

Chapter Title: TURNING INTO A SATYR: SMALL VASES FROM THE FIRST HALF OF THE 6TH CENTURY BCE

Book Title: Dionysos in Archaic Greece

Book Subtitle: An Understanding through Images

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Published by: Brill. (2007)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1163/j.ctt1w76w9x.8>

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CHAPTER TWO

TURNING INTO A SATYR: SMALL VASES FROM THE FIRST HALF OF THE 6TH CENTURY BCE

What is the reason for this subtitle? First of all, in iconography it is essential to respect periods and development in order not to lose sight of the historical dimension. However, as I said in the introduction to this book, it is equally important to keep in mind the function of the image-bearers. Small vases, used for drinking or for containing unguents, are intended for an individual: the message of their decoration is addressed to him alone. Large vases, rather, are usually intended not for individuals but for collective use: a krater is used simultaneously by a group (for example, by participants at a symposium), and a monumental amphora placed in a necropolis or a sanctuary, although celebrating a prominent person or honouring a deity, is addressed to the passers-by. The message of the image is intended more for a community than for an individual.

Usually, studies of Dionysian iconography consider only—or at least in preference—Attic pottery, which has the advantage of being especially rich, sequenced and well studied. More than the iconography from other centres, it provides useful historical links with other types of evidence concerning Dionysos, his mythology and his festivals. However, this ‘Athenocentric’ trend is misleading and reductive, contradicting the real historical situation. Certainly, Athens may have had its own particular history, which is better known to us than the history of other cities; but it has never been an isolated history and its course is not substantially different from the history of neighbouring poleis¹. This fact is reflected also in Dionysian iconography, which is particularly rich in Athens, just as its ceramic production during the 6th century is exceptionally copious and well documented. However, the attention that we must necessarily pay to the Athenian image of Dionysos and his world must not make

¹ Raaffaub 1996, 1059.

us lose sight of the situation in Corinth, for example, or Boeotia, Sparta and various Ionian centres.

Corinthian unguent vases

History of art demands first of all taking the Dionysian iconography of Corinth into consideration, because this is where the typology we are interested in was developed and because the pottery of Corinth had the greatest influence on the production in Athens between the end of the 7th and the beginning of the 6th century. This applies both to the technique of black figures (figures painted in black on a light background, with incised details and added colours), and to the new repertoire of shapes adopted by the artisans of the potters' quarter of Athens, the Kerameikos, around or shortly after 600 BCE. It is not surprising therefore that the same influence was felt also in the area of Dionysian iconography.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, one of the ways in which the Corinthian imagery of wine penetrated Attica is documented by the fragmentary dinos dated between 620 and 610 BCE, with grotesque dancers, found on the Attic site of Vari. This is by far the most widespread Dionysian subject in Corinthian pottery in the years around 600 BCE and during the first half of the following century, and one of the standard decorations of the globular ointment vases, the aryballo². The formula that is repeated most often, and the most concise, besides the individual dancer, is the row of dancers with interposed rosettes: it provides few elements for interpretation. Furthermore, these strange figures have been the subject of a discussion on the origins of Attic drama that has lasted for generations and is still unresolved. In fact, some have wished to see the dancers as actors: grotesque characters in disguise or padded clothes. Such a reading presupposes that the images intended to reproduce photographically what the eye saw: the actual style, which is allusive rather than descriptive and dominated by conventional formulae, excludes this. Therefore, we must force ourselves to exclude specu-

Fig. 10-12

² Amyx 1988, 651ff. For an overall view of the iconography of the Corinthian grotesque dancer cf. Seeberg 1964 and especially Seeberg 1971. The relationship between the shape of the aryballos and the subject of dancers is probably closer today than it really was: Seeberg 1995, 1f. Example: Zurich 3505: CV 1 pl. 3, 51-54.

lations concerning the origin of drama and pay attention to the actual figures, always bearing in mind the limitations of the modern interpreter, who remains somehow foreign to the cultural system to which these figurations belong.

The Corinthian unguent vases confirm what has been said about previous versions: the pot-bellied dancers belong to the world of the animal frieze, a world—not real but imaginary—antithetical to the ‘normal’ world governed by human laws. They are male characters, shown to be such not by a phallus, which is usually missing, but by their beard and clothing (even if we cannot always establish with certainty whether they are imagined as clothed or naked). The greatest difference to other male characters in the figurative repertoire of the period lies in the way they move, in their grotesque proportions, in their clothing. Note, in particular, the recurrent deformation of one foot³: as they are dancers, this is an absurd feature, which emphasises the carnival nature of this dance. This needs not mean disguise, but it certainly indicates difference: they are completely different characters from the figures of the heroic world and, in looks, the opposite of the young athlete⁴. In comparison with these, they give the impression of being somehow incomplete, infantile, or pertaining to a transitional phase, of undefined identity, and thus belonging to a world outside the norm. They form a group and move as a group (the stylised rendering emphasises this effect) and the group is clearly more important than the individual: in fact, figurations of individuals are considered abbreviations of group images⁵. Closer to these figurations than the theatre is the ritual and community sphere that, on the other hand, contains elements of a show.

The above examples of grotesque dancers—on the alabastron in a private collection and on the dinos from Vari⁶—allow us to establish an explicit link between dance and wine. This is fully confirmed by the drinking-horns and the kraters or dinoi on a stand, present in the series of images we are considering. As we know, the ritualised consumption of wine is a central element of the symposium: we will see that the dancers introduced into Attic art due to Corinthian

³ Seeberg, 1971, 74f.; Amyx 1988, 651.

⁴ Seeberg 1971, 3: “The komasts are presented as emphatically unathletic”.

⁵ Callipolitis-Feytmans 1970, 94.

⁶ See p. 13.

influence were to become the standard decoration of symposium pottery. In Corinth, instead, the same dancers are a typical decoration of aryballoi, which are not vases for drinking but for unguents: what is the connection between these vases and the domain of wine?

The unguent vases were also used in the symposium (like the lekythoi later, in spite of their obvious connection with the funerary world)⁷. However, as figurations of the aryballoi in Attic vase-painting suggest⁸, the more direct mental association was with the athletic competition and its protagonists. There are at least two possible connections between the athlete and the pot-bellied dancer: the dancer, deformed and grotesque, could be representing the antithesis of the athlete, possibly alluding to past or future events in which the athlete is transformed into his own antithesis, undergoing a radical metamorphosis. Such a metamorphosis could happen only metaphorically in that the athlete, even without changing externally, could 'feel' that he had become different, finding himself outside the normal world, having fallen back into a savage state.

The second connection could be through the wine, in the sense that the dancers—associated with the large vessel for communal drinking—remind the young athlete of the goal to which his present condition, connected to a particular stage of life, naturally tended. This was access to the symposium, no longer as a young cupbearer or eromenos but as a symposiast, equal to the other symposiasts. On the other hand, the image of the symposiast could be a metaphor for the perfect condition of the fully-fledged citizen. In this sense, the status of athlete could be understood as a preliminary condition for the status of symposiast (alias, citizen): because to be qualified to drink wine in the setting of the symposium was equivalent to being recognised as an equal by the community.

Why, then, the choice of the formula of the dancer and not of the recumbent symposiast? The difference between the two formulae is clear: the recumbent symposiast is a static subject, somewhat fixed, and that was precisely where the attraction of his goal lay. Rather, the motif of the dancer evokes instability, a discontinuous and transitional condition. Hence the hypothesis, stated elsewhere⁹,

⁷ On the function of the lekythoi cf. Gex-Morgenthaler 1993, 59f.

⁸ For example on the amphora by the Amasis Painter, discussed here on p. 136f.

⁹ Isler-Kerényi 1988.

that the unavoidable transition from one condition (athlete) to another (symposiast), the metamorphosis, was felt to be Dionysian: this does not contradict the evidence from other sources concerning Dionysos and his way of acting¹⁰.

It is possible, then, to establish an exact connection between the aryballos and Dionysos without referring to wine. In some of these passages wine could be involved, because evidently the consumption of wine emphasises the sensation of instability or transition required in those circumstances. The consumption of wine in ritualised form—as in the symposium but also during certain festivals—also guaranteed that the effect and the sensation would remain confined, would not escape control and would not become a danger to the community.

Support for this interpretation comes from a *Middle Corinthian aryballos of exceptional size*¹¹, its only decoration, apart from rosettes, being two male busts in profile: the one to the right has a beard whereas the other to the fore and left, does not. Both have long hair: the youthful person cannot be a woman, because the shoulder blades are depicted and not the hem of a garment¹². This figuration could refer to two different ages in a man's life, the ephebe and the mature man; but it could indicate a third possible connection between the aryballos and Dionysos, the erotic connection. The form of the unguent vase evokes perfumes and therefore the sphere of Eros and Aphrodite. In addition, it is in this sphere that the young athlete, the typical beloved (eromenos), and the symposiast are situated: first in the role of eromenos, then as erastes. The flowers, namely the rosettes, are not alien to this setting.

The problem of establishing which of these connections was intended by the creator of the image and the user of the piece must remain open (all the more since, as so often happens, the context of the find-spot is missing and therefore any evidence that could throw light on the use of the vase). Regardless, we note yet again that the figurations on pottery, conceived for being suitable for vases that are not always identical in function, allow for more than one reading; and these readings do not necessarily exclude each other but are often complementary.

Fig. 14–15

¹⁰ For example, the Homeric Hymn to Dionysos or the *Bacchae* of Euripides, in which both the god and his opponents are transformed.

¹¹ Würzburg L 110: Amyx 1988, 174 no. 26.

¹² Two other aryballoi attributed to the same painter show two bearded busts facing each other: Benson 1971, 15 nos. 20 and 21.

Before moving on, let us briefly examine some specific examples of Corinthian grotesque dancers that could reveal something more about their possible meaning. On a *small bottle (alabastron) from ancient Corinth*¹³, to be dated around 600 BCE¹⁴, the figures are arranged on two registers. In the upper register we see a boar hunt: clearly a hunt for heroes¹⁵. One of the hunters, positioned exactly under the joint (now lost) of the handle, does not use a spear but a round projectile like the one in the hands of the fantastic creatures already considered on the Protoattic krater¹⁶. This is repeated, as we will see, in the figuration of the boar hunt on a contemporary Attic dinos: the use of such different weapons in the same scene suggests placing the event between wild life and the heroic age. The grotesque characters of the large frieze are not dancing but performing various acts. In the centre of the composition there is a lion¹⁷ biting the head of a grotesque person armed with a cudgel. The situation would be hopeless if a hunter, as slender as those in the upper frieze, were not approaching from the right with a spear pointing at the beast. The rest of the frieze is filled with five figures of the type we have already met. The first on the left seems to be observing the scene just described with sympathy. The third figure is seizing the deformed leg of the second, the last two are running in from the right, the first with a kithara (reminiscent of the fragment of a late-geometric Euboic skyphos already discussed)¹⁸, the second with a double flute: both instruments are clearly shown but are not destined to be played. The feature that gives this figuration some notoriety is the bearded head emerging from the base line, located exactly under the joint of the handle on the back of the vase, and so imagined to be in a liminal area.

This position is reminiscent of the female protome on the reverse of one of the Cycladic kraters already mentioned¹⁹, which we under-

¹³ Louvre S 1104: Seeberg 1971, 41 nos. 216 and 75; Amyx 1988, 110 no. 2; Giron-Bistagne 1976, 248f. fig. 97–99; LIMC III, Dionysos 49.

¹⁴ Amyx 1988, 428.

¹⁵ On a possible connection between the boar hunt and the symposium: Isler-Kerényi 1997a, 536 n. 37.

¹⁶ Berlin 31573 (A32) See p. 10.

¹⁷ For Amyx, loc. cit., it is a panther.

¹⁸ Cf. p. 9.

¹⁹ Athens 3961: Isler-Kerényi 1990b; above, p. 7.

stood as an allusion to the generative potential of the ground²⁰. The protome could also have been understood to be a head of Dionysos, which, as we shall see²¹, will be the only male deity sometimes represented in this way. For the moment, we do not have enough elements to go further in the interpretation. If the vase is considered as a whole, it is clear that the grotesque persons belong to a wild and dangerous world of 'outside' (and to the heroic hunt), a world that is on the one hand antithetical, and on the other complementary to the world of music.

Another figuration of dancers often associated with the one just discussed appears on an *aryballos* from *Early Corinthian*²² which, besides the usual dancers, shows under the joint of the handle, a frontal view of a squatting male dressed in panther skin. The frontal squatting position, as we shall see in respect of a Boeotian tripod-pyxis and an Attic *aryballos*, both more recent²³, probably has a specific meaning: the metamorphosis intentionally induced (by means of masturbation) of a dancer into a satyr. Here too one of the dancers rushes in with a double flute in his hand. The allusion to the same wild and Dionysian milieu is obvious.

The dancers in the Early Corinthian period are associated not only with the wild and erotic sphere but also explicitly with wine²⁴: the consumption of wine does not only take place in the symposium but also at a sacrifice. This is shown by a vessel of the type called *kothon*²⁵, probably Early Corinthian. Here together in the same frieze, interspersed with squatting sphinxes arranged to correspond with the three joints of the handles on the vase, are dancers in various poses and forms, one of whom could be holding a round projectile in his hand. At the centre of the image is a krater on a stand and from the left a male of normal proportions is approaching it, carrying a

²⁰ Isler-Kerényi 1990b, 35.

²¹ For example, on the Naples cup Stg. 172, discussed on p. 165ff.

²² London 1884.10–11.48: Seeberg 1971, 42, no. 218, and 75; Amyx 1988, 110 no. 8; LIMC III, Dionysos 285.

²³ See pp. 37 and 195 below (*aryballos* by Nearchos, New York 26.49).

²⁴ Callipolitis-Feytmans 1970, 95: "Il est probable que les peintres qui ont d'abord traité le sujet ont axé la composition sur le dinos afin d'attirer l'attention sur les rapports qui existent entre ce type de danse et les fêtes pour le vin".

²⁵ Würzburg 118: Callipolitis-Feytmans 1970, 95ff.; Seeberg 1971, 41 and 62 no. 215; Amyx 1988, 471. For the type of vase that was probably used as a large unguent-container for communal use in a symposium, see: Scheibler 1964 and 1968.

wineskin on his shoulders. Between him and the krater there is a horned animal, evidently a caprid for sacrifice. The connection between drinking together (the symposium) and eating together (which follows the sacrifice) is obvious²⁶: it is not surprising, then, to find dancers in this setting.

A Corinthian mule-rider

At this point, we must take a closer look at one of the most discussed Middle Corinthian figurations. It does not include grotesque dancers, but is important for its iconographic connections with the Protoattic krater just considered²⁷ and with the return of Hephaistos to Olympus. It is on a *miniature amphora*²⁸, evidently a rare and precious variant of the unguent-container. On the side, which we shall call 'A' because it is clearly central to the image, a beardless, long haired youth is sitting on a mule. He is holding the reins in his right hand and with his left hand is lifting a drinking-horn towards his lips. The most striking element, which, as we shall see below, makes this rider similar to the Hephaistos on the dinos by Sophilos, is the way his legs (both on the same side of the mount) and his feet (clearly deformed) are depicted. A bearded male is following the rider on foot with a bunch of grapes in his left hand. Many scholars see the third figure on the left as Dionysos. Instead, for anyone else considering the figuration without preconceptions, it is clearly a woman²⁹. If we move to the other side of the little vase, the woman is followed by a nude male who is supporting a large vine branch with bunches of grapes on one shoulder and raising his left hand (in greeting?). At the end of the procession, a male is carrying a jug in his left hand, which is similar to the one already surmised to be in the hand of one of the dancers on the transitional alabastron in a private collection.

The most enigmatic figures are the last two, which do not seem to form part of the procession but, as indicated by the little tree in

²⁶ Durand/Schnapp 1984, 49–54.

²⁷ Berlin 31573 (A 32): cf. p. 10 above.

²⁸ Athens 664: Amyx 1988, 497 no. 1; Seeberg 1965, pl. 24; Seeberg 1971, 45 no. 227a; Ghiron-Bistagne 1976, 217 fig. 71; LIMC IV, Hephaistos 129.

²⁹ Seeberg 1965, 103 n. 10.

front of the mule, belong to a different setting, even if connected in some way with the one in which the procession is moving. Directly under the handle (and thus in a position similar to the one on the Protoattic krater of Berlin), we find an ithyphallic person (in spite of his clothes). He has unkempt hair and is moving towards the right while turning his head towards the left, establishing a clear connection with the procession on side A. In his left hand this person is holding an object that is difficult to identify (possibly a little cup) but in his right hand he has something round, perhaps a stone or fruit for throwing. Beside him is a second person with a long, dangling phallus, a feature that makes him like the satyrs, even though he also shows some affinity with the canonical dancers.

For an appropriate reading we must avoid projecting onto this figuration either problems that are essentially unrelated to iconography, such as the problem of the origin of Attic drama, or mythological labels derived from more recent images, such as the Return of Hephaistos on the François krater. Above all, we will try to clarify the definite elements present in the image. We can see a procession that is connected with vines, grapes and wine. One of the themes evoked could be the transition from vine into wine: on a conceptual level, the metamorphoses of grapes into wine, on a level of practical (ordinary) life, the production of wine. The type of little vase in question confirms this reading. For the function of the unguent-holder, the potter had well-established shapes at his disposal, such as the spherical or pointed aryballos and the alabastron. If he chose the little amphora, he did so to add value to the piece and its figured decoration.

Another definite element is the procession comprising of five people, including a young rider and a woman. The deformed feet of the rider (allowing him to move about only if mounted) indicate that this procession does not belong to the world of heroes and is not in the normal setting of the polis, but is moving in a marginal zone. However, both the mount—not a horse but a mule—and the vine suggest a rural world rather than the world of wild nature. The woman with her cloak evokes order and correct behaviour: it is sufficient to compare her with the wild woman being attacked by a kind of satyr, on the pointed Protocorinthian aryballos³⁰. The little

³⁰ Brindisi 1669; see p. 11f. above.

tree marks the boundary between the rural zone, external but not extraneous to the polis, and the 'outside': all that is different from and antithetical to the polis. Instead, the two persons with their uncivilized and aggressive aspect and attitude, halfway between the satyr and the dancers, belong to the wild.

It is difficult to make further interpretations because the piece is too isolated. If we had enough similar little amphorae, we could have been in a position to understand whether the figuration alludes to a ritual or a mythological event; to name the rider of the mule. The present situation does not allow this, because some of the features—the deformed foot, the type of mount—indicate the young rider as Hephaistos, known from other figurations of the return to Olympus, whereas other features—the accompanying figures, the location of the procession not between earth and Olympus but between rural and wild settings—exclude him. Thus two possibilities remain: either it is an allusion to a rite or it is a mythological event unknown to us, where the protagonist could be either Hephaistos in a situation not recorded in our sources or another mythological person.

However, the distinction between myth and ritual is perhaps less important than may seem: in the mind of the performers, a possible rite with a mule-rider would have had a mythological precedent from which the painter would have derived it. Also, the vase painter could intentionally have left this aspect in suspense in order not to place limitations on the spectator when reading the image as occasion demanded.

We can now summarise the situation as follows: for the vase painter—and evidently, for his clientele—the metamorphosis of the grapes into wine (in other words, the production of wine) was an event falling outside everyday life and was felt to be exceptional. Besides, the event on the vase deals with the antithesis between 'inside' and 'outside', in which the intermediate zone, which is rural, has a pre-eminent role. There is not only a male but also a woman taking part in this event. She is clearly different from the nymph who is the object of erotic aggression depicted on the Protocorinthian aryballos. The protagonist is a deformed rider, in some way subordinate in respect of the norm. All these elements, as well as others that are probably new, are also present in the myth of the Return of Hephaistos to Olympus in its first Athenian version, depicted on the François krater. For us it is most interesting that the subject was

earlier present in Corinth. The imagery and the rite of wine were taking shape not only in, nor first in Athens at the beginning of the 6th century.

Middle Corinthian symposium vases

In the first decades of the 6th century, in the pottery of Corinth, the grotesque dance that accompanies the rites of wine also tends to become a decorative subject on drinking vessels. This must certainly be connected with what happened in the same period in Athens, which, as we shall see, was then the most important production centre of kylikes. The fact that Corinthian cups belong almost exclusively to the Middle Corinthian period³¹ is revealing. Of the 45 known and attributed pieces³², of which more than half are of assured provenience, 14 come from Corinth, six from Taranto and four from Greece. A few other exemplars, now in the south of France³³ or in central Italy³⁴, could have been imported from those areas: a comparison with the distribution of Attic kylikes of the Komast Group and the Siana type³⁵ serves as a good illustration of how the two productions, one in Athens and the other in Corinth, found themselves in open competition, in the decades between 600 and 570 BCE³⁶.

The decoration confirms this. The typical decorative formula of the Corinthian kylikes remains the animal frieze. The most frequent subject on the inner medallion is the gorgoneion, often replaced by the ornament called a “whirligig”, and sometimes by the female protome: we will return to this motif when we discuss the Attic cups from the second half of the century³⁷. Among the subjects on the outer sides, the military themes clearly predominate, that is young horse riders and duelling hoplites, which indicate the age groups of the ephebes and young adult respectively. Some heroic battles of Theseus and Herakles and the wild boar hunt also appear. They

³¹ Amyx 1988, 462f.

³² Amyx 1988, 194–205.

³³ Amyx 1988, 203 no. 3: Béziers; 205 no. 5: Nîmes.

³⁴ Amyx 1988, 205 no. 4: Orvieto.

³⁵ KdS 61f.

³⁶ For the date of the Middle Corinthian period cf. Dehl-von Kaenel 1995, 42.

³⁷ Cf. p. 161ff.

are particularly suitable subjects for kraters; and there are some iconographical rarities, such as the suicide of Ajax³⁸. Compared with the military themes, the Dionysian themes are less than half: they are dancers and symposiasts. We will reflect on this ratio, which is not only numerical, in respect of a similar ratio present in the kylikes of Painter C. A situation appeared not seen previously in pottery: a conceptual link between the dancers and a military subject, made explicit in the not uncommon combination of both subjects appearing on the same vase³⁹.

However, the most obvious link is still with the symposium, expressed in the types of vases featuring dancers: phiale⁴⁰; skyphos⁴¹; mastos⁴²; kylikes⁴³; kraters⁴⁴. A particularly informative example is a *plate*⁴⁵ on which the subjects of grotesque dancers and the symposium are combined in the same image. The vase painter does not provide enough data to determine with certainty what he considered the centre of the figuration: probably it could be the large krater on a stand with dancers on the left and a figure in a long garment holding what is perhaps a little jug on the right. Three dancers follow it, the central one with a deformed foot. On the left of the krater, the figures following the dancers face the other side so that they seem to be forming an independent group. We see three dancers, two of them with a drinking horn, and two persons with a long garment (one, in fact, has something that is like a polos or a diadem on her head), probably female⁴⁶. The remaining space is filled with four figures: the last on the left is a banqueter who is proffering a sort of kan-

³⁸ Basel (loan): Amyx 1988, 197 no. 2; LIMC I, Aias I 122.

³⁹ Amyx 1988, pls. 81–83; Louvre MNC 674: 204 no. 3. Of particular interest in this last instance is the presence of a dolphin and a male transformed into a dolphin in the area beneath the handles: we will come back to this problem in respect of the kalyx by Exekias in Munich on p. 185. The combination of a rider and a grotesque dancer also occurs on aryballoi: Würzburg H 5390: CV 1 pl. 31.7–10; Florence 81741: Seeberg 1964, 31 fig. 3.

⁴⁰ Amyx 1988, pl. 72.1.

⁴¹ Amyx 1988, pl. 73.2.

⁴² Amyx 1988, 502 no. 2. We will consider this vase in the form of a female breast below when discussing Attic examples, cf. p. 197ff.

⁴³ Amyx 1988, pls. 81–83; 204 no. 3.

⁴⁴ Amyx 1988, pls. 102.1; 121.1; cf. Seeberg 1995, 2 and his lists in Seeberg 1971.

⁴⁵ Athens 3680: Seeberg 1971, 44 no. 225; Amyx 1988, 229 pl. 97 (BCH 86, 1962, pl. 5).

⁴⁶ Seeberg 1971, 44 n. 2.

tharos to a dancer who is dipping a jug into a container placed on the ground. On the right a flute-player and the last dancer are following.

The situation evoked by this image is certainly the symposium in which many dancers took part in differentiated poses and roles. It is noteworthy that most of them have a phallus, although this does not affect their attitude—basically neutral—toward the female figures. The presence of these females is surprising in terms both of number and their calm and dignified attitude, in stark contrast to that of the dancers. Similar females also occur, as we shall soon see, in figurations of Dionysian dance and the symposium on contemporary Attic kylikes, where they seem to allude to the conceptual link between the symposium and weddings. The Corinthian plate in the National Museum of Athens is preserved well and so probably comes from a Greek necropolis: thus, the theme dealt with was not incompatible with the funerary world.

This Corinthian plate illustrates a situation—and the related ideological system—also familiar to Athenian vase painters, as we will see. However, it does not provide proof of direct iconographic dependence in one direction or the other. This is worth noting: in light of what has been established in respect of the mule rider, we can state that the grotesque dancer, his close relationship with the ritualised consumption of wine, and the link between symposium and wedding are not exclusive to Athens.

A large Late Corinthian aryballos with a foot⁴⁷ showing five dancers provides proof that in Corinth, Athens and Boeotia similar ideas circulated about characters from the Dionysian world and their relations to each other. The first on the left is a satyr, with equine ears and tail and a large phallus. Three typical grotesque dancers are following and the first two definitely have beards. The last on the right has a horsetail but neither have a beard nor a phallus. This image shows that satyrs and dancers belong to the same setting. It could allude to situations in which dancers—metaphorically and subjectively—turn into satyrs: a phenomenon expressed in an earlier phase⁴⁸, although through different means, by Attic and Boeotian painters, as we will see.

Fig. 16–17

⁴⁷ Berlin 4509: Seeberg 1971, 46 no. 229; Amyx 1988, 620f.

⁴⁸ Late Corinthian dates from 570 to at least 550 BCE: Dehl-von Kaenel 1995, 42.

From a cultural point of view, it is important to note that there are strong similarities between images from different workshops, but not such as to make dependence of one on another plausible. We are faced with a matter of iconography and certainly of habit, not peculiar to a specific Greek polis, but generically Greek. Nor, obviously, is the divinity that presides over all this, namely Dionysos, exclusive to Athens.

Attic Komast cups

We know that around 600 BCE, the potters' quarter of Athens, the Kerameikos, was strongly influenced by Corinth. In fact, from the pottery of Corinth comes the subject of Dionysian dancers, the standard decoration of a new type of kylix, the introduction of which was also due to Corinthian influence. The choice of this decorative motif is all the more important if one considers Athenian pottery as a whole and throughout its evolution from the beginning of the 6th to the 4th century BCE. Indeed, the kylikes are by far the most important type of vase: they comprise of at least half the total production of high-quality pottery, whether figured or glaze-painted. However, they are important not only for their sheer numbers but especially for their level of artistry. Among all the shapes of Greek vases, the kylikes are most susceptible to changes of taste: during the 6th century, almost every generation produced a new variant. Among the potters and painters of kylikes, more often than elsewhere, we find artistic personalities who are especially original and innovative. To find the new subject of Dionysian dancers specifically on cups is thus a sure indication of their importance.

Fig. 18 The kylikes, labelled by Beazley as belonging to the Komast Group, are chronologically the first among Attic kylikes with black figures. The similar shapes of the 7th century, the so-called "skyphos-krater" and the lekanis (a shape between a plate and a bowl) were not identical in function in view of their size. Today, the dating of these cups tends to be later than proposed by Beazley and Payne⁴⁹, also because the date of the Middle Corinthian period has been lowered, a style from which these cups—and on this scholars seem to agree—

⁴⁹ Brijder 1983, 31.

derive⁵⁰. The particularly late dating proposed by Brijder (for whom Attic kylikes of the Komasts precede the Siana type by less than a decade⁵¹), depends on his opinion that other types of Attic cups without figurative decoration (Types A–C) form a rigid sequence, and must necessarily precede the cups of the Komasts. However, this dating contradicts what we know about the stylistic development of designs in this period: unless this entire group is to be considered as intentionally archaizing. For Beazley the oldest kylikes of the Komasts are contemporary with the early period Sophilos⁵². Among the more recent painters, the Palazzolo Painter has decorated cups of the next type, the so-called Siana cups, to be dated to the second quarter of the 6th century, and in a mature phase, the Painter of Athens 533 collaborated with Ergotimos, the potter of the François krater⁵³. This means that the kylikes of the Komast Group were disseminated not after 580, but before and their production dates to between 585 and 570 BCE, that is, it corresponds to the mature Middle Corinthian style⁵⁴. The first dancers on kylikes, then, would be more recent than those on the fragmentary dinos from the Agora that we considered above⁵⁵. It is probable that in the years following 600 BCE, the potters of the Kerameikos, in search of a new type of drinking-vessel, would have received the idea from their Corinthian and Greek-Oriental colleagues. The success of the kylix of the Komast type would have been due to two characteristics: the elegant shape of the foot, which later would be emphasised in the cups of the Siana type and by the Little Masters, and the figurative decoration with grotesque dancers inspired by the decoration on Corinthian unguent-holders.

More than fifty vases have been attributed to the first painter of this group, *Painter KX*. Most of the vases are lekanides (open form), and the rest are skyphoi (two-handled cups) and kylikes⁵⁶. In the

⁵⁰ The question of the dates of the Corinthian styles has been exhaustively discussed by Dehl-von Kaenel 1995, 32–42.

⁵¹ Brijder 1983, 45. Cf. the critique of this system: Isler 1988, 134.

⁵² Beazley 1944, 39. Now cf. also Kreuzer 1997, 343 and 1998, 265 (with n. 65).

⁵³ Callipolitis-Feytmans 1979, 210.

⁵⁴ Cf. other recent proposals for dating: KdS 46, with extremely wide margins for the individual types of cup, and Brijder 1997, 11 fig. 21, with very narrow margins.

⁵⁵ Athens, Agora P 334; discussed on p. 65ff.

⁵⁶ Beazley ABV 23–27. Now, cf. Brijder 1997 as well as Kreuzer 1997 and 1998, 253–256.

work attributed to his imitators, kylikes and skyphoi are better represented than lekanides, a symptom of the success attained by the new shapes⁵⁷. The lekanis from this period should be considered a type of traditional vase, the kylix and the skyphos to be modern, as confirmed also by the decorative formulae: the former usually have a animal frieze typical of the 7th century, whereas the latter often have human figures.

Most of the skyphoi, also Corinthian in type, show a decoration called “komos”: two men or a man and a youth dancing on each side of the vase. Its origin in the Corinthian Dionysian dancer is obvious, both from the way that the figures move and are dressed and from the rosettes that adorn the intervening spaces. On one skyphos there is also a flute-player among the dancers. In one example, similar persons form a procession led by a lyre-player while the other participants, youths and older men, hold various drinking vessels in their hands (karchesion, skyphos, drinking-horn, kantharos)⁵⁸. This example shows that, like the dance—in the Corinthian precedents explicitly connected with wine rituals—the kind of vase that has the figuration, the skyphos, also belongs broadly to ritual (that is, not strictly sacred but also domestic). We have suggested the hypothesis that this setting was the symposium: of the three kylikes attributed to Painter KX, all in fragments, at least two, from the Heraion of Samos, have the first representation of a symposium in Attic painted pottery⁵⁹. The link between these first Attic dancers and the ritualised consumption of wine is similar to the link with the Corinthian dancers, earlier and contemporary. Also similar is the erotic colouring of the figurations, where the difference in age between the participants is explicit. The choice of subject-matter for drinking cups rather than unguent holders tends to emphasise the connection with the symposium and not with athletics.

This tendency is more evident in the work of the younger colleague of Painter KX, Painter KY, who, instead of the lekanis, included the column krater, a clear symposium shape of Corinthian origin like the kylix or the skyphos⁶⁰. The production of kraters

⁵⁷ Beazley ABV 27f.; Brijder 1983, 67ff.

⁵⁸ Athens 640: Beazley, Addenda 7 (26.21).

⁵⁹ Samos K 1196: Brijder 1997, 1f. fig. 2; Samos K 1280: Brijder 1997, 6 figs. 8f.

⁶⁰ Beazley, ABV 31–33; Brijder 1983, 73ff.

increased also in contemporary Corinthian pottery. Alongside elements of the animal frieze, the subject of dancers, virtually the only human figure, is by now present on almost all the vases of Painter KY: the kraters, skyphoi and the numerous kylikes (23 out of a total of 35 attributed pieces) as also occurs in the whole Komast Group.

The Corinthian derivation of the Attic dancers is evident also in the asymmetrical way in which their legs are often represented⁶¹: but it is difficult to decide whether this asymmetry still has a meaning of which the painter was aware or whether by then it had become an automatic formula. The same applies to the clothing: the Attic dancers are mostly represented naked, even if sometimes⁶² all that remains of the close-fitting clothes are the incisions indicating the edges of the sleeves. There can also occur, in the same image, naked dancers together with clothed dancers⁶³ or else dancers with parts of their bodies in different colours⁶⁴: all this could allude to a fluctuating identity, 'in suspense', of the dancers. As noted already, the dance itself is always a way of being provisional and undefined. The masculine connotation of the subject remains dominant right to the end, even if female dancers sometimes also appear among the male dancers, especially in the later stages of this production⁶⁵. It has been noted in the past⁶⁶ that, by inserting a woman, the vase-painters wished to express the erotic element present in the Dionysian dance rather than the actual participation of women.

Like many Corinthian predecessors, the dancers often carry a drinking horn in their hands. The drinking-horn, which as we will see is also an attribute of Dionysos, is a primitive drinking vessel. With it the dance evokes not only the world beyond the human world, of animals and rosettes, but also a previous period, when vessels for drinking wine made by man—the skyphoi and kylikes—were not yet used. Instead, containers acquired through sacrifice from the animal realm were used: here we can mention the kothon with a

⁶¹ Brijder 1983, pls. 3 c.d (Louvre C 10235), 4d (art market), 5b (Louvre E 741); Boardman 1990, fig. 23 (Athens 1109).

⁶² Brijder 1983 pls. 1d.e (New York 22.139.22), 2a (Taranto 110550), d (Copenhagen 103), e (St. Petersburg B 1966 g), 6b (Prague 80-14).

⁶³ Brijder 1983, pls. 1e (New York 22.139.22), 4b (Rome, Villa Giulia 45707), 6d (Vienna 226).

⁶⁴ Brijder 1983, pls. 1d.e, 2a.d.e, 3a, 6b.c.

⁶⁵ Brijder 1983, 193; Brijder 1997, 9f. fig. 16 (Thasos 85.670).

⁶⁶ Isler-Kerényi 1991a, 295.

sacrificial caprid next to a container for communal wine⁶⁷. The Dionysian dance, which, according to the hypothesis formulated in respect of the Corinthian evidence, celebrates the transition between successive male identities, evokes another no less important transitional phase: between successive moments in the collective journey from pre-civilized to civilized. The drinking-horn comes to have a meaning similar to the meaning of the primitive projectiles that, in many cases, are used by grotesque Corinthian dancers⁶⁸, as they were used by similar characters from Protoattic imagery⁶⁹. It becomes a symbol of a human and cosmic condition that is earlier at least, if not primordial.

Confirmation of such a reading of the grotesque dancer as a being belonging, not only to 'outside' but also to 'before', lies in the assimilation in some cases of the dancer to the satyr, when represented with his face not as seen in profile but from the front⁷⁰. In this way, the painters of Athens express what the painters of Corinth⁷¹ and, as we shall see next, of Boeotia, intend to express by making dancers and satyrs share the same setting and take part in the same action.

Fig. 19–20

Grotesque dancers from Boeotia

Slightly later than the unguent containers (and the kylikes) made in Corinth and later than the Attic kylikes just discussed, a series of vases appeared which is stylistically similar to Athenian products, attributed to a workshop in Boeotia active between 575 and 550 BCE⁷². Fundamentally, they have two shapes: the tripod-pyxis and the kantharos. The exact function of the first is not known, perhaps it was an unguent-holder: as it is it is probable that it was not intended for daily use but for ritual purposes. The same applies to the kantharos, in contemporary images an attribute of Dionysos: not the most frequent type of vase in ceramics, which evokes the age of

⁶⁷ Würzburg 118. Cf. p. 23f.

⁶⁸ Seberg 1971, 3.

⁶⁹ Berlin 31573 (A 32); discussed on p. 10.

⁷⁰ Göttingen 549a (J.11); Brijder 1983, pls. 5c (Palazzolo) and d (Harvard 1925. 30.133).

⁷¹ Cf. the late Corinthian aryballos in Berlin 4509 discussed above on p. 29.

⁷² Beazley, ABV 29–31; Kilinski 1978; Kilinski 1990, 65; Boardman 1998, 214f.

heroes⁷³. Beazley has catalogued six tripod-pyxides to which can be added a seventh, which emerged recently on the art market⁷⁴. The particular interest of these containers lies in the fact that all present a variety of images—in six of the seven cases also the Dionysian dance—arranged according to a recurring pattern: each foot shows one or two superimposed panels and the border is also divided into three sectors⁷⁵, each of which portrays different subjects. Although they are different, these figurations give the impression of having a common link. What is this link?

*The first example*⁷⁶, which is particularly rich, has in the upper panel of the feet three images from the myth of Perseus pursued by the Gorgons. The lower panels portray scenes from athletics: wrestlers, boxers and a referee with a discus-thrower. On the cup of the vessel can be seen: a row of dancers led by a flute-player; a symposium (two male couples served by young cupbearers, with a female flute-player); and a boar being led to sacrifice. In the lower part of the cup and on the border we find couples of animals and fantastic beings (sphinxes, sirens) from the repertoire of the orientalisating animal frieze. Like these, the hare hunt on the lid evokes the setting of the hunt and the wild. The figured panels are more accessible to us. The presence, on the same level, of the dance, the symposium and the procession, confirms the common ritual significance of the three situations and, like the images from the myth of Perseus, continuity or at least proximity in time. This mythological episode is an example of the arete of Perseus, the mythical model of the young athlete. We have already mentioned the possible connection between athletics and the symposium⁷⁷. However, it is easy to identify a conceptual link between the ritual and mythological spheres as well, because a rite—as we have already noted in respect of the Corinthian mule-rider⁷⁸—was an opportunity to remember the facts

⁷³ Isler-Kerényi 1990b, 45.

⁷⁴ Dallas 1981.170; White Muscarella 1974, no. 53.

⁷⁵ Which is reminiscent of the kothon from ancient Corinth in Würzburg, cf. p. 23f. above.

⁷⁶ Berlin 1727; Beazley, Addenda 8 (29.1); CV pls. 196 and 197, 5–6; Kilinski 1978, 177 figs. 4 and 5; Scheffer 1992, 119ff. figs. 1–5; Boardman 1998, 225 fig. 441.

⁷⁷ See p. 20f. above.

⁷⁸ Athens 664: cf. p. 24ff. above.

of the myth through recitations and songs. The figurations on this tripod-pyxis therefore belong to the mental world of the young athlete, where the piece also belongs due to its function. The combination of the elements from the world of nature, sport and symposium occurs in more abbreviated form on the other six pieces of the series.

Fig. 21 *The example found after Beazley's catalogue*⁷⁹ has three facing couples of beings on the border that belong to the orientalisng animal frieze: sirens, panthers, young deer. In the intervening spaces—and this also applies to the panels adorning the feet of the vase—are painted rosettes of various kinds, Corinthian in origin, that confer value on the piece. Each of the three feet has a different subject. One of them shows two boxers fighting with a tripod in the centre indicating a prize. The figuration is particularly detailed and the age difference between the two boxers is clear: the one on the left has a beard and is built more heavily; the other has no beard and is slender.

The difference in age between the couple dancing on the second panel is also evident: even if the younger person has a beard: it is clearly shorter and the older partner's gesture unequivocally denotes the erotic nature of the dance. Two facts are noteworthy. To the dancers, unlike the boxers, who are certainly to be imagined as completely naked, and also unlike characters of the previous scene, the painter has added an engraved line to the arm, the only reminder of the close-fitting chitoniskos of many Corinthian and some Attic dancers. The second unusual fact is the way in which the legs of the younger dancer are portrayed, namely crossed. This feature associates it closely with the Corinthian and Attic dancers already discussed, and recurs, as we shall see, in the Laconian dancers of the middle of the century. The relationship of these Boeotian dancers with contemporary dancers from better-documented areas is therefore certain.

The last scene, containing a greater density and variety of rosettes that make it particularly precious, also shows two male characters: the older one carries a kantharos in his hand, the younger is holding a jug to his mouth. We can certainly surmise that the beverage is wine. However, the kantharos, a shape used more in ritual than in ordinary life, and the fact of drinking—or tasting—not from a

⁷⁹ Dallas 1981.170; see p. 35 above.

cup or a glass but from a jug, reflect not the classic situation of the symposium but an episode that is ritual in character. Our analysis of the motif of the dancers in Corinthian pottery has shown the relationship between the Dionysian dance (the dance of wine) and the symposium, between dance and the hunt, between dance and the sacrifice. The relationship between dance and the world of athletics has been deduced from the function of the unguent vases. In the vase that we are discussing, this latter relationship is explicit, whereas the relationship between dance and the symposium is less obvious.

As is well known, one characteristic of the Greek symposium is homoerotic love⁸⁰, implicitly present in all three scenes of this tripod-pyxis. The connection between homoerotic love and the phases in age is evident, apart from what is documented in written sources⁸¹. Therefore, it is into this set of ideas that we must insert another element present in the Boeotian repertoire (and as we shall see it is not at all foreign to the Attic repertoire), an element that has not failed to embarrass modern scholars: masturbation. *One of the tripods*⁸² has the following figurations, possibly to be read in sequence: first, a couple of dancers of different ages, the younger of whom touches his older partner in the pubic region; second, a bearded person seen from the front, who is masturbating and is visibly proud of the effects of his act; third, a bearded dancer with a satyr's tail exhibiting an enormous phallus in front of a female. The metamorphosis of dancer into satyr can be induced, so it seems, intentionally⁸³.

Fig. 22

Confirmation of this comes from some *kantharoi* from the same workshop with the dance as a standard decoration (besides the animals and the fantastic beings of the animal frieze)⁸⁴. Most illuminating is the first of the list⁸⁵ that has, arranged on both sides of

Fig. 23–25

⁸⁰ Murray 1990, 7: "... The symposion became in many respects a place apart from the normal rules of society... The distinctive manipulation of Greek sexuality in the homosexual bonding of young males through symposion and gymnasion is one effect of this self-conscious separation".

⁸¹ Devereux 1967; Cantarella 1992, 28–67. The view of Keuls 1985, 288f., is in agreement in respect of the phases, but seems to be anachronistically psychological.

⁸² Athens 938: Beazley, ABV 30, 4 (incorrect description); Mistrachi-Capon 1989, 135 no. 66.

⁸³ Satyrs exhibiting phalloi of disproportionate size in front of female figures also occur on a Boeotian kylix which is more or less contemporary: Hamburg, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe 1963.21; Kilinski 1990, 19, 8; CV 1 pls. 5.5–6 and 6.1–4; Boardman 1998, fig. 445.

⁸⁴ For the photographic evidence cf. Kilinski 1978 and also Maffre 1975.

⁸⁵ Munich 6010 (419): Beazley, Addenda 8 (30.6); CV 270.3–4.

the vase, a figuration of a Dionysian dance to the sound of the double flute: a *dinos* on a stand between the dancers indicates the presence of wine. The last of these dancers, who is masturbating, is facing the opposite direction: his tail and horse ears clearly indicate the metamorphosis that has taken place (but perhaps not visible to the others). The subject of masturbation in the context of ritual dance is also documented by a second *kantharos*, found in a tomb in Rhitsona⁸⁶.

Fig. 26

The assimilation of dancers into satyrs is clearly depicted in another particularly detailed Boeotian figuration on a *trick-vase* (evidently a container for the symposium), contemporary with the *pyxides* and *kantharoi* from between 570 and 560 BCE, discussed above, which shows the dancers arranged as three couples as well as a flute-player and a satyr⁸⁷. The two dancers positioned at the peak of the spout of the vase are carrying drinking horns in their hands and are moving around a container that is shaped like a wide *kylix*: the allusion to a wine ritual is clear. Of the following two on the left, one is holding a *kantharos*, while his partner's gesture seems to be indicating an erotic approach. The same gesture is shown, along with a drinking horn and masturbation, in the next dancing couple: the satyr's tail differentiates them. A small *ithyphallic* satyr, holding a drinking-horn, is moving in the space that has been created in front of the flute-player: if we suppose that the painter started in the area of the spout, it is possible that this could be a filler. But his presence, whether or not it is dictated by the need for decoration, still remains symptomatic and confirms the fact that dancers and satyrs mentally occupy the same space. However, the idea that this space is equivalent to a theatrical scene⁸⁸ does not seem to fit the style of the figuration, which is not naturalistic or episodic but concise and allusive. It is far more likely that it is a ritual space (such as the symposium), which by its very nature is both a performance and a show.

⁸⁶ Thebes R 50.265: Beazley, *Addenda* 8 (30.8); Kilinski 1978, 184f. figs. 16f. The fragment with masturbation, which Beazley mentions (*chezon dephomenos*) and is barely distinguishable in the first publication of the piece (*BSA* 14, 1907–8, pl. 10a), is missing from the photo of the restored vase published by Kilinski, although he makes no comment on this (and neither does Maffre 1975, 449 n. 100)!

⁸⁷ Berlin 3366: CV 4 pl. 202, l. 2; Hedreen 1992, pl. 41.

⁸⁸ This is the thesis of Hedreen 1992, *passim*.

The idea that the Dionysian dancer could be transformed into an ithyphallic figure or find that he has a tail, and so assimilate himself to a satyr, is expressed equally clearly, even if more cursorily, on a *Boeotian alabastron*⁸⁹ which, from its style, derives from Late Corinthian models.

The presence of the satyr in Boeotian imagery of the second quarter of the 6th century and its link with practices of masturbation is also attested by a *tripod pyxis with incised decoration*⁹⁰. The figure is lacking a tail but has been given a name (Samon). However, the mythological context remains obscure: of the other two feet of the pyxis, one has a sphinx and the other has a vegetal motif. If there is a connection with the satyr, this is a generic mythical area of wild nature and perhaps funerary setting.

A *kantharos*, dating to the years around the middle of the 6th century, enriches the Dionysian iconography of Boeotian pottery⁹¹. It is important because it attests the presence also in Boeotia of the mule-rider, which we will discuss later in connection with the François krater. The arrangement of the subject-matter on the vase, with Dionysos in the centre of side A and the rider in the centre of side B, both moving in the same direction, recurs more richly executed on a column krater more or less contemporary by Lydos⁹². Both protagonists are surrounded by a couple of satyrs and nymphs. In these cases also the Boeotian painters appear more explicit than their Attic colleagues: here the ithyphallic nature of the satyrs is depicted in an exaggerated fashion. The same applies to the mule, emphasised by the little jug hanging on its phallus and by an especially tiny satyr who is touching it.

Let us see what the pottery from Boeotia tells us about the grotesque dancers. Compared to the Corinthian and Attic versions, the ritual connotation of the dance is emphasised: the dancers are usually⁹³ depicted resembling each other and often together with a

⁸⁹ Göttingen HU 533g: Hedreen 1992, pl. 46. Another way of alluding to the metamorphosis of dancers into satyrs is found on a late Boeotian kantharos from the Kabirion of Thebes (Ghiron-Bistagne 1976, figs. 118f.). Here too we see the ritualised dance, to the sound of the double-flute: however, the dancers, who are grotesque but not ithyphallic, are depicted as completely hairy.

⁹⁰ Berlin 3364: Hedreen 1992, pl. 44; LIMC VII 1, 661 under 'Samon' (A. Kossatz-Deissmann).

⁹¹ Dresden ZV 1466: Shapiro 1995, 6f. pl. 74a; LIMC IV, Hephaistos 142a.

⁹² See p. 97f.

⁹³ But not always: Maffre 1975, 448ff. figs. 18–20.

flute-player⁹⁴. The link with sexuality is more evident in this series than elsewhere, and it is essentially masculine sexuality: autoerotic and homoerotic. Female participation in these erotic activities is sporadic⁹⁵. The link with the symposium is present, but more important is the generic Dionysian element expressed by the kantharos, a type of vase that is far more widespread than all the other contemporary productions. A possible link between this pottery and the sanctuary of Dionysos in Tanagra has been assumed also for other reasons⁹⁶.

The image that the painters from Boeotia give of the Dionysian dancer corresponds, in its main characteristics, to the image already deduced from contemporary Corinthian and Attic productions. However, in this case too, and in spite of the external stylistic influences to which these craftsmen had always been exposed⁹⁷, the impression given is that the figurative tradition was substantially independent and alluded to experiences that do not reflect those of others, but are the direct and genuine experiences of those who acquired and used these vases in Boeotia⁹⁸. The setting of these experiences was probably not the institution of the symposium but more likely other Dionysian rituals. The meaning of the celebration was probably the same: to celebrate and remember the passage in a man's life from one age to another through the inescapable intermediate phases. This passage was evident in metamorphoses, in the assimilation to a satyr, in reverting to the wild: all through sexuality and in the realm of Dionysos.

Attic Siana cups

The generation of cups that follows the generation of the Komast Group, dating essentially to the second quarter of the 6th century, is named after a site in Rhodes which was excavated in the nineteenth century. In comparison with the preceding phase, there is

⁹⁴ Some examples: Kilinski 1978, figs. 5 (Berlin 1727), 7 (Athens 623), 9 and 10 (Athens 624), 20 (Karlsruhe B 1349). A lyre-player is also attested: Kilinski 1978 fig. 16 (Thebes 50.265).

⁹⁵ Athens, Canellopoulos Collection 11: Maffre 1975, 448 fig. 18.

⁹⁶ Kilinski 1978, 190f. Cf. also Mercati 1986/87, 110.

⁹⁷ Cook 1972, 102.

⁹⁸ This opinion is shared by Scheffer 1992, 137. Mercati 1986/87, 111f.

now a noticeable increase not only of kylikes produced but also of the decorative formulae used: the breadth of subject matter is greater and the repertoire differs from one painter to another. This increase and diversification should probably be connected with the growing export of Greek pottery to Italy⁹⁹. Figurative decoration appears on both the outside of the vase and in the inner medallion: from this is born the possibility of identifying an interconnected dialectic between the various decorative areas of the cup.

The C Painter

The C Painter is one of the two most important painters of Siana cups, and chronologically the eldest¹⁰⁰. His importance lies not only in the number of vases decorated by him but also in his role as pioneer and model for his colleagues. Unlike the Komast cups, two facts are noticeable: the extremely clear preponderance of military themes over the Dionysian ones (the ratio is about 2:1, as in the Middle Corinthian kylikes), and, within the Dionysian sphere, the far greater importance of the symposium as a subject than the Dionysian dance. The numerical relationships are comparable in the work of minor painters of the group such as the Painters of Taras and of Malibu. In fact, in the whole of Painter C's circle, the relationship seems to have changed in favour of military themes. However, if the combination of subject of the same cup is considered, the two areas can evidently be seen as linked.

On the other hand, the symposium is shaped like an extension of dance when both themes are present in the same image¹⁰¹. However, there are fewer dancers as the only decorative motif¹⁰². They remain important in our perspective because they document the permanence of the subject and its links with the world of the symposium during the second quarter of the 6th century. Here the problem concerns the combination, in the same image, of the symposium with a subject not met before: men of various ages and women standing in

⁹⁹ KdS 61f.

¹⁰⁰ For 'Corinthianising': Boardman 1974, 32.

¹⁰¹ Brijder 1983, nos. 53 (Taranto I. G. 4339), 117 (Syracuse 49271), 176 (Bari 2959); Heesen 1996, no. 21 fig. 56 (Amsterdam 13.367).

¹⁰² Brijder 1983, 55 pl. 17b (Taranto 50677), 245 no. 113 (Taranto 110341), pl. 35b (Bari 2959), pl. 57c (Syracuse 6028).

conversation¹⁰³. We will solve this problem in respect of the Heidelberg Painter.

First, we will turn to the question of the combination of Dionysian and military subjects on the Middle Corinthian kylikes, a common combination on the cups of the C Painter and his circle. Evidently, as in the case of the Corinthian unguent-vases with Dionysian dancers, the combination has to be considered in light of the symposial function of these vases. To continue the line of thought, we propose the hypothesis that the condition of the young horse-rider and the hoplite, like the condition of the athlete, was considered typical of a certain phase of a man's life: the young horse-rider of the ephobic phase and military training facing entry to the symposium, the hoplite of the next phase, maturity, serving in defence of the polis.

The rareness of mythological themes in the work of C Painter and his circle is noticeable in comparison with the rest of Attic pottery of this period, especially compared with the other important painter of kylikes, the Heidelberg Painter. The repertoire is clearly dominated by images of a generic nature and it is symptomatic that, in the case of the wild boar hunt¹⁰⁴, it is impossible to decide whether it is the Calydonian hunt or one undertaken by an anonymous group, possibly inspired by a real hunt. Proof that the repertoire was chosen deliberately, and not due to a lack of knowledge of mythology, is found in the frequency of mythological figures—although isolated and therefore not involved in action—on the medallions. In this way, the C Painter is taken up in the tradition begun by the Komast cups, which would be taken up again in the second half of the century by the Little Master cups. This choice could be ascribed to the nature of the kylix, which is not communal but individual, and performs its communicative function on a more intimate level.

From this selection, which leaves room for the individual reading of motifs, the absence of Dionysos could be explained, who instead is conspicuous on the dinoi of Sophilos and the François krater, which can be dated to the same years. On some medallions¹⁰⁵, instead,

¹⁰³ Brijder 1983, nos. 59 (Berlin 1755), 162 (Birmingham Univ.), 163, 226 (Taranto 4478), 227, 228, 237 (Tübingen 4351[D 33]), 246 (Helgoland, Kropatschek collection).

¹⁰⁴ Brijder 1983, pl. 20 (Florence 3890).

¹⁰⁵ Brijder 1983, pls. 29e (Taranto I. G. 4980), 36d (Taranto 52205); Heesen 1996, no. 22 fig. 59 (Amsterdam 13.814).

there are satyrs, a motif present also in a class halfway between the Komast and Siana kylikes¹⁰⁶. The vases manufactured in Boeotia have helped us to understand the identity of this satyr, and in the next chapter we shall see how this figure acquired its canonical form even in Athens.

Otherwise, the repertoire of the medallions of Siana cups of the C Painter and his circle comprises of individual animals, chief among them the cockerel, an erotic symbol¹⁰⁷; fantastic beings such as sphinxes, sirens, winged horses, a chimaera; the warrior crouching, running or on horseback; among the heroes, Herakles in combat; among the deities, often the winged goddess, running¹⁰⁸, rarely Athena and a god with a fishtail. Later we will evaluate the importance of this last motif in greater detail¹⁰⁹. The medallion is considered to be intermediate between the divine and human worlds, between 'inside' and 'outside': the satyr, shown to be particularly close to the human world, is also depicted in this way.

The Heidelberg Painter

The repertoire of the Heidelberg Painter is quite different. He is a painter specialising in Siana kylikes, and his work is dated a little later than the C Painter, either in the same quarter or after the middle of the century¹¹⁰. Even if the presence of the anonymous military sphere remains strong, mythological themes are consistently present: after Herakles, Dionysos is one of the best-loved mythological characters. His most frequent position is in the inner medallion. On only one of the vases known do we find him alone and running¹¹¹ following the traditional decoration of the disk: the C Painter prefers to have figures in movement, like the winged goddess of the dispute and of victory, warriors (or other figures) running or ready (like the kneeling hoplite) and animals or mythological beings in motion. One of the recurrent decorations of the contemporary Middle Corinthian

¹⁰⁶ Brijder 1983, pl. 7d (Basel, Cahn collection).

¹⁰⁷ Koch-Harnack 1983, 97–105.

¹⁰⁸ A deity of struggle in the broadest sense of the term, who could be called either Eris or Nike: Isler-Kerényi 1969, 36.

¹⁰⁹ In ch. 5, in connection with allusions to the sea on cups with large painted eyes.

¹¹⁰ Brijder 1997, 12f.

¹¹¹ Brijder 1991, pl. 113d (Taranto).

cups has a similar meaning: the vortex, a sort of wheel with half-moon spokes. However, it would be incorrect to state that the cups' medallions were reserved for subjects that evoke movement and change, because the gorgoneion, a petrifying subject, appears more often on Middle Corinthian kylikes. The connection between the two motifs will become clearer when we discuss cups fashionable after 540 BCE.

Fig. 27

A variant of the Dionysos motif, not in motion but static, occurs quite often on medallions of cups¹¹² of the Heidelberg Painter: the god, who usually has a drinking-horn in his hand, is confronted by a woman, sometimes veiled or with a wreath in her hand. The identity of this character, evidently different from the companions of dancers found on Komast cups—and from contemporary nymphs as partners of satyrs that we shall see in the next chapter—is discussed frequently¹¹³: we do not know whether she is Ariadne or Aphrodite. This is a problem raised by its iconographic antecedent, the wife facing Dionysos on a Cycladic krater¹¹⁴: we think it is more correct to leave the question unanswered, because a mythological name does not exclude identification with a common mortal. This is corroborated by the fact that the repertoire of images considered so far on Attic cups presents anonymous or prototype figures rather than mythological characters, which sets it on the human plane.

Proof is that the female figure in question is identical to those whom Brijder interprets as betrothed or young brides presented to the groom's father, which we find on the outer sides of some of these cups¹¹⁵. However, the proof raises a new problem if we consider function besides the iconographic fact. The cups clearly belong to the world of the symposium, which is masculine by definition as shown on this type of vase by the prevalence of military, sport and heroic themes¹¹⁶. How, then, can we explain the presence of wives, whether mortal or divine, in this repertoire?

At this point, we shall leave iconography to consider the symposium as an institution. In respect of the Corinthian aryballoi with Dionysian dancers, we have proposed the hypothesis of a concep-

¹¹² To the cup medallions add a contemporary plate: Leiden XVa 3 (LIMC III, Dionysos 709).

¹¹³ Brijder 1991, 357ff.

¹¹⁴ Melos, Archaeological Museum: discussed on p. 7f.

¹¹⁵ Brijder 1991, 394f.

¹¹⁶ Stein-Hölkeskamp 1992, 42.

tual link between the worlds of the athlete and of the symposium, which could be understood as typical of successive phases of a man's life. Just as typical of specific phases of a man's life is the wedding. In fact, one of the ceremonies immediately preceding a wedding was the symposium¹¹⁷ and previous symposia had already provided the occasion for future fathers or fathers-in-law to choose sons-in-law or daughters-in-law. One of the mythological models of this situation is, for example, the episode where Herakles meets Iole at the symposium given by Eurytos, which is represented on the well known Corinthian krater in the Louvre¹¹⁸. Among the so-called visitors¹¹⁹ in symposia represented on cups of the circle of C Painter female figures are sometimes present.

Thus, the woman facing Dionysos in the medallion of the cups could evoke the status—future or already attained—of the head of the oikos and the father of legitimate sons of the male user of the cup. At least one of these kylikes¹²⁰ shows on one of its outer sides a scene introducing the bride. Among the other examples known to us, images of war and athletics¹²¹ are combined with these medallions. Nor is the combination with Herakles fighting with the centaur Nessos accidental¹²², a mythological episode with nuptial connotations even if in tragic mode. The same hero fighting with the Nemean lion¹²³ is instead a mythical model of youthful arete and refers rather to the military or athletic sphere.

Dionysos is depicted not only with a bride but also with a male, traditionally called Ikarios, who appears as one of his alter egos¹²⁴. A new and far more convincing interpretation identifies him as Peleus, based on his similarity with that person on the dinos by Sophilos and the François krater¹²⁵. This identification is plausible, because, as we shall see better in respect of the large vases just mentioned,

Fig. 28

¹¹⁷ Oakley/Sinos 1993, 22. On the meaning of nuptial rites cf. Calame 1996, 130ff.

¹¹⁸ Louvre E 635: LIMC V, Iole I 1.

¹¹⁹ As Brijder 1983, 176 calls them.

¹²⁰ Brijder 1991, no. 369 (Cambridge 30.4).

¹²¹ Brijder 1991, no. 407 (Munich 7739); LIMC III, Dionysos 710.

¹²² Brijder 1991, no. 385 (Taranto I. G. 4408).

¹²³ Brijder 1991, 424 (Thasos 59.106).

¹²⁴ Brijder 1991, no. 367 (Louvre CA 576); Ghiron-Bistagne 1976, 253 fig. 103. This reading is doubted by D. Gondicas in LIMC V I, 646f. (s.v. Ikarios) but maintained by Angiolillo 1997, 145–148.

¹²⁵ Danali-Giole 1992.

Peleus is one of the mythological models for anyone about to start a family in anticipation of legitimate children¹²⁶. It is worth remembering that Peleus pursuing Thetis, clearly a nuptial topic, occurs frequently in the repertoire of the C Painter¹²⁷, just as the topic of Peleus giving the young Achilles to Chiron is among the themes of the Heidelberg Painter¹²⁸. The presence of anonymous spectators¹²⁹, both here and in other mythological images, shows that these events were presented as paradigms¹³⁰.

In turn, Peleus is identified with Dionysos, who is also a husband and a father¹³¹, which explains the mirrored presentation of the two figures on medallions of cups. Logically, when we speak of Dionysos in this context, the hypothesis implies a margin of uncertainty for the modern reader of the image¹³²: the same uncertainty we experience about the name of the woman and about certain figurations that may or may not be mythological, such as the wild boar hunt of the C Painter¹³³. This uncertainty is inherent in the structure of the images on vases and distinguishes them from other images (for example, wall paintings): it stems from the fact that these images must allow more than one reading to be functionally successful, just as the actual vases could have been used for more than one occasion. We will have the opportunity to return to this topic.

Besides the two types discussed, Dionysos also appears with satyrs¹³⁴, satyrs alone¹³⁵ and Dionysian dancers on the medallions of the Heidelberg Painter's cups¹³⁶. The dancers also occur, as in the workshop of the C Painter, among symposiasts on the outsides of some of these cups¹³⁷.

¹²⁶ However, it is not necessary to resort to a supposed privileged connection of Peleus and Dionysos with Boeotia: Danali-Giole 1992, 116.

¹²⁷ Brijder 1983, 131f.

¹²⁸ Brijder 1991, 382.

¹²⁹ Brijder 1991, 337f.

¹³⁰ Fehr 1996, 790 and 831–833.

¹³¹ Shapiro 1989, 92–95.

¹³² Cf. Brijder 1991, 357: "The identification of the figure as Dionysos is almost certain".

¹³³ Brijder 1983 no. 102 (Florence 3890).

¹³⁴ Brijder 1991, pl. 130c: it is interesting to note that the satyrs are of different heights and therefore of different ages, as on the Boeotian trick-vase already considered on p. 38.

¹³⁵ Brijder 1991, pl. 145f (Athens, Agora P 6059).

¹³⁶ Brijder 1991, pl. 145e (Histria V 10048).

¹³⁷ Brijder 1991, nos. 366 (Taranto 110339) and 421 (Pesaro, Moccia collection).

The well-known *kylix* by the Heidelberg Painter in Copenhagen¹³⁸ which, in the medallion, bears the vortex as its only decoration, shows Dionysos among satyrs and female dancers on the outer sides. The two images are not identical. In the centre of the one side, an ithyphallic satyr is playing the flute, and in front of him, Dionysos is engaged in a particularly lively dance. He is followed on the left by a woman in a short garment, exactly like the female companions of the dancers on late Komast cups, and a satyr. On the right he is followed by a satyr between two female dancers who are similar to each other. Generally speaking, Dionysos in movement is far less common than him standing in the centre of the image: it appears after the Dionysos on the François krater (who is not dancing, however, but moving forward impetuously) and a little before the Dionysos on an amphora by the Amasis Painter¹³⁹. In the centre of the other side, there is another satyr playing music. On the right he is flanked by Dionysos with a drinking horn (as on the medallions), and on the left by a dignified standing female. Satyrs and female dancers in skimpy clothing complete the scene on both sides. The meeting between Dionysos and the woman is probably the same as on the medallions: using other material, we have to examine how this could happen in the presence of the thiasos. Noteworthy is also the particular role the painter gives to the satyr in both images.

Fig. 29–30

To conclude the contribution of the two great workshops of Siana cups to Dionysian iconography: in the work of Painter C we must emphasise the link between the symposial and the military sphere and the introduction of the satyr in some medallions. The new element to emerge from the cups by the Heidelberg Painter is the relationship between Dionysos, the symposium and weddings. However, it is only a novelty relatively speaking, because, as we have seen, the oldest representation of Dionysos, on the monumental Cycladic krater from the end of the 7th century¹⁴⁰, describes the god as a patron of a bride. The Attic kylikes portray Dionysos as a nuptial deity in the world of the symposium, which is masculine: the Cycladic figuration in comparison seems to be orientated towards the female world. The reference to the Cycladic repertoire, in which Dionysos

¹³⁸ Copenhagen 5179; Brijder 1991, no. 336; LIMC III, Dionysos 298 and 712.

¹³⁹ Würzburg L 265, discussed on p. 133.

¹⁴⁰ Melos, Archaeological Museum, cf. p. 7f.

has a comparable role to Hermes Psychopompos¹⁴¹, shows an important trait of Dionysos, which distinguishes him from all the other gods with the exception of Hermes: he is set on a level that is particularly close to the human level. He is one of the few divine persons, apart from Hermes, to appear on the medallions of these kylikes; similarly, Herakles is almost the only hero to appear more than once¹⁴².

Other Siana cups and a contemporary skyphos

Among the last cups of the Siana type, the examples by *Lydos* are important, because they introduce a new type of Dionysian decoration. One kylix¹⁴³ is the best preserved of a series: in the medallion there is a cockerel (elsewhere a panther), and on the two outer sides there are alternating male and female dancers. The males are moving similarly to their predecessors, but have normal proportions: they are neither fat nor deformed. Moreover, they are all ephebes in age. At first glance they are similar to satyrs surrounding Dionysos with dancing women. He is standing and holding a drinking horn, while facing a female of the nuptial-matronly type on another kylix¹⁴⁴. The close relationship between the dancers on the Taranto cup and the satyrs on the Heraklion cup is evident, not explicitly through a metamorphosis as on the Boeotian vases already considered¹⁴⁵, but indirectly through the female companions, who are identical on both vases. These are dancing women who, unlike the female dancers by the Heidelberg Painter¹⁴⁶, are wearing long garments and animal skins: the same dress that we find, more accurately executed, on a famous krater by *Lydos*¹⁴⁷. The identities of the female companions of the dancers and the female companions of the satyrs are similar,

¹⁴¹ Isler-Kerényi 1990b, 44f.

¹⁴² Besides Herakles, Ajax is attested with the corpse of Achilles (Brijder 1991, pl. 112a [Florence 3893]), Achilles pursuing Troilos (Brijder 1991, pl. 132f. [Louvre CA 1684]), Bellerophon on Pegasus (Brijder 1991, pl. 134c [Cab. Méd. 314]).

¹⁴³ Taranto I. G. 4412: Beazley, *Addenda* 32 (113.74); Tiverios 1976, pl. 12.

¹⁴⁴ Heraklion, Archaeological Museum no. 217: Beazley, *Addenda* 32 (113.71bis); Tiverios 1976, pl. 14b–17a (seated sphinx in the medallion).

¹⁴⁵ See p. 38.

¹⁴⁶ Copenhagen 5179: cf. p. 47. above.

¹⁴⁷ New York 31.11.11: cf. p. 97f.

and the fact that they belong to the world of the wild allows them all to be called Nymphai. Kleitas, in the return of Hephaistos on the François krater, provides more information about the Nymphai in a Dionysian context¹⁴⁸. It must be stressed, however, that Lydos, like the Heidelberg Painter before him, draws a clear distinction between these Nymphai, female companions of dancers and satyrs, and the female figure of the nuptial-matronly type who is in front of Dionysos: evidently, she is identical on the medallions of kylikes of the Heidelberg Painter. In the Dionysian iconography from the middle of the century, new trends can be observed: on the kylikes, the mythical thiasos replaces the komos and the subject tends to move from the repertoire of cups to large vases, such as amphorae and kraters.

The persistent link between the dancers and satyrs of Lydos and the tradition of Corinthian Dionysian dancers (and therefore between the Attic kylix and the Corinthian unguent-vase) is confirmed by a strange motif found on *medallions of cups* ascribed to his workshop¹⁴⁹. It is the protome of an ephebe (combined, on the outside of the vase, with athletic figurations), which immediately recalls the same protome, facing one of a mature man, on the gigantic Corinthian aryballos of Würzburg. We interpret it as an allusion to the two typical male roles in the symposium¹⁵⁰: as ephebe-eromenos and as symposiast-erastes.

A similar formula to the one on the outside of the kylix by Lydos in Heraklion occurs on a *special type of cup* (a Merrythought cup with buttons on the handles), dated to between 560 and 550 BCE¹⁵¹. Dionysos, standing in the centre, carries a drinking horn and a branch of ivy like on the skyphos that we will consider next and on the krater of Lydos mentioned already, where the god matches the mule-rider¹⁵². From this context, the satyr appears to be following him, carrying an enormous, full wineskin, an allusion to the symposium that is about to be celebrated. The other figures are ithyphallic satyrs dancing with wild nymphs. Under each of the handles

¹⁴⁸ Chap. 3, pp. 81 and 104.

¹⁴⁹ Taranto 20273: Beazley, Para 44 (112.69); Taranto I. G. 4492: Beazley, Addenda 32 (113. 73); Tiverios 1976, 156.

¹⁵⁰ Würzburg L 110: cf. p. 21 above.

¹⁵¹ Munich 2016: Beazley, ABV 199 above; KdS 395, 70. 3.

¹⁵² New York 31.11.11.

Fig. 31 a satyr is depicted masturbating: a motif already met in Boeotian pottery¹⁵³, which is related to the metamorphosis of a dancer into a satyr, and implicitly, of an ephebe into a mature man. A *cup of the same type*, but earlier and signed by Ergotimos, the potter of Kleitias¹⁵⁴, shows on one side the almost unique figuration of the capture of Silenos and on the other a figuration, which is also extremely accurate, of three dancers, the one in the middle being an ephebe playing a flute and the two on the sides bearded and holding drinking-horns.

A lesser-known piece, a *skyphos* from a rich tomb, is close. In all likelihood it is of a woman from Ialysos in Rhodes¹⁵⁵. The figurations on the two sides of this cup are similar to those by the Heidelberg Painter just considered. In the centre of side A is a female turned to the left towards Dionysos, who is in front of her with an ivy shoot in his right hand and a drinking horn in his left. A satyr follows Dionysos and two more satyrs fill the space behind the woman. They are behaving differently from the satyrs on the Copenhagen kylix: in rushing towards the edge of the image, one of them is raising his arm to greet Dionysos, evidently having appeared suddenly. On the two sides, closing the scene, one male on the right, two on the left, are cloaked and holding lances. The beard of the one on the right is clearly shown to be growing: a precise indication of his youthfulness. This composition is repeated, in essence, on the other side of the vase, even if there are three young onlookers¹⁵⁶ and two satyrs behind Dionysos, one of them ithyphallic. The way the last-mentioned is moving, and the lines between the arms and shoulders of the satyrs, are reminiscent of the grotesque dancers. Original to these images are the garlands worn by the satyrs on their chests, like the symposiasts in the act of masturbating by the Amasis Painter¹⁵⁷, evoking a ritual situation.

The satyrs of the *skyphos* preserve more grotesque and wild features than the satyrs of the Heidelberg Painter and Kleitias, making

¹⁵³ See p. 37f. above.

¹⁵⁴ Berlin 3151: Beazley, *Addenda* 22 (79 Para 30).

¹⁵⁵ Rhodes 11131: Beazley, *Para* 90. 1; Clara Rhodos 8, 112–125: the golden diadem, the mirror and the hydria are typical accessories of female burials; Malagardis/Iozzo 1995, 201 and pl. 50a.

¹⁵⁶ G. Jacopi's description (Clara Rhodos 8, 112–125) is not completely clear and the illustration is poor.

¹⁵⁷ Boston 10.651: cf. on p. 188f. below.

them seem older than they really are: the same style, between clumsy and genuine, is also noticeable among the other figures. The date of this skyphos remains open: the comparison of profiles, beards and feet with those of other Attic satyrs from the first half of the 6th century, to be discussed in the next chapter—on the dinos of the Agora, the fragments by Sophilos, from Naukratis and Cortona—indicate an earlier phase than the satyrs of the François krater and the Boeotian kantharos with the metamorphosis from dancer to satyr¹⁵⁸.

The female figure in the centre of the image could be related to the nature of the find-spot: the rite that is being alluded to could belong to a nuptial context. This vase confirms, then, the fact noted in respect of the cup of the Heidelberg Painter in Copenhagen, which we will turn to next: the meeting between Dionysos and a woman occurs in the presence of satyrs. In addition, the anonymous, on-looking youths turn this meeting into an event that is not so much individual as it is public and paradigmatic.

Regarding the satyrs the decoration of the kylix from the same grave context¹⁵⁹ (on one of its sides are Amazons on horseback and the combat of Herakles, and on the other, Greeks with Amazons) is noticeable. On the shield of an Amazon on side B, an emblem can be seen representing a satyr's head¹⁶⁰: he is attributed the aggressive mode—here not erotic but martial—the boar and the bull express in the other two emblems of the same image¹⁶¹.

In the summary of what Attic kylikes from the second quarter of the 6th century tell us about the world of Dionysos, the link that the painters establish between the symposium and weddings (as seen from the male point of view) is significant, although it is missing

¹⁵⁸ Instead, Malagardis/Iozzo 1995, 201, seem to propose a date towards the middle of the century.

¹⁵⁹ Rhodes 15430: Beazley, *Addenda* 53 (198.1).

¹⁶⁰ Its forms seem to be more developed than those of the satyrs on the skyphos, but in fact they are similar to the protomes of satyrs on oinochoai of the circle of the Gorgon Painter (Beazley, *ABV* 10.1 and 2): the date of this kylix also remains rather vague and at the earliest could be placed a few years before 550 BCE.

¹⁶¹ This way of reading is confirmed by other examples of satyr-masks on shields: of Enkelados in a Gigantomachy by the Lydos circle (Beazley, *Para* 48), of Achilles who plays dice in the famous figuration by Exekias (Frontisi-Ducroux 1995, 153 fig. 15; *LIMC* VIII Suppl., Silenoi 187) and finally, in the battle of the Giants of the Siphnian treasury at Delphi.

from the contemporary figurations from Corinth and Boeotia. The language of these images, intended for individuals, is always allusive and concise, and so not easily accessible: but, the connection between the symposium and weddings can only mean the involvement of Dionysos in the nuptial event as well. This nuptial aspect of Dionysos is expressed far more explicitly, in fact in cosmological dimensions, in the Dionysian figurations of the large vases for collective use that we will examine in the next chapter. Here the presence of satyrs at weddings will become clearer.

Laconian cups with Dionysian images

Before considering the great vases of this period, it will be worth examining a contemporary pottery connected with both Corinthian and Attic production, but which in addition has stylistic links with Ionia. Here too, with two exceptions¹⁶², they are cups, the predominant shape in this pottery, demanded however, so it seems, more by the foreign than by the local market¹⁶³. Most of the Laconian kylikes belong to the decades before and after the middle of the century: all the Dionysian subjects that interest us are in fact to be dated between 575 and 525 BCE, and so are contemporary with or slightly later than the Middle Corinthian and Attic versions of the C Painter and the Heidelberg Painter.

The Dionysian themes are usually¹⁶⁴ found in the medallion. The medallion of Laconian cups is more important in the decorative system of the vase than in the Corinthian and Attic kylikes: not only is a single field for figured subjects the rule, but it is particularly spacious and often portrays complex scenes, with more characters. Unlike Attic cups, frequently high-ranking deities like Zeus are represented. However, it is difficult to pick out a preferred theme, because, compared with the small number of Laconian kylikes known¹⁶⁵,

¹⁶² The Rhodes hydria 15373 and the dinos Louvre E 662, to be discussed on p. 101.

¹⁶³ Stibbe 1972, 11ff. The preferred drinking vessel used in Sparta was not the kylix but the lakaina, a cup in the form of a kantharos but with horizontal handles. The lakaina never has figured decoration.

¹⁶⁴ Symposium on the outside of the cup: Stibbe 1972, no. 37 pl. 19. 1 (Samos K 1445); dancers: Stibbe 1972, no. 64 pl. 26.7 (Sparta).

¹⁶⁵ In Stibbe's catalogue there are 370 Laconian vases, and of these much fewer

the subjects are many and diverse¹⁶⁶. From the subjects we consider Dionysian because they are connected with the ritualised consumption of wine, Dionysos himself is missing, although the mule-rider is present. The *symposium*¹⁶⁷, one of the Dionysian figurations on the human level, is well documented and is even one of the earliest. Male and female players of the flute and other instruments, as well as the young cupbearer certainly belong to the context of a symposium. There are fewer pot-bellied dancers in respect of the symposium in the work of the first painters, but they tend to predominate after the middle of the century. On the human level, the military theme is second in numerical importance, but emerges only gradually with the passing of decades: the ratio between the Dionysian and military themes is thus inverted in respect of the Corinthian and Attic kylikes. Besides Dionysos, the Dionysian bride of Cycladic origin is also missing.

The *first formula among those adopted for the symposium*¹⁶⁸ is original. The five guests are arranged in a circle in the round interior of the cup, around a rich floral motif in the centre. Each of them is leaning on his left arm and has a bowl in his right; the food is indicated by tiny circles (imagined as arranged on a small table placed next to the kline) near the left hand. There is no difference in age: they all have beards and are dressed in the same way. The rhythm is interrupted by a large dinos on a stand with a young cupbearer holding a small jug and a wreath in his hand. In the space remaining above the symposiasts, two sirens and two erotes with wreaths in their hands are flying around. In addition, there are two drinking horns, imagined to be hanging from the walls. No less rich and structured is *another representation of the symposium* on one of the oldest Laconian kylikes, in which the symposiasts are paired with females or young males and where erotes are flying around¹⁶⁹. In the lower band, Dionysian dancers are represented: in Sparta, as in Athens

than half are not kylikes. Most of the cups in the catalogue are small fragments. There are about 130 kylikes complete enough for their decoration to be recognised.

¹⁶⁶ Stibbe 1972, 51f., 93, 109f., 125f., 154f.

¹⁶⁷ Illustrated examples: Stibbe 1972, no. 13 pl. 6.1 (Louvre E 667), no. 191 pl. 58 (Samos K 1203 etc.), no. 195 pl. 62.3 (Naples).

¹⁶⁸ Louvre E 667: Stibbe 1972, no. 13 pl. 6.1, dated to around 565 BCE (Stibbe 1972, 50).

¹⁶⁹ Samos K 1203: Stibbe 1972, no. 191 pl. 58f. Date given by Stibbe 1972, 30: around 565, first phase of the Arkesilas Painter.

and Corinth, the Dionysian dance and the symposium were felt to be related themes. In *another example of the Laconian symposium*¹⁷⁰, a set of communal vases have been placed next to the dancers at the feet of the kline with a heterosexual couple¹⁷¹.

The most interesting Laconian representation of the symposium comes from recent excavations at Lavinium¹⁷². The medallion is divided into three bands, the largest of which portrays the symposium; in the lowest, Dionysian dancers can be seen in various poses on the two sides of the krater. On the kline is a male couple: both have beards, but not of the same length, and their hairstyles are different. The symposiast on the right is evidently the erastes, the one on the left (on whom a bird has settled) is the eromenos¹⁷³. In front of the bed is a table with food and vases: a kantharos and a kylix. Under the table, we see the stool with footwear, two seated dogs, two eagles in flight and a bird on the ground. At the two sides of the kline are ephebes of differing height, among them an flute-player: from the top of the head of the two smaller figures emerge vegetal elements as is also the case with Laconian young horse-riders¹⁷⁴, perhaps an allusion to their heroic nature (in the most generic sense of the term). The field above the central couple is taken up by three small winged figures with beards and two eagles in flight. At various points, climbing lizards and little serpents are also visible. The outside of this kylix has what appears to be episodes of animal hunts, one of them a cockerel.

The erotic note is more explicit in the Laconian than in the Corinthian and Attic images, due to the presence of erotes¹⁷⁵ and a cock-

¹⁷⁰ Brussels R 401: KdS316, 54.1; Stibbe 1972, no. 192.

¹⁷¹ Cab. Méd. 192; Stibbe 1972, no. 228 pl. 80.3 and Louvre E 662; Stibbe 1972, no. 313 pl. 111.1.

¹⁷² *Pratica di Mare E* 1986; Boardman 1998, 206 fig. 414. Probably to be attributed to the Naukratis Painter.

¹⁷³ My reading differs from the one in the publication, where they are identified as the Spartan twins Kastor and Polydeukes: Castagnoli 1975, 366.

¹⁷⁴ Stibbe 1972, nos. 306 (London B 1) and 307 (Louvre E 665), pls. 108, 1 and 2.

¹⁷⁵ Erotes are already portrayed in other scenes, e.g. Stibbe 1972, nos. 25b pl. 13. 1 (Samos), 23 (London B 4: with a goddess), 307 pl. 108.2 (Louvre E 665: with a young horseman), 312 (Taranto 20909: with kithara player and symposiast). Probably Eros, but the primitive Eros, and so shown with a beard, as for example in Stibbe 1972, nos. 2 pl. 1.5 (Samos K 1045); 9 pl. 5.1 (Boston 64.1459) is, in my opinion, also the winged person running, traditionally called Boread: Isler-Kerényi 1984 (now cf. Kunze-Götte 1999, 54ff.). For a confirmation see Calame 1996, 202ff.

erel, a typical gift of homoerotic relationships¹⁷⁶. In the second image, the young symposiast holds one in his hand, and on the outer side of the same image, another is about to be caught¹⁷⁷. The cockerel often recurs in Laconian ornamental repertoire, a distinctive feature of this pottery¹⁷⁸. More frequent than elsewhere, but less obvious, the sirens, who sometimes assist in the exploits of heroes, can be found¹⁷⁹.

Dancers are a recurrent subject in Laconian kylikes: they occur in the oldest phases¹⁸⁰ as well as in the more recent¹⁸¹. The subject of ephebes is related. They perform the rituals of wine, as the similarity of figurations shows¹⁸². More often than with other dancers, they are of different heights, with or without beards, and so are of varying ages¹⁸³: the homoerotic tone is clear in this subject as well. The presence of Dionysos is implicit in the ritual nature of the consumption of wine and in the *kantharos*¹⁸⁴.

Concerning the *satyrs*, there are no allusions to a satyr-like metamorphosis as found on the Boeotian vases. However, the idea is closely related on a broken cup from the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia near Sparta¹⁸⁵, which has an extremely obscene erotic figuration, including public defecation. The protagonists are dancers who are typologically very close to contemporary Corinthian dancers. The person positioned to the left of the handle is hairy and endowed

¹⁷⁶ Koch-Harnack 1983, 97–105.

¹⁷⁷ It also occurs on the outside of the cup with a symposium Louvre E 667: Stibbe 1972, pl. 6.2.

¹⁷⁸ Stibbe 1972, *passim*: there are many examples. The cockerel is also present in the episode of Achilles, Troilos and Polyxena: Stibbe 1972, no. 294 pl. 100.1 (from Samos).

¹⁷⁹ New York 59.15: Stibbe 1972, no. 300 pl. 104.1 (hero fighting a bull).

¹⁸⁰ Brussels A 1760: Stibbe 1972, no. 141 pl. 45.1 (Boread Painter, 575–565 BCE); Samos K 2522: no. 293 pl. 98 (Rider Painter, shortly after 560 BCE).

¹⁸¹ Leipzig T 2177: Stibbe 1972, no. 314 pl. 112; Samos K 1960: no. 315 pl. 112 (Rider Painter, group E, circa 535); Vatican, Guglielmi Coll.: no. 272 pl. 90.2 (style of the Hunt Painter, third quarter of the 6th century).

¹⁸² Cf. London B 3: Stibbe 1972, nos. 308 pl. 109.1 with Leipzig T 2177; 314 pl. 112. To these can be added the group comprising of a dancer, a krater and a flautist on the dinos Louvre E 662: no. 313 pl. 111.1, which will be discussed again on p. 101.

¹⁸³ Cab. Méd. 192: Stibbe 1972, no. 228 pl. 80.3; Samos K 2522: no. 293 pl. 98; private collection: no. 223; Florence 3879: no. 227 pl. 80.1.

¹⁸⁴ Sparta: Stibbe 1972, no. 244 pl. 85.4. The *kantharos*, a Dionysian symbol, is still in vogue in the pottery of the 5th century: Stibbe 1994.

¹⁸⁵ Pipili 1987, 65f. fig. 95; Stibbe 1996, pl. 16.2.

with an oversized phallus: it is reminiscent of one of the two wild persons on the little Corinthian amphora with a mule-rider.

The well-known fragment of a medallion showing *the capture of Silenos* has, on its outside, perhaps not accidentally, a symposium scene¹⁸⁶. The event takes place near a fountain, particularly significant for connecting satyrs with the female world, as we shall see below in the discussion on Achilles, Troilos and Polyxena on the François krater¹⁸⁷.

Besides the capture of Silenos, only one other mythological subject occurs in Laconian ceramic art, the *mule-rider*¹⁸⁸. The figure occupies the half of a medallion of a cup that, externally, is almost lacking in decoration. The other half shows the capture of a lion by a mature male using a noose. In the surrounding empty field are a swan and a little owl. This pattern is new and unique¹⁸⁹: the lion's opponent is certainly not Herakles, who is usually strangling a lion. In fact, he is not a real hero: his purpose is not to defeat the lion, but to capture it. Even the lion seems surprised. The scene is clearly paradoxical: the very antithesis of the heroic deed.

Similar paradoxical features also mark the depiction of the mule-rider when compared with the iconography preceding the more famous version on the François krater¹⁹⁰, which is elder than the Laconian cup by a decade at most. The most striking feature is the way the rider sits on the mule¹⁹¹, which makes the deformation of both feet conspicuous: the mount and rider are the complete antithesis of the young hero on horseback on other Laconian kylikes¹⁹² and on many vases by contemporary makers, including Troilos, the mythological prototype of the young hero¹⁹³. This rider would not be able to move without a mount: the mule is only a humble means of trans-

¹⁸⁶ Berlin WS 4: Stibbe 1972, no. 292, Pipili 1987, no. 98; the same subject, with the dance motif, recurs in Rome, Villa Giulia 57231 (Stibbe 1972, no. 342; Pipili 1987, 39 no. 97) and perhaps for a third time: Pipili 1987, 39 no. 99.

¹⁸⁷ Florence 4209: see p. 81f.

¹⁸⁸ Rhodes 10711: Stibbe 1972, no. 190; Clara Rhodos 3, 120 fig. 115; LIMC IV, Hephaistos 132.

¹⁸⁹ Some proposals for reading are mentioned by Stibbe 1972, 105f.

¹⁹⁰ Athens 664: see above on p. 24ff.; Florence 4209: see on p. 82ff.

¹⁹¹ Hephaistos is portrayed in a similar way on the dinos by Sophilos, London 1971.11-1.1: see on p. 73.

¹⁹² Stibbe 1972, nos. 306 (London B 1), 307 (Louvre E 665) pl. 198.1-2.

¹⁹³ Villa Giulia: Stibbe 1972, no. 291 pl. 96.1. On the concept of the mythological prototype cf. p. 111.

port. Our deformed rider proffers a drinking horn towards the mouth of a wineskin carried on the shoulders of a male following him. This figure is reminiscent of the one carrying a long vine-shoot on his shoulder, found on the little Corinthian amphora discussed above¹⁹⁴, on which however the rider is young, not mature. Here too we have a scene connected with the production of wine: the consumption of wine is the complete antithesis of the symposium, both for the social connotation of the protagonists and for the method and time. The drinking horn in the rider's hand sets the episode in an archaic period or in a rural setting: outside and before the polis. Further on we shall return to the problem of the relationship between this rider and his mythological prototype, Hephaistos¹⁹⁵. The Laconian version confirms what we have already said about the little Corinthian amphora: the mule-rider is not exclusive to Athens but generally widespread in Greece.

To summarise, the Dionysian repertoire of the Laconian kylikes is not fundamentally different from the repertoire of the Corinthian and Attic cups. The absence of Dionysos is prominent compared with the Heidelberg Painter, but not with the C Painter. The symposium and the Dionysian dance do not appear in the same image but are evidently considered to be related: the kantharos, which is also a Dionysian symbol in Laconia, can occur in both. Unlike contemporary productions where the mule rider is a subject for dinoi and kraters, in Laconia we find it on a kylix: a detail that should be connected with the special function of the Laconian medallions concerning elaborate images. We shall return to Laconian ceramic art when considering the community vases.

Dionysian subjects in Ionian pottery

Clownish *dancers* of a type derived from Dionysian dancers of the Corinthian aryballoi—but slimmer and with a different hairstyle—are the most common decoration on Chian chalices. They are drinking vessels similar to the kylix. From an archaeological viewpoint, this vessel is important because it was exported extensively, from the

¹⁹⁴ Athens 664: see above p. 24f.

¹⁹⁵ On p. 89f.

Greek settlements on the Black Sea to the Mediterranean coasts of the Middle East and Africa. Dancers belong to the Chian repertoire “appreciably later than the introduction of the black figure technique”¹⁹⁶, that is, towards the second quarter of the 6th century. Normally it is a single figure on each side of the vase, often surrounded by simplified rosettes of Corinthian matrix. In some cases a female figure holding a wreath appears with the dancers¹⁹⁷. She is clearly different from the female dancers who accompany the Attic Dionysian dancers on late Komast cups since she is wearing long garments and has a dignified aspect. In the wreath this woman is holding, and in the recurrent gesture of the dancers touching their own buttocks with one hand, an ancient gesture of sexual stimulation¹⁹⁸, an erotic element might be evident. Perhaps too not by chance, the most widespread decoration of these Chian chalices besides the dancer is a cockerel alone or with a hen¹⁹⁹.

There are few elements for a reading: but it is certain that this Chian dancer, like his Corinthian counterpart, is ‘outside’, in the world of nature, and in a vaguely erotic setting. Only the type of vase on which it occurs suggests a link with wine. A clear indication of its importance is the fact that it is the only human figure regularly present in the repertoire of the Chian chalices.

The clownish dancer is not foreign to the other Ionian productions, as shown by a *small* “Carian” *amphora*²⁰⁰, where the dancer, the only subject apart from a little jug, is ithyphallic, and the well-known *Samian kylix* with the so-called bird-catcher²⁰¹, both from the second half of the century.

Instead, *the symposium* is virtually absent. A single figuration that could allude to the condition of the symposiast occurs on an *amphora-lekythos in the Fikellura style*, in Rhodes, almost contemporary with the Samian cup just mentioned²⁰². A bearded male, dressed carefully and

¹⁹⁶ Lemos 1991, 169; Boardman 1998, 145f.

¹⁹⁷ Lemos 1991, 171 fig. 94 (Chios 3296), 172 fig. 98 (Oxford).

¹⁹⁸ Cf. the Protoattic krater Berlin 31573 (A 32), see above on p. 10; several examples also in the Corinthian style, cf. Seeberg 1971, pls. Ia, VIb, VIIIb, XIa, XIVa and Seeberg 1964, 37 figs. 14, 39, 18.43, 23 and even in the work of the Amasis Painter (Boston 10.651).

¹⁹⁹ Lemos 1991, 173ff.

²⁰⁰ Kassel Alg 269; Yfantidis 1990, 178f.

²⁰¹ Louvre F 68; Boardman 1998, 164 fig. 327. We will discuss it again on p. 202.

²⁰² Rhodes 12396: CV I pl. 4, 2 (Italy 420); Boardman 1998, 168 fig. 338.

holding a drinking horn in his right hand, seems to be hovering in the air. Is this a metaphor of symposial joy? On the other side of the vase, equally isolated, is a warrior standing in full armour. This coupling of figures on the same vase is reminiscent of similar combinations already seen on Middle Corinthian and Attic Siana kylikes: in archaic imagery, the warrior and the symposiast are antithetical and complementary manifestations of the same stage of masculine life.

Conclusion

We shall now try, at the end of this long chapter on Dionysian figurations in Greek pottery for individual use, to summarise the hypotheses that have emerged. The subject that recurs most often, common to Corinthian unguent vases and to all types of drinking vessels, is the clownish dancer. The type, which also seems to have precedents in the Protoattic period, acquired its canonical formulation in Corinth from where it was transmitted to the Attic, Boeotian, Laconian and Ionian repertoire. Its presence throughout Greece and the variations between being clothed and naked, fat and slender, alone and in a group, makes it implausible that it is a character from the theatrical world (and so to be connected with the origins of Attic dramatic genres) as has been maintained for a long time. The primary connotation is clearly that it is a ritual. Rites also entail performance: so the dancer also represents something. Our hypothesis, derived from the function of the image-bearers, from the combinations of subjects on the same vase, from the bodily forms and gestures, as well as from the attributes, is that the painters intended to evoke specific moments in a man's life: moments of transition between one identity and another, moments in which a person gives the impression of being (or subjectively feeling) incomplete.

The dancer is a suitable image for expressing these moments of transition. He is suitable in the ambiguity of his look: male, but usually without a phallus, often youthful, never athletic. The protruding stomach and buttocks, present particularly in the more ancient formulations, suggest various conclusions: the different, the deformed, and the incomplete. The dance itself evokes transition, a suspended situation. Dance becomes paradox when lame or deformed people are dancing. Clearly, the setting evoked by the dancer is the antithesis

of the normal world, to some extent it is an upside-down world²⁰³. Therefore, the initial association of the subject of the dancer with the sphere of 'outside' and wilderness is not surprising.

Another characteristic of the subject is its acting in chorus: even when portrayed alone, the dancer evokes a group. The succession of different identities is a normal feature of each life: both on an individual, and on a social level. Besides individual age²⁰⁴, role and social image represent these successive phases. For each of these phases every society creates typical roles and images: in Archaic and Classical Greece, the athlete was the embodiment of the ephebic age (or at least was one of the embodiments), the figure of the warrior was the prototype of first maturity.

By perceiving the biographical journey in such a manner, the transitional phases of the individual become crucial for the social group. Moreover, if an individual's life is made up of a series of phases²⁰⁵, there are also (and repeatedly) transitional phases. These are foreseeable and foreseen, but not automatic. Above all, they cannot be considered individual and private events, but are relevant for the whole society: hence the need to ritualise them. The rites of passage between these different phases were and remain of vital importance for every society: we must assume they existed, even if only faint or indirect traces of them are found (in certain rites or myths) in the sources. We certainly know that the sources show quite limited glimpses of real life and that many essential aspects are never mentioned in literature. If the transitional phases are repeated with a certain rhythm (in archaic and classical Greece probably every seven years)²⁰⁶, then the one linked with the moment of puberty is not the only one. The transitional rites will then be only partly of the classical initiatory type: indeed, they must take place not only before but also after the athletic phase, before and after the military phase, etc.

²⁰³ Cf. the Etruscan stone slabe from Acquarossa in Viterbo, with the dancer in the centre portrayed with his head down: Cristofani 1991, 72 fig. 2.

²⁰⁴ Ethnological examples of societies organised on the basis of age suggest that the individual age is to be understood in a relative sense: Bernardi 1984, 14: "the very idea of age, which we use continuously, is a cultural product", and 26ff., on the difference between physiological age and structural age.

²⁰⁵ Garland 1990, 2; Musti 1990.

²⁰⁶ The Solonian hebdomades: Brulé 1987, 98; 360ff.; 398; 406; Garland 1990, 3f.

The setting of these rites was not necessarily public. The moment of transition between various ages, roles and images is crucial on the social level; however, it is problematic also on the individual and psychological levels. The corresponding rites serve to let the community know about the metamorphosis that has happened. But they certainly also had the function of providing psychological support to the individual who was mentally and physically undergoing that metamorphosis. A suitable setting for ritualised transitions must certainly have been the semi-private frame of the symposium. The symposium was one of the privileged settings of rituals of this type, as is confirmed by various roles, correlated with the different phases of age, which we find within the symposium itself: the role of the young cup-bearer; of the seated table companion, who is *ephebe* and *eromenos*; of the recumbent symposiast who is a mature man and *erastes*²⁰⁷.

The imagery of pottery, an artisanship functionally linked to the symposium, expresses this circumstance, clearly emphasising, already in the 7th century, the dancer's connection with wine. Wine refers back to Dionysos, and facing Dionysos was whoever found himself, repeatedly in the course of his life, in a transitional phase. In a clearer way than the dancer, the symposiast is linked to wine. In our survey we have noted constantly the closeness between dancer and symposiast.

A more subtle way of evoking the link between the symposium, a privileged setting for the consumption of wine, and the age-phases with their corresponding social roles, consists in portraying anonymous warriors and athletes, the corresponding prototypical heroes and the winged goddess of contest and victory²⁰⁸. The most concise method was to decorate the unguent vase, an attribute of the *ephebe*—who embodies the most typical transitional phase—with the figure of the dancer.

We now know that the symposium was a symbol of civil life²⁰⁹. Civil life is defined in terms of it being in contrast with life in the

²⁰⁷ Isler-Kerényi 1993b.

²⁰⁸ Isler-Kerényi 1969, 34ff.

²⁰⁹ Schmitt Pantel 1990, 26: "... these practices (symposion and sacrificial distribution) bring into play, in everyday gestures, a spectrum of attitudes which are the true characteristics of the Archaic citizen"; Stein-Hölkeskamp 1992; Calame 1996, 105ff.

wild. If attending a symposium was equivalent to living a specific social role, the transitional phases between the different social roles are logically felt as “falling back” into the wild. Hence, the strong wild connotation of the dancer (and the importance of the hunt as a symbol of the effort to overcome the wild)²¹⁰ appears especially on the Corinthian unguent vases. Hence perhaps also the long persistence of the animal frieze as a decorative formula on the Corinthian and Laconian kylikes, as well as the strong presence of the fantastic and monstrous figures in the repertoire of Attic Siana cups²¹¹.

The affinity of the dancer with the wild evidently means affinity with the animal world. This explains, but only superficially, the metamorphoses of dancers into satyrs in Boeotian pottery; and it also explains the formal oscillations between the iconographic forerunners of dancers and satyrs. If the dancer can, in certain circumstances, intentionally or not, turn into a satyr, this would mean that the satyr does not belong to a mythological sphere conceptually separated from the human sphere, but to somewhere between human and mythical. In this way, and in spite of the significantly small number of satyrs in the pottery considered so far, iconography reveals a new fact, which has escaped previous studies that are too limited to the Attic repertoire. A fact we will consider in depth in the next chapter when we examine the Dionysian figurations on contemporary communal vases, the *dinoi* and the *kraters*.

The same applies to a subject strictly connected with the satyr and the Dionysian thiasos, namely the mule-rider, who illustrates the passage from the wild to civilisation, from ‘outside’ to ‘inside’. Iconography connects this transition with the transportation of wine and even before that with its production, which is with the metamorphosis of the grape into wine. We will show that this twofold transition—from the wild to the civilised and from grape to wine—was understood in both a spatial and a temporal sense.

Finally, we wish to consider at length the central figure of the Dionysian repertoire, namely, Dionysos. In the classes of material discussed so far, he is present to a limited extent: in fact, he is missing from the Corinthian unguent vases, from the first series of Attic kylikes and from Boeotian and Laconian pottery. The only ones to have Dionysos in their repertoire are the kylikes by the Heidelberg

²¹⁰ Schnapp 1997, 46f.

²¹¹ On the meaning of the animal frieze: Isler 1978.

Painter. Important and new is his link with weddings, once he appears facing both a nuptial-matronly female figure, prototype of the bride, or a male person similar to Dionysos himself, prototype of the groom.

With these images of Dionysos emerges the problem of identifying the females surrounding him. In the first chapter, we met two completely different types of woman: the victim of erotic aggression by a Protocorinthian satyr-like person and the bride who meets Dionysos on the Cycladic krater of the 7th century. A new female on the Attic Komast cups is the female dancer, companion of the Dionysian dancer. The kylikes of Lydos have revealed the identity of this female dancer to be a companion of the satyrs: which proves the substantial similarity of dancer and satyr. However, if the female dancer and the victim of erotic aggression are the same person, how can we explain the different attitudes of the satyr—now peaceful but originally aggressive—towards her? In addition, what is the relationship of this female companion of the dancer-satyr with the female companion of the Laconian symposiast and with the Attic matronly-wife who meets Dionysos? For an answer to these questions, we must turn to the more explicit images of the great communal vases.

A recurring attribute of Dionysos in these images is the drinking horn: already an attribute of the dancers on the first Attic kylikes and on the Corinthian unguent vases, also present in the figurations of the mule rider and the symposium on Laconian cups. The drinking horn can have, as we have said, a primitive connotation because it is a drinking vessel, not made by man but found in nature. Another idea that the drinking horn evokes is sacrifice: to obtain the horn it is necessary to kill the animal. In this way, the consumption of wine is connected with sacrifice that, in mythological thought—also illustrated by the myth of Prometheus²¹²—represents an important step in the process of emancipation from life in the wild. The few figurations of Dionysos present on vases for individual use reveal a trait of his personality, which the analysis of the first figurations of the god on dinoi and Attic kraters from the decades between 580 and 550 BCE will fully confirm: his cultural, civilising aspect, as antithesis and complement to his wild and primordial features²¹³.

²¹² Rudhart 1981, 209–226; Kerényi 1998, 201.

²¹³ For confirmation see Calame 1996, 148, when he speaks of the “*faculté ambivalente de transgression et d’intégration*” present in the cult of Dionysos and, in legend, of his role in sustaining the “*action civilisante du mariage*”.

