



Women in Their Cups

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WOMEN IN THEIR CUPS

Scholars of Athenian cultural history have always turned to images on painted vases to derive information on Athenian daily life, social institutions, and societal attitudes.* Students of vase painting, too, have looked to vases for insights into the public and private life of ancient Greeks.¹ As a student of the latter discipline, I have been examining the implications inherent in the images of vases painted on vases. In this essay, I should like to focus on a single vase shape—the skyphos—and explore how its depiction within the painted image can expand our understanding of the vocabulary employed by Athenian men to denote “the other” and, among that “other,” specifically women.

The obvious conviction that underlies any study of images on vases, of course, is that these images—and especially those painted on Attic red-figured vases—embody meaning. In a symposium at the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles in March 1988, Herbert Hoffmann raised the question “Why do the Greeks need imagery?” He then responded by proposing that those figured vases not specifically intended for export were destined for the tomb, and that imagery was thus needed to give abstractions—like images of gods—a concrete form.² Clearly, Hoffmann’s answer is too narrow: figured vessels found in domestic context, alone, indicate their use in Athenian daily life;³ and images on Attic vases, too, show figured vessels in every-

* An abbreviated form of this paper was presented at the meeting of the Classical Association of the Atlantic States, October 1990, at Princeton, New Jersey. I am very pleased to thank Madeleine M. Henry for her perceptive and helpful comments on this article. The article was accepted for publication in February 1996, and the currency of the bibliography reflects this fact.

¹ For the bibliography and a brief history of scholarship on genre scenes (through its date of completion) see R. F. Sutton, Jr., “The Interaction between Men and Women Portrayed on Attic Red-Figure Pottery,” (diss., University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 1981) 11–15. Add to Sutton’s bibliography the more recent works produced by the French scholars connected with the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), many of whom are contributors to C. Bérard et al., *A City of Images* (Princeton 1989).

² H. Hoffmann, “Why Do the Greeks Need Imagery? An Anthropological Approach to the Study of Vase Painting,” *Hephaistos* 9 (1988) 143–62. See also A. Schnapp, “Why Did the Greeks Need Images,” *Proceedings of the Third Symposium on Ancient Greek and Related Pottery Copenhagen, 31 August–4 September 1987*, ed. J. Christiansen and T. Melander (Copenhagen 1988) 568–74, who is particularly interested, in this article, in sculptural images.

³ Published excavation reports of domestic architecture are few for Athens and Attica. See, however, J. E. Jones, A. J. Graham, and L. H. Sackett, “An Attic Country House below the Cave of Pan at Vari,” *BSA* 68 (1973) 374, no. 1: a calyx krater(?) body sherd with the head and upper body of a clothed figure (pl. 71); no. 2: a Corinthian skyphos lip fragment (“no later than the mid-5th century and perhaps much earlier”) (pl. 71); and no. 3: 22 fragments of a calyx krater(?). See also J. E. Jones, L. H. Sackett, and A. J. Graham, “The Dema House in Attica,” *BSA* 57 (1962) 88, no. 1: a red-figured bell krater with a symposium on one side and a maenad and other figures on the other by a painter near the Kleophon Painter (pl. 27a–c); no. 2: a column krater fragment with animals in silhouette (pl. 27d); no. 3: a lebes gamikos (pl. 28a); and no. 4: other red-figured fragments.

day use, and include their use at banquets, a function explicitly denied to them by Hoffmann.⁴ Nevertheless, Hoffmann's main idea is certainly correct: Greeks *needed* imagery, and they needed imagery to confer explicitness on the abstract world. I should like to extend Hoffmann's thesis further, and submit that Greeks "needed" figured vessels to help transmit a shared cultural heritage and to help establish a uniform cultural consciousness.

Pictorial images serve a function analogous to that served by myth and cult: they transmit and solidify values implicit—but not necessarily explicit—in the culture. I believe that images on Athenian vases were constructive in formulating and distinguishing a homogeneous cultural community—an Athenian people—and in formalizing in visual form the values that defined the community. In the same way that the oral and written tradition was instrumental in transmitting the standards, rules, and expectations of human society, imagery gave concrete, visible form to these abstractions. These media all served to objectify and bring into conscious focus individual experience and, in that way, create a consciously cohesive society. And I further believe that vases were prescriptive—consciously or unconsciously embodying and, moreover, maintaining the norms of Athenian society.

⁴ Figured vases are explicitly rendered, e.g., on an oinochoe, Athens NM 1045, *ABV* 186 by Kleisophos (*AthMitt* 14 [1889] pls. 13–14) (a calyx krater at a banquet; the phiale from which the Anacreonic drinks, however, is clearly represented as metal); a red-figured hydria ca. 500, a life gift to the Kassel Museum (I. Scheibler *Griechische Töpferkunst* [Munich 1983] fig. 10) (a calyx krater); a kylix by Makron, Berlin F 2290, *ARV*² 462.48 (*CVA* 2 [Germany 21] pl. 87.2) (a skyphos held by a maenad); an amphora fragment, Athens Agora P 21402 (*Hesperia* 22 [1953] pl. 22.2) by the Boreas Painter (not in *ARV*²) (an amphora); a pelike, New York 75.2.27, *ARV*² 1159.2 by the Somzée Painter (G. M. A. Richter and L. Hall, *Red-Figured Athenian Vases in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* [New Haven 1936] pl. 152) (a calyx krater at a Dionysiac banquet); the epinetron by the Eretria Painter, Athens 1629, *ARV*² 1250.34 (J. Boardman, *Athenian Red Figure Vases: The Classical Period* [London 1989] fig. 235) (a loutropheros and two lebetes gamikoi in a scene of preparation for marriage); an oinochoe by the Eretria Painter, Athens, Vlasto, *ARV*² 1249.13 (Boardman, fig. 233) (a calyx krater at a Dionysiac sacrifice); and a pyxis by the Eretria Painter, London E 774, *ARV*² 1250.32 (Boardman, fig. 234) (loutropheroi at a scene for wedding preparations). I believe that questioning that these vessels are meant to be other than clay shows a lack of understanding of the way images applied to metal vases and those painted on clay vases behave.

M. Vickers ("Artful Crafts: The Influence of Metalwork on Athenian Painted Pottery," *JHS* 105 [1985] 108–28; with D. Gill, *Artful Crafts: Ancient Greek Silverware and Pottery* [Oxford 1994]) may be correct in general to insist on the privileging of metal vessels, but his conclusions—as well as much of the evidence he adduces—are open to challenge (see, e.g., R. M. Cook, "'Artful Crafts': A Commentary," *JHS* 107 [1987] 169–71). A literary reference, albeit from the second century B.C.E., that specifically mentions clay vessels at a (wedding) banquet is transmitted by Athenaeus (*Deipnosophists* XI.474 c–d; see also L. Preller, ed., *Polemonis Periegetae Fragmenta* [Amsterdam 1964] 105–6): discussing the Marriage of Perithoos in a chapter *On Painters*, Polemon reports that "Hippeus represents the wine-pitcher (οἰνοχόη) and the goblet (κύπελλον) as bejeweled . . . the drinking cups are kantharoi of pottery" (trans. Gulick).

The society affected by the images on vases was probably restricted by class (or at least by economic circumstance) and, to some extent, by gender. Certainly the values that were transmitted were those of males. Although I have argued elsewhere⁵ that women must have helped out in vase workshops, substantial evidence—both pictorial and epigraphic—still supports the hypothesis that both the production and the distribution of Attic painted vases were in the hands of men. The only names of potters and painters that have survived are those of males, and at least as far as our current understanding goes,⁶ males owned the pottery workshops which produced these wares. Although a few scenes survive of women purchasing oil contained in vases,⁷ I do not know of any image that specifically shows the purchase of a vase by a woman.⁸ Thus, it seems inescapable that men were the painters of the vases and men were the patrons and the clientele. Consequently, regardless of whether it was the potter, painter, or patron who chose the image depicted on the vase,⁹ men controlled the subjects and, by extension, the cultural perspective of the subtext of the scenes. But rather than limiting any investigation, this male bias inherent in the vase evidence can be adduced as further evidence of how Athenian men viewed women, and how they wished their women to view themselves.¹⁰

Since no evidence supports the view that women actually purchased vases for themselves, it is highly probable that men purchased

⁵ M. S. Venit, "The Caputi Hydria and Working Women in Classical Athens," *CW* 81 (1988) 265–72.

⁶ The precise meaning of *epoiesen* signatures has not been proven definitively, but most scholars agree that signatures can be taken to indicate both the owner of the shop and the potter. See, e.g., R. M. Cook, "'Epoiesen' on Greek Vases," *JHS* 91 (1971) 137–38; M. Robertson, "'Epoiesen' on Greek Vases: Other Considerations," *JHS* 92 (1972) 180–83; M. Eisman, "A Further Note on EPOIESEN Signatures," *JHS* 94 (1974) 172; R. M. Cook, "'Artful Crafts': A Commentary" (above, n.4) 171. For other interpretations see Vickers and Gill (above, n.4) 154–66.

⁷ E.g., Bern 12227, *ARV*² 596.1, a pelike in the manner of the Altamura Painter (H. Bloesch, *Antike Kunst in der Schweiz* [Zurich 1943] pls. 36–37), on which a maid purchases perfumed oil in an alabastron from an oil vendor and takes it to her mistress; Adolphseck, Hesse 42, *ARV*² 285.1, by a member of the Group of Vienna 895 (*CVA* Schloss Fasanerie 1 [Germany 11] pls. 32.1–2), which shows similar scenes.

⁸ Scenes that show the purchase of vases by males include: Louvre CA 1852, *ARV*² 540.4, by a painter near the Boreas Painter (*CVA* 8 [France 12] pl. 38.1), which shows a man purchasing an amphora; Baltimore, Johns Hopkins B 4, *ARV*² 24.14, by Phintias (*CVA* Robinson 2 [USA 6] pl. 3.2), on which a youth buys vases; Copenhagen 125, *ARV*² 256.1, by the Copenhagen Painter (*JdI* 102 [1987] 74 fig. 9b), on which a youth buys an amphora.

⁹ See T. B. L. Webster, *Potter and Patron in Ancient Athens* (London 1972), 42–62 and *passim*.

¹⁰ M. Beard ("Adopting an Approach II," in *Looking at Greek Vases*, ed. T. Rasmussen and N. Spivey [Cambridge 1991] 30) argues that "visual images can subvert as much as establish and uphold norms." Although I, too, have found instances where I cannot explain the function of a specific image or combination of images within the norms of Athenian behavior that meets my expectations, I believe that this discrepancy is a result of our lack of understanding and that vase imagery—if it served any social function, as most of us believe it did—was prescriptive.

vases for specific women and for specific occasions. Death would be one such occasion and marriage another. Even if one ignores the evidence of the “female” subject matter that appears on certain shapes of vessels,¹¹ external evidence can be adduced to show their gender specificity: images on grave stelai make it clear that the pyxis functions as a container for a woman’s articles; images on vases themselves show the use of lebetes gamikoi and loutropheroi at marriage rituals¹² and of stamnoi at religious ceremonies in which women are the sole participants;¹³ among oil vessels, the alabastron, the squat lekythos, and the plemochoe are shown as explicitly discrete to women;¹⁴ the epinetron was probably received by women as a wedding gift, or fabricated for them for a votive, for excavation indicates that it was certainly extended by them as a dedication.¹⁵

The vase shape that concerns us here, however, the skyphos, has not been identified as a woman’s vase, because its use is by no means limited to women. Men, too, drank from skyphoi. Thus, we should not expect the subjects painted on the actual vessels to be specific to either gender.

As far as its designation is concerned, *skyphos* is almost certainly the ancient name for the deep cup that now bears that name.¹⁶ Euripides, in his *Cyclops* (390–91), describes Polyphemus’ skyphos as more than four and a half feet wide and more than six feet deep, which coincides in proportion—if not in actual size—to the vessel we now call a skyphos.¹⁷ On a Protoattic vase in Eleusis,¹⁸ which antedates the play by Euripides by more than two centuries, Polyphemos holds up an early version of the shape as an explanation for his drunken stupor.

¹¹ See, e.g., S. R. Roberts, *The Attic Pyxis* (Chicago 1978). The relationship between subject matter and shape is one that has only rarely been investigated, although the following statements are considered truisms. The most complete study, and the one that has yielded the most interesting results, is on one-piece amphorae by I. Scheibler (“Bild und Gefäß: Zur ikonographischen und funktionalen Bedeutung der attischen Bildfeldamphoren,” *JdI* 102 [1987] 57–118).

¹² See, e.g., J. H. Oakley and R. H. Sinos, *The Wedding in Ancient Athens* (Madison, Wis., 1993) 6–7.

¹³ Below, n.33.

¹⁴ See, e.g., Richter and Milne (below n.16).

¹⁵ For epinetra found at Brauron, e.g., see *Antike Kunst*, suppl. 1 (1963) pl. 5.

¹⁶ See G. M. A. Richter and M. J. Milne, *Shapes and Names of Athenian Vases* (New York 1935) 26–28; on the shape see also B. A. Sparkes and L. Talcott, *The Athenian Agora*, vol. 12, *The Black and Plain Pottery* (Princeton 1970) 81–87; M. B. Moore and M. Z. P. Philippides, *The Athenian Agora*, vol. 23, *Attic Black-Figured Pottery* (Princeton 1986) 58–61. The names of cups do not appear as discrete in antiquity as their modern nomenclature implies. At least one cup with the shape currently designated as skyphos bears a graffito that indicates it was, in antiquity, considered a kylix; see M. L. Lazzarini, “I nomi dei vasi greci nelle iscrizioni dei vasi stessi,” *Archaeologia Classica* 25–26 (1973–74) [341–75] 355, no. 23, for an Attic black-glazed kylix in Syracuse inscribed with the name skyphos, and 356–57.

¹⁷ On this point, see also N. G. Kanowski, *Containers of Classical Greece* (St. Lucia, Queensland, and New York 1983) 139.

¹⁸ Eleusis Museum; S. P. Morris, *The Black and White Style* (New Haven 1984) pl. 6.

Black-glazed examples make it clear that the skyphos was a normal form of cup throughout the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.E.,¹⁹ but in painted wares the shape loses popularity after about 570 B.C.E., and only again becomes significant in the last decades of the sixth century.²⁰ Early skyphoi are relatively modest cups, usually measuring about five inches high. One such skyphos painted by the KX Painter²¹—one of the Corinthianizing painters who familiarized Athenians with the shape—shows a lyre player, approached from left and right by two other men. The left male holds out a kantharos, while the right man hands the musician a skyphos which is drawn as if it were at least a foot high. The kantharos—which is mostly lost—is apparently also drawn as a greatly oversized vessel, so one might imagine that the artist drew the vessels larger than natural to clarify the narrative of the scene. Yet, throughout the history of the medium, vase painters almost invariably depict the skyphos as if the vase were vastly larger than life, and this disparity between the actual size of the vase and the artist's perception of its size, is, I think, an important clue to the subtext of the scenes in which the vessel appears.²²

Artists normally show the skyphos as far more capacious than the kylix although, in reality, the difference in capacity—if any—is slight.²³ The skyphos must have been renowned for its amplitude: on a cup in the Louvre (Fig. 1),²⁴ for example, the skyphos is shown so huge that even a reasonably richly endowed young man comes up short when measured against it.²⁵ Athenaeus (499f–500), in his ety-

¹⁹ Sparkes and Talcott (above n.16) 81.

²⁰ The Attic black-figured shape is introduced from Corinth. See Sparkes and Talcott (above n.16) 81.

²¹ Athens Kerameikos 2869, *Paralipomena* 15; *Deltion* 19 (1964) pl. 38c; J. Sweeney, T. Curry, and Y. Tzedakis, *The Human Figure in Early Greek Art* (Athens 1988) 116, no. 34.

²² I suspect that this disparity between actual size and painted size of the vessel might also be true for early kantharoi. I have wondered whether kantharoi are shown as capacious vessels, specifically because of their connection with Dionysos, and whether they are intentionally drawn larger than their modest life size when they become his attribute.

²³ In their actual state, the range of sizes for both vessels is extensive. For skyphoi shown especially large in relation to kylikes which should be about the same size, see, e.g., London E 161, by the Syriskos Painter, *ARV²* 262.41 (*CVA* 5 [Great Britain 7] pl. 72.3); Würzburg 507, by the Kleophrades Painter, *ARV²* 181.1 (E. Pfuhl, *Malerei und Zeichnung der Griechen* [Munich 1923] no. 377); Brussels R 329, *ARV²* 1593.43, unattributed red-figured cup, ca. 510 (*CVA* 1 [Belgium 1] pl. 4.5); Geneva, Boehringer, by Makron, *ARV²* 466.108 (J. Dörig, *Art Antique: Collections privées de Suisse romande* [Geneva 1975] no. 208); Gotha Ahv 49 (*CVA* 1 [Germany 24] pl. 46.1–4); Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale 542, by Douris, *ARV²* 438.133 (P. Arias and M. Hirmer, *A History of 1000 Years of Greek Vase Painting*, trans. and rev. B. Shefton [London 1963] pl. 148 above).

²⁴ Paris, Louvre G 73, *ARV²* 49.186; 170, attributed to a painter “near both the Scheurleer Painter and the Bowdoin-Eye”; side B: “komast (balancing a skyphos on his belly)”; *CVA* 10 (France 17) pl. 21.6.

²⁵ For other skyphoi painted as greatly oversized see, e.g., Berlin inv. 31131, oinochoe by the Taleides Painter, *ABV* 176.2 (*Wiener Vorlegeblätter* 1889 pl. 4.5);

mological argument on the origin of the word, certainly implies the connection between the shape and its ample capacity when he proposes that “the word skyphos may be as it were for Skythos, since the Scythians are in the habit of drinking to excess” and cites as his linguistic authority Hieronymus of Rhodes, who says, “To get drunk is to behave like a Scythian; for the sound of ph (as in skyphos) is related to the sound of th” (trans. Gulick).

One can argue that the skyphos is merely an all-occasion cup in common use.²⁶ Athenian males—at least those depicted on vases—may have preferred the more elegant, shallow cup we call (almost doubtless incorrectly) a kylix,²⁷ but they surely found the deeper skyphos a fully acceptable alternative drinking vessel. At symposia, skyphoi are the choice of men and youths alike. Yet, it is “the other” that is most closely connected with skyphoi. Anacreonics—men dressed as women or, more likely, garbed as foppish Easterners—are connected much more frequently with skyphoi than are other males,²⁸

Toledo 64.126 (*CVA* 1 [USA 17] pl. 56); Crakow 31, by Onesimos, *ARV*² 325.34 (*CVA* 1 [Poland 2] pl. 8.1c); London E 767, by the Dikaios Painter, *ARV*² 31.6 (J. C. Hoppin, *Euthymides and His Fellows* [Cambridge, Mass., 1917] pl. 19); three vases by Epiktetos: once Paris, Pourtalès Collection, *ARV*² 75.54 (J. C. Hoppin, *A Handbook of Attic Red-Figured Vases I* [Cambridge, Mass., 1919] 338); Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale 510, *ARV*² 78.96 (Pfuhl [above n. 23] fig. 325); London E 137, *ARV*² 78.95 (Pfuhl [above n. 23] fig. 329).

²⁶ See, e.g., Kanowski (above n.17) 138.

²⁷ The name kylix is apparently generic for cup, since it is often inscribed on skyphoi. See, e.g., Lazzarini (above n.16) 348, no. 13; 350, no. 17; 352, no. 21; see also E. Vanderpool, “Kephistophon’s Kylix,” *Hesperia* 36 (1967) [187–89] 188–89. Kanowski (above n.17, 139), however, believes that skyphos is the generic word.

²⁸ On Anacreonics see, most recently, D. C. Kurtz and J. Boardman, “Booners,” *Greek Vases in the J. Paul Getty Museum*, Occasional Papers on Antiquities, 2, vol. 3, The J. Paul Getty Museum (Los Angeles, California 1986) 35–70, and F. Frontisi-Ducroux and F. Lissarrague, “From Ambiguity to Ambivalence: A Dionysiac Excursion through the ‘Anacreonic’ Vases,” *Before Sexuality: The Construction of Erotic Experience in the Ancient World*, ed. D. M. Halperin, J. J. Winkler, F. Zeitlin (Princeton 1990) 211–56. Cf. Madrid 11009, unattributed stamnos, ca. 480, *CVA* 2 (Spain 2) pl. 6–8; Chiusi 1836, *CVA* 2 (Italy 60) pl. 23 (one skyphos, one kylix); Adria B 248, *CVA* 1 (Italy 28) pl. 32; Syracuse 2696.7, by the Gales Painter, *ARV*² 36.2, Hoppin, *Handbook* (above n.25) I, 465 (youth offering huge skyphos to Anakreon? inscribed); Louvre G 286, by Douris, *ARV*² 443.229, Boardman and Kurtz 56, fig. 14; Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum 86.AE.293, Briseis Painter, Boardman and Kurtz 59, figs. 22a–b; Rhodes 12.129, by the Pig Painter, Boardman and Kurtz 63, figs. 26a–b; Bologna 234, by the Orchard Painter, Boardman and Kurtz 64, fig. 28; Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum 76.AE.102.29–30, by the Pan Painter, *Greek Vases in the J. Paul Getty Museum*, vol. 3 (1983) 88, figs. 6a–b; Berlin 2100, by Epiktetos, *ARV*² 71.7, *CVA* 2 (Germany 21) pl. 54.4; Louvre G 220, by the Flying Angel Painter, *ARV*² 280.11, J. Boardman, *Athenian Red-Figure Vases: The Archaic Period* (London 1975) fig. 178.

Anacreonic with kylix: Munich 2647, by Douris, Boardman and Kurtz 56, fig. 18; Vienna 770, by the Agrigento Painter, Boardman and Kurtz 64, fig. 27; Basel 421, by Psiax, *ABV* 294.21, Boardman and Kurtz 45, fig. 9; Kassel, Hessisches Landesmuseum A Lg 57, by the Nikothenes Painter, Boardman and Kurtz 51, fig. 12; Cleveland 26.549, by the Pig Painter, *ARV*² 563.9, Boardman and Kurtz 62, fig. 25; with two kylikes: Berlin 4221, *CVA* 2 (Germany 21) pl. 54.2–3.

as are foreigners,²⁹ and it is certainly noteworthy that a scene that shows dancing youths costumed in ape masks³⁰ has, as its central focus, an enormous skyphos.

Nonmortals, too, drink from skyphoi, although these nonmortals are almost invariably those most closely connected with wine and drunkenness. Dionysos, whose normal drinking vessel is a kantharos or a rustic drinking horn, occasionally finds his wine in a kylix or skyphos, with the skyphos apparently assuming some slight preference.³¹ More importantly, members of his thiasos, satyrs and particularly maenads—if they abandon their normal kantharos (or, in the case of satyrs, their kantharos or drinking horn)—are likely to substitute a skyphos as their wine cup.³²

²⁹ Note Ferrara T 499, the tondo of a cup near the Dokimasia Painter, *ARV*² 415.2 (above); 1652 (S. Aurigemma, *La necropoli di Spina in Valle Trebba I* [Rome 1960] pl. 207) where an Egyptian priest from a Busiris scene runs away, a hydria in one hand, a skyphos in the other. (Another vase that connects the skyphos with sacrifice is Oxford 1911.617, a cup by the Pan Painter, *ARV*² 559.152, *CVA* 1 [Great Britain 3] pl. 7.3.) See also Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum 85.AE.316, a kalpis by the Kleophrades Painter in which Phineas is connected with a skyphos (*GettyMus./J* 1986, 192 no. 51). On a kylix in Berlin (2270), by a member of the Thorwaldsen Group (*ARV*² 455.3, *CVA* 2 [Germany 21] pl. 92.1), a Scythian reclines at a symposium, a skyphos in hand.

³⁰ Vulci 64224; *Paralipomena* 330 (Villa Giulia); imitation of the Euergides Painter. Most recently, see H. A. G. Brijder, "Apish Performances," in *Proceedings of the Third Symposium on Ancient Greek and Related Pottery* [above n.2]; esp. relevant to the present argument is Brijder's last comment (68): "The youth in the centre offers his comrades an enormous quantity of wine in an enormous skyphos. Those who drink too much of it, will lose their balance. They will behave as ridiculously as apes. You are warned."

³¹ For Dionysos with skyphos see Louvre G 201, Nolan amphora by the Berlin Painter, *ARV*² 201.63, D. C. Kurtz, *The Berlin Painter* (Oxford 1983) pl. 45c; Syracuse 22934, calyx krater with ithyphallic Dionysiac herm holding a cadeuseus in one hand, a skyphos in the other, *CVA* 1 (Italy 17) pl. 11, 4; London E 786, *ARV*² 1537.3, unattributed plastic kantharos, *CVA* 4 (Great Britain 5) pl. 39.1b (Beazley questions the identification of Dionysos in *ARV*²); Leipzig T 3328, circle of the Swing Painter (Böhr), *CVA* 2 (Deutsche Demokratische Republik 2) pl. 24.4. N.b. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale 271 (*ABV* 449.5, by the Painter of Rhodes 13472; *CVA* 2 [France 10] pl. 66.2.9) noted by H. Gericke, *Gefässdarstellungen auf griechischen Vasen* (Berlin 1970) 186 no. 3, as Dionysos on a kline with a skyphos shows Herakles and Pholos; Bibliothèque Nationale 343 (*ABV* 206.1, by a painter in the Group of Walters 48.42; *CVA* 2 [France 10] pl. 63.1.3.4.7) noted by Gericke (186 no. 3) as Dionysos with a skyphos is instead Dionysos with his more common vessel, the kantharos; Compiègne 1068 (*ARV*² 188.66, by the Kleophrades Painter; *LIMC* III, pl. 400, Dionysos 839), noted by Gericke (188 no. 29) as Dionysos with a skyphos shows a skyphos among other vases in silhouette in the predella beneath a scene of Dionysos, but Dionysos himself holds a kantharos.

I know of only two examples of Dionysos with a kylix: Los Angeles County Museum 50.8.3.1, by a member of the Florence-Boreas Group (*ARV*² 540; *LIMC* III, pl. 34.Dionysos 391); Louvre G 114, by the Copenhagen Painter (*ARV*² 257.14, *LIMC* III, pl. 365.Dionysos 580), in which Dionysos is playing kottabos with the cup.

³² This may relate to the fact that the skyphos is noted as the common cup of rustics: centaurs, shepherds, and all country folk (see *Od.* 14.112 and Asclepiades of Myrlea, quoted by Athenaeus [XI.489f]: "No dweller in the city, even in moderate circumstances, ever used a skyphos or a kissybion; it is only swineherds, shepherds, and country people who do, like Eumaeus" [trans. Gulick]). A vase in Los Angeles

Yet, of all, women are most likely to use a skyphos as their cup, and although the skyphos does not function solely as a woman's vase, women most often limit themselves to skyphoi. The skyphos, for example, is the single wine cup used in the Athenian women's festival to Dionysos, identified in images on vases as the Lenaia.³³ This special pertinence of the shape to women, I should like to propose, reflects the attitudes of Athenian men toward their women.

It might be argued that women use a skyphos precisely because it is the wine cup used at the women's festival of Dionysos, but it is more likely the other way around. The series of Lenaia vases that show the festival participants ladling wine from stamnos to skyphos begins a full half-century *after* women are routinely seen drinking from skyphoi in other scenes on vases, and although the actual use of the skyphos at the Lenaia may conceivably have antedated its depiction, the vases are still our only source for the inclusion of the skyphos at the festival at all.³⁴

One might argue that the skyphos is a woman's cup because it belongs to the world of the gynaikon, for the shape certainly finds a place in the women's quarters where it is apparently the only cup that is ever used by women. On a pyxis in London,³⁵ for example, a seated woman contemplates the contents of a table among which is a skyphos; on a vase at Harvard,³⁶ women feed pet herons, using a skyphos to hold the grain they scatter before the birds; even in a brothel the shape appears: on a cup in Warsaw,³⁷ one resident of the establishment raises up a spindle—a gender specific object—the other holds aloft a skyphos. A woman tipping from a skyphos on a skyphos

(J. Paul Getty Museum 83.AE.326), by the Tyzkiewicz Painter (*GettyMusJ* [1984], 242 no. 54), shows Hephaistos, if he is correctly identified, weakened by wine served him by Dionysos, docilely returning to Olympus, a skyphos—the vehicle of his drunkenness—in hand.

³³ On the Lenaia see, most recently, J. L. Durand and F. Frontisi-Ducroux, "Idoles, figures, images: Autour de Dionysos," *RA* (1982) 83–108; the basic study is by A. Frickenhaus, *Lenäenvasen* (Winckelmanns Programm, Berlin 1912).

³⁴ Rare scenes of cult earlier than the "Lenaia vases" in which women drink from skyphoi still postdate secular scenes of women with skyphoi. For these cult scenes see, e.g., Munich 1538, *ABV* 395.3 (*CVA* 9 [Germany 48] pl. 10); Agrigento R 142, by a member of the Leagros Group, *ABV* 377.235 (*CVA* 1 [Italy 61] pl. 4.1). Cult scenes contemporaneous to those on "Lenaia vases" (e.g., Florence, 3950 by the Penthesilea Painter [*CVA* 3 [Italy 30] pl. 109.1; 110.2], a sacrifice, almost certainly to Dionysos; Munich 8934, an Attic red-figured skyphos with a caricature (?) of a Dionysiac cult scene [A. Cambitoglou, ed., *Studies in Honour of Dale Arthur Trendall* (Sydney 1979) pls. 34.3–4]) also connect women with skyphoi. The Spartan poet Alcman's connection of "a large skyphos" with bacchants (see Athenaeus XI.498f, Diehl frag. 37, Edmunds frag. 47) is the earliest connection of the shape with women known to me.

³⁵ London E 769, circle of the Brygos Painter, *ARV²* 410.63 (E. Keuls, *Reign of the Phallos* [New York 1985] fig. 186).

³⁶ Cambridge (Mass.), Harvard, Fogg 60.340, by the Painter of the Yale Oinochoe, *ARV²* 503.22 (*CVA* Robinson 2 [USA 6] pl. 34 and colorplate 34a).

³⁷ Warsaw 142317, by the Boot Painter, *ARV²* 821.6 (*CVA* Goluchów 1 [Poland 1] pl. 37.1).

(Fig. 2)³⁸ recalls Xenophon's advice (*Econ.* 9.11) to employ as house-keeper a woman who, among her other virtues, is most temperate in wine drinking. Yet the skyphos is certainly not limited to the women's quarters for we have seen it in the andron, too, as vessel of symposiasts and komasts. It is what the skyphos signifies that is important here.

The painter's visual imagery resonates with the same timbre as the verbal imagery that his literary colleague invokes. By burdening women with the great-sized skyphos the vase painter admits the same cultural attitude as the poet who writes—in simulated jest—that women are incapable of moderation. Attic comedy abounds with references to the debauchery of women: in the *Thesmophoriazusae* (735–38), for example, Aristophanes complains:

O ever thirsty, ever tipping women
 O ever ready with fresh schemes for drink
 To vintners what a blessing; but to us
 And all our gods and chattels what a curse.³⁹

The Attic comic poet Pherecrates, who is slightly closer in date than Aristophanes to the vase painters whose works we have been discussing, employs precisely the same imagery as they to characterize his women as intemperate. In his *Tyranny*, Pherecrates uses the voluminous capacity of the women's wine cups as the vehicle to demonstrate their duplicity governed by their unquenchable thirst:

For the men, the women had made flat drinking cups, which had no sides, only just a bottom holding not even so much as a timpleful, like little tasters, but for themselves they had cups deep as wine-transporting merchantmen, well rounded and delicately fashioned yet bellying out in the middle. The women had them made not without shrewd planning, and long before, for they wanted to be able to drink up the greatest possible quantity of wine without being called to account. And then, when we men accuse them of drinking up all the wine, they scold us and swear they haven't taken more than a single cup. But this single cup is mightier than a thousand.⁴⁰

Pherecrates uses the generic term for the cup that women fashion for themselves (i.e., *kylix*), but his description of a deep cup bellying out in the middle accurately describes a skyphos of his day.

³⁸ Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum 86.AE.265, unattributed Attic red-figured skyphos; ca. 470–460 B.C.E.; ht. 15.3 cm.

³⁹ B. B. Rogers, trans., *Aristophanes . . . The Thesmophoriazusae . . .*, Loeb Classical Library (London and Cambridge, Mass., 1924). See also, e.g., Aristophanes, *Cocolas* (Athenaeus II.478d; Kock I.350; Kassel-Austin III.2.364).

⁴⁰ Athenaeus XI.481b–d (Kock I.143; Kassel-Austin VII.152) (C. B. Gulick, trans., *Athenaeus: The Deipnosophists*, Loeb Classical Library [London and Cambridge, Mass., 1933]). M. M. Henry, "The Edible Woman: Athenaeus's Concept of the Pornographic," *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome*, ed. A. Richlin (New York and Oxford 1992) 250–68, discusses Athenaeus' construction of women in the *Deipnosophists*.

It has long been noted that the ceremony of the drinking of wine was one way that Greek men sought to separate themselves from women and foreigners, for men boasted that they mixed their wine with water whereas barbarians and women drank theirs straight.⁴¹ Moderation they regarded as a masculine virtue, and they advocated it in the performance of all pleasurable acts, believing that excessive pleasure led to abuse and to the debasement of the soul.⁴² Drawing a parallel between the threefold pleasures of drink, sex, and food,⁴³ they saw the excessive pursuit of any of these desires as degrading.⁴⁴ Diluting wine with water—and thus endowing the ideal of moderation with perceptible concrete form—raised Greek men above “the other.”

The characterization of women as lascivious and intemperate, which runs as a thread throughout Greek literature, also informs Attic red-figured vases, where parallels, too, are drawn between women’s incessant desire for copious draughts of wine and their inexhaustible desire for ceaseless sex. Yet, whereas literature speaks of the intemperance of *wives*, vases—with the exception of the image on the Getty skyphos—identify their immoderate women as hetairai. And the dichotomy between the spoken word and the painted image demonstrates, to my mind, the difference inherent in the two modes of discourse. For although these images appear on vases created—as is the literature—for a male audience, the visual images seem to be restricted to those that cannot possibly endanger the social order of the Athenian state. The visual image seems to embody a power beyond that of the spoken word.

⁴¹ Scythians and Thracians drank wine undiluted, their women as well as men (Plato, *Laws* IV.637e), and Aristophanes notes in the *Ecclesiazusae* (227) that Greek women “love their wine unwatered as of old” (Rogers, tr.); see also Aristophanes, *Cocalos* (Athenaeus XI.478d, Kock I.350; Kassel-Austin III.2.364), who describes “barbarous old women with large clay kotylai [pouring] their own bodies full of red Thasian wine, without constraint, overpowered by passion for the red unmixed wine,” and Theopompos, *Pamphila* (Athenaeus XI.485e; Kock I.41; Kassel-Austin VII.42), who speaks of “a very great cup (λεπαστή) from which she drinks unmixed wine to the Agathos Daimon and with her shouts makes the village stand round agape.”

⁴² See, e.g., Plato, *Republic* III.402c; *Timaeus* 89b; Aristotle, *Nicomachian Ethics* III.11.1118b; VII.4.1148a; VII.7.1150b.

⁴³ See, e.g., Plato, *Republic* III.389e; IX.580e; Xenophon, *Memorabilia* IV.5.9.

⁴⁴ Xenophon, *Apology* 16, has Socrates use the phrase “a slave to the desire of the body,” and Philomen (frag. 104) uses a similar expression for addiction to wine; see K. J. Dover, *Greek Popular Morality* (Oxford 1974) 208. See also Aristotle VII.14.1154a: “It is pursuing . . . excess that makes a bad man, not pursuing the necessary pleasures, for everybody enjoys savoury foods and wine and sexual pleasure, though not everybody to the right degree,” H. Rackham, trans., *Aristotle: Nicomachian Ethics*, Loeb Classical Library (London and Cambridge, Mass., 1962). In this regard, one might view the images of men vomiting on cups by Onesimos (Leningrad 651, *ARV*² 325.77 [*ArchAnz* 1913, 93, fig. 1]) and by the Brygos Painter (Würzburg 479, *ARV*² 372.32 [*Arias* and Hirmer (above n.23) colorplate 33]) as proscriptive, but the tender gesture of the slave girl or boy who helps the drunken male in each image makes such an interpretation difficult to sustain.

Euphronios may have set a pattern for the connection of hetairai and skyphoi with scenes like that on his psykter in Leningrad:⁴⁵ in a symposium composed solely of hetairai, Euphronios paints four naked women reclining without the company of men. Each is named with professional precision: Agape, Smikra, Palaisto, and Sekline.⁴⁶ Sekline plays the flute to Palaisto, who drinks from one skyphos and holds the only kylix in the scene—possibly Sekline’s—in her left hand. Smikra holds one skyphos in her left hand and with another—a most unlikely choice of vessel for the game—plays kottabos for the charms of Leagros. Agape, too, holds two skyphoi. A symposium composed solely of naked—or gartered—women can only be a fantasy of male titillation; yet, one can easily imagine the Leningrad psykter floating in its krater high on icy water, revolving slowly in the center of the real gathering, displaying first one woman then the next, for the delectation of the assembled male banqueters who become one with the scene.⁴⁷

The decoration of a kylix in Los Angeles by Phintias⁴⁸ even more explicitly exemplifies the duality of lust and drink: on one side a youth tips a calyx krater toward an old hetaira so that she can see that it is indeed empty, while with his other hand he holds his erect penis (Fig. 3a); on the other side, the hetaira, presumably surfeited with wine, and at the further insistence of the youth, gets down to business (Fig. 3b). Phintias clearly has constructed his hetaira as the ultimate vessel, its purpose unfulfilled unless it is filled with liquid.

⁴⁵ Leningrad 644, *ARV²* k6.15, Hoppin, *Handbook* (above n.25) I, 405.

⁴⁶ For a discussion of the names, especially that of Sekline, see, most recently, H. R. Immerwahr, *Attic Script: A Survey* (Oxford 1990) 63–64.

⁴⁷ Women reclining together at symposium, shown independent of men, is a relatively rare subject. All examples known to me cluster around Euphronios: Oltos (Madrid 11267, *ARV²* 58.53 *CVA* 1 [Spain 1] pl. 4.1) shows two hetairai, facing one another, a flutist and the second with two cups: a kylix and a skyphos; Phintias (Munich 2421, *ARV²* 23.7 [Boardman, *Archaic* (above n.28) fig. 38.1]) has a second pair, both holding skyphoi, on the shoulder of a hydria, seemingly dedicated to Euthymides; and a cup in a private collection on Centre Island attributed by Bothmer to a painter of the Proto-Panaetian Group (mentioned by D. Williams, “The Ilioupersis Cup in Berlin and the Vatican,” *JBerlMus* 18 [1976] 22–23; D. von Bothmer [letter, 4 September 1990] has noted the connection of the cup with the scene on the Leningrad psykter) shows six hetairai drinking together: one plays kottabos with a kylix; four hold capacious skyphoi; the last figure is fragmentary, her gesture (and, perhaps, her vessel) lost.

⁴⁸ Los Angeles, California, J. Paul Getty Museum 80.AE.31, Attic red-figured cup signed by Phintias as painter; ca. 510 B.C.E. See J. Frel, “A View into Phintias’ Private Life,” *Festschrift für/Studies in Honor of Leo Mildenberg*, ed. A. Houghton, S. Hurter, P. E. Mottahedeh, J. A. Scott (Wettern 1984) 57–60 and pls. 8–9; C. Weiß, “Phintias in Malibu and Karlsruhe,” in *Greek Vases in the J. Paul Getty Museum*, vol. 4 (1989) 83–94 and 90, fig. 3. Frel interprets the figures as Phintias (58) and the hetaira, known from inscriptions elsewhere, as Syko (60); he interprets the gesture on Side A as Phintias presenting the hetaira with a love-gift of a calyx krater (58). Weiß (92), more correctly in my opinion, doubts both the specificity of Frel’s identifications and his interpretation of Side A. The inscription on Side B (see *Mildenberg*, 59) does nothing to support Frel’s interpretation.

The skyphos itself is perhaps charged with overtones of this double self-indulgence. In *Malerei und Zeichnung*, Ernst Pfuhl figures a fragmentary cup in the Louvre attributed to the Pedeios Painter (Fig. 4a):⁴⁹ a young hetaira balances a skyphos on the back of her hand while a companion waves her hand and seems to egg her on. But the cup is not quite so fragmentary as illustrated by Pfuhl, and his censorship serves to obscure the real meaning of the scene. For the girl who raises her arm in apparent delight is cheered rather more by a phallos-bird which rears its head with unconcealed interest (Fig. 4b)⁵⁰ than she is by any act of balance her associate achieves. To further underline the close connection between wine and sex, two phalloses (certainly olisboi), which on other vases are shown enthusiastically employed, hang on the wall.⁵¹ Yet, that men saw women as slaves to self-indulgence, their passion for physical gratification uncontrolled—ready to drink deep from any source—is no more clearly illustrated than in an image on a vase, now lost, once in the Pourtalès Collection in Paris (Fig. 5):⁵² an hetaira, naked but for a garter round her thigh, stoops to raise a massive phallos-skyphos to her lips, drinking deep, at once of wine and sex.

I do not wish to leave the impression that the skyphos is an emblem signifying excess, nor that the painter employed the shape with iconographical intent. Rather, the vase painter was part of the cultural construct that informed ancient Athens and that necessitated its own perseverance. The biases of those who painted vases and those who commissioned and purchased them, alike, supported the perpetuation of the image, for it replicated a perception of reality that fully engaged Athenian men.

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⁴⁹ Louvre G 14, *ARV*² 85.1; Pfuhl (above n.23) figs. 336–37.

⁵⁰ See *CVA* 10 (France 17) pl. 17.3, which figures the unexpurgated version.

⁵¹ See, e.g., a cup by Epiktetos, Leningrad, Hermitage 14611, *ARV*² 75.60 (Boardman, *Archaic* [above, n.28] fig. 71), which is possibly also informed by the same connection of women's eager desire for wine and sex: a woman naked but for her sakkos wields two olisboi, lubricated perhaps with wine from the kylix placed on the floor before her.

⁵² Once Paris, Pourtalès 388, attributed to Douris; *ARV*² 450.22 (G. Vorberg, *Glossarium eroticum* [Stuttgart 1932] 507).



Fig 1: Paris, Louvre G 73 (photograph courtesy of the Louvre).



Fig 2: Los Angeles, California, J. Paul Getty Museum 86.AE.265; Attic red-figured skyphos, ca. 470–460 B.C. (photograph courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Museum).



Fig. 3a: Los Angeles, California, J. Paul Getty Museum 80.AE.31; Attic red-figured kylix by Phintias, ca. 510 B.C. (photograph courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Museum).

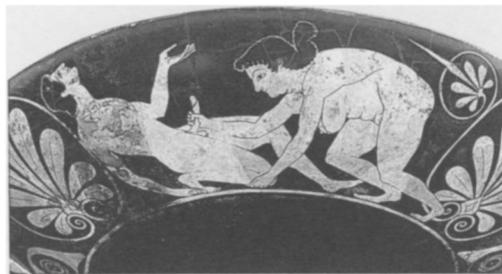


Fig. 3b: Los Angeles, California, J. Paul Getty Museum 80.AE.31; Attic red-figured kylix by Phintias, ca. 510 B.C. (photograph courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Museum).

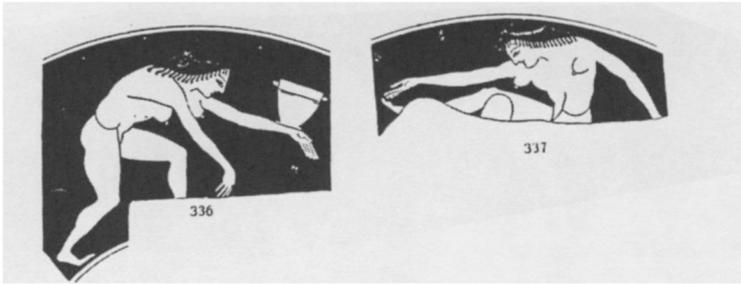


Fig. 4a: Paris, Louvre G 14 (after E. Pfuhl, *Malerei und Zeichnung*, figs. 336-37).



Fig. 4b: Paris, Louvre G 14 (photograph courtesy of the Louvre).



Fig 5: Once Paris, Pourtalès 388 (after G. Vorberg, *Glossarium eroticum*, p. 507).