The Theseus Painter
Borgers, O.E.

Citation for published version (APA):

General rights
It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations
If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: http://uba.uva.nl/en/contact, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

Download date: 28 Dec 2018
XII. RITUAL, THEATRE AND EVERYDAY LIFE

1. Introduction

Many of the Theseus Painter’s pictures apparently depict contemporary subjects of various categories: rituals, cultic practice and feasts, games and play, possibly even, in a few instances, theatrical performances and, finally, more basic daily activities like work. In part, the first category consists of the rather obvious scenes of fragmentary loutrophoroi showing male and female mourners as well as sometimes the dead lying on a kline (Cat. nos. 178-81, 183-85, pls. 57 a-b, e-g). The same subject recurs on the alabastron in the Lagunillas collection, Havana, (Cat. no. 201, pl. 63). However, to judge from Beazley’s descriptions, several fragments of loutrophoroi portray what might more correctly be regarded as processions rather than gatherings of mourners: Athens NA 1957 Aa 229, 2237, 2241, 2251, 2258, and Athens (Cat. nos. 186-91). Unfortunately, nearly all these fragments are known to me only from Beazley’s short descriptions, as they remain unpublished after all these years. The single exception is Athens 1957 Aa 193 (Cat. no. 182, pl. 57 c-d). Its particular combination of figures and attributes (women, auloi- and lyre-players, wreaths, youths) recurs on many (often later) red-figure vases (among which, several loutrophoroi) which illustrate wedding processions. Black-figure examples of that theme are rare, however. Pictures which are even more ambiguous might also belong to the category of ritual practice. For instance, the above-mentioned representations of Dionysos in a ship-cart could be images of either the god himself or of the actual god or a man disguised as the god who participate in a real-life procession.

To some extent, a similar uncertainty marks the Theseus Painter’s fights. He was generally not especially fond of portraying warriors or fights or any other subject involving much action. But whether his few pictures that indeed show warriors or the like actually relate to real life or to mythology is difficult to say. In contrast, the Athena Painter showed a strong preference for fights and warriors. The Theseus Painter’s surviving work comprises only three vases with related subjects: a lekythos once in the Lucerne market has warriors leading horses and archers; the lekythos in the Embiricos collection, London, a fight; and an oinochoe once in the New York market, a Thracian horseman (Cat. nos. 130, 148, 170, pl. 40 e). Maybe the Cambridge lekythos featuring the harnessing of a quadriga (Cat. no. 131, pl. 40 d-e) also fits into this category, although a warrior is not among the figures.

The Theseus Painter’s scenes of more general daily life are not numerous. In Berlin 3230 (Cat. No. 164, pl. 52 b) a man hits a small boy with a sandal, as also seen on a pelike of Euphranor and an earlier

730 For vase-shapes with mourners, other than loutrophoroi and plaques, see Killet, *Ikonographie*, catalogue 1, nos. 5, 10-11, 13-14, 40-1, 67-8, 81-3 (klaythos, amphoroi, cup, lebetes, phormiskoi, lekythoi, pyxides, "Sprenggefäße"). Apparently, no other alabastron shows mourners.

731 Para 257, Athens NA 1957 Aa 229, "youth to right, woman to right looking round, woman to right with loutrophoros, fluteplayer"; NA 1957 Aa 2237, "woman with loutrophoros, fluteplayer"; NA 1957 Aa 2241, "lyreplayer with wreath, fluteplayer"; NA 1957 Aa 2251, "one with loutrophoros to right and fluteplayer to right"; NA 1957 Aa 2258, "woman to right, woman with wreath to right, looking round, woman with loutrophoros, fluteplayer."


733 Many of the Athena Painter’s vases depict fights and it is often unclear whether the setting is mythological or real: Louvre F 367 (ABL 257,55); Brussels A 2295 (ABL 257,84); Havana (ABL 523,10); K. Schefold, *AK, Beilheft 1967*, 155-158; R. Olimos, *Vasos Griegos de la Coleccion Condes de Lagunillas*, Kirchberg/Zurich 1990, 96-97, no. 26; once Basle market (Para 262); Neuchatel (Para 262); Cab. des Médailles. (ABL 260,140); once Bareaus coll. (Para 261); Vienna 195 (ABL 257,67); Agora P 19319 (ABL 523,2); Agora XXIII, no. 1181, pl. 87); London B 617 (ABL 260,131); once Castle Ashby (CVA 1, pl. 23.5-7; *Christie’s, The Castle Ashby Vases*, 2 July 1980, 116-17, no. 74); Baltimore 48.226 (ABL 523,9); London, Reitlinger coll. (ABL 255,12); Taranto (ABL 255,25); Naples F 121 (ABL 255,21); once Agrigento, Giudice coll. (ABL 258,95); once Athens market (ABL 255,24); New York 06.1021.71 (ABL 257,83); London, Winslow coll. (ABL 523,8); Louvre MNC 786 (ABL 258,93); once Athens market (ABL 258,94); Cab. des Médailles 299 (ABL 258,106); Para 260); Palermo, Mormino coll. (CVA 1, pl. 18-4-6; *La collezione archeologica, Banco di Sicilia*, Palermo 1992, 118, D 132; possibly also Collisani coll. (H.P. Isler and M. Sguaitamatti, *La collezione Collisani/Die Sammlung Collisani*, Archäologisches Institut der Universität Zürich, Zürich 1990, no. 179, pl. 28).

734 Villa Giulia (ARV² 15,11; *Beazley Addenda* 153). See also S. Karouzou, "Die ‘Schutzfllehende’ Barberini, AntK 13 (1970)

114
leythos of the Sandal Painter. The kalpis Utrecht 29 (Cat. no. 162, pl. 51 b) depicts a small boy in front of a campstool, flanked by a man leaning on a stick and a woman with a mirror; the boy holds a scarf or ribbon and a lidless exaleiptron. Similar subjects, while quite often adorning later red-figure vases, are rare in contemporaneous black-figure. In addition, Haspels mentions an unpublished lekythos with a "concert", attributable to the Theseus Painter (Cat. no. 149). On his pelike in the Cabinet des Médailles (250) (Cat. no. 156, pl. 49) two men ride donkeys. And the neck-pelike in the Winslow collection, London (Cat. no. 158), illustrates a "man courting boy". The painter symposia, other than those with Herakles, are found on two cups only (Cat. nos. 174, 176, pl. 56 c).

2. Ritual and sacrifice

Several of the Theseus Painter's vases discussed above in other contexts can again be mentioned at this point because they illustrate aspects of cult or ritual, including sheep and oxen at the altar of Athena (Uppsala kalpis, Cat. no. 61, pl. 51 a), Dionysos in a ship-cart, the 'Lenaia' skyphos, and perhaps Athena receiving Herakles in her sanctuary, as she pours from an amphora into the hero's phiale. Animal sacrifices can also be noted. The almost identical skyphoi Tampa 86.52 and Stuttgart KAS 74 (Cat. nos. 40-41, pl. 17) show a boy and a man carrying an amphora by means of a pole resting on their shoulders (pl. 17 a, c). Behind them, on the Tampa skyphos, a man leads a bull, whereas on the Stuttgart skyphos a man drags a boar by one of its hind legs. The other side of the Stuttgart skyphoi (pl. 17 d) has a man carrying a tray full of offerings, followed by a bull being urged on and an auloi-player. On the reverse of the Tampa skyphos (pl. 17 b), once again, a boar is pulled forward by a hind leg, placed between a figure carrying offerings and a man with "a basket of cakes".

Scheibler observed that the wine-amphora was essential equipment for festive occasions and was therefore depicted as such by the Theseus Painter on the Tampa and Stuttgart skyphoi: "Das verdeutlichen einige attische skyphoi des spätschwarzfigurigen Stils, die wohl selbst rituellen Zwecken dienten und deshalb vom Theseusmaler mit Szenen geschmückt wurden, die Opferzüge und Opfervorbereitung schildern". In several scenes by other painters an amphora is being transported in a similar manner as seen on the Theseus Painter's skyphoi in Tampa and Stuttgart. One of them is a fragmentary skyphos near the Theseus Painter.

H. Laxander points out that the nudity of the men on the Stuttgart and Tampa skyphoi would be very unusual for a cult subject. She also sees a thematic connection between these skyphoi and the Theseus Painter's komos-skyphoi, which indeed look somewhat similar (the latter often also show amphora-carriers, although each one alone carries an amphora, see for example pls. 20 a, 21 d). Laxander considers all these scenes to depict a blend of elements of cultic seriousness and orgiastic revelry. She also remarks that in the Theseus Painter's other ritual scenes, for example with a ship-cart, the participants are fully dressed and generally act more seriously (see pl. 4 d), which makes the Tampa and Stuttgart skyphoi even more remarkable.

Like the Tampa and Stuttgart skyphoi, the lekythos Louvre CA 1837 (Cat. no. 140, pl. 44 c-d) shows an animal being led away, probably to sacrifice: two boys and a man with spears lead a bull towards a man who is seated in a building resembling a shrine or a sanctuary. In the view of F.T. van Straten, this lekythos as

725 Bologna PU 204 (ABV 70,7; Para 28; Beazley Addenda 181). See also Beck, Album, 44-45.
726 Killet, Ikongraphie, 203-19, catalogue no. 10.
727 Neils, Goddess and Polis, 181, "the first carries a block-like object [...], the third carries a basket (skaphos) of cakes."
728 Neils, Goddess and Polis, 181. See also Neils, Pride, 184-85. Compare the offerings displayed on the fragment Acropolis 1307 (Cat. no. 85, pl. 35 h).
729 Scheibler, Bild und Gefäss, 71.
730 See Neils' examples, mentioned in Goddess and Polis, 181, and the skyphos Athens, NM 12531 (CVA 4, pl. 28). For amphorai in processions see also Laxander, Individuum, 17, n. 81.
741 Aegina 111, W. Felten, Alt-Aigina II,1 (Mainz 1982) 32, 47, no. 259, pl. 19, near the Theseus Painter, also with an auloi-player as in Stuttgart. The subject might be similar.
742 Laxander, Individuum, 17-18. For a possible connection between the Theseus Painter's komoi on skyphoi and ritual processions see also below.
well as the two skyphoi depict the moments directly before an animal sacrifice.\textsuperscript{743} However, the occasion of the sacrifice is not at all clear.

Although the skyphos Acropolis 1295, now reduced to fragments (Cat. no. 94, pl. 37 a), has not previously been attributed to the Theseus Painter, there are strong indications that it is indeed by his hand. On each side (?) it illustrates a procession of worshippers, who carry various items of sacrificial ritual like a small boar and an oinochoe, people at an altar, and a female or goddess seated inside a structure reminiscent of a temple, comparable to that of the Louvre lekythos (Cat. no. 140, pl. 44 c-d).\textsuperscript{744} The exact nature of the festivities remains an open question, however.

On the skyphos fragment Agora P 9273 (Cat. no. 95, pl. 36 j) a man plays aulos in front of an altar with a fire in which something seems to be burning, as represented by a curled line. The burning object is regularly seen in representations of sacrifice and often identified as an oxtail.\textsuperscript{745} Despite other suggestions regarding its nature - goat's horn or animal tongues\textsuperscript{746} - Van Straten concludes that it must indeed be an \textit{osphûs}.\textsuperscript{747}

To close, if we consider the overall prominence of Athena or Dionysos in the work of the Theseus Painter, it would not seem unlikely that they were often intended as the beneficiaries of his otherwise unidentifiable processions and offerings.

3. Theatrical performance, Pyrrhic dance, game and sport

References to theatrical performances
As discussed above, some of the Theseus Painter's themes are possibly theatrical: the supposed satyr-play mentioned in the section on satyrs, possibly amazon/Arimasp and griffin, Herakles leading a female monster as well as heroes at a mound and satyrs making music. Additional examples can be added. Most of the vases showing warriors mounted on dolphins, often accompanied by an aulos-player, are in varying degrees associated with the Theseus Painter. This chorus of dolphin riders is regarded as a reference to 'old comedy'.\textsuperscript{748} Kerameikos 5671 (Cat. no. 129, pl. 40 a-b), showing an aulos-player between two warriors riding dolphins, is attributed to the Theseus Painter himself. Of the other specimens, the cup Louvre CA 1924\textsuperscript{749} is near the Theseus Painter; the lekythos Palermo CAT 2816 is by the Athena Painter;\textsuperscript{750} and Boston 20.18\textsuperscript{751} is a skyphos of Heron Class type, which might belong to the CHC Group. Also a psyktēr by Oltos and an unattributed cup fragment can be cited.\textsuperscript{752} The reverse of the preceding Heron Class skyphos, Boston 20.182, shows the same subject as the Theseus Painter's skyphos of that type in Guardia Purticara (215223) (Cat. no. 36, pl. 16 a): female ostrich-riders, with aulos-player and bystanders.\textsuperscript{753}

\textsuperscript{743} Van Straten, \textit{Hiera Kala}, nos. V43-44, 50.
\textsuperscript{744} Agora XXIII, 281, no. 1495.
\textsuperscript{745} Van Straten, \textit{Hiera Kala}, 118-44.
\textsuperscript{746} Van Straten, \textit{Hiera Kala}, 118-44.
\textsuperscript{747} Van Straten, \textit{Hiera Kala}, 118-44. The \textit{osphûs} is the sacrum and sometimes other anatomically connected elements like the tail.
\textsuperscript{748} F. Brommer, 'Delphinreiter', \textit{AA} 1942, 65-75; Green, \textit{Birds}, 102-108, nos. 6, 13-7, figs. 9, 16-20a; Green, \textit{Theatre}, 21-22. Green emphasises that, in vase painting, there is generally no clear distinction between depictions of comedy prior or subsequent to its inclusion in the Dionysia (486 B.C.). See also R. Försch, 'Die Nichtdarstellung des Spektakulären: Griechische Bildkunst und griechisches Drama', \textit{Hephaistos} 15 (1997) 62.
\textsuperscript{749} Green, \textit{Birds}, no. 16.
\textsuperscript{750} Palermo, \textit{Arch. Reports} 1966-7, 40, fig. 19; Green, \textit{Birds}, no. 13.
\textsuperscript{751} Green, \textit{Birds}, no. 17.
\textsuperscript{752} Green, \textit{Birds}, nos. 6, 15.
\textsuperscript{753} See also Green, \textit{Birds}, 95-118; Green, \textit{Theatre}, 15-50.
Pyrrhic dance

The Pyrrhic dance, that is, the weapon-dance performed by youths in a contest at the Panathenaic games, was more than once portrayed by the Theseus Painter, whose youths may be either performing the actual dance or practising it (Bonn 307; once Brussels, Theodor collection; San Antonio 86.134.157, Cat. nos. 143, 152, 168, pls. 46 a-b, 48 a-b, 54 a). The figures of the Bonn lekythos and the Brussels oinochoe are most similar: two dancing youths armed with high-crested helmets, round shields and spears. The auloi-player of the Bonn lekythos stands between two campstools; the dancers, placed on the far left and far right, are naked. On the Brussels oinochoe the youths wear loincloths and flank a campstool with folded garments; the auloi-player is replaced by a thin tree. The San Antonio pelike features a single, standing youth who is fully dressed and has a low-crested helmet; he is accompanied by a flute-player and there is a campstool between them. A goat stands behind the auloi-player on side A (pl. 48 a). Pyrrhic dances are also common in the work of the Athena Painter.  

A related subject, however strange it may be, is perhaps found on another oinochoe of the Theseus Painter: once Adolphske 13 (Cat. no. 169, pl. 54 b-c). The movements of the two youths resemble the choreography of the Pyrrhic dancers. Each youth wears a chitoniskos and holds a sword and sheath. Curiously, their helmet crests are in the form of female busts. According to Brommer, the youths may be participating in some kind of festival. Zealey proposes a "masquerade."  

Sports

The Theseus Painter sometimes located his sports scenes in the palaestra. The very fragmentary skyphos Amsterdam 2159 (Cat. no. 43, pl. 18 e-g) preserves several youths with spears and the lower parts of the garments of two auloi-players (one on each side). To judge from the published description of a fragmentary skyphos found on the Athenian Acropolis, which has not been illustrated by Graef and Langlotz (no. 1275, Cat. no. N9), its picture may be generally comparable to the one in Amsterdam (see also above, chapter II.3, last section). Several of the Theseus Painter's alabastra have a palaestra-like setting. On an

---


755 It occurs on the following vases by this artisan: London 64.10-7.237 (ABl 259,120; ABV 531,5; Beazley Addenda 132); Cab. des Médaillés 272 (ABL 260,141; ABV 531,6; Beazley Addenda 132); New York 06.1021.75 (ABL 258,90); Taranto (ABL 257,56); Riehen, private coll. (Para 261; Beazley Addenda 131); Basle, private coll. (Para 261; Beazley Addenda 131).  


757 Para 256.  

758 The work of some painters in the vicinity of the Theseus Painter shows similarities to the subject (palaestra with trainer, auloi-player, youths) and composition of the Amsterdam fragments. Gela Painter: Syracuse 21858 (ABL 210,99); Amsterdam 3741 (ABL 209,77; Para 216); Palermo, Mormino coll. (CVA 1, III Y, pl. 3.1-3); Villa Giulia (ABL 215,198; MonAnt 42 (1955) 305-307, no. 35, fig. 55); Agora P 24538 (Para 216; Beazley Addenda 119). Sappho Painter: once London market (Sotheye's 8 Dec. 1980, lot no. 254. Edinburgh Painter: formerly Witte coll. (ABL 217,35, unpublished); New York 56.49.1 (ABL 219,67; Para 217; Beazley Addenda 120). Almost identical in composition is Syracuse 23610 by the Edinburgh Painter (ABL 218,53, unpublished). Compare also Würzburg 221, (E. Langlotz, Martin von Wagner Museum der Universität Würzburg, Griechische Vasen, Munich 1932, no. 221, pl. 59; Vanhove, Sport, 348, no. 215). For the rectangular shape on two fragments of Amsterdam 2159 (pl. 18 d-e) compare the garments (often incised in similar fashion) of the auloi-players on the above-mentioned vases.  

alabastron once in the Basle market (Cat. no. 203, pl. 64 c-e) a woman holding an alabastron stands between two youths, one of whom is furnished with spears. There is a campstool behind her, and, in front of her, a lekythos. On the other side an Ionic column separates the youths who stand back to back. An identical picture, apart from the omission of the campstool, occurs on another alabastron which was once in the Basle market (Cat. no. 202, pl. 64 a-b). And the alabastron once in the Philadelphia market (Cat. no. 205) shows a similar scene (without column, but with a cock); the figures are painted in silhouette technique. Further, the alabastron Palermo 660 (Cat. no. 204, 65 a-c) has a discus-thrower, dog, aulos-player and youth holding a jumping weight and spear. Between the youth with the spear and the aulos-player there seems to be the lower part of what may be a column, as seen in Cat. nos. 202-203.

Different sporting events are portrayed on either side of the skyphos New York 06.1021.49 (Cat. no. 42, 18 a-b): wrestlers (youths) with their trainer and a bystander; and on the other side, pancratists (men) with a trainer and bystander. Perhaps the unpublished pelike Louvre F 391 (Cat. no. 157) also presents some kind of sporting subject; Beazley describes the subject as "boys running."

Ephedrismos

A rather large series of the Theseus Painter's skyphoi have pictures of an ephedrismos-like game (Copenhagen 6571, Brussels R 327, Agora P 1546, Haverford EA 1989-4, Amsterdam 2178 as well as the small fragments Himera H 27.679, Acropolis 1276, Agora P 23174, San Antonio 86.134.51 and, possibly, Corinth C 37-2323; Cat. nos. 54-63, pls. 25-27). Insofar as preserved, they all closely resemble one another. A youth rides piggyback on another youth, holding his arms around the other's chest, while the bearer reaches back and grasps the other's shins. Two pairs of such youths form the scene, and each pair is preceded by a walking youth who looks round and, in the case of the youth on the far right, holds a short stick or club. The standard ornament below the handles consists of intertwined tree trunks, next to which there is invariably a small cone-shaped object, identified as the dioros, that is, the stone which marks the game's boundary. This specific kind of representation is not met outside the Theseus Painter's work. On the other hand, several pictures of similar, but distinctly different games in which people ride piggyback occur in vase painting as well as on other artefacts. Of them, however, only one type of game may be identified as the ephedrismos proper, in which the person riding piggyback holds his or her hands over the eyes of the bearer. In Brommer's words: "Demnach kam es also darauf an, einen aufgestellten Stein, der Grenzstein genannt wurde mit anderen Steinen oder Ballen umzuwerfen; der Besiegte musste den Sieger, der ihm auf den Rücken sitzend die Augen zuhielt, so lange tragen, bis er wieder an den Grenzstein angelandt war. Hesychius, der das Spiel s.v. ἐφέδρισμον erwähnt, fügt als Besonderheit der Art des Tragens hinzu, dass der Besiegte dabei die Arme auf den Rücken hält, und bemerkt dass das Spiel bei den Ἀττικοί ἐν κοτυλήι ἔσσε [...]. Wir lernen [...] den weiteren Umstand, dass der Getragene sich mit seinen Knien auf die verschlungenen Hande des Tragenden stützte." Therefore the game played by the Theseus Painter's youths cannot rightfully be considered the ephedrismos. Moreover, it seems that the naked youth with a stick who walks in front of one pair, as if directing the youths towards the dioros, is not part of the true ephedrismos. However, the Theseus Painter included two unquestionable features of the game: the dioros and the way in which the bearer grasp the rider's legs.

wie die Figur rechts vom Flötenbläser auf a gewesen sein kann. Spätrliche Zweige."  

60 For palaestra scenes in general see, for example, Beck, Album, 29-32; Vanhove, Sport, 69-73.

61 Para 256, "In silhouette. Free replica of the last [once Basle market]. 1, athlete standing to right with fillet and acontion, 2, woman standing to right with spathe and lekythos, 3, athlete standing to left; on the ground, between 1 and 2 a cock, between 2 and 3 a lekythos, on the right of 3 a discus."

62 See, for example, Beck, Album, 29, 35-6; Vanhove, Sport, 102-104.

63 Para 257; Beck, Album, 29, 32; R. Patruncio, Lo sport nella Grecia antica (Florence 1972) 225-67, 269-331; Vanhove, Sport, 99-106.


65 Brommer, 'Huckepack', 141.
4. Komoi

The Theseus Painter's most popular subject is the procession of 'revellers'. It appears on most of his vases by far. Nearly identical compositions and komasts are seen on the skyphoi Agora P 1544, 1547-49, Amsterdam 290 and Taranto 4591 as well as the kyathoi Philadelphia L 64-540, Erlangen I 522 and Heidelberg S 53 (Cat. nos. 45-51, 194-196, pls. 20-23 a-b, 60-61 a-b). The komasts include naked men and youths, male and female auloi-players, amphora-bearers and, sometimes, lyre-players. The picture of Pisa P 695 is probably comparable (Cat. No. 52, pl. 23 e), although with slightly different details (booted figures, walking stick).

It has been proposed that the Theseus Painter's komoi might somehow be related to sacrificial processions. The suggestion is partly based on the goats below the handles of the skyphoi, which would then represent the participants' sacrifices. This could be possible, but it needs to be considered that goats are not depicted on the kyathoi, which would seem to argue against their importance as integral elements of the scene and in favour of their simpler function as decorative motifs comparable to the many white herons below the handles of other skyphoi. Furthermore, there are several examples of White Herons on the Theseus Painter's skyphoi with ritual associations. On the other hand, the Theseus Painter's komoi have a much more dignified air than the average Attic representations, and the stances and demeanour of the figures are more in line with definite ritual processions than with revellers. Also, Athens, NM 498 (Cat. no. 80, pl. 34 e-f) with a representation of an image of Dionysos on the obverse, most likely a ritual scene, has a procession on the reverse which is very similar to the abovementioned komoi. Furthermore, the Theseus Painter's other skyphoi with goats below the handles sometimes have some ritual associations too. In short, a religious or sacred interpretation of the processions seems not too far-fetched if we bear in mind the Theseus Painter's evidently general interest in cultic themes.

Comparable, though much less like a procession, is the picture of the lekythos Athens, NM 9686 (Cat. no. 142, pl. 45 d-e), with lyre- and auloi-players and a naked and a dressed man. In Columbia 61.2 (Cat. no. 151, pl. 47 c-d) a lyre-player standing in front of a goat confronts a man leaning on a stick. On the reverse the lyre-player is replaced by a female-auloi-player and a dog. Naples Sfg 118 (Cat. no. 132, pl. 41 a-c) depicts a fully-dressed auloi-player with mitra and dog between two male mantle-figures. As the Naples lekythos is white-ground, the black skin colour of the central figure is not necessarily indicative of male gender (see for example black skin of women on other white-ground vases: Cat. nos. 138, 145, pls. 43 d-e, 46 e). On the other hand, the prominent red forelock visible under the mitra is a usual trait of the Theseus Painter's males. Similar figures that can definitely be identified as males are discussed by D.C. Kurtz and J. Boardman. They are critical of the widely accepted notion that they represent komasts dressed in female clothing, as "associated with the stay in Athens of the poet Anakreon". Boardman remarks that all the features of their

---

766 Van Straten, *Hierakia*, komoi, cat. nos. V3-4 (Agora P 1544, P 1547); goats under handles, 52-53, "A number of Attic black figure skyphoi by the Theseus Painter [...], with more or less religious scenes, have goats under the handles, which are sometimes referred to as sacrificial victims [...]. Whether these goats under handles should be regarded as sacrificial animals, is a moot point. They are never incorporated in an unquestionably sacrificial context." P. Valavanis, in "THNE·A KAΣNIKE", AA 1991, 490-91, n. 25, compares these vases with the fragmentary amphora Acropolis 842 showing a Panathenaic or Dionysiac procession including men with twigs, Panathenaic-shaped amphora and goat. All the Theseus Painter's komoi that include amphora-bearers also show amphorai of Panathenaic shape being carried by them: Agora P 1544 (decorated with a wreath), Agora P 1548, Naples 81082, Philadelphia L 64-540, Erlangen I 522, Heidelberg S 53 (Cat. nos. 45-46, 155, 194-96). The sole possible exception is Taranto 4591 (Cat. no. 50, pl. 21 d), where the neck-amphora has a large, torus-shaped foot, but since that part of the skyphos has been restored, an amphora of Panathenaic shape might be depicted after all. See also a fragment from Reggio (Cat. no. 50), unpublished possibly showing a komos, with a man carrying a pointed amphora. Compare also Malibu 86.AE.147 (Cat. no. 193): Herakles served by satyrs and maenads, one carrying a pointed amphora. See also Neils, *Pride*, 183, on the significance of Panathenaic-shaped amphorai. Also Burkert, *Trogedy*, esp. 98-99, figs. 1-3.

767 Some skyphoi that can be assigned with a degree of certainty to a ritual context show herons below the handles: London B 79, Dionysos in a ship-cart, Cat. no. 8, pl. 4 a-b; Florida 86.52, sacrificial procession, Cat. no. 40, pl. 17 a-b. At least one komos skyphos of the Theseus Painter has white herons (Taranto 4591, Cat. no. 50, pl. 21 c-d).

768 That is, if one interprets scenes like those with Athena serving Herakles in such a way (Cat. nos. 18-21, pls. 8 d-e, 9 a-d, with goats under the handles).

garments can just as easily be considered typically male as female. Furthermore, such clothing for males could result from general Ionic influence on Attic vase painting from the 520s B.C. onwards rather than from a single poet's popularity. Naples 81082 (Cat. no. 155, pl. 49 c) has a more conventional komos-like portrayal: on one side, an amphora-bearer and female auloi-player; on the other, two youths, one of whom plays auloi.

Beazley described the subject of the sklyphos Athens, NM 13916 as "men contemplating a large amphora" (Cat. no. 53, pl. 24).770 Pipili regards it instead as quite close to a komos, comparable to that of the pelike Munich 1678 (Cat. no. 154, pl. 49 a-b)771 where, on each side, a calyxlike krater is flanked by two youths, one of whom either holds a kantharos or plays auloi. On the Athens sklyphos, however, a somewhat ceremonial atmosphere is evoked by the composition, colourful wreath around the amphora and birds on the rim. However, Scheibler, referring to the Athens sklyphos, cites a series of red-figure pictures on opposite sides of the same vases: one side shows people looking at an amphora, very much like the figures of the Munich pelike, the other depicts people with purses. In her opinion, the subject is the sale of amphorai.772

Returning to the Munich pelike, we can note that it presents two of the very few surviving pictures by the Theseus Painter which might possibly portray a non-mythological symposion. The others are found on the exteriors of the cups Winchester College and Taranto 6515 (Cat. nos. 174, 176, pl. 56 c).773 The cup Agora 1383 (Cat. no. 177, pl. 56 d-g) depicts a single dancing man, presumably a komast, as does the small olpe Athens, NM 13262 (Cat. no. 163, pl. 52 a).

The komos or a related subject probably appears on small fragments in Corinth (KP 2773) and Athens (Agora P 13373) (Cat. nos. 96-97, pl. 36 k-l), of whose figurework very little remains. Lastly, the sklyphos Taranto 4449 (Cat. no. 44, pl. 19) might also depict a komos. Again we see the familiar naked and half-naked men and youths, some playing auloi. But in contrast to the preceding komoi (particularly Cat. nos. 45-52) several figures hold a staff or spear. Furthermore, one man jumps up in the air (pl. 19 a), two youths squat (19 b-c) and another youth supports himself with his hands on the floor while raising his legs (pl. 19 d), postures which are not repeated in the Theseus Painter's other komoi.774

5. People at work

The Theseus Painter's depictions of people at work are few. His most discussed scene that might regard work is the sklyphos Harvard 60.321 (Cat. No. 64, pl. 28a-e). In the centre of side A, a youth stands behind a large cone-shaped 'heap' with flattened top, marked with rows of incised dashes. To the left, a youth empties a basket onto the heap; to the right, a man stands in front of a Herm. Apart from small differences, the reverse picture is comparable. The youth behind the heap also has a basket, and the incised markings of the heap form a herringbone pattern. Below each handle a seated youth grasps a handle of a large amphora. A fragmentary sklyphos of the Theseus Painter which shows similar or perhaps identical pictures was discovered in Thasos and recently published (Cat. no. 65, pl. 28 d-e). To date, no other parallel is at hand.775

---

(Oxford 1954) 55-61, suggesting that the komasts are men disguised as women, who might be intended as "Anacreon's boon companions."

770 Para 259, near the Theseus Painter. Considered by M. Pipili (CVA Athens 4, 50-51) and A.N. Malagardis (Sklyphoi) as work of the painter himself.

771 CVA Athens 4, 51, where Pipili also refers to Scheibler's suggestion "on the use of belly-amphorae in sacrifices and Dionysiac feasts in the open air as opposed to house symposia." On this matter see also Scheibler, Bild und Gefass, 68-72.

772 Scheibler, Bild und Gefass, 74-75, figs. 9-11.

773 See, Kunst der Schale, 299, "[...] also eine art Symposion im stehen, oder ein ortsfester Komos."

774 F. Brommer, 'Antike Tänze', AA 1899, 491, refers to "Sprungtänze" mentioned in ancient sources. According to him, they are not portrayed on Attic vases: "ein Sprungtanz ist mehrfach Dargestellt, aber nur für Sparta überliefert. Bei ihm berühren die Tänzer mit den Füßen das Gesäß, beide Beine haben sich vom Boden gelöst. Dieser Tanz kommt bereits in geometrischer Zeit vor [...]. Von archaischen oder klassischen Vasen Attikas oder Spartas ist er nicht bekannt." Brommer's description seems suited to at least one figure of the Taranto sklyphos, illustrated in pl. 19 a. See also G. Franzius, Tänzer und Tänze in der archaischen Vasenmalerei (Diss. Goettingen 1973) 31, type 4, fig. 4 d-e.

775 Compare slightly similar scenes on three sklyphoi of Heron Class type: people emptying baskets onto a (burning?) heap on the floor, Thebes R 18.98 (Burows and Ure, Rhitsóna, 292, possibly identify it as a game; Ure, Sixth and Fifth, 62, pl. 18, "smelting of
The activities of the men on the Harvard skyphos have been variously interpreted. D.M. Robinson suggested that the ‘cone-shaped heap’ possibly represents a granary, wine-container or tank, but concluded that it might instead be a kiln under construction. M.M. Eisman and L. Turnbull, on the other hand, later proposed that the men are not building a kiln but carrying out stages in the clay purification process, as the shape of the heap is not comparable to that of readily identifiable kilns in vase painting. Scheibier initially agreed with Eisman and Turnbull and published a photograph of heaps of clay undergoing treatment in a present-day potter’s workshop. Later, however, she advanced an entirely different theory: the men are preparing for a harvest feast.

Although Eisman and Turnbull’s interpretation has some merit, other vase paintings supply no comparisons which might help to explain some unsolved aspects. For example, the cone-shaped heaps actually look much more like neatly arranged piles of grain or the like than irregularly shaped mounds of clay. Scheibier also notes examples of similarly formed heaps in an agricultural context. In addition, although Eisman and Turnbull cite several examples of herms in a manufacturing environment, the man standing in front of the herm on the Theseus Painter’s skyphos appears to be decorating or cleaning it, an activity which seems rather out of place in a workshop. Scheibier has furthermore a strong point when she remarks that the amphorai below the handles preserve traces of white wreaths indicating that they are to be seen as already in use and not as being shaped. Despite the uncertainties, I am inclined to agree, however hesitantly, with Scheibier that the theme is the harvest or a harvest feast.

The previously unpublished skyphos in Salerno (Cat. no. 79, pl. 34 a-d) is described by Beazley as depicting a forge. Its heavily damaged condition hampers the identification of some of the figures, however. Although the central object of side A (pl. 34 b) resembles melting furnaces seen in unquestionable representations of forges, most of the men around it do not appear to be engaged in any kind of activity associated with metalworking: one of them bends forward, holding a stick as if stirring something, two hold what looks like a vessel (pl. 34 a). However, the man seated on the far right might be fuelling or stirring a fire (pl. 34 b), like the seated man on the Foundry Painter’s name-vase. On side B two men, poorly preserved, seem to hammer (pl. 34 e) on something resembling an anvil, assisted by a colleague. On the far right, another figure seated in a manner similar to the one on the far right of side A works beside another rectangularly shaped structure (forge or cupboard?), which has a bird on top (pl. 34 e). On each side, in the upper right, a rectangular form is visible which possibly corresponds with the rectangles with sketches on the Foundry Cup.

A skyphos, supposedly in Thebes (Cat. no. 121), is shortly mentioned in a few publications. Its subject is the pressing of oil or wine, as also featured on a skyphos near the Theseus Painter (Cat. no. NS2).

ore”); Thebes R. 18.100 (Burrows and Ure, Rhitsóna, 292, “four men at some occupation; perhaps another stage of the game depicted in no. 18; perhaps stoking a fire”; Ure, Sixth and Fifth, 62, pl. 18, “smelting of ore”); Amsterdam 2575 (CVA Hague, Scheurleer Coll. 2, pl. 6.3-4, harvest, forthcoming CVA Amsterdam).

776 CVA Baltimore, Robinson Coll. 3, 11-12. See also nn. 524-26 above.


779 Scheibier, Bild und Gefäss, 72.

780 Scheibier, Skyphoi, 27, n. 86.


782 Unfortunately there is no trace of a wreath or flowers or the like in the man’s hand.

783 Scheibier, Skyphoi, 27.

784 Para 257, Padula.

785 See, for example, J. Zionecki, Les représentations d’artisans sur les vases attiques (Wrocław/Warsaw etc. 1975) 28-30, 98 ff., see esp. 57, fig. 19 (a forge, with one seated figure poking the fire), 59, fig. 20 (man hammering); G. Zimmer, Antike Werksstattbilder (Berlin 1982) 6-23.

786 Berlin 2294 (ARv7 400,1; Para 370; Beazley Addenda 230).

787 This might indicate that the setting is indoors, whereas the criss-cross branches with leaves suggest the outdoors.


789 Olynthos VIII, 341, n. 14, “a man bringing down a long beam on the press out of which flows the oil into a big vat and from that into a kind of wine-skın or sack. A man leans over it as if about to lift it and another stands at the left.” During my visit to Thebes
The cup Malibu 96.AE.96 (Cat. no. 171, pl. 55 a-c) depicts, on one side, a man in a loincloth cutting up a large fish (tuna) and, on the other, a man carrying a similar fish. The few close comparisons are dispersed over a long period of time.790

In the tondo of Salerno 158 a (Cat. no. 175, pl. 56 b) we see a "youth carrying the leg of an ox over his shoulder"791 and on the fragmentary cup Agora P 1384 (Cat. no. 172, pl. 56 h) a male carrying a piece of meat, who recalls the man carrying tuna on the Malibu cup.792 It is quite remarkable that as many as three of the Theseus Painter’s cups show the handling of meat or fish. Whether the figures are all intended as butchers or fish dealers remains unclear, however.

A fragment from the Acropolis (1282) (Cat. no. 66, pl. 23 d) preserves part of a scene described by Haspels as "people pulling something with a thick rope."793 It could be a scene of labour, but it might instead be a religious, sacrificial procession. The incomplete figures include colourfully dressed men and a mule adorned with equally colourful wreaths and flowers pulling two very thick ropes. The abundant added colour and the fragment’s discovery on the Athenian Acropolis might lead one to believe that the figures are instead processional, possibly pulling something similar to a ship-cart. The idea is further supported by the right-hand partial man in a long mantle who seems to be balancing something on his missing head, steadied by his left hand, like the left-hand figure of Tampa 86.52 (Cat. no. 40, pl. 17 b). On the other hand, we may be dealing with just a scene of men and mules at work.

The same problem applies to another fragment from the Acropolis (1271, (Cat. no. 5, pl. 2 c-d), which Haspels assigned to near the Theseus Painter.794 In my opinion, however, this skyphos was decorated by the painter himself. According to Haspels, it simply depicts "washermen". Scheibler proposes that the subject is possibly the Plynteria, the yearly washing of the wooden statue of Athena Polias. It is unclear, however, whether only the statue was washed or, as might be depicted here, also the robe.795 Moreover, the washing was apparently done by girls in the sea, with youths acting only as escorts.

790 A lekythos from Thasos (Gahli-Kahil, Thasos VII, 93, no. 127, pl. 39, close to the Theseus Painter and the Athena Painter, maybe by one of them). The olpe Berlin 1915 (ABV 377,247; Para 163; Beazley Addenda 100; CVA 7, pl. 36, also mentioning the possibility of such representations being fish sacrifices; see also Cité des Images, 50, and J.L. Durand, 'Figurativo e processo rituale', Ddd 1, 1979, 16-31) with a shape similar to a large skyphos on the floor. It migh also be what is called a lekane (as a spagheion), compare, for example, Agora XII, 213-14, nos. 1781-1820, pls. 83-85. See also Pingiatoglou, Frauenelagage, 44-46. Also two south Italian kraters: A.D. Trendall, The Red Figured Vases of Lucania Campania and Sicily (Oxford 1967) 208, no. 54 (caricatures by the Tunny-seller Painter) and once London market, Christie's London 12 Dec. 1990, 39, no. 79 (satyr and woman pouring liquid over a tuna). See also Durand, Ibid., 28-29, mentioning the visual similarity between the picture of the above-mentioned Berlin olpe and depictions of animal sacrifice.

791 ABV 520,34.

792 Compare, for example, also the oinochoe Boston 99.527 (ABV 430,27, Beazley Addenda 111, Group of Vatican G. 47), "man cutting up a carcass."

793 ABL 251,42.

794 ABL 253,12.

795 Deubner, Attische Feste, 17-22; Parke, Festivals, 152-55; Simon, Festivals, 46-48.