were exposed if defective).

3. The archaic statues of maidens (*korai*) and youths (*kouroi*) were

- a. clothed if male, naked if female
- b. naked if male, clothed if female
- c. always naked
- d. always clothed

Both male and female grave-marker figures (*kouroi*, *korai*) are extant from archaic Athens, both derived from Egyptian forms and exhibiting the bland physical ideal of each gender. Male figures were naked and emphasized strength and aesthetic proportions. Female figures were clothed and emphasized strength and restraint; physically the buttocks were a focus of beauty.

4. According to Pomeroy, all of the following are true of Sappho EXCEPT:
- a. She belonged to a community, Lesbos, where women were valued and educated
 - b. Her work is an example of individualism in Greek poetry during this period
 - c. She was the only female Greek lyric poet
 - d. Some of her poetry suggests she may have been married and had a child

There were a number of other female lyric poets; some of their writing survives in fragments, as quoted by other authors.

5. Advice given by Hesiod in *Works and Days* includes:
- a. "Do not let a flaunting woman coax and cozen and deceive you: she is after your barn."
 - b. "First of all, get a house, and a woman, and an ox for the plough—a slave woman and not a wife, to follow the oxen."
 - c. "A man should not clean his body with water in which a woman has washed, for there is bitter mischief in that."
 - d. All of the above

All three of the quotes are indeed from Hesiod's *Works and Days*, which displays a strong mistrust and fear of women rooted in the vulnerability of men.

Optional Extra Credit

EC. Pomeroy called Spartan marriage customs "unusual among the Greeks." How so?

Spartan warriors were held to be equal; consequently, marriage among the landholding elite was not about family status as in Athens and elsewhere. Instead, marriage focused on compatibility and the ability to produce children; as the weddings were often secret, unproductive marriages might be quietly annulled, and both parties could seek new mates. In some cases, young men and women were shut up in a dark room to see who went home with whom. Other customs sometimes practiced included the groom carrying the bride away in secret. The wedding involved the bride with male clothing and hair cut short, possibly reflecting a transition from the groom's previous homosexual relations in the barracks.