

Bell Ringer 3/24/15

What is an Amphora?

An amphora is: a tall ancient Greek (or Roman) jar with two handles and a narrow neck.

Bell Ringer 4/14/15

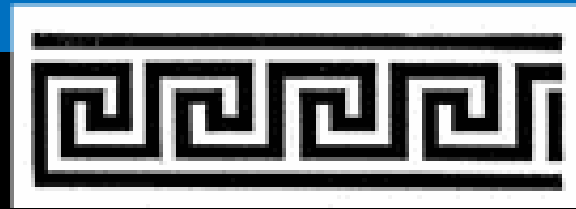
- What is a glaze? What is an underglaze?

Bell Ringer 4/15/15

What is the difference between Red-figure & Black-figure (with glaze?)

4.

Archaic Greek Art



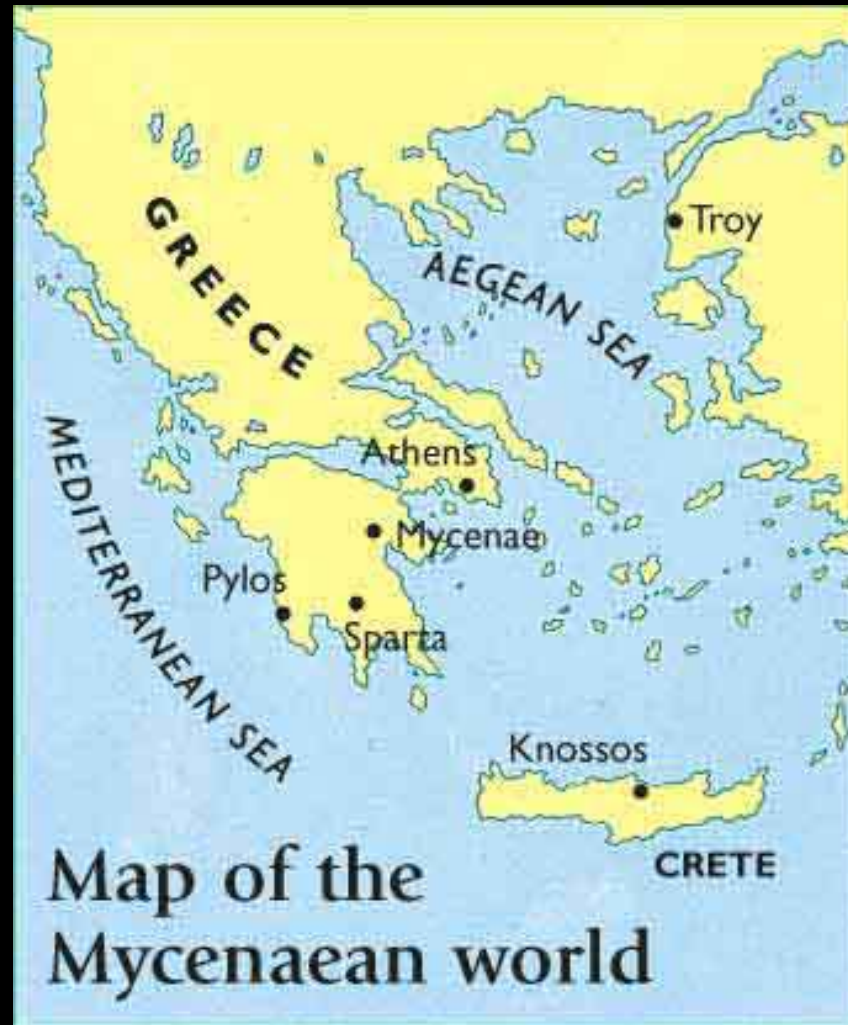
(Early Period)



Ancient (Archaic) Greece



Ancient (Archaic) Greece



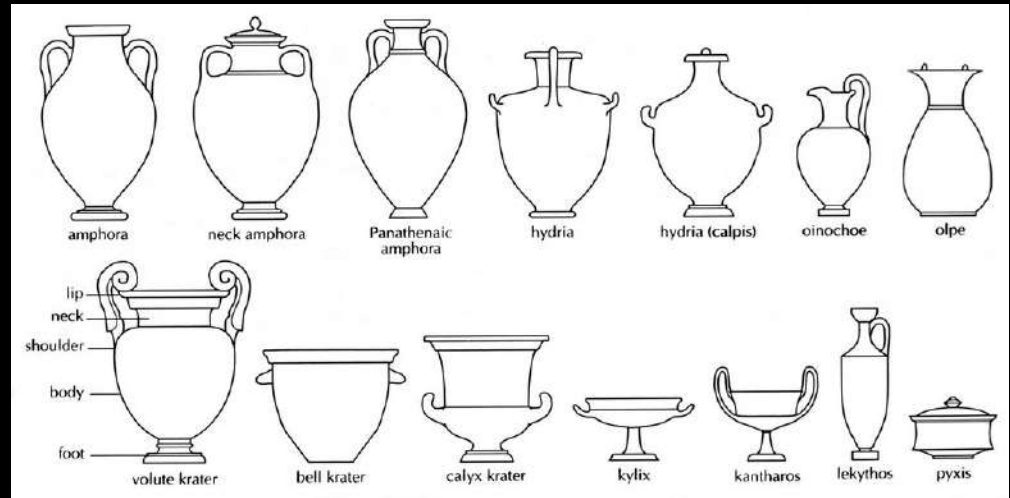
After the collapse of the Mycenaean civilization, art became non-figural.

This period is known as the

GEOMETRIC STYLE

Geometric Style Pottery

Potters developed a standardized repertoire of shapes.



Amphora, krater (large vase) and kylix (drinking cup) are the most popular.

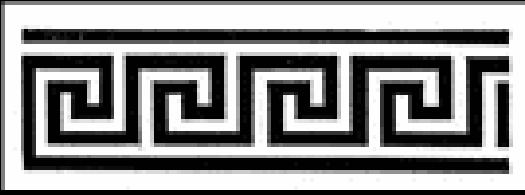
**Late Geometric belly- handled
vase from the Dipylon Master,
5'1"
ca. 750 BCE.**

This large vessel was used as a grave monument. Holes in the bottom allowed liquids to filter down to the dead.

Earlier, Athenians cremated their dead and placed the ashes in these amphoras and also in kraters.

The name, **GEOMETRIC STYLE** comes from the abstract markings such as bands of horizontal lines, triangles, checkerboards and *Greek key* designs.





ek Art

This is the *Greek key* design. It is also called a *meander*. There are many versions of it.

Back to the Athenian (from the city of Athens) tradition of the cremated body's ashes in a vase.

There are rules:

Men's ashes in a wide-necked krater.

Women's in a belly-handled amphora like the one shown here.



Learn how to speak VASE.

There is a proportional *canon* here. Which means a *set of rules* regarding proportion:

The width measures $\frac{1}{2}$ of the total height.

The neck measures $\frac{1}{2}$ of the height of the body.

Lip

Neck

Shoulder

Body

Base/
Foot



The design of the surface decoration proportionally reflects the proportions of the parts of the vase.

Bands are horizontal, triple lines spaced in groups of two (except at the very top and at the bottom).

Between the groups of bands on the neck, the artist has used single **meanders**. But in the center, to emphasize its length, the meanders are tripled.

As the body portion of the vase slims down below the shoulder the larger meander gives way to smaller ones.

Then the designs take on new geometric patterns.

This is the reason for the term **GEOMETRIC STYLE**.





Between the handles, there is a narrative scene. The deceased lies on a funeral bier under a checkered shroud.

Mourners with arms raised in lamentation face the deceased from both sides. Under the bier are 4 figures, kneeling and sitting.

Lavish funerals were an opportunity to demonstrate status and wealth. It was customary for a body to lie in state for a public mourning. It was a common practice to hire additional professional mourners to make a bigger show.

Although it is hard to see, there are tiny shapes between bands toward the top and the bottom of the neck.

Those shapes are a repeating pattern of grazing deer at the upper end and resting deer at the bottom.

Also note that the handles are double loops on each side of the vase.



Geometric Style Vase

(with more narrative and a funerary theme)

**Krater from the Dipylon
Master, ca. 740 BCE, 3'4½"**

**Meander, checker-board,
zig-zag, and chevron
patterns.**

Funeral mourners.

Registers/ bands.

**Procession with horses,
chariots, and warriors.**

Decorative bands

**The deceased was
probably military.**



*The Blinding of Polyphemus and
Gorgons, amphora 56"*
ca. 675-650 BCE.

THE
ORIENTALIZING
STYLE

Mythological theme.
Narrative stories fill
the surface – body.
Figures!





Looks like it takes three figures to poke out the one eye of a Cyclops.

Note how the artist lets us know that the Cyclops is a giant. Let him have a seat.

Also the human figure shape from the Geometric Style is carried through here.

THE ORIENTALIZING STYLE

Odysseus thrusts a pole into the eye of the giant, Cyclops.

Stalking animals are on the shoulder.

Large portion of the body of the vase is covered with images of the Gorgons (sisters of Medusa).

The term *orientalizing* comes from artistic decoration visuals based on Greek mythology.

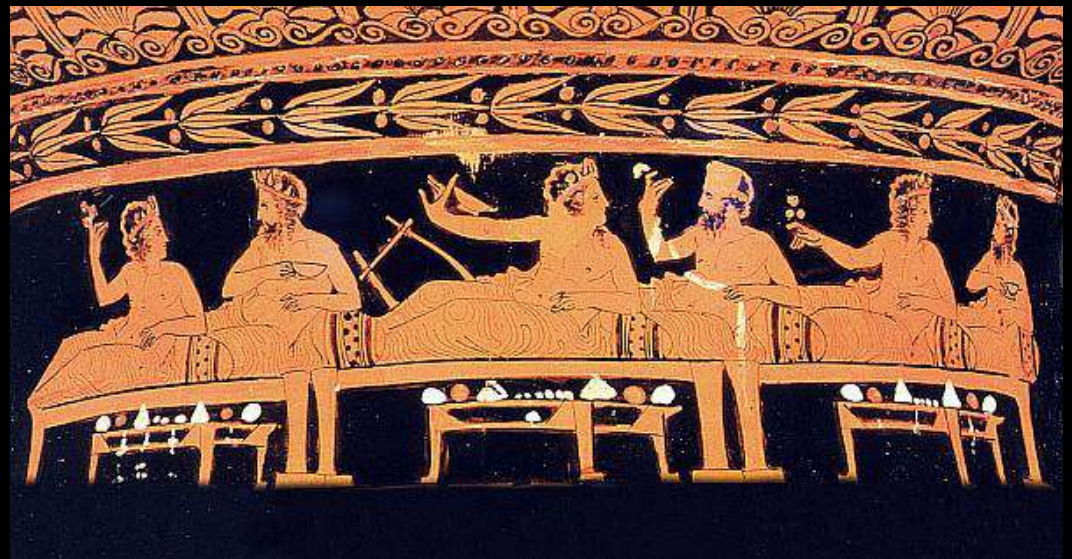
Identity *orientalizing* by the fact that the **story** occupies **the largest portion** of the vase.

This style was mostly produced in Corinth (on the peninsula, just south of the isthmus). The Corinth clay is this buff color. The Corinthian potters developed a black, metallic clay slip as well as a white slip.



Vases and the symposium.

Music, storytelling, word games and debates on politics, ethics and morality. However, these festivities usually ended when the courtesans joined the men.



Pottery workshops in Athens proudly turned out extremely fine wares, with scenes from mythology, legend and ordinary life. Beautifully decorated vases were used for drinking wine at symposiums. (Ordinary looking vessels were for every day use.)

Symposiums were exclusive drinking parties for men. Wives and other respectable women were not invited. Courtesans were. Men lounged around a room on couches and were served wine. Plenty of wine.



Black-figured vase-painting came first.



BLACK FIGURED TECHNIQUE

The entire design is painted in black and detailing lines were incised out with a stylus (needle). This method can be observed in the example to the left.

The clay around Corinth had this buff background color. Most of the best vase painting was going on in Attica (Athens) and Corinth.

Some specific areas are filled in with white or a reddish purple color of slip.

These magnificent vases started what became of a vigorous export industry. The biggest market was the Etruscans.

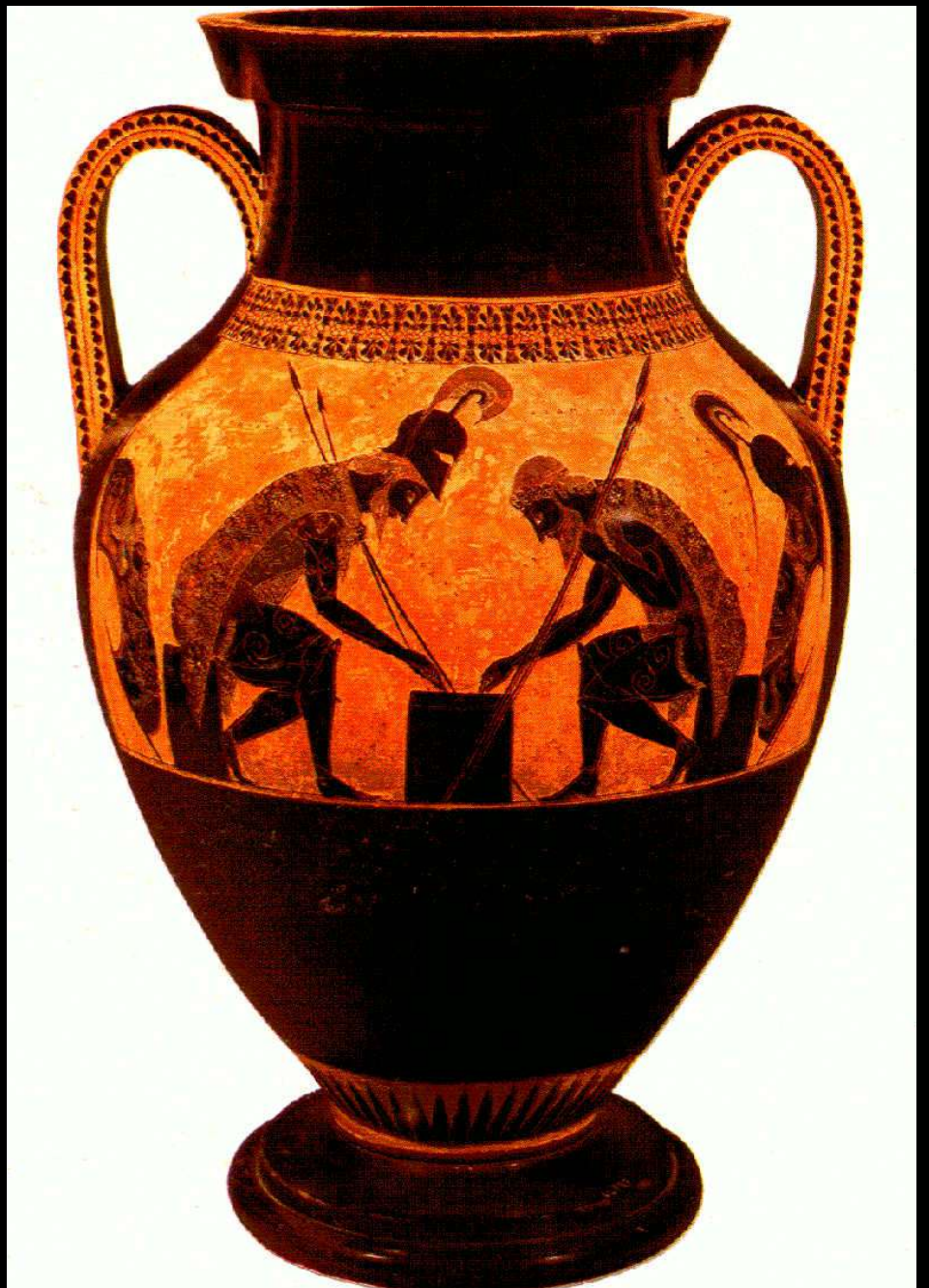
Achilles and Ajax Playing Dice,
Black figured amphora, 2'
ca. 540-530 BCE.

Many of the vase painters were known for their excellent work. Buyers knew them by name and aspired to own their wares.

This one is signed by *Exekias* as the painter and potter.

This is thought to be the first “gaming” scene in Greek painting.

These artists were also known and respected among each other.

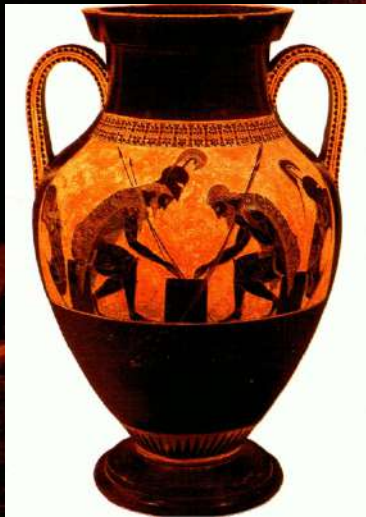




Taking a few minutes of relaxation these two warriors play a game.

Achilles (left) is rolling dice with Ajax (right). Achilles rolls a “3” and Ajax rolls a “4”. Which makes Achilles the winner in this game. The words are written on the vase.

Their gear is hanging on the tent wall and they are both leaning on their spears and positioned at the edge of their seats ready to jump up and resume their war duties.



This turns out to be a tragic death story. Achilles won the dice roll but when they re-entered the battle, Achilles dies and Ajax carries his lifeless body back to camp and, in grief, fall upon his own sword to his death.

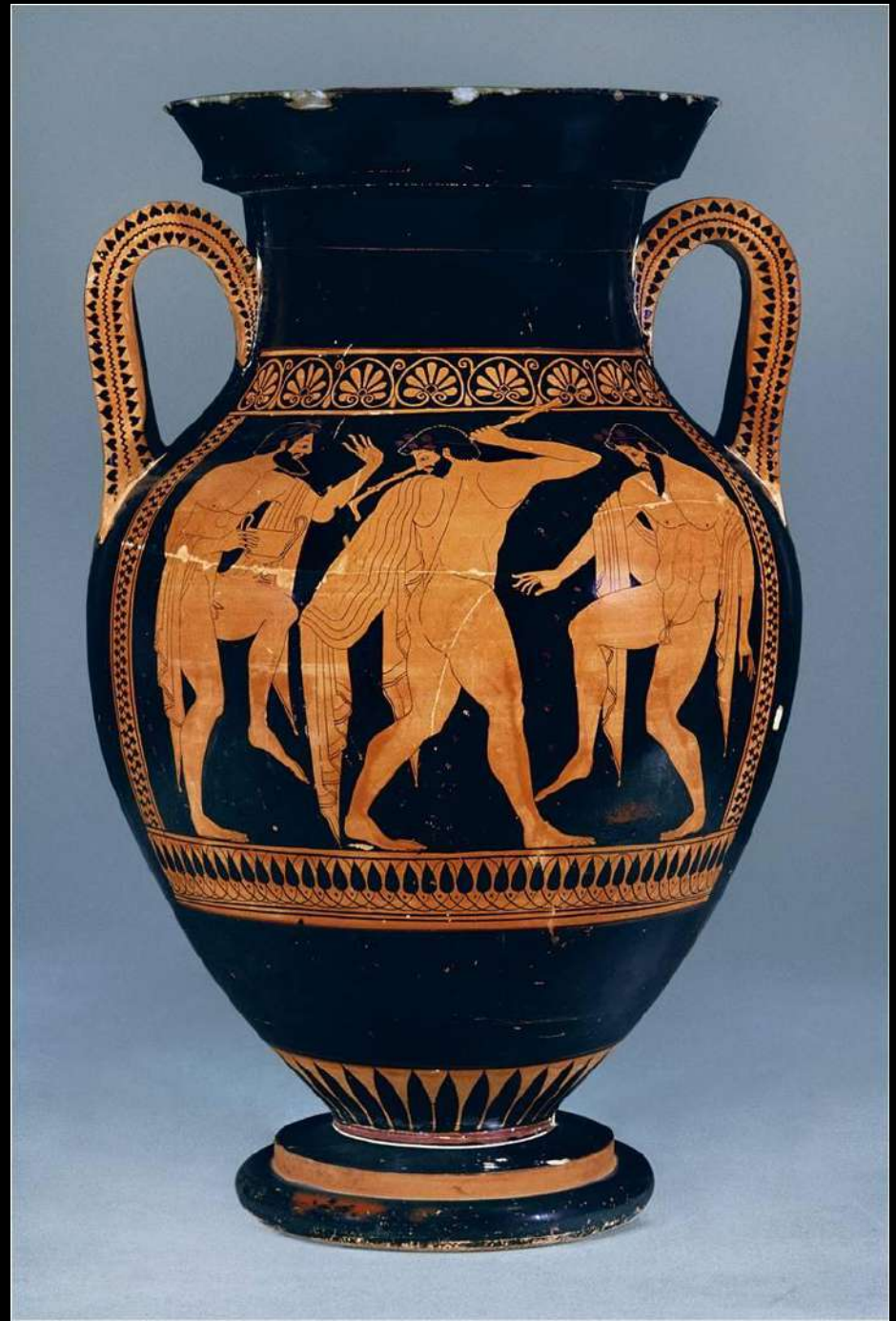
**Dancing Revelers, red-
figured amphora, 2'
510-500 BCE**

Drinking and dancing again, this time the potter has reversed the technique. Background black, figures in red with lines drawn in to define the body parts.

This one is signed by *Euthymides*.

This artist presents bodies in $\frac{3}{4}$ turn and with a shoulder twist.

Euthymides is so confident that he inscribed the vase with “As never Euphronios” taunting and challenging his main competition.



***Eos and Memnon*, by the
Douris Painter, red-
figured kylix, 10 1/2 "
ca. 490-480 BCE.**

Eos, the goddess of Dawn is holding her dead son, Memnon who Achilles has killed.

The Douris painter has drawn the inner lines of his body, and exquisitely indicated her body movement beneath the multiple lines that define the design of her dress.

His limp arms reflect her wings.

Note that his toes pop over the border circle while her wings and his left hand are hidden by it.



Deep within this story is raw emotion. The gods have intervened in Eos life and killed her son.

These mythological stories have a certain parallel to the life Athenians lived during the horrors of the Persian Wars.

