The Theseus Painter
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XI. HERAKLES AND THESEUS

1. Introduction

The majority of the Theseus Painter’s mythological pictures show the two main heroes found in Athenian vase painting: Herakles and Theseus. By far the most numerous and most varied of them, however, are Heraklean. Herakles appears in 34 of the Theseus Painter’s 211 pieces, as identified in Table 12. Many of these scenes are somewhat exceptional: the subject is found seldom or not at all outside the Theseus Painter or his direct vicinity (White Heron Group, Athena Painter, etc.), or the depiction is among the earliest instances of that particular Heraklean theme.

Most of the Theseus Painter’s representations of Herakles betray a tendency towards a ‘renewal’ of the hero’s iconography, as also seems to happen in the work of several other painters from around 500 B.C. Although it is of course impossible to establish whether the Theseus Painter actually introduced one or more of these subjects, he consistently seems to belong chronologically to the group of painters who evidently depicted them for the first time. On the other hand, he also portrayed Herakles in more usual episodes, although he did so comparatively much less often.

The Theseus Painter evidently preferred to give Herakles a non-active role, often reclining or otherwise resting, rarely performing a heroic act. Therefore, not surprisingly, the painter’s depictions of the twelve labours are few. Herakles and the lion are seen twice only: Lagunilla’s skyphos (Cat. no. 11, pl. 5 b), with Herakles fighting the lion in the kneeling scheme, and formerly the Peyrefitte collection (Cat. no. 146, pl. 46 f), where both combatants stand (Herakles looking round) and an onlooker in a long mantle grasps a flower. Thasos 1117 (Cat. no. 89, pl. 35 n) preserves part of a leg and Herakles’ lion skin as well as a pair of hind legs, which would belong to a deer. Perhaps the subject was Herakles and the hind. A very small fragment from the Athenian Acropolis shows partial white birds (Cat. no. 88, pl. 35 m). Graef and Langlotz as well as Haspel proposed that the subject was Herakles and the birds. Although the fragment’s very small size and the lack of further identifying clues might make the interpretation seem far-fetched, it gains some plausibility when the fragment is compared to a partial cup from ancient Smyrna, decorated in Six’s technique, which shows comparable birds and part of what might be Herakles.639

On the other hand, definitely identifiable as one of Herakles’ twelve labours is the subject of Amsterdam 2604 (Cat. no. 12, pl. 5 c-e). Each side of this fragmentary skyphos has Herakles leading Kerberos with a rope to the right. Hades stands on the left side behind Kerberos, the foot of Hermes might be visible in front of one of Herakles’ feet.640 In the view of Von Bothmer, London 1926.11-15.1 (Cat. no. 17, pl. 8 a-c) represents Herakles fighting Andromache and another amazon.641

The Theseus Painter’s evident lack of interest in Herakles’ labours is hardly exceptional, however. Other late black-figure painters were apparently equally uninterested in these stories, as they seem rarely to have chosen them. Moreover, their representations often include uncommon details. Four vases attributed to the Athena Painter, for example, feature Herakles and the lion,642 but in three instances the lion crouches in the

639 Y. Tuna-Nörling, *Die Ausgrabungen von Alt-Smyrna und Pitane, Die attisch-schwarzfigurige Keramik und der attische Keramikexport nach Kleinasiien* (Tübingen 1995) 34-35, no. 145, pl. 9. See also *LIMC* V, s.v. ‘Herakles’, nos. 2241-45, with similar compositions, but no completely white birds. No known vase of the Theseus Painter is in Six’s technique. However, at least one skyphos of Heron Class type is in this technique, with an acrobatic drinker, Malibu 76.AE.127 (Cat. no. N65). See further J. Burnet-Grossman, ‘Six’s Technique at the Getty’, *GV* Getty Mus 5 (1991) 17-19, fig. 2 a-c, also n. 19, 24 nos. 94-97.

640 For black-figure vases with this composition, see *LIMC* IV, s.v. ‘Hades’, nos. 139-45; *LIMC* V, s.v. ‘Herakles’, nos. 2592-98. Compare also a skyphos close to the Theseus Painter, in the Sub-krokotos Group, possibly even by the Painter of Philadelphia 5481 with a scene of Herakles in the underworld (Cat. no. N36).

641 Bothmer, *Amazons*, 49, no. 127, pl. 40. Haspels (ABL 253,3) assigns the vase to the Theseus Painter; in my opinion it is by his hand.

entrance of a cave, a scheme which is otherwise met only in much later red-figure.\textsuperscript{643} The Athena Painter's other pictures of the labours include Herakles and the bull (three times),\textsuperscript{644} Herakles and the birds (once)\textsuperscript{645} and one amazonomachy.\textsuperscript{646} Likewise, neither the Krokoitos Group nor other painters near the Theseus Painter frequently depicted Herakles' deeds: once Herakles and the deer,\textsuperscript{647} once Herakles and Kerberos\textsuperscript{648} and twice Herakles and the Hydra, a subject which the Theseus Painter seems not to have illustrated.\textsuperscript{649}

The Theseus Painter also depicted a few other Heraklean subjects which are not among the twelve labours but which are nevertheless fairly common in Attic vase painting. Once we see Herakles fighting a sea monster (human body and fishtail, Marseilles 7017, \textit{Cat. no. 23, pl. 10 c-d}).\textsuperscript{650} On a rim fragment of a skyphos (Navplion Museum, \textit{Cat. no. 91, pl. 36 b}) the hero is preceded by an auloi-playing satyr. Although no direct, recognisable parallel can be cited, Herakles is occasionally seen playing music in a Dionysian context.\textsuperscript{651}

In contrast, notwithstanding the name Haspels gave to the Theseus Painter, he rarely portrayed his namesake, as remarked above. In fact, Theseus is found on only six vessels decorated by the painter.\textsuperscript{652} Moreover, the deeds of Theseus that the painter chose are generally not especially common in Attic black-figure. An exception – the oinochoe Petit Palais 313 (\textit{Cat. no. 167, pl. 53 d-e}) – shows one of the most usual stories of Theseus in Attic black-figure, which is met more than 40 times: Theseus and the bull. Only Theseus fighting the minotaur occurs more often.\textsuperscript{653}

The next two sections deal with the Theseus Painter's rare or otherwise unusual scenes in which Herakles and Theseus are the main protagonists.

2. Herakles

Both sides of Taranto 4447 (\textit{Cat. no. 13, pl. 6a-b}) feature Herakles and Helios. The god is portrayed as a youth on one side, and as bearded on the other; he has a yellow sun disk above his head and a frontal \textit{biga} with winged horses. The two figures of Herakles differ substantially: on one side, he is seated on the shore, with raised right hand, and seems to greet Helios; on the other, he climbs up the same shore looking round at Helios. Although Herakles is not aiming his bow (on side B he even has no bow at all), two arrows stick out of Helios' body. In black-figure, fewer than 20 vases portray Helios similarly, placed frontally in a \textit{biga}.

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\textsuperscript{643} See \textit{LIMC} V, s.v. 'Herakles', nos. 1889-92, the red-figure vases are generally later than 450 B.C.

\textsuperscript{644} Bonn 538 (\textit{ABV} 523); Athens, NM 1132 (\textit{ABL} 256,50; \textit{ABV} 522; Para 260; Berlin ST. 4982,9 (Para 261).

\textsuperscript{645} Vienna 1841 (\textit{ABL} 256,53; \textit{ABV} 522).

\textsuperscript{646} Palermo 142, (\textit{ABL} 256,51)

\textsuperscript{647} Vatican 454 (\textit{Ure, Krokoitos, 97, no. 6; Para 95}).

\textsuperscript{648} In any event, Herakles in the underworld, see \textit{Cat. no. N36}.

\textsuperscript{649} Athens, NM 416 (\textit{CVA} Athens 4, pl. 32, Krokoitos/sub-Krokoitos Group); Agrigento (\textit{ABV} 254,2 "in the manner of the Theseus Painter"; \textit{ABV} 521; Para 259).


\textsuperscript{651} See \textit{LIMC} IV, s.v. 'Herakles', nos. 1472-77. A similar head of Herakles is seen on a small rim fragment of a skyphos from Satyrion (\textit{Cat. no. 90, pl. 36 a}).

\textsuperscript{652} In fact, one of them, the fragment Corinth C-70-33 (\textit{Cat. no. 31, pl. 13 f}), does not necessarily depict Theseus. It shows the partial head of a bearded man which is grasped by the outstretched hand of a missing opposite figure, towards which, in turn, the first man extends a partial arm, very much like the Prokrutes of Lacon 37996 and Toledo 63.27 (\textit{Cat. nos. 29-38, pls. 13 a, d}). On the other hand, the man may be bending up his arm towards his own head, like the fleeing female of the Toledo and Lacon skyphoi. However, no male figure of the Theseus Painter known to me gestures similarly, not even on his leotrophoroi. See also Neils, \textit{Theseus}, 74-77, on the relative rarity of Theseus on the vases of the Theseus Painter compared to his Herakles representations.

\textsuperscript{653} For Theseus and the bull in black-figure see Brommer, \textit{Vasenlisten}, 252-54; \textit{LIMC} VII, s.v. 'Theseus', nos. 178-81, 199. For Theseus and the Minotaur see Brommer, \textit{Vasenlisten}, 227-38; \textit{LIMC} VII, s.v. 'Theseus', nos. 230-35.
Sometimes Herakles is included, but more often the sun god is alone.\(^{654}\) The representations of Helios alone are: twice the Gela Painter,\(^{655}\) three times the Diosphos Painter,\(^{656}\) five times the Haimon Painter or his Group,\(^{657}\) once the Beldam Painter,\(^{658}\) and once unattributed.\(^{659}\)

The subject's occurrence is limited to a very short period: earliest, about 510 B.C.; latest, in red-figure, about 460 B.C. Regarded as the oldest known Attic illustration of Herakles and Helios is a lekythos picture assigned by Haspel to her Daybreak Painter, who is linked to the Leagros Group. Stylistically, however, the Daybreak Painter seems not to be significantly earlier than the Theseus Painter.\(^{660}\) Apart from these two black-figure painters, only a few others depicted both Herakles and Helios together: once the Sappho Painter\(^ {661}\) and, once each, two unnamed painters.\(^{662}\) All the black-figure portrayals, apart from the two by the Theseus Painter, are found on lekythoi. A number of red-figure pictures represent Helios in similar fashion, mounted on a biga, but without Herakles; none is found on a lekythos, all are dated between 480 and 460 B.C.\(^{663}\)

The next few vases depict an episode that is loosely related to the preceding one. Apparently they show Herakles fighting the giant cowherd Alkyoneus, who stole the cattle of Helios\(^ {664}\) (Taranto 4448, once Athens market, Brussels A 1953, Cat. nos. 14, 109, 135, pls. 6 c, 42 d-e). Regarding the Brussels lekythos, the subject has always been considered fairly certain.\(^{665}\) Alkyoneus lies asleep as Herakles overpowers him, which is the usual Attic presentation.\(^{666}\) The Hypnos hovering above the giant clinches the subject's identification.

In contrast, the Taranto and Athens skyphoi are more problematical. It is generally regarded as most acceptable to see the opponents on these skyphoi as actively fighting (wrestling) one another rather than as one (Herakles) tricking the other in his sleep (Alkyoneus). The first view would seem all the more likely because, in contrast to the Herakles of the Taranto and Athens skyphoi, the hero is not portrayed as naked in the certain scenes of his confrontation with the giant. Therefore the subject of these skyphoi has long been instead considered Herakles fighting Antaios. If so, the theme of side B of Taranto 4448 (pl. 6 d), where Hermes is leading cattle, would then be only remotely connected to that of side A: Hermes with the cattle of Geryon.\(^{667}\) Nonetheless, B. Andreae maintains that the Taranto and Athens skyphoi indeed show Alkyoneus\(^ {668}\) because the attitude of Herakles' opponent seems, in fact, too passive for an active wrestling

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\(^{654}\) See ABL 120-24, nos. 1-15; LIMC V, s.v. 'Helios', nos. 1-11, nos. 95-98; LIMC V, s.v. 'Herakles', 2545-49. Also G.F. Pinney and B.S. Ridgeway, 'Herakles at the ends of the Earth', JHS 101 (1981) 141-44.

\(^{655}\) Boston 92.99 and Vienna 815 (ABL 120,4-5; LIMC V, s.v. 'Helios', no. 2), also dated 510-500 B.C.

\(^{656}\) Cabinet des Médailles 220, New York GR 540, Würzburg 384 (ABL 120, 6, 9-10; LIMC V, s.v. 'Helios', nos. 3, 7), all dated about 490 B.C.

\(^{657}\) Berlin 1983, Karlsruhe 173, Athens, NM 2211, twice Athens market (ABL 120,11-15; LIMC V, s.v. 'Helios', nos. 4-6, 8; ABV 438,54), all dated about 490 B.C.

\(^{658}\) Hanover 1968.3 (LIMC V, s.v. 'Helios', no. 10).

\(^{659}\) Kerameikos HS 231, (LIMC V, s.v. 'Helios', no. 9). Also Helios in side view in Nicosia 1935/C727 (LIMC V, s.v. 'Helios', no. 13).

\(^{660}\) Athens, NM 513 (ABL 120,1 196,1; later added to Beazley's Leagros Group, ABV 380,290; Para 163; Brommer, Vasenlisten\(^1\), 68, no. A1; LIMC V, s.v. 'Herakles', no. 2545). A date of 510-500 B.C. has been given to this lekythos, which would not be far from the date of the Theseus Painter's skyphos.

\(^{661}\) New York 41.162.29 (ABL 120,3; ABV 507; Brommer, Vasenlisten\(^1\), 68, no. A3; LIMC V, s.v. 'Herakles', no. 2547), dated around 500-475 B.C.

\(^{662}\) ABL 120,7-8; LIMC V, s.v. 'Herakles', nos. 2548-49, where dated about 500-475 B.C.

\(^{663}\) Two polychrome bobbins, dated 470 B.C. in LIMC V, s.v. 'Helios', nos. 11-12. One of them, Agora P 5113, is said to be by a painter possibly near the Brygos Painter (?) (Agora XXX, 351, no. 1640, pl. 153, ca. 480 B.C., no mention of the Brygos Painter); the other is Athens, NM 2350 (ARV\(^7\) 775,3). The remaining three are two kraters and a skyphos (LIMC V, s.v. 'Helios', nos. 14-16).

\(^{664}\) LIMC I, s.v. 'Alkyoneus'; Andreae, Herakles, 130-210.

\(^{665}\) This identification of Alkyoneus goes back to Haspel (ABL 251,57).

\(^{666}\) See Brommer, Vasenlisten\(^1\); Andreae, Herakles, and esp. LIMC I, s.v. 'Alkyoneus', nos. 1-30. Most of these vases are black-figure.


\(^{668}\) Andreae, Herakles, 186-91, as also maintained in Brommer, Vasenlisten\(^1\), 6, no. 15, and by R. Olmos and L.J. Balmaseda, in LIMC I, s.v. 'Alkyoneus', no. 17. In my view, however, the identification remains uncertain because the Theseus Painter's figure rather differs from representations of Alkyoneus by other painters.
match which, in turn, suggests that the man might just be Alkyoneus asleep after all. If so, moreover, side B of the Taranto and Athens skyphoi would then complement side A: Hermes leading away the cattle of Helios, which Alkyoneus had stolen. This interpretation of the subject, in turn, is more in line with the Theseus Painter's evidently frequent preference for thematic unity between the sides of the same vase. On the other hand, it seems that this combination of subjects is not seen on vases by other painters that show Herakles and Alkyoneus.

Lastly, K. Danali-Giole notes that Alkyoneus is depicted as asleep only in Athenian art possibly in reference to theatre performances, whereas outside Athens he is pictured awake. Therefore, even if Herakles' opponent on the Taranto and Athens skyphoi is indeed meant to be awake, he could still be Alkyoneus, but in a non-Attic scheme.669

A highly exceptional representation is seen on two other skyphoi of the Theseus Painter (Acropolis 1306 and Monopoli, private collection, Cat. nos. 15-16, pl. 7 a, c). Herakles leads a female monster by a rope, comparable to the way he handles Kerberos in Amsterdam 2604 (Cat. no. 12, pl. 5 c-d). Few parallels can be cited, all of which are very close to the Theseus Painter: one by or near the Athena Painter, and one by a painter in the vicinity of the White Heron Group.670

But despite the lack of parallels various identifications of the monster have been advanced. For example, a deity or demon of death, comparable to Kerberos, such as Thanatos, Lamia, Empousa, Ker and Mormo or Orco. Haspels accepted Lamia. However, as remarked above, such an identification must be considered with caution because Lamia has been linked, on unclear grounds, to other indeterminate monsters, as we have seen with regard to the Boston and Guardia Perticara skyphoi showing amazon/Arimasp and griffin (Cat. nos. 6, 10, pls. 3 a, 5 a; see also chapter X.2 above).671

On the other hand, it may be that the scenes of the Athens and Monopoli skyphoi generally refer, in symbolic terms, to victory over death, similar to Herakles' victory over Kerberos. J. Boardman further suggests that the monster might be an unknown female counterpart of Kerberos. The suggestion is not completely impossible, as the content and composition of both types of scenes (Herakles leading Kerberos, and leading a female monster) indeed seem to correspond rather well (see also Amsterdam 2604, Cat. no. 12, pl. 5 c-d), although the apparent similarities might be accidental. K. Schefold and F. Jung associate the female monster with sphinxes led by a rope, representations which go back as far as Egyptian art.672

In the last analysis, however, none of the above-mentioned proposals is especially convincing, due partly to the lack of parallels and possible narrative sources. And the rarity of the representations. Attempts have also been made to place the female monster in a broader, more general context. She may reflect, for example, exotic influences from Egypt and the Near East, like wingless sphinxes and griffins or even monkeys. But none of the Theseus Painter's monsters particularly resembles a monkey or a wingless sphinx, creatures which, moreover, he is not known to have portrayed and which, if he wished to do so, he would presumably have made to conform to Attic norms, as nothing in his work suggests such remote pictorial sources. Therefore this proposal seems less satisfactory. In sum, as suggested with respect to the painter's amazon/Arimasp and griffin, as discussed above (Cat. nos. 6, 10, pls. 3 a, 5 a), it is probably wisest to see the


670 Boston 98.924 (ABV 524,1; Beazley Addenda 131, by or near the Athena Painter) and Copenhagen NM 834 (Cat. no. N53). Also the oinochoe Berlin St. Mus. 1934, with a similar scene showing a female monster as on the above-mentioned vases confronting an erect, monstrous female (ABL 260,1; ABV 528,44; Beazley Addenda 131). The Berlin oinochoe, in turn, can be compared to a Kabirion skyphos with a similar scene, see P. Levi, 'A Kabirion Vase', JHS 84 (1964) 155-56.

671 S. Reimann, Répertoire des vases peints grecs et étrusques, Avec des notices explicatives et bibliographiques 1 (Paris 1899-1900) 489-90.


674 ABL 144. Lamia was a Lybian woman loved by Zeus. Every child she gave birth to was killed by Hera until Lamia went mad and started killing and eating other women's children, after which she became a monster.

675 See n. 607 above.

676 LIMC V, s.v. 'Herakles', 120, nos. 2834-35.


678 Vermeule, Herakles, 53-60.
female monster with Herakles as originating in the imaginations of the Theseus Painter and his companions and, possibly, going back to a lost mythological story.

Regarding the Theseus Painter's female monster, apart from the close comparisons mentioned in n. 670, few other comparisons, with varying degrees of relevance, can be cited. On a somewhat later Boeotian drinking-cup a male figure leads a similar-looking monster, and the scene of a very much later Apulian red-figure vase has a female monster of strikingly comparable appearance, interpreted as a 'stage monster', which is confronted by a youth with a spear (apparently not Herakles!). Clearly, the place and time of the Apulian vase's manufacture - southern Italy some 150 years after the Theseus Painter - disqualify it as a particularly pertinent parallel. In the broadest terms, however, the Apulian picture raises the possibility that the Theseus Painter's female monster might indeed be derived from theatre productions.

Nor are the reverse sides of the Athens and Monopolis skyphoi very helpful in explaining the obverse. (Cat. nos. 15-16, pl. 7 b, d). The scene on side B of the Monopolis skyphos appears to be a mix of a hunt and a ritual sacrifice: a strange animal stands in the middle, resembling a cross between a boar and a bull, with a giant curving tusk in added white which extends upwards and even overlaps the off-set rim of the skyphos. Bearing in mind that the Theseus Painter generally depicted both boars and bulls very accurately, we might conclude that he had neither species in mind. Or did he intend to show one of them and simply made some mistakes? In addition, it is curious that the animal's head appears to be stuck between the two trunks of the tree which looks very similar to the type below the handles of the Theseus Painter's ephedrismos skyphoi (Cat. nos. 54-63, as illustrated in fig. 34 b, pls. 25 b, 26 b, part, 27 a). M. Reha-Bumbalova, on the other hand, suggests that a large ribbon may go round the animal's neck, although, in my opinion, a double tree trunk seems more obvious. Opposite the animal, on the right-hand side, two men are posed with legs apart; they hold raised spears pointed towards the animal as if in a hunt. On the left-hand side, behind the animal, a third standing man holds up a double-axe which suggests a sacrifice. In any event, no thematic unity is immediately apparent between the two sides of the Monopolis skyphos, even though the Theseus Painter, as stated, most often maintained such unity. Although the preserved part of side B of the Acropolis skyphos is only one small fragment, what remains strongly indicates that the subject must have been the same as that of the Monopolis skyphos. This repetition therefore makes it seem logical to suppose that, after all, the pictures on opposite sides of these two skyphoi are related. If so, their content - possibly mythological, theatrical or ritualistic - remains enigmatic.

The theme of Herakles and Hermes reclining in the cave of Pholos, while Pholos provides light with torches, as depicted on the Theseus Painter's lekythos which was once in the Philadelphia market (Cat. no. 127, pl. 39 a-c), poses no particular difficulties. However, its treatment is notable because Herakles' fight with the other centaurs or the scene of Pholos and Herakles standing at the pithos is much more common in Attic vase painting. Among the almost 90 vases with Pholos listed by Brommer, the scheme is seldom comparable to that of the Theseus Painter's lekythos.

The largest number of the Theseus Painter's Heraklean pictures shows the hero reclining on the ground, accompanied by one or more other figures, but there is no clear mythological context as on the Philadelphia lekythos. Herakles symposiates is in itself well-known in Attic vase painting. S.R. Wolf notes 62 vases in black-figure portraying Herakles reclining, and 34 in red-figure. Without exception, Herakles is not alone. The Dionysos and Herakles who recline together on one side of the cup London B 446 is unproblematic.

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680 Naples, Ragusa coll. 8.
681 A.D. Trendall and T.B.L. Webster, Illustrations of Greek Drama (London 1971) 144, no. IV. 37. See also F.G. Lo Porto, 'Sceni teatrali e soggetti caricaturali su vasi Apuli', Bdd 51 (1961) 8-9, figs. 23-26, identifying the subject as Perseus and Ketos.
682 Compare the bulls of Taranto 4448 with the bulls and boars of Tampa and Stuttgart (Cat. nos. 14, 40-41, pls. 6 d, 17).
683 Reha-Bumbalova, Vaso inedito, 56-57.
684 The chest and upper leg of an animal turned to the right and the lower bodies of two men turned to the left. The men are positioned closer to the animal than on the Monopolis skyphos, with the animal partly overlapping them.
685 Brommer, Vasenlisten, 178-82; LIMC VIII, s.v. 'Kentauroi et Kentauridae', nos. 237-41, 351-54.
686 See also LIMC VIII, s.v. 'Kentauroi et Kentauridae', nos. 360-63, most often, however, the arrangement differs from that of the Theseus Painter.
687 Wolf, Herakles, 195-217. See also LIMC IV, s.v. 'Herakles', nos. 1483-1522; R. Blatter, Herakles beim Gelage', AA 1976, 49-52.
despite the relative rarity of the subject (Cat. no. 173, pl. 55 d), for which Wolf mentions only two black- and nine red-figure vases (including the London cup). The oldest (red-figure) vase, a cup by Skythes, is dated about 510 B.C.; its pictorial composition is nearly identical to that of the Theseus Painter’s London cup. The only other black-figure depiction of Herakles and Dionysos reclining is seen on a cup once in the Hearst collection (Cat. no. N22). All the other examples are red-figure and later, from about 480 onwards. Herakles’ companion on side B of the London cup is obviously Hermes, who is provided with the petasos. The same applies to the figure reclining with Herakles on the skyphos which was once in the U.S. market (Cat. no. 75, pl. 33 c).

In other instances, however, Herakles’ companion cannot so easily be named. In quite a few pictures by the Theseus Painter Herakles reclines beside a male who has not any identifying marks (Agora P 1545; once Helgoland, Kropatscheck; Bari, Cotechia collection; Delos B. 6138, side A; and probably Agora P 1543; Cat. nos. 25-28, 74, pls. 11 e-f, 12, 31 c). As explained in chapter 9, however, this figure is probably Hermes. On side B of the skyphos Delos B 6138 (Cat. no. 74, pl. 31 d-e) Herakles’ companion is helmeted. He has often been regarded as Ares, which is problematical because in mythology Herakles and Ares are not the best of friends and in vase painting Ares is always represented as a common warrior who can generally be recognised not by any attributes but by the situation in which he is seen (meetings of the Olympian gods, etc.). Other identifications, like Iolaos or an anonymous warrior, are equally uncertain. A nearly identical scene appears on a skyphos decorated by a painter of the White Heron Group: Herakles reclining beside a seated warrior.

At least twice, the Theseus Painter depicted Herakles as reclining with satyrs (Cat. nos. 24, 193, pls. 11 a-d, 59), as also seen on several black- and red-figure vases. The earliest examples date around 520-510 B.C.; one is near the Madrid Painter, the other by a painter near the Group of Walters 48.42. Wolf notes two distinct thematic categories: the satyrs steal Herakles’ weapons, or the satyrs act as his servants. The Naples skyphos (Cat. no. 24), with Herakles raising his club threateningly at a satyr, might belong to the first category, whereas the Malibu kyathos probably fits into the second one (Cat. no. 193).

Another of the Theseus Painter’s frequent subjects is Herakles being served by Athena (London 1902.12-18.3; Dresden ZV 1680; Mt. Holyoke 1925 BS II.3; Basle, Kambli collection; Agora P 1550-1; maybe also Oria OR 502-645; Cat. nos. 18-21bis, 117, pls. 8 c-d, 9). Among them, the composition hardly varies. Herakles is seated on a small (almost altar like) stool or a throne, wearing a short chitoniskos or a long mantle. In his right hand he has a phiale, into which Athena, who stands in front of him, pours the contents of an oinochoe. Twice, Herakles’ left hand is raised, as in a greeting gesture. In Dresden and Mt. Holyoke, Hermes, standing to the left of Herakles, plays aulos. In London, Hermes is replaced by a dancing satyr.

Relatively few other vases feature this subject, all of which date to the late sixth or the early fifth century B.C., the most important one being by the Berlin Painter. Only the Theseus Painter is known to have chosen the subject so often. Even smaller is the number on which Herakles is seated, as on the skyphoi by the Theseus Painter. Representations of Herakles served by Athena have been associated with Herakles’ meal

688 Wolf, Herakles, 22-29, 108-137. See also above; and LIMC IV, s.v. ‘Herakles’, nos. 1500-1508; LIMC III, s.v. ‘Dionysos’, nos. 579-82.
689 Wolf, Herakles, nos. sf. 27, 43, rf. 20-26, 32. Possibly also sf. 49.
690 Wolf, Herakles, no. sf. 27. See also Frankfurt St. V. 4 (ABV, 430,23; Wolf, Herakles, no. sf 49, possibly with the same subject).
692 Athens, NM 13907 (Cat. no. N48). Also a red-figure cup, private coll., Wolf, Herakles, no. rf. 12.
693 Princeton 170 (Para 145; BeazleyAddenda 89; Wolf, Herakles, 198, no. sf. 12).
694 Dallas 1972.5 (Wolf, Herakles, 199, no. sf. 14).
695 Wolf, Herakles, 36. See also Schauenburg, Silene, LIMC IV, s.v. ‘Herakles’, nos. 1511-1516.
696 The skyphos in the Kambli coll., Basle, is unpublished. The two fragments Agora P 1550-1 preserve only Athena's head and legs. The fragmentary skyphos Gioia del Colle MG 308-315 (Cat. no. 92, pl. 37 b) might have a similar subject (Herakles standing with a phiale, Athena?).
697 Beazley, Berlin Painter, 49-67, esp. 55-58; LIMC V, s.v. ‘Herakles’, 3156-77.
698 Beazley, Berlin Painter, nos. 1-6 (three of which are skyphoi by the Theseus Painter) and LIMC V, s.v. ‘Herakles’, nos. 3162-64, including a vase by the Athena Painter, formerly Granet coll. (Beazley, ibid., 56, no. 3; LIMC V, s.v. ‘Herakles’, no. 3162). Once again, only the Theseus Painter has a series with this subject. In date, all the earlier examples are generally close, including the Theseus Painter's skyphoi. Later vases with the subject are a cup by Douris, dated about 470 B.C., and a fourth-century B.C. bellkrater (Beazley, Berlin Painter, nos. 5-6).
after his apotheosis. Alternatively, it also has been suggested that they might portray the hero while resting between or after his labours, with Athena in attendance. A 'cultic' context has also been proposed because of the ritual associations of phialai and the act of pouring and making libations.

The latter suggestion seems to be confirmed by several thematically related pictures which also include an altar and, possibly, by the subject of at least one other skyphos of the Theseus Painter, Delos 6140 (Cat. no. 72, pl. 30 c-d). On side B of the Delos skyphos Hermes and a winged goddess hold a phiale and an oinochoe, respectively. They are placed between columns topped by owls. The goddess has been identified as either Nike (Haspels and Beazley) or Iris (Boardman), each of whom is seen in vase painting performing acts that resemble the pouring of libations. Moreover, Iris, as messenger of the gods, is sometimes depicted in the company of her counterpart Hermes; therefore Iris is more likely than Nike to be the winged goddess of the Delos skyphos. On the opposite side Herakles and Athena shake hands. Cocks stand on the flanking columns. Perhaps the fragmentary skyphos Delos 6142 (Cat. no. 73, pl. 31 a-b) originally featured a comparable scene. The preserved parts show Athena between cocks on pillars. Hermes and Athena again accompany Herakles on the Theseus Painter's lekythos Boston 21.277 (Cat. no. 145, pl. 46 d-e).

In one instance Herakles is a musician (Syracuse 53263, Cat. no. 22, pl. 10 a-b). The Theseus Painter shows him playing a lyre while standing on a bema, flanked by bystanders holding flowers and wreaths. Many vases illustrate Herakles playing a stringed instrument, but in only two examples is the instrument a lyre rather than a kithara: the Syracusan skypchos and another skypchos by or near the Painter of Philadelphia 5481 (Athens, NM 635, Cat. no. N31). The latter scene is almost identical to the one by the Theseus Painter, although the anonymous bystanders are replaced by Athena and Hermes. On a skypchos near the Theseus Painter, Herakles, in more usual fashion, has a kithara; he is seated on a rock surrounded by cattle (Cat. no. N86). In my opinion, the earlier attribution of this skypchos to the Theseus Painter himself is erroneous.

The tondo of the cup Taranto 6515 (Cat. no. 174, pl. 56 a) contains another curious depiction of Herakles. He is naked and has no beard (otherwise without parallel in the work of the Theseus Painter), and lacks the lion's skin. Nevertheless the hero can easily be recognised by his attributes: club, held high above his head, and bow and quiver. A remarkable detail is the low, rectangular base on which Herakles stands. It has been suggested that the base and figure possibly refer to a renowned statue which once existed, because other vase paintings lead to the same conclusion.

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699 G. Beckel, *Götterbeistand in der Bildüberlieferung griechischer Heldensagen* (Waldsassen 1961) 61. This seems questionable, however, when we consider that other (more earthbound) figures are included in these scenes, for example, the satyr of the Theseus Painter's London skypchos and a lekythos near the Athena Painter (once Agrigento, *LIMC IV*, s.v. 'Herakles', no. 3162), where even laoloi is depicted.

700 E. Simon, *Opfernde Götter* (Berlin 1953) 41. See also *LIMC V*, s.v. 'Herakles', comment on 152-53, where a cultic association is proposed, especially for the pictures in which Herakles holds a phiale. Compare also Hobart University 45, Group of Berkeley 8.3376, *LIMC V*, s.v. 'Herakles', no. 3173, which shows a similar situation, but also including an altar.

701 *LIMC V*, s.v. Herakles, 152-53.

702 Hobart University 45 (Para 172; *LIMC V*, s.v. 'Herakles', no. 3157); Leiden PC 5 (*ABV* 370,128; *LIMC V*, s.v. 'Herakles', no. 3156). And two red-figure vases (*LIMC V*, s.v. 'Herakles', nos. 3158-59, both dated 450 B.C.).

703 *ABL* 249,7; Beazley, *Berlin Painter*, 56, with no. 3; J. Boardman, *LIMC V*, s.v. 'Herakles', no. 3183.

704 *LIMC V* s.v. 'Iris I', nos. 20, 22, 25, 31; *LIMC VI*, s.v. 'Nike', 104, 107-108.

705 *LIMC V* s.v. 'Iris I', nos. 83-89. See also Killet, *Ikonographie*, 150-51, remarking that winged goddesses in a sacrificial context (altar) are generally found only in red-figure (leythoi).

706 *LIMC V*, s.v. 'Herakles', nos. 3179-200 (3179-88 are vases).

707 Maas and McIntosh-Snyder, *Stringed Instruments*, 79-91, 'Chelys-lyra'.

708 See also Brommer, *Vasenlisten*, 100-101; K. Schauenburg, 'Herakles Mousikos', *Jdl* 94 (1979) 49-76; *LIMC IV*, s.v. 'Herakles', nos. 1438-74. On another vase he is depicted as playing a barbiton (*LIMC IV*, s.v. 'Herakles', no. 1452).

709 S. Woodford, 'Herakles Alexikakos Revisited', *AJA* 80 (1976) 291-94. See also M. Schmidt, 'Zu Amazonomachiedarstellungen des Berliner Malers und Euphronios', in H.A. Cahn and E. Simon (eds.), *Taimia, Festschrift für Roland Hampe* (Mainz 1980) 153-69; Shapiro, *Art and Cult*, 159, 'Of thousands of depictions of Herakles on Archaic vases, none can properly be called a 'cult-scene' with the possible exception of the black-figure cup showing a statue of Herakles in the tondo.' See also W. Oenbrink, *Das Bild im Bilde, Zur Darstellung von Götterstatuen und Kultbildern auf griechischen Vasen* (Frankfurt 1997) 147-48, 389, no. G1. Herakles also stands in the tondo of the Winchester cup (Cat. no. 176), but with a more regular appearance.
3. Theseus

The prelude to the fight between Theseus and the minotaur might be the subject of side A of Acropolis 1280 (Cat. no. 76, pl. 32 a): a youth, identified by Graef and Langlotz as Theseus, shakes hands with Athena in front of a rectangular construction decorated with white ornaments, which has been identified as the (entrance to the) Labyrinth. The latter seems to be confirmed by the rectangular structures with similar decoration in scenes of Theseus fighting the Minotaur. Furthermore, that the figure shaking hands with Athena is indeed Theseus, is made clear by the subject on the reverse side where Theseus grapples with Skiron, who is placed on a rock marked with a turtle in added white as emblem (pl. 32 b).

Apparently, the same story can be seen on one side (B) of two other skyphoi of the Theseus Painter: Laon 37996 and Toledo 63.27 (Cat. nos. 29-30, pl. 13 c, e). In each, Theseus holds his bearded opponent similarly to his hold on the Acropolis fragments. Neither skyphos shows a turtle, however. Instead, the rock of the Toledo skyphos has a white snake, whereas in Laon the emblem has faded away. On the far right side of each scene a woman clasps her head in a gesture of fright. Such a woman is evidently not part of the Acropolis picture. However, the compositions of the three representations are so similar that the same tale must be shown.

Sides A of the Laon and Toledo skyphoi (Cat. nos. 29-30, pl. 13 a, d) depict Theseus killing Prokrustes with the villain's own hammer or, as rendered by the Theseus Painter, with a double-axe or double-headed hammer. Theseus wields a similarly shaped weapon in the Theseus Painter's picture of the same story on the lekythos Athens, NM 515 (Cat. no. 136, pl. 43 a). The painter's male figure on a small skyphos fragment in Corinth (C-70-33, Cat. no. 31, pl. 13 f) has also been identified as Prokrustes because his head appears to be held similarly to Prokrustes on Toledo and Laon, although too little remains to be certain. The two struggling men on the reverse of the Athens lekythos (Cat. no. 136, pl. 43 b) are thought to be Theseus and Sinis because of the prominent (pine?) tree which the losing party holds on to and causes to bend.

Side B of the Acropolis fragments preserves a third nude male figure extended on the ground, to the right of Theseus and Skiron (pl. 32 b). He holds a stone or something similar in his lowered left hand. No such figure is seen in the Toledo and Laon skyphoi. There may be some doubt as to whether the mended sections of the Acropolis skyphos actually are parts of side B of the same vase, as they are non-joining. However, their large size and scale of the preserved figures suggest that the sections most likely belong together.

The section with the third male figure would belong on the far right of side B of the skyphos, as seen in the illustration, because it includes part of a handle-attachment on the right side. The result is the appearance of two episodes of 'Theseus' journey to Athens on the same side of the vase, which is not the Theseus Painter's usual practice, as such an arrangement is not repeated, for example, on any of his other skyphoi. In contrast, it is a characteristic of a number of red-figure cups representing the deeds of Theseus on his way to Athens, the so-called cycle-cups (see below), which suggest that the Theseus Painter could also have employed the device of multiple episodes on the Acropolis skyphos. Furthermore, the original dimensions of the skyphos seem to lend support to the possibility: in its complete state it was one of the

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710 Acropolis, 142-43, confirmed by Haspels (ABV 249,1).
712 Brommer, Theseus, 14-18 (with lit.); LIMC VII, s.v 'Theseus', nos. 97-122. In black-figure, only skyphoi by the Theseus Painter show this subject. They are preceded only slightly, if at all, by the earliest red-figure examples, all of which are cycle cups.
713 This particular shape of the hammer is a pictorial convention met in the work other painters. Brommer, Vasenlisten², 245-47; Brommer, Theseus, 22-26; LIMC VII, s.v 'Theseus', nos. 126-46.
714 Brommer, Theseus, 6, Sinis forced "[... Die vorbeikommenden [...] Fichten herunterzubeugen, bis ihre Kräfte nachließen und sie von den Bäumen in die Luft geschleudert wurden und dabei umkamen." Theseus killed him in the same fashion; Brommer, Vasenlisten², 249-50; Brommer, Theseus, 5-8; LIMC VII, s.v 'Theseus', nos. 62-48. Only the securely identified lekythos Athens 515 and Acropolis 1280 (Cat. nos. 136, 76, resp.), of which the identification is not that certain, are black-figure examples of this episode.
715 Buxton, Imaginary Greece, 202, cites plants as a means of making "symbolic statements about the social world." In his view, pines are linked to wildness and aggressive violence, exemplified by "the downfall of Pentheus [...] the ferocity of centaurs" and, not in the least, 'Theseus' combat with Sinis the Pine-bender'. Strictly speaking, the tree of the Athens lekythos hardly looks like a pine, but as it is thinner and straighter than the Theseus Painter's usual kind of tree, it may be intended as one after all.
Theseus Painter’s largest skyphoi (see fig. 52), providing enough space for two episodes of Theseus’ deeds.

According to F. Brommer, the right-hand figure represents Sinis. However, it is more probably Procrustes, as the posture is more similar to that of Procrustes in Laon 37996 and Toledo 63.27 (Cat. nos. 29-30, pl. 13 a, c, especially Laon). On the Acropolis fragments, moreover, the lower right-hand corner of the section with Theseus and Skiron shows a foot pointed towards the right. This foot could belong either to Theseus who is attacking Procrustes (?) or to the latter figure itself, as the Procrustes in Laon and Toledo has a foot turned to right while the rest of the figure faces left.

Apart from side A of Acropolis 1280 (Theseus and the Labyrinth), all the foregoing vases by the Theseus Painter show deeds of Theseus while travelling to Athens which, in black-figure, appear in only comparatively late work and remain rare in that technique. Most illustrations of them are in red-figure (some of which are the earliest known examples). They often occur on so-called red-figure cycle-vases, mostly cups, as mentioned above, which present several episodes of the hero’s journey on each side.717 In a way, the pictures of the Laon, Toledo and Athens lekythoi might also be considered cyclic, albeit with only a single episode on each side. As suggested, the Acropolis fragments 1280 (Cat. no. 76, pl. 32 a-b) possibly belong to a more truly black-figure cycle-vase, with the difference that the episodes are confined to one side (Skiron, Procrustes), while the obverse has a Labyrinth scene.

The earliest red-figure vase with Theseus’ deeds on the road to Athens is apparently a cycle-cup by Kachrylion,718 dated 510-500 B.C. Another early example showing episodes of the same adventurous journey is by the Euerigides Painter, which is not a cycle-vase, however.719 Apparently neither of them significantly precedes (if at all) the earliest examples by the Theseus Painter and other black-figure painters who illustrated these themes. The Toledo and Laon skyphoi are assigned to Theseus Painter’s middle phase (505-495 B.C.), whereas the Acropolis fragments are transitional between the middle and late phases (495-490 B.C.). In date, all other red-figure pictures of Theseus’ encounters on the road to Athens range from after 500 until deep in the fifth century B.C. All this seems to demonstrate not only that more than half of the extant black-figure representations of these stories are by or near the Theseus Painter, but also that he and his close colleagues were among the first to depict them. In black-figure, moreover, only the Theseus Painter decorated a series of vases with these Thesean deeds.

Of the 44 vases portraying Theseus and Procrustes, no more than 11 are black-figure.720 Five of them, as noted, are by the Theseus Painter (including the Corinth and Acropolis fragments). The other black-figure examples are by the Troilos Painter,721 Diophos Painter and near him722 and in the Haimon Group,723 as well as an unattributed pelike discovered in the Athenian Agora.724 In addition, the Theseus and Procrustes of a White Heron type skyphos are very similar to those of the Theseus Painter (Cat. no. N49).725

Further, only 4 of the 35 vases with Skiron are black-figure.726 Again, the Theseus Painter is the sole vase painter who seems to have illustrated the subject on a series of vases, as three of the four are by him. The remaining example is a skyphos with a similar scene by the Painter of Rodin 1000 (Cat. no. N44), although the identification is not definite because Theseus holds a sword instead of ‘Skiron’s’ feet. The allegedly earliest red-figure picture of Skiron is found on the above-mentioned cup by Kachrylion. Another early rendering is by Skythes, dated around 510 B.C.727 The other red-figure vases are all late archaic or classical. Turning to Sinis, we see that he and Theseus are portrayed on 37 red-figure vases, all showing a tree.728

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716 Brommer, Vasenlisten1, 249, no. 2; LIMC VII, s.v ‘Theseus’, no. 62. See also Neils, Theseus, 75.
717 Of the 23 cycle-vases, Brommer, Vasenlisten3, 311-12, mentions 18, and LIMC VII, s.v. ‘Theseus’, nos. 32-53, adds 5.
718 ARV2 108, 27; LIMC VII, s.v. ‘Theseus’, no. 33.
719 ARV2 89, 21; LIMC VII, s.v. ‘Theseus’, no. 132. Dated about 510 B.C.
720 Brommer, Vasenlisten2, 245-47; Brommer, Theseus, 22-26; LIMC VII, s.v ‘Theseus’, nos. 32-60, 126-46.
721 ABV 400.
722 ABV 509, 5, and 511. 3.
723 ABV 560, 17.
724 Agora P 12561 (Agora XXIII, no. 391, pl. 38, ca. 510-500 B.C.).
725 St. Petersburg 14281, Gorbunova, Ermitazihe, 47, 52, no. 32, attributed to the Krokotos Group, although, in my opinion, it is later; LIMC VII, s.v. ‘Theseus’, no. 130.
726 Brommer, Vasenlisten2, 250-52; Brommer, Theseus, 14-18; LIMC VII, s.v. ‘Theseus’, nos. 97-118.
727 MuM 51 (1975) no. 149, pl. 34; LIMC VII, s.v. ‘Theseus’, no. 101.
728 Brommer, Vasenlisten1, 249-50; Brommer, Theseus, 6-8; LIMC VII, s.v. ‘Theseus’, nos. 62-81.

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contrast, the only certain black-figure treatment of the theme is the Theseus Painter’s Athens lekythos.\textsuperscript{729} In red-figure the earliest representation is again seen on the Kachrylion cup.

All in all, it is hard to establish that the Theseus Painter indeed introduced the new Theseus themes. In any event, he doubtless worked among the earliest painters who did. Such innovativeness can rightly be considered remarkable for a late black-figure painter. Although Haspels was not very adequate in naming him after the number of his Theseus representations, considering their importance, she undeniably had a point.

\textsuperscript{729} As said above the right hand figure on Acropolis 1280 (Cat. no. 76) is accepted as a representation of Sinis in Brommer, \textit{Vasenlissen\textsuperscript{3}}, 249, no. 2, and \textit{LIMC VII}, s.v. ‘Theseus’, no. 62. Probably, as said above, he is Prokrustes.