

UCL Housman Lecture

**THE DIONYSIAN
PARADE AND
THE POETICS OF
PLENITUDE**

by Professor Eric Csapo
20 February 2013

A.E. Housman (1859–1936)

Born in Worcestershire in 1859, Alfred Edward Housman was a gifted classical scholar and poet. After studying in Oxford, Housman worked for ten years as a clerk, while publishing and writing scholarly articles on Horace, Propertius, Ovid, Aeschylus, Euripides and Sophocles. He gradually acquired such a high reputation that in 1892 he returned to the academic world as Professor of Classics at University College London (1892–1911) and then as Kennedy Professor of Latin at Trinity College, Cambridge (1911–1936).

Housman Lectures at UCL

The Department of Greek and Latin at University College London organizes regular Housman Lectures, named after its illustrious former colleague (with support from UCL Alumni). Housman Lectures, delivered by a scholar of international distinction, originally took place every second year and now happen every year, alternating between Greek and Roman topics (Greek lectures being funded by the A.G. Leventis Foundation). The fifth Housman lecture, which was given by Professor Eric Csapo (Professor of Classics, University of Sydney) on 20 February 2013, is here reproduced with minor adjustments. This lecture and its publication were generously supported by the A.G. Leventis Foundation.

The Dionysian Parade and the Poetics of Plenitude

Scholarship has treated our two greatest Athenian festivals very differently.¹ The literature on the procession of the Panathenaea is vast. The literature on the Parade (*pompe*) of the Great Dionysia is miniscule. The standard handbook, Pickard-Cambridge's *Dramatic Festivals of Athens*, gives little more than two pages to the Parade.² Recent scholarship on the Parade in English make a virtue of this neglect, supposing it was rather a dull affair. It stresses the procession's 'solemnity', 'formality', 'dignity' and implies that it was lifeless, perfunctory and fully prescribed.³ I will argue the opposite: that it was riotous, creative and colourful. It was also perhaps the most intensely musical event in ancient Greece, with even more choruses than the lyric and dramatic contests that followed.

The Dionysia took place mid to late March, the beginning of Greek Spring. By popular reckoning the Dionysia marked the opening of the sailing season. Sailors, like farmers, used the stars as a guide: both the agricultural year and the sailing season began with the evening setting of the Pleiades (late March/early April) and ended with their morning setting (late October/early November): hence the ancient etymology of

¹ I would like to express my thanks to Gesine Manuwald and all members of the Department of Greek and Latin at University College London for the kind invitation to give the Housman Lecture and their very generous hospitality while I was there. I owe special thanks for hospitality and advice to Emmanuela Bakola, Chris Carey, Emma Cole, Giambattista D'Alessio, Pat Easterling, Miriam Leonard, Flachra Mac Góráin, Kyriaki Ioannidou, Hallie Marshall, Oliver Taplin and Saeed Zeydabadi-Nejad. Though they do not always share them, my views on the Dionysia have benefited greatly from discussions at the Centre of Classical and Near Eastern Studies of Australia with my Sydney colleagues, Dick Green, Andrew Hartwig, Sebastiana Nervegna, Ted Robinson and Peter Wilson. For the provisioning of images and permissions I am indebted to Sheldan Collins, Maria Laura Falsini, Mario Iozzo, Jan Jordan, Margaret Miller, Sophie Morton, Stavros Paspalas of the Australian Archaeological Institute at Athens, Brigitte Freyer-Schauenburg and Peter Wilson. I owe thanks also to Tatiana Bur who helped with proofreading and to Anastasia Miller-Csapo who gave Photoshop assistance. My research was made possible by an Australian Research Council Discovery Grant.

² A. Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens* (2nd ed., Oxford 1968 [rev. 1988]) 61-3.

³ C. Sourvinou-Inwood, *Tragedy and Athenian Religion* (Oxford/Lanham 2003) 70: 'involved a certain solemnity'; X. Riu, *Dionysism and Comedy* (Lanham 1999) 13-14: 'solemn procession that inaugurates the festival'; N. Spineto, *Dionysos a teatro: il contesto festivo del dramma greco* (Rome 2005) 229: 'la compostezza e la solennità che l'occasione richiedeva'; K. Rothwell, *Nature, Culture, and the Origins of Greek Comedy: A Study of Animal Choruses* (Cambridge 2007) 18: 'formal and dignified'.

Pleiades from πλέω ‘sail’.⁴ Ancient astronomers and mythographers liked to connect the Pleiades with Dionysus, stressing their corporate persona as a chorus and their location between the horns of Taurus (the bull).⁵

Dionysus’ connection with the agricultural year has been noticed and overrated: in Athens, at least, he is less of a fertility god. His connection with shipping and commerce, on the other hand, is generally unnoticed and underrated. Theophrastus’ Chatterbox, a man who talks in clichés and links them together in a chain of the most hackneyed associations, connects cheap wheat, lots of foreigners, the beginning of the sailing season and the Dionysia. Agriculture gets mentioned too, but only in a less vivid future conditional clause: he says ‘that wheat is now selling at a good price in the market place, and that there are a lot of foreigners in town, and that the sea becomes navigable from the time of the Dionysia, and that if Zeus were to send more rain, the crops would be better’.⁶ Classical Athenians connected the sailing season with the Dionysia because the festival and its associated market were designed to attract merchants and foreign visitors. Together they brought good things to alleviate the want and tedium of a long winter: food, money, unusual privileges, and dazzling entertainments.

Indications are that the closure of the seas was for the most part strictly observed, bringing an end to maritime commerce and even military communication for a period of at least four and a half months.⁷ As it coincided with the termination of agricultural activity, this had serious consequences for the Athenian food supply. The threat of shortage was particularly acute in the fifth and fourth century when more than half of the grain needed to feed the Athenian population was imported from overseas.⁸

⁴ N. Austin, *Archery at the Dark of the Moon: Poetic Problems in Homer’s Odyssey* (Berkeley 1975) 241-2; A. Zissos, *Valerius Flaccus’ Argonautica* 1 (Oxford 2008) 350-2; A. Poochigian, *Aratus Phaenomena* (Baltimore 2010) 39-41.

⁵ Along with their sister and neighbouring chorus the Hyades from the time of Pherecydes fr. 90 Fowler, cf. E. Csapo, ‘Star Chorus: Eleusis, Orphism, and New Musical Imagery and Dance’, in M. Revermann and P. Wilson, eds., *Performance, Iconography, Reception: Studies in Honour of Oliver Taplin* (Oxford 2008) 280. For the equation of Taurus with Dionysus, see W.H. Roscher, *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie* 5 (Leipzig 1916-24) 145-7.

⁶ Thphr. *Char.* 3.2-3 (Diggle): ...καὶ ὡς ἄξειοι γεγόνασιν οἱ πυροὶ ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ, καὶ ὡς πολλοὶ ἐπιδημοῦσι ξένοι, καὶ τὴν θάλατταν ἐκ Διονυσίων πλώμιον εἶναι, καὶ εἰ ποιήσειεν ὁ Ζεὺς ὑδὼρ πλεῖον τὰ ἐν τῇ γῆ βελτίω ἔσειεσθαι...

⁷ See esp. And. 1.137; Thuc. 6.21.2.

⁸ A. Moreno, *Feeding the Democracy* (Oxford 2007) 323. Moreno (311) argues that the Athenians were particularly successful in ensuring that serious shortages were *relatively* rare (viz. only fourteen of the first seventy-eight years of the fourth century), but created an uneasy dependency of the common people upon the elites who controlled the food supply. Public distributions of food at festivals must have played a significant role in easing the tension between the politically dominant demos and economically dominant elites.

With scarcity came price-gouging. The price of grain rose sharply towards the end of the winter months putting basic food supplies beyond the reach of many. The grain law of 374 BC attempted to alleviate the problem by requiring that a twelfth part of the grain from Lemnos, Imbros and Scyros be gathered in Athens just before the closure of the seas, and that it not be sold in the market before Anthesterion, the last month of winter just before the Dionysia, and at a price agreed upon by the People.⁹

The Dionysia offered one of the largest and busiest markets of the Eastern Mediterranean. With a resident population topping in the third quarter of the fifth century perhaps 300,000 and tens of thousands of visitors, Athens was an obvious destination for merchants selling the remnants of grain from the previous year's harvests.¹⁰ This was the end of a forced Lent and it is not surprising to find that food and material goods are a major theme of the festival.

It is important to contextualise the festival if one is to appreciate the role played by food in Greek comedy and especially Old Comedy. Many of the fragments preserved by Athenaeus are little more than lists of food, some of them worked into wild deipnological fantasies.¹¹ A favourite motif of fourth-century comedy is the monologue of the cook, who announces his menu in dithyrambic flight: one character delivers a menu in a patter song of one breath, consisting of nothing but a solid thirty lines of edibles, followed, probably, by a wine-list of equal length (of the latter only two lines survive).¹²

Sometimes the lists are rhapsodic. Hermippus in a play called *Stevedores* launches into a mock-Homeric hymn to Dionysus in which the god is praised as a merchant-shipper (PCG F 63): 'Tell me now you Muses who dwell in Olympus how many good things Dionysus brings here to men in his black ship since the time he began to carry merchandise over the wine-faced sea. From Cyrene, silphium stalk and ox hide.

⁹ P.J. Rhodes and R. Osborne, *Greek Historical Inscriptions 404-323 BC* (Oxford 2003) no. 26, and p. 127; R.S. Stroud, *The Athenian Grain-Tax Law of 374/3 BC*, Hesp. Suppl. 29 (Princeton 1998) 73: 'It seems evident that the prohibition about introducing a motion in the ekklesia to sell grain any earlier than Anthesterion was to make a certain quantity of wheat and barley available to the public at the time of year when maritime activity was normally reduced, existing supplies of grain were often low, and prices presumably approaching their peak'.

¹⁰ Moreno (above, note 8) 28-31 has a helpful discussion of population estimates.

¹¹ Especially *Deipnosophists* 1.27d-8d, 6.267e-70a. See also J. Wilkins, *The Boastful Chef: The Discourse of Food in Ancient Comedy* (Oxford 2000); P. Ceccarelli, 'L'Athènes de Périclès: un "pays de cocagne"?' L'idéologie démocratique et l'ἀνθρώπιος βίος dans la comédie ancienne', *QUCC* 54 (1996) 111-59; M. Pellegrino, *Utopie e immagini gastronomiche nei frammenti dell'Archaia* (Bologna 2000).

¹² Anaxandrides *Protesilaus* PCG F 42, ll. 38-71; cf. H.-G. Nesselrath, *Die attische Mittlere Komödie* (Berlin/New York 1990) 267-80.

From the Hellespont, mackerel and every sort of salted fish. From Thessaly, barley and sides of beef and the mangle for the Spartans from Sitalkes, and from Perdikkas a great many ships-full of lies. The Syracusans provide pigs and cheese * * *'. After a lacuna the list goes on to include products that originate from cities throughout the Eastern Mediterranean, from Carthage to Phoenicia. Most modern readers fail to see the humour that such lists of food are supposed to generate. There is none really. It is mainly about sustaining the buoyancy of the audience with effervescent reminders of the festival's blessings. Even the performances of comedies themselves are metaphorically presented as meals for the eyes and ears of the spectators: Metagenes, for example, claims his comedy will 'feast the audience with many original side-dishes' (*PCG* F 15), and Aristophanes backhandedly compliments Crates for comedies that provided a 'light but satisfying lunch' (*Knights* 538-9), while he himself offers Athens 'the first taste' of his new *Clouds* (523).

1. Plenty of Food

The first official act of the Dionysia is the Parade. The Parade is a sacrificial procession. Isocrates (7.29) speaks of the city sacrificing as many as 300 cattle at a festival. Inscriptions recording the sale of the hides of sacrificed cattle permit estimates for the Dionysia: Peter Wilson calculates 200 cattle at the Dionysia paid for by the Athenians.¹³

An Athenian decree of 372 BC requires the allied city of Paros to 'bring a cow and a phallos to the Dionysia *since they happen to be colonists of the people of Athens*'.¹⁴ This requirement for cow and phallos is said to be 'traditional': we know in fact that colonists were to bring a phallos from a decree of 445 BC founding the colony of Brea.¹⁵ But the Paros decree is ambiguous about whether the requirement to bring a cow and a phallos to the Dionysia applies to them as a colony, which they are said to be, or as an ally, which they in fact are. The question may be purely academic. Athenian propaganda tended to conflate allies and colonists on the basis of the claim that the Ionian cities were all originally colonised from Athens. The Greater Panathenaea offers a ready analogy: there we are certain that both colonies and allies brought a cow and a panoply for the procession. We should therefore probably estimate for the Dionysian Parade, at the height of the empire, another 200 cattle.

Four hundred cattle represent a lot of food. Four hundred modern beef-cattle would provide one kilo of meat each for about 110,000 people. Ancient cows were less beefy,

¹³ *IG* II² 1496, ll. 80-1; P. Wilson, 'Costing the Dionysia', Revermann and Wilson (above, note 5) 97.

¹⁴ Rhodes and Osborne (above, note 9) 146-9, no. 29, ll. 3-6.

¹⁵ *IG* I³ 46 ll. 16-17.

but if we take McNerney's upper estimate of up to 200 kilos per Classical Greek cow we are still providing a kilo of meat for 80,000 people.¹⁶ Instructions for a fourth century distribution from Koresia on Keos stipulate 1.25 kilos of meat per person.¹⁷ This would give us a figure of 64,000 portions – a figure very close to Hansen's estimate for the adult male citizen population in Athens in 432/1 BC.¹⁸ We might suppose that the allies and colonists who brought the meat also had a share. Add to this privately sponsored sacrifices and offerings by publicly appointed liturgists called 'restaurateurs'.¹⁹ A bull described as 'worthy of the god' led the sacrifices, but all of these cattle participated in the Parade and required escorts from beginning to end.²⁰



FIGURE 1.
ATTIC POLYCHROME
OINOCHÉ, ca. 510 BC,
AGORA P 23907.
Watercolour by Piet De Jong.
Courtesy of the American School
of Classical Studies at Athens:
Agora Excavations.

The Parade puts other consumables on display. Our sources name a distinctive bread, unique to the Parade, 'obel bread', and the processing of the loaves was evidently memorable: we have three depictions in late fifth- to fourth-century vase painting (Figures 1 and 2). The loaves are painted white, suggesting that they are uncooked dough that will be roasted at the sacrifice with the meat. The bread is impractically large, probably bigger than appears on Figures 1 and 2, since Pollux (6.75) tells us a

¹⁶ J. McNerney, *The Cattle of the Sun: Cows and Culture in the World of the Ancient Greeks* (Princeton 2010) 175-6 takes an 'intermediate range' of 150-200 kilos per cow from scholarly estimates. The Statistics Norway website gives an average of 274 kilos of meat per cow slaughtered in 2005.

¹⁷ *IG XII 5*, 647 ll. 12-13.

¹⁸ A minimum of 60,000 adult male Athenian citizens in 432/1: M.H. Hansen, *Three Studies in Athenian Demography* (Copenhagen 1988) 14-28.

¹⁹ P. Schmitt-Pantel, *La cité au banquet: Histoire des repas publics dans les cités grecques* (Rome 1992) 123-31; but only if the *hestiatores* provided for the main sacrifice, see Wilson (above, note 13) 116.

²⁰ E. Perrin-Saminadayer, *Éducation, culture et société à Athènes. Les acteurs de la vie culturelle athénienne (229-88): un tout petit monde* (Paris 2007) T 26 l. 13 $\epsilon\pi\epsilon\mu[\psi]\alpha\nu\ \tau\omicron\iota\varsigma\ \Delta\iota\omicron\nu[\nu\sigma\iota\omicron\iota\varsigma]\ \tau\alpha\upsilon\delta\rho\omicron\nu\ \acute{\alpha}\xi\iota\omicron\nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\ \delta\upsilon\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \acute{\epsilon}\theta\upsilon\sigma\alpha\nu\ \acute{\epsilon}\nu\ [\tau\omicron\upsilon]\ \iota\epsilon\rho\omega\iota\ \tau\eta\iota\ \pi\omicron\mu\pi\eta\iota$.

loaf could contain 157.5 litres of flour. This equates to 200 standard white tin loaves from your local bakery. It makes one think of the 440 lb. sausage paraded by the butcher's guild at the carnival in Koenigsberg in 1583.²¹ It will be eaten, no doubt, but in the Parade it is food for the eyes—huge food—edible theatre. The obel-bread carriers themselves are part of the fun. Photius tells us that the term 'obeliphoroi' could serve as a derogatory term for workers and rustics: this implies clowning and coarse humour (*Lex. s.v. ὀβελίας ἄρτος* l Porson). Ehippus found them amusing enough to make them the chorus of a comedy. If everyone who gets meat gets a quarter-litre of bread and we are feeding roughly 70,000, then at the height of the empire we might want about 125 of the largest size of obel-bread and 250 *obeliphoroi*. The figures are unlikely to be precise, but the impression is: there was plenty of raw food. Other sources indicate that metics carried trays with honey cakes and water jugs and citizens carried large wineskins (Figure 3): these were made from whole goatskins and on the analogy of the Madeiran *borrachos* still in use, held 45 to 70 litres, suggesting that about 500 were needed if every diner got a half-litre.²²



FIGURE 2.
ATTIC RED-FIGURED BELL
KRATER, TELOS GROUP
(Schauenburg) or TELOS
PAINTER (McPhee),
390-380 BC,
Naples Private Collection.

²¹ E. Muir, *Ritual in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge 1997) 96.

²² The Neck Amphora on Figure 3 unusually shows a procession of human males carrying wineskins (*askophoroi*—there is a third wineskin-bearer beyond the handle) and in the centre a mixing bowl. Usually processional *askophoroi* in Attic art are mythicised as satyrs (as frequently in Return of Hephaestus scenes, on which see below). The procession on Figure 3 is Dionysian as is clear from the 'front' of the vase which shows Dionysus and a female companion on a dining couch. It is unlikely to refer to the Anthesteria or a 'sacred marriage', as is sometimes thought: the scene is sympotic not nuptial and the scene on the obverse shows it is all about wine and the abuse of wine, for which the Dionysia was notorious. Under the handles on each side participants in the parade vomit copiously (one is just visible on the extreme left of Figure 3). See D. von Bothmer, *Glories of the Past: Ancient Art from the Shelby White and Leon Levy Collection* (New York 1990) 140-1, no. 107.



FIGURE 3.
ATTIC BLACK-FIGURED
NECK AMPHORA,
RELATED TO MEDEA
GROUP, ca. 520 BC, ONCE
NY MMA SL 1990.1.107.

Photo: Sheldon Collins, with permission.

2. Oodles of Boodle

Edible abundance was accompanied by a display of wealth. The Parade was especially associated with the glitter of gold and silver. The processing of wealth was a theme common to the larger festivals. The public stores had enough processional equipment that Thucydides lists them second among Athens' uncoined gold and silver reserves (2.13.4). The first two items in Plutarch's characterisation of the Dionysian Parade are the 'carrying about of golden objects', and 'expensive himatia' (*Mor.* 527d). From the sale of sacrificial hides Lycurgus paid for processional equipment that included 'dedicated gold spun clothing and jewellery and baskets for a hundred basket bearers'.²³ It is probable that at least some of this was used for the Dionysia, though this is the only place we have even a suggestion of more than eleven basket bearers in a single Athenian procession (or more than one for any major Athenian sacrifice).²⁴

The Dionysian Parade offers some conspicuous examples of putting wealth on display. We know that the 1225 lyric and dramatic chorus men that were to perform in the Dionysian contests also marched in the Parade. As choregos Demosthenes ordered gold-spun gowns and golden crowns for every one of his fifty choreuts. The manuscripts of *Against Meidias* 22 preserve the testimony of the goldsmith who says

²³ Ps.-Plut. *Mor.* 852b; Paus. 1.29.16. Cf. Ar. *Ach.* 258; Cic. *Tusc.* 5.91. The Lycurgan law *IG II³ 445*, l. 42 of ca. 335 specifies funds from the *dermatikon* for festival *kosmoi*.

²⁴ See E. Csapo and P. Wilson, 'The Finance and Organisation of the Athenian Theatre in the Time of Eubulus and Lycurgus', forthcoming in E. Csapo, J.R. Green, H.R. Goette, and P. Wilson, eds., *Greek Theatre in the Fourth Century BC*. On the possible number of kanephoroi in a single procession, see R. Parker, *Polytheism and Society at Athens* (Oxford 2005) 224.

that the ornaments were made specifically for the Parade. The statement is of some interest even if it is a later interpolation. It may imply that other (less ornate) costumes were worn in performance, or it may imply that the costumes worn in the Parade and in the theatre were the same even though the Parade alone is mentioned, because foremost in the goldsmith's mind. Perhaps relevant is a fourth-century decree from Eretria that stipulates that all musical contestants are to march in the festival procession wearing the same costume they will wear in the contests (*IG XII* 9, 189 ll. 39-40). The costume of the choregos himself, however, needed the Parade for conspicuous display, as he did not perform in the theatre and otherwise only appeared in the public gaze after the judging and then, presumably, only if he won the competition. Some confirmation of the importance of the Parade for choregic display comes from Satyrus' claim that Alcibiades took advantage of his choregia to appear in the Parade in a stunning purple cloak (*Athen.* 12, 534c).

The Dionysia took place early in the ninth prytany, what Meritt called 'the end of the fiscal year' and what might just as easily be regarded as the beginning of the new fiscal year.²⁵ Along with the resurgence in revenues from import, harbour and market taxes in the ninth prytany, rents for leased public lands normally fell due.²⁶ But most importantly during the empire allies brought tribute to the Dionysia.

The tribute delivered by the allies was paraded and displayed in the *orchestra*.²⁷ Because Isocrates (8.82) mentions this procession in the same breath as the honouring of war orphans, it is sometimes assumed that this happened before the tragic contests when announcements were made. Isocrates' juxtaposition is, however, rhetorical and not temporal. The parading of the tribute is quite unlike the official announcements before the tragic contests: it is pure ceremonious display. Even allowing six days for the Dionysia, it seems impossible to find time for a separate procession: and we should consider it likely that this was part of the display of wealth that characterised the Parade. Raubitschek imagines a train 'of at least five hundred men each carrying one talent of money'.²⁸ The relief crowning the Cleonymus Decree (Figure 4) is generally

²⁵ B.D. Meritt, 'A New Date in the Fifth Century', *AJP* 57 (1936) 182.

²⁶ Arist. *AthPol* 47.3-4; N. Papazarkadas, *Sacred and Public Land in Ancient Athens* (Oxford 2011) 95.

²⁷ The custom of setting the deadline for the tribute at the Dionysia probably goes right back to the spring of 453 BC soon after the treasury was moved from Delos to Athens (B. Smarczyk, *Untersuchungen zur Religionspolitik und politischen Propaganda Athens im Delisch-Attischen Seebund* [Munich 1990] 155). We can infer its existence at least as early as the Cleonymus Decree, *IG I³* 68, of ca. 426, which represents a tightening up of tribute collection, and was passed in a meeting of the Assembly held, significantly, in the immediate aftermath of the Dionysia (l. 13) to take measures against defaulters.

²⁸ A. Raubitschek, 'Two Notes on Isocrates', *TAPA* 72 (1941) 357-8.

supposed to show the jars and bags of money that the allies deposited in the Theatre's orchestra.²⁹ The reliefs on decrees, unlike most other types of ancient reliefs, are often purpose-designed to fit their content and this decree introduced new rules regulating the delivery of tribute at the Dionysia.



FIGURE 4.
FRAGMENT OF RELIEF
CROWNING IG I³ 68,
CLEONYMUS DECREE,
mid 420s BC,
ATHENS EPIGRAPHICAL
MUSEUM 6595.

Photo: P. Wilson, with permission.

It is mainly because of the tribute that the Dionysia has been called Athens' 'imperial festival.'³⁰ Part of the function of the Parade was to advertise the empire's power and solidarity. Meg Miller has brought attention to the way Athens at the height of its empire borrowed imperial ritual and symbolism from Persia. In the Persian empire the subject peoples, including the Ionians, delivered their tribute in a great procession on the day of the New Year's Festival. In the same way, the subjects of the Athenian empire, mostly Ionians, delivered their tribute (a cow, a phallos, and large sums of money) in the Parade of the Dionysia. This imperial formula is all the more striking given that, at the end of the processional route, the Parade wound around the Odeon, a building whose design was a direct imitation of the audience halls or Apadanas in which the Persian king and satraps received tribute at Persepolis and other Persian capitals.³¹

²⁹ Relief on Cleonymus Decree, mid 420s BC, Athens EM 6595 (IG I³ 68); C.L. Lawton, *Attic Document Reliefs: Art and Politics in Ancient Athens* (Oxford 1995) 81 no. 1.

³⁰ P.J. Rhodes, *A History of the Classical Greek World, 478-323 BC*² (Chichester 2010) 94.

³¹ M.C. Miller, *Athens and Persia in the Fifth Century BC: A Study in Cultural Receptivity* (Cambridge 1997) 236-42, 256-7; cf. K.A. Raaflaub, 'Learning from the Enemy: Athenian and Persian "Instruments of Empire"', in J. Ma, N. Papazarkadas, and R. Parker, eds., *Interpreting the Athenian Empire* (London 2009) 114-15. Raubitschek (above, note 28, 360-2) argued that it was Cleon who initiated the display of tribute in the theatre after the death of Pericles (429 BC). This might explain both the topicality of imperial relations in the comedies of 425-422 BC and their assimilation to master-slave relations.

3. Plenty of Slack

If the many phalloi processed by the allies symbolised power, this does not exhaust the range of this most polysemous of symbols. The phallos is generally taken to be a fertility symbol. Fertility and agriculture are however not thematised by the use of the phallos in the Parade or in the myths that explain it. The myths explaining the origins of the phallic rites in both Athens and Attica make it clear that the phallos symbolises the divine madness that licenses the worshipper to transgress ordinary human laws with impunity.³² According to the Athenian myth, a missionary named Pegasos first brought the image of Dionysus Eleuthereus from Boeotia to Athens (Σ Ar. *Ach.* 243 Wilson). But when the Athenians rejected the god he afflicted their genitals with an incurable disease. Delphi declared that the sole cure was for Athens to hold the god in all reverence. They therefore constructed phalloi and with these paid homage to the god and made them a memorial to their suffering.

The modern literature sometime explains the disease as impotence, but it is just the opposite: it is hyperpotency (satyriasis or priapism). The Icarian myth is more explicit (Σ Lucian *Dial.D.* 1-5 Rabe). Dionysus gave the farmer Icarius a vine. He grew it, harvested it and offered the juice to his neighbours. They drank it and felt the effects of wine for the first time: overpowered, some of them fell into a stupor, others into a drunken rage. Assuming that Icarius had given them poison, they murdered him. To avenge the murder, Dionysus appeared before the Icarians in the form of a beautiful boy and flirted with them until they reached the peak of excitement, and then Dionysus suddenly disappeared leaving them in this unabated state, until an oracle advised them to put a stop to their madness by fashioning and dedicating images of their afflicted genitals. Another myth says the same about satyrs, except satyrs never found the cure (Σ Clem. Al. *Protr.* 47.5, p. 314 Stählin). It is clear that the disease of the first myth and the madness of the second are equivalent and that the symbol of this divinely inspired madness is the phalloi.

The Florence cup (Figure 5) shows the ritual cure in progress and not yet complete: the Athenians are still afflicted with ‘madness’.³³ Though now faded, details in added red (i.e. the erect phalloi) show that the phallos-bearers re-enact their state of divine inspiration. For the Classical period we have good evidence of two types of phallic choruses: there are the phallic choruses called *phallophoroi* or ‘phallos-bearers’ such as

³² I have dealt generally with the function and meaning of the Dionysian phallos in E. Csapo, ‘Riding the Phallus for Dionysus: Iconology, Ritual and Gender-Role De/construction’, *Phoenix* 51 (1997) 253-95.

³³ On the Florence cup, see M. Iozzo, ‘Phallic Rituals’, in N.C. Stampolidis and Y. Tassoulas, eds., *Eros: From Hesiod’s Theogony to Late Antiquity* (Athens 2009) 260-262 (with further bibliography).



FIGURE 5.
ATTIC BLACK-FIGURED CUP, ca. 550 BC, FLORENCE 3897.
Courtesy of the Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici della Toscana.

we see here, and then there are choruses called *ithyphalloi* or ‘erect-phallos’.³⁴ These are phallic clowns who sport a variety of phallos just about everywhere save the most obvious place. An *ithyphallos* by the Berlin Painter (Figure 6) has a phallos coming out of his forehead, one attached to the end of his nose and one whose tip we can see at his right shoulder, but which once belonged to a stick. This stick is the distinctive attribute of the *ithyphalloi*. Its absence on the lower fragment of the jar in fact indicates that, despite the reconstruction, the upper and lower part of the figure do not go together but belong to two identically costumed men. The jar originally represented part of a chorus of *ithyphalloi*. Enough representations of phallos-stick bearing choruses survive to show that they have several features in common, like the boots called *kothornoi*, ivy-spotted garments, and often effeminately draped chitons.

³⁴ For a detailed presentation of the evidence, see E. Csapo, ‘Comedy and the Pompe: Dionysian Genre-Crossing’, in E. Bakola, L. Prauscello, and M. Telò, eds., *Greek Comedy and the Discourse of Genres* (Cambridge 2013) 40-80.

Aggression, verbal and physical, is characteristic of phallic performers. The historian Semos reports that the *phallophoroi* would rush forward at the crowd threatening it with the phallos and then verbally abuse whomever they wished (*FGrH* 396 F 24). In this spirit *ithyphalloi* sometimes sport aggressive costume: phalloi placed like the horns of a black rhinoceros on Figure 6, or the poised knife with a phallic end held by the eccentric wildman with an extra Cyclopic eye on Figure 7.

From Demosthenes we know that an aristocratic youth gang, cultivating a reputation for righteous thuggish violence, appropriated the name 'Ithyphalloi' (54.14-20).



FIGURE 6.
FRAGMENTS OF A RED-FIGURED JUG,
BERLIN PAINTER, 490-480 BC,
ATHENS NM ACROPOLIS G 251, 2.702.

*Photo: M.C. Miller, reproduced courtesy of
the National Archaeological Museum, Athens.*

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A certain amount of physical aggression was tolerated and expected. Demosthenes tells us of one Ctesicles who thought it fitting to join the Parade carrying a leather strap (21.180). When he happened upon a personal enemy he thrashed him with it. The revealing thing is that Ctesicles pleaded not guilty to violent assault due to 'the influence of the Parade and drunkenness' and would have been excused the assault had it not been for a history of enmity between Ctesicles and his victim which made the violence look more like premeditation than the sort of random outburst one might expect on this occasion. Aeschines could demonstrate the habitually good behaviour of one Epicrates by claiming he showed perfect control *even at the Parade* of the Dionysia (2.151).

Decrees honouring epebes make special reference to their orderly conduct at the Parade.³⁵ Decorum and good order from any semi-organised group of young men were so far from being expected that the Athenians created boards of ‘Wardens of the Parade’ and ‘Wardens of the Choruses’. Their task, we are told, was ‘to make sure that choruses did not lose control’ – not likely to be aimed at the restraint of Sophocles and his choreuts competing in the theatre but the many choruses of drunken and ritually stimulated men in the Parade.³⁶ Aeneas Tacticus tells us that on the day of their Dionysian Parade the Chians filled the city with armed guards to prevent riots (17.5).



FIGURE 7.
**ATTIC RED-FIGURED
 LEKYTHOS, ca. 440 BC,
 ATHENS Γ' EPHORIA A5801.**

*Photo: E. Csapo, reproduced
 courtesy of 3rd Ephorate of
 Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities.*
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³⁵ The inscriptions are all second–first century BC: *JG* II² 1006, ll. 13–14; *JG* II² 1011, ll. 67, 76; *JG* II² 1028, ll. 16–18; *JG* II² 1029, ll. 11–12; *JG* II² 1030, l. 14; *JG* II² 1043, l. 31.

³⁶ See E. Csapo and P. Wilson, ‘Le passage de la chorégie à l’agonothésie à Athènes à la fin du IV^e siècle’, in B. Le Guen, ed. *L’Argent dans les concours du monde grec* (Vincennes 2010) 43.

4. A Riot of Choruses

The madness of Dionysus Eleuthereus is mob madness. It is expressed by group indulgence in precisely the things one cannot or should not practice alone: heavy drinking, rowdy behaviour, sex (even if only symbolic), and choral music and dance. In this sense he is a god of sociality, and his Parade advertises the superior power of the group over the individual. The ritual aggression is in principle group aggression against individualism. It is a bonding ritual, advertising the specific advantages of being part of a group, which is why the Athenians were eager to involve their allies and colonies.

When the allies and colonies sent phalloi to Athens they had also to send choruses to process the phalloi. In the Thudippus decree (440-420 BC) it is expressly stated that the ox and panoply sent to the Panathenaea are to be accompanied by men who will process them (*IG I³ 71*, ll. 57-8), and this must be *a fortiori* true of the phalloi of the Dionysia. We can see from the Florence cup (Figure 5) that the phalloi are large: they are carved monoxyls and heavy, requiring many hands to carry them. Greek art rarely shows the depth of a line. Comparative phallogogy, mixed with a little practical sense, suggests that we should imagine at least six men on the left side to balance the six on the right. An analogous phallic procession performed in Japan, the Hounen Matsuri at the Tagata shrine, requires five relays of twelve men each, all aged 42, in order to carry a 400 kilogram combination of shrine and phallos a distance of 1.5 kilometres.³⁷ If we add the exarchos or chorus leader, and such extras as the man riding the satyr and the man standing at the back of the base-pole, we could calculate a chorus of ca. 15 per phallos. If we multiply this by roughly 200 for the number of allies at the height of the empire, it gives us 3000 *phallophoroi*: 15,000 if we suppose relays as in Japan.³⁸

There are other types of choruses that we need to add to the list. But the evidence for some of these is best approached by reconstructing our earliest evidence for the Dionysia. Dionysian themes suddenly become very popular in Attic art in about 570-560 BC.³⁹

³⁷ This important comparandum for the Dionysian Parade is generally underreported. I have found the Thoeny Family website (www.thoeny.org/tagata.html) most helpful.

³⁸ Some phalloi appear in the later Classical period to have been transported on wagons (see further below), but the survival of the name ‘phallophoroi’ and descriptions like Semos’ (*FGrH* 396 F 24), or enactments, like that in *Ar. Ach.* 246-79, suggest that the sheer physical exertion of these choruses in keeping the phallos upright long remained an important part of the spectacle.

³⁹ T. Carpenter, *Dionysian Imagery in Archaic Greek Art* (Oxford 1986); G.M. Hedreen, *Silens in Attic Black-figure Vase-painting, Myth and Performance* (Ann Arbor 1992) 155-170; H.A. Shapiro, *Art and Cult under the Tyrants in Athens* (Mainz 1995) 84-100; E. Csapo and M.C. Miller, ‘General Introduction’, in E. Csapo and M.C. Miller, eds., *The Origins of Theater in Ancient Greece and Beyond: From Ritual to Drama* (Cambridge 2007) 22-4; T.J. Smith, *Komast Dancers in Archaic Greek Art* (Oxford 2010) 116.

I will argue that these themes are inspired by the creation of the Dionysia. The invention or reorganisation of the Panathenaea can also be dated by inscriptions to precisely this time.⁴⁰



FIGURE 8.
RELIEF FROM
SANCTUARY OF
DIONYSUS,
ca.550-530,
ATHENS NM 3131.

Photo: E. Csapo,
reproduced courtesy
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Museum, Athens.
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Other forms of Dionysus had been in Athens since the Bronze Age, but Dionysus Eleuthereus, the god of phalloi and choruses, does have a recoverable history. We can be confident that Dionysus Eleuthereus was in Athens by the mid sixth century. The evidence is architectural and iconographic. The earliest evidence of construction in the area of the Sanctuary of Dionysus Eleuthereus on the South Slope of the Acropolis is the fragment illustrated in Figure 8, probably of an altar, which Simon dates as early as 550 BC and Despinois to 540–530 BC.⁴¹ On it we have a scene characteristic of the god: two ithyphallic satyrs, one playing pipes, and a maenad, all dancing. But this kind of iconography can be traced back in Attic art a few more decades. Dionysus, satyrs and Dionysian themes first suddenly appear in Attic art about 580 and then become extremely popular between 570–560 BC. Some subjects stand out.

⁴⁰ R. Parker, *Athenian Religion: A History* (Oxford 1996) 75-6; J.L. Shear, *Polis and Panathenaea: The History and Development of Athena's Festival* (Ph.D. diss. University of Pennsylvania 2001) 507-15.

⁴¹ E. Simon, 'Silenoi', *LIMC* 8 (1997) 1129, no. 201; G. Despinois, 'Il tempio arcaico di Dioniso Eleutereo', *ASAtene* 74-75, n.s. 58-59 (1996/7) 198.

Return of Hephaestus

This is a mythic scene but the remarkable thing, as scholars like Carpenter and Hedreen have shown, is that the mythic event is buried – indeed lost – within a Dionysian festival procession.⁴² At times it is very much less a ‘mythical’ scene than a festival scene with some mythic content. On the frieze of Figure 9, for example, the narrative is continuous, but it is a scene of a sacrificial procession in which the actual mythic narrative has to be sought out like a Where’s Wally in a sea of figures. The procession combines humans and satyrs, bovine and caprine victims, and even includes a man with a big head that suggests a mask. It ends, like the Parade, in a huge feast.



FIGURE 9.
FRIEZE ON SHOULDER
OF ATTIC DINOS,
PAINTER OF LOUVRE
E 876 (NAME VASE),
ca. 570-560 BC.

© RMN-Grand Palais
(musée du Louvre)/Hervé
Lewandowski.

⁴² See esp. G.M. Hedreen, ‘The Return of Hephaistos, Dionysiac Processional Ritual, and the Creation of a Visual Narrative’, *JHS* 124 (2004) 38-64; cf. Carpenter (above, note 39) 13-29. Hedreen’s Appendix (above, note 39) 183-184 lists forty-nine Attic black-figure treatments of the subject from the sixth century BC. The myth was treated by *Homeric Hymn* 7, composed in the last half of the seventh century: see M.L. West, ‘The First *Homeric Hymn* to Dionysus’, in A. Faulkner, ed., *The Homeric Hymns: Interpretive Sketches* (Oxford 2011) 29-43.

Regimented Choruses of Satyrs

Not only does Dionysus first appear in Attic art in processional scenes, but so do satyrs.⁴³ Although satyrs are generally shown to be intractable beasts, many early representations, such as Figure 10, surprisingly show them in regimented and orchestrated files.⁴⁴



FIGURE 10.
ATTIC BF AMPHORA,
PAINTER OF BERLIN
1686, ca. 540 BC,
BERLIN F 1697 ('back').
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Geschichte, Berlin/
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

Phallophoria

The mid sixth century also coincides with our first evidence of processions with phallos poles (Figures 5 and 17).

Beast Riders and Funny Walkers

From ca. 560 a series of over 20 vases begins that continues into the fifth century (Figures 11-12).⁴⁵ They are often called beast-riders or animal choruses, but sometimes they are just transvestites, men on stilts, or old men who walk on their hands. What they have in common is elaborate costume, orchestrated movements, often a piper, and usually an arresting way of moving. The choruses usually move in a straight line.

⁴³ Mainly in Return of Hephaestus (see above) and Wedding of Peleus and Thetis scenes. The earliest depictions of both Dionysus and satyrs in Attic art appear, 580-570 BC, on: the Attic bf dinos, by Sophilos, London BM 1971.11.-1.1., *Paralipomena* 19, 16bis; and the Attic bf volute-krater from Chiusi (François Vase), by Ergotimus and Cleitias, Florence Museo Archeologico 4209, *ABV* 76.1.

⁴⁴ G.M. Hedreen, 'Myths of Ritual in Athenian Vase-Paintings of Silens', in E. Csapo and M.C. Miller, eds., *The Origins of Theater in Ancient Greece and Beyond: From Ritual to Drama* (Cambridge 2007) 150-95.

⁴⁵ See, above all, J.R. Green, 'A Representation of the Birds of Aristophanes', *The J. Paul Getty Museum: Greek Vases* 2 (1985) 95-118.

Dick Green speaks of these choruses as comedies and as seen ‘in the theatre’ but there is no theatre in Athens until about 500.⁴⁶ What we see is a processional chorus, a fleeting entertainment with no narrative element. Painted letters on the Oltos psykter (Figure 12) shows the dolphin-riders’ song emanating from their mouths. They all sing the words ‘on a dolphin’ (ἐπὶ δελφίνος). There is not much more to be said really: no hint of anything beyond what the costumes and movements make obvious.

Among the iconographic motifs just examined we saw satyrs moving in processions or in disciplined lines. A Demosthenes scholion tells us that ‘those who processed for Dionysus paraded in imitation of his retinue’ taking on the appearance of ‘satyrs, Bacchai, silens’.⁴⁷ In *On the False Embassy* (287) Demosthenes mocks Aeschines’ brother-in-law nicknamed Curebion for not wearing a mask in the processions:

This man (Aeschines) who even betrayed your allies’ arms to him (Philip of Macedon) led the charge (against me) and spoke about prostitution—O Earth and the gods!—while his two brothers-in-law stood beside him – men whom you would howl at the sight of: the disgusting Nicias, who sold himself to Chabrias in his expedition to Egypt, and the accursed Curebion, who participates in the komos at the Parades without the mask (καὶ τοῦ καταράτου Κυρηβίωνος, ὃς ἐν ταῖς πομπαῖς ἄνευ τοῦ προσώπου κωμάζει).

We know from Aeschines’ response (2.151) that this referred specifically to the Dionysian Parade. We might assume that Curebion is a spontaneous participant like the father of Androtion who, when prisoners were released to participate in the Dionysia, is said by Demosthenes to have joined the Parade and danced in his chains (22.68). Between them these passages provide good evidence that some citizens participated in a komos in the Parade wearing satyr masks. Unfortunately, the late Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood argued ingeniously, but wrongly, that the stress here is on ‘participates in the komos’ (κωμάζει), not on ‘without the mask’, interpreting the passage to mean that Curebion’s fault was to *break the solemnity* of the Parade by behaving in a manner appropriate to another parade, the Komos, an event that she took by an equally ingenious argument to refer to a small procession called the

⁴⁶ J.R. Green, ‘The Material Evidence’, in G.W. Dobrov, *Brill’s Companion to the Study of Greek Comedy* (Leiden 2010) 74.

⁴⁷ Scholiast to Demosthenes, *Against Meidias* 617 (§ 180) Dilts: οἱ πομπεύοντες τῷ Διονύσῳ κατὰ μίμησιν τῆς περὶ αὐτὸν θεραπείας ἐπόμπεον, οἱ μὲν τὸ τῶν Σατύρων σχῆμα σφύζοντες, οἱ δὲ τὸ τῶν Βάκχων, οἱ δὲ τὸ τῶν Σειληνῶν ἐμμοῦντο.



FIGURE 11.
ATTIC BF AMPHORA,
PAINTER OF BERLIN
1686, ca. 540 BC,
BERLIN F 1697 ('front').
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für Kunst, Kultur und
Geschichte, Berlin/Staatliche
Museen zu Berlin.



FIGURE 12.
ATTIC RED-FIGURED
PSYKTER BY OLTOS,
ca. 510 BC, NEW YORK
THE METROPOLITAN
MUSEUM OF ART,
GIFT OF NORBERT
SCHIMMEL TRUST
1989 (1989.281.69).
Image © The Metropolitan
Museum of Art.

Introduction that took place before the Dionysia.⁴⁸ I cannot offer a point by point refutation of this argument here.⁴⁹ I hope by now at least to have given you reason to doubt Sourvinou-Inwood's premise, namely that the Dionysian parade was solemn, formal and dull.

⁴⁸ C. Sourvinou-Inwood, *Tragedy and Athenian Religion* (Lanham 2003) 70.

⁴⁹ I do offer a fuller critique in 'The Earliest Phase of "Comic" Choral Entertainments in Athens: The Dionysian Pompe and the "Birth of Comedy"', in B. Zimmermann, ed. *Die Periodisierung der griechischen Komödie* (Mainz, forthcoming).

The scholiast commenting on Curebion tells us that people used to wear masks to mock others without shame.⁵⁰ Mockery is of course an important part of the Parade: Demosthenes and Menander use the words *pompeia*, ‘Parade-abuse’, and *pompeuein*, ‘to behave abusively like one in the Parade’. Both authors use these expressions in significant conjunction with another expression meaning the same thing but literally translated as ‘from the wagons.’⁵¹

Our lexica tell us that both expressions refer to ritual abuse of onlookers by people riding in wagons in a parade.⁵² They are however confused about which festival of Dionysus these wagons belong to: they name the Dionysia, but also the Lenaea and two different days of the Anthesteria. The confusion seems to arise from various attempts to link these expressions with Hellenistic theories of the origins of drama. Our one prehellenistic source, Plato, speaks of Athenians at the *Dionysia*, drunk and misbehaving, *on wagons*.⁵³ Plato is not one of those authors who uses the term ‘Dionysia’ generically to refer to any festival of Dionysus,⁵⁴ but specifically to the Dionysia and the reference here to Taras should remove all doubts: that city had a Dionysia, but no Anthesteria and no Lenaea.⁵⁵

5. Shiploads of Satyrs

Epigraphy indicates the use of ‘wagons’ in the Parade of the Dionysia by the fourth century at latest. Direct evidence for Athenian practice might have come from *IG II² 673*, an intriguing early third-century inscription (278/7 BC), which appears to discuss problems on a processional route, referring specifically to the Parade’s starting point at the Dipylon and also possibly to the nearby Sacred Gates (fr. b-c, ll. 4, 11-12).

⁵⁰ Scholiast to Demosthenes, *On the False Embassy* 19.287.

⁵¹ Demosthenes, *On the Crown* 18. 11, 122-4; Menander, *Perinthia* fr. 5.

⁵² For a full discussion of the sources, see E. Csapo, “Parade Abuse”, “From the Wagons”, in C.W. Marshall and G. Kovacs, eds., *No Laughing Matter: Studies in Athenian Comedy* (London 2012) 19-33.

⁵³ Pl. *Laws* 637a1-b5: τὰ δ' ἐν Σπάρτῃ κάλλιστ' ἀνθρώπων δοκεῖ μοι κείσθαι τὰ περὶ τὰς ἡδονάς· οὐ γὰρ μάλιστ' ἄνθρωποι καὶ μεγίσταις προσπιπτουσιν ἡδοναῖς καὶ ὕβρεσι καὶ ἀνοίᾳ πάσῃ, τοῦτ' ἐξέβαλεν ὁ νόμος ἡμῶν ἐκ τῆς χώρας συμπάσης, καὶ οὐτ' ἂν ἐπ' ἀγρῶν ἴδοις, οὐτ' ἐν ἄστεσιν ὅσων Σπαρτιάταις μέλει, συμπόσια οὐδ' ὅποσα τούτοις συνεπόμενα πάσας ἡδονάς κινεῖ κατὰ δύναμιν, οὐδ' ἔστιν ὅστις ἂν ἀπαντῶν κομᾷζοντί τι μετὰ μέθης οὐκ ἂν τὴν μεγίστην δίκην εὐθὺς ἐπιθεῖ, καὶ οὐδ' ἂν Διονύσια πρόφρασιν ἔχοντ' αὐτὸν λύσειτο, ὥσπερ ἐν ἀμάξιας εἰδὸν ποτε παρ' ἡμῖν ἐγώ, καὶ ἐν Τάραντι δὲ παρὰ τοῖς ἡμετέροις ἀποικοῖς πᾶσαν θεοεσάμην τὴν πόλιν περὶ τὰ Διονύσια μεθύουσιν· παρ' ἡμῖν δ' οὐκ ἔστ' οὐδὲν τοιοῦτον.

⁵⁴ Cf. Pl. *Prt.* 327b5, *Rep.* 475d7.

⁵⁵ The Lenaea and Anthesteria are Ionian festivals: W. Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Cambridge Ma. 1985) 226; C. Trümper, *Untersuchungen zu den altgriechischen Monatsnamen und Monatsfolgen* (Heidelberg 1997). Dionysia for Taranto are independently attested: the famous anecdote about the insult to Lucius Postumius and the Roman legates in the Tarentine theatre (Val. Max. 2.2.5; D.H. 19.5.2; Plb. 1.16.5) is explicitly said to be at the Tarentine ‘Dionysia’ by D.C. 9.39.5; Jul. *Mis.* 27.2; etc.

It is unfortunately too fragmentary to allow us with confidence to connect the reference to the phallic procession (fr. b-c ll. 7-8: - -ς τῆς φαλλαγ[ωγίας]) with the very plausibly restored '[f]our-wheeled [wagon]' ten lines below (fr. b-c l. 18: ἄμαξαν τετρακύκλον).⁵⁶ Indirect evidence does however come from the Parade of the Dionysia at Delos which was organised at a time when Athens dominated the island and which in most respects demonstrably follows the Athenian model. At Delos several inscriptions detail the construction of the 'wagon' or 'phallageion' used to carry the phallos in the Parade.⁵⁷ Phallos wagons are also attested elsewhere. An eye-witness tells us that the sixty metre high golden phallos at the Alexandrian Dionysia under Ptolemy II (274 or 270 BC) was carried on a four-wheeled wagon.⁵⁸ A phallos in 2nd c. AD Edessa was also carried by a four-wheeled wagon as shown on the tombstone of a pet pig that got so excited he used the wagon as his juggernaut (Figure 16).⁵⁹



FIGURE 13.
FRAGMENTARY ATTIC BLACK-FIGURED SKYPHOS,
ATTRIBUTED TO THESEUS PAINTER, ca. 500 BC. LONDON BM B79.

Drawing from: G. Judica, Le antichità di Acre (Messina 1819) pl. 26.

⁵⁶ See S.G. Cole 'Procession and Celebration at the Dionysia', in R. Scodel, ed. *Theater and Society in the Classical World* (Ann Arbor 1993) 28.

⁵⁷ R. Vallois, 'L'aglama' des Dionysies de Délos', *BCH* 46 (1922) 94-112.

⁵⁸ Callix. *FGrH* 627 F 2 ap. Athen. 201e.

⁵⁹ *I. Epidamnos* T 527 = *SEG* 25.711; G. Daux, 'Notes de lecture: épitaphe métrique d'un jeune porc, victime d'un accident', *BCH* 94 (1970) 609-618; Csapo (above, note 32) 283.

Inscriptions show that the wagon for the phallos at Delos was weighted with lead ballast, using the nautical term *hermatizein*.⁶⁰ Because of the ‘ballast’ some have thought that the wagon was in fact drawn through a local river to make it look as if it was floating and that the wagon was in some sense a ship.⁶¹ I suspect lead ballast was needed only because the phallos was very large, heavy, and stood (mostly) vertical and therefore needed a counterweight to avoid it toppling over. The fact that the processional route had to be laid with planks,⁶² shows that a steady ride was desired, and also perhaps that the wagon was a larger than standard gage. But the use of nautical language is still interesting.

Four Attic vases, produced at the end of the sixth century show Dionysus and satyrs riding wagons, fitted out like ships (Figures 13-14).⁶³ Later antiquity’s larger and more international festival economies seem to have required the magnificence of actual wheeled ships. By contrast the images on the Attic skyphoi are very much ‘wagons’ in the shape of ships—and unlikely to be called anything other than ‘wagons’ in ancient texts. Even the Panathenaic ship was referred to as a ‘wagon’ (in Latin *currus*) as late as the first century AD.⁶⁴ In the case of the Tarquinian amphora (Figure 15), the vehicle is mythicised as an actual ship, but incorporates features of the ritual wagon including the piper and the mysterious wicker-like object at the keel.⁶⁵ Since the nineteenth century most scholars have connected these ship-wagons with the

⁶⁰ *ID* 372A, l. 101; *ID* 316, l. 119; *ID* 338Aa, ll. 57-8; *ID* 440A, ll. 33-4; *ID* 442, l. 199; *ID* 444A, l. 30; *ID* 447, ll. 12-13.

⁶¹ See G.M. Sifakis, *Studies in the History of Hellenistic Drama* (London 1967) 9-13.

⁶² *ID* 372A, l. 102; cf. *IG* XI 203A, l. 37; *IG* XI 219A, l. 20.

⁶³ The three better preserved vases, all Attic black-figured skyphoi, are attributed to the Theseus Painter or to a close associate (by Haspels, *ABL* 250.29-30, 253.15): Athens NM 1281; London BM B79; Bologna 130. Two small fragments of a similar scene are Tübingen + Vatican Ast. 668, inv. 35632: see M. Iozzo, *La Collezione Astarita nel Museo Gregoriano Etrusco* II.1 *Ceramica attica a figure nere* (Vatican 2002) 206-7, pl. 139. The copy on a lead strip from Catania (E. De Miro, ‘Lastra di piombo con scena dionysiacca dal territorio di Piazza Armerina’ in L. Beschi, et al. eds., *Aparchai. Nuovi ricerche e studi sulla Magna Graecia e la Sicilia antica in onore di P.E. Arias* [Pisa 1982] 179-83) is almost certainly a fake.

⁶⁴ See J.L. Shear (above, note 40) 148-52; S. Wachsmann, ‘Panathenaic Ships: The Iconographic Evidence’, *Hesperia* 81 (2012) 237-66.

⁶⁵ Among the many representations of ancient ships, this attachment is only (and regularly!) found on Attic pottery depicting the Dionysian ship-wagon (and the imitation on the Sicilian lead-strip: see above, note 63). J.S. Morrison and R.T. Williams, *Greek Oared Ships, 900-322 BC* (Cambridge 1968) 110 infer that the object at the keel is not connected to naval architecture but ‘presumably plays some part in the Dionysiac ritual, for it occurs in exactly the same position in the Dionysian ship-carts’; cf. E.A. Mackay, ‘Feasts of Images’ in A.F. Basson and W.J. Dominik, eds. *Literature, Art, History: Studies on Classical Antiquity and Tradition in Honour of W.J. Henderson* (Hamburg 2003) 255.



FIGURE 14.
FRAGMENTARY ATTIC BLACK-FIGURED SKYPHOS, BY OR CLOSE TO THESEUS PAINTER, ca. 500 BC, BOLOGNA 130. *Drawing by G. Gattis in: A. Frickenhaus, 'Der Schiffskarren des Dionysos in Athen', JdI 27 (1912) 61-79, pl. 3.*

Anthesteria, because Philostratus and Aristides mention a sacred ship for Dionysus in second-century AD Smyrna at a festival in the month of Anthesterion. But by the second century AD, there is a promiscuous koine of Dionysian imagery in art and, so far as we can tell, a generic mixing of motifs in Dionysian processions. Parker rightly warns that 'striking ritual practices of the second century AD are not usually best explained as survivals from the ancient Ionian heritage.'⁶⁶

For just as long a minority of scholars have urged much stronger arguments for connecting the ship-wagon with the Dionysian Parade.⁶⁷ The ship-wagon is included in a procession of bull sacrifice on the Bologna skyphos (Figure 14) and the London skyphos (a bull appears on the other side of vase illustrated in Figure 13). Bulls belong to large public sacrifices, and are very much a feature of the Parade of the Dionysia. The Anthesteria by contrast seems to have involved only private sacrifices (which could hardly include such pomp as the ship-wagon). There is in fact no public

⁶⁶ Parker (above, note 24) 303.

⁶⁷ For the detailed account, see Csapo (above, note 52).

procession at the Anthesteria to which our images could refer: 'this was not' says Parker, 'a festival of public pomp and expenditure'.⁶⁸ The procession at the Anthesteria connected to the sacred marriage of Dionysus at the Boukoleion seems excluded by the lack of wedding imagery: our ship-wagons cannot be compared to the chous that supposedly shows children enacting the wedding procession of Dionysus and his bride in a chariot (brides are conspicuously absent in the ship-wagons).⁶⁹ Aristophanes *Frogs* (217-19) mentions *komoi* in relation to the last day of the Anthesteria, but these also appear to have been without formal organisation or elaborate spectacle.



FIGURE 15.
ATTIC BLACK-FIGURED NECK AMPHORA, ca. 510 BC, TARQUINIA 678.
Courtesy of Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici dell'Etruria Meridionale.

⁶⁸ Parker (above, note 24) 290.

⁶⁹ Attic red-figured chous, NY MMA 24.97.34. Accessible illustration in Pickard-Cambridge (above, note 2) fig. 10.

Some object that Dionysus Eleuthereus did not come to Athens by ship but overland. We have to respond that the ship is a symbol, not historical reconstruction. In part it suits the Athenian Dionysus because, as we saw, he brings for his festival food and wealth from overseas. But there is something deeper. The utopic vision inspired by the Athenian carnival is one of things spontaneously appearing and spontaneously moving under the influence of Dionysus. In the first messenger speech of Euripides' *Bacchae* the presence of Dionysus is revealed by the sudden appearance of springs of water, wine, milk and honey (705-11), and by the effortless coordination, energy and equilibrium of the bacchants' movements (esp. 693, 755-8). The spontaneous springs of water, wine, milk and honey recall the αὐτόματος βίος of the Cronian Golden Age when the earth freely produced an abundance of food and drink for all men at no cost or effort.⁷⁰ This was of course also an ideal embodied by the Dionysian festival where food and wine really were abundant and free. But effortless coordination and equilibrium are also an expression of the processional god. Dionysus sets people and things in motion, particularly in a graceful and rhythmic motion: the power of music to animate the body (even at times against one's will) is perhaps the supreme expression of this particular aspect of the god. When in Euripides' *Bacchae* (726-7) Dionysus appears in answer to the bacchants' invocation, 'the entire mountain revelled along with them and the beasts, nothing remained still' (πᾶν δὲ συνβάκχευ' ὄρος / καὶ θήρες, οὐδὲν δ' ἦν ἀκίνητον δρόμῳ). Plenitude also means that both animate and inanimate nature is filled by the god and made to move αὐτομάτως (cf. *E. Ba.* 477), with no effort of the individual will or body. It is for this reason that the earliest processional technology, perhaps the first truly sophisticated machines, were created for the Dionysian Parade.

6. Οὐδὲν ἀκίνητον

Herodotus tells us that the Egyptians invented the phallic procession as well as phalloi that can be made to waggle up and down (2.48-9). These soon became customary in Greece, according to Herodotus and others. The moving phalloi came to be called 'string puppets' (2.48: νευρόσπαστα). The fulcrum below the satyr's hands, the pulleys and counterweights, indeed the whole arrangement of the phallos on the Florence cup (Figure 5) seems designed to create a phallos for the satyr that when raised appears to be his and when lowered appears to be one he rides upon.⁷¹

⁷⁰ See above, note 11 (esp. Ceccarelli).

⁷¹ Csapo (above, note 32) 269-75.

Others have shown that the epigraphically detailed axles, pivots and pins among the components of the icon of Dionysus in Delos make it clear that it had moveable parts.⁷² It was fitted with wings that must have flapped. In fact we have a relief showing the icon of Dionysus as a cock with a phallic head and are surely to imagine it flapping its wings, rising up and crowing at climactic moments.⁷³ The chicken icon also appears in the wagon at Edessa but it lies flat on the wagon, suggesting that it too was meant to jump up and crow at intervals (Figure 16).⁷⁴ But the most brilliant automata are attested for Dionysian processions in the Early Hellenistic period. In 308 when Demetrius of Phaleron was archon he organised an especially magnificent Parade for the Dionysia. An eye-witness tells us that he particularly prided himself ‘that a [giant mechanical] snail moving of its own accord (αὐτομάτως) led the Parade for him, leaving a trail of slime’.⁷⁵ Automata of this sort are also mentioned in the



FIGURE 16.
INSCRIBED
FUNERARY
STELE,
2nd c. AD, EDESSA.

Photo: P. Petsas.

⁷² Cole (above, note 56) 31; Vallois (above, note 57).

⁷³ Choregic monument of Karystios, *JG* XI 4, 1148.

⁷⁴ See above, note 56.

⁷⁵ Democh. *FGrH* 75 F 4.

Great Procession of Ptolemy Philadelphus. It included, among other marvellous floats, a twelve-foot tall personification of Dionysus' nurse, Nysa, on a wagon drawn by sixty men, which he says 'stood up mechanically without anyone laying a hand on it and after pouring a libation of milk from a golden phiale, sat back down again'.⁷⁶ Demetrius' snail and Ptolemy's Nysa suggest that the playful and innovative spirit of Dionysian parades was the origin of spectacle technology which reached brilliant heights in Roman and Byzantine times.⁷⁷

Ships differ from wagons in that they can be moved by external forces. They are ideal 'floats' in the fullest sense for a Dionysian procession. And even when real ships need to be moved by human power, they are moved by oarsmen who keep a rhythm that in ancient Greece was often accompanied by pipe music. It is the music and free movement of the ship that make it Dionysian and a suitable setting for the invention of choral dance. That some Greeks processed Dionysus in a ship by the early sixth century BC is suggested by the surviving Homeric hymn that tells this myth. It brings together an epiphany of the god, a ship, and men transformed into dancing animals, representing the original and first human chorus for Dionysus.⁷⁸ The second *Hymn to Dionysus* (38-41) describes grapevines and ivy replacing the rigging of the pirates' ship in a way that suggests familiarity with the kind of ship-wagon we find imaged in Attic art (Figures 13-15).

The ship-wagons are no earlier than about 510 BC; but the Attic black-figured cup by Exekias suggests that the image of the Dionysian ship may have been known in Attica by ca. 530 BC.⁷⁹ I wonder if we can add Dionysian ships to our collection of subjects in Attic pottery inspired by the Parade. The missing link between phallos

⁷⁶ Callix. *FGrH* 627 F 2.

⁷⁷ This fascinating topic is begging for a comprehensive study. See H. Denard, 'Lost Theatre and Performance Traditions in Greece and Italy', in M. McDonald and J.M. Walton, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Greek and Roman Theatre* (Cambridge 2007) 152-6; B. Leyerle, *Theatrical Shows and Ascetic Lives* (Berkeley 2001) 31-2.

⁷⁸ No decisive criteria exists for the dating of the seventh Homeric Hymn; I follow the broad consensus for the sixth or seventh century BC. On the dating and epiphanic nature of the hymn, see most recently D. Jaillard, 'The Seventh Homeric Hymn to Dionysus: An Epiphanic Sketch' in Faulkner (above, note 42) 133-50. The central motif of the narrative, the conversion of men into dancing dolphins, certainly draws upon symbolism broadly known throughout Greece from the early sixth century: for this, and the ritual background, see E. Csapo, 'The Dolphins of Dionysus', in E. Csapo and M.C. Miller, eds., *Poetry, Theory, Praxis: The Social Life of Myth, Word and Image in Ancient Greece* (Oxford 2003) 69-98.

⁷⁹ Munich 2044; *ABV* 146.21. The Exekias cup anticipates features of the iconography of the Dionysian ship-wagon iconography, and was very likely inspired by the ship-wagon ritual: see E. Simon, *Die Götter der Griechen* (Darmstadt 1985) 287-8.

wagons and ship-wagons is provided by vase-fragments produced by Greek potters and painters resident in Egypt around 560 BC (Figure 17).⁸⁰ When the Greek cities began to have grand processions, it is easy to believe that they borrowed much of their basic know-how from the Egyptians whom the Greeks generally regarded as geniuses in religious matters. Egyptian priests had long processed Amun, Osiris, Hathor and Horus in sacred ships. Ship-wagons are also known from Egyptian terracottas.⁸¹

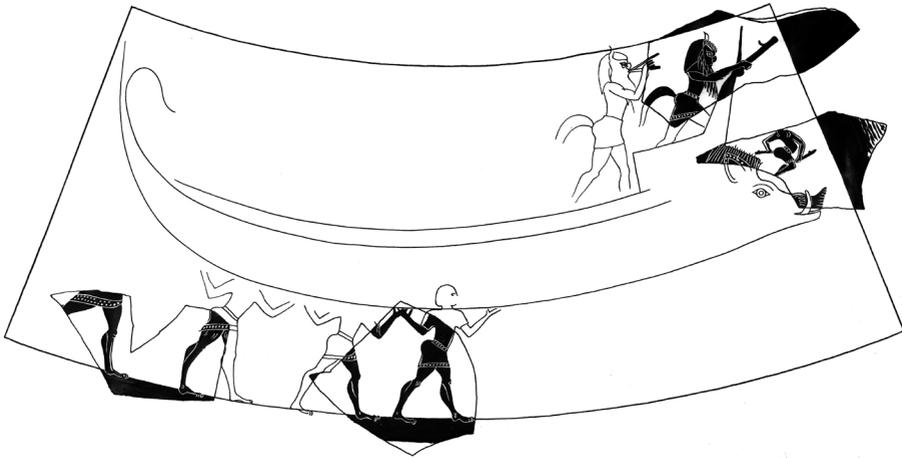


FIGURE 17.
FRAGMENTS OF AN EAST GREEK ('CLAZOMENIAN') BLACK-FIGURED
NECK-AMPORA, ca. 550 BC, OXFORD 1924.264.

Reconstruction by J. Boardman. Courtesy Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

⁸⁰ Oxford 1924.264; *CVA* Oxford ii, IId, pl. 10 (401), 24. Photos: J. Boardman, 'A Greek Vase from Egypt', *JHS* 78 (1958) 4-12, pl. 1; Csapo (above, note 32) figs. 8A-B.

⁸¹ In Egypt the cultic use of wheeled ships is probably much older than the Ptolemaic artifacts by which it is directly attested: see W. Weber, *Die ägyptisch-griechischen Terrakotten* (Berlin 1914) 255-6, figs. 127-8; F. Dunand, *Terre cuites gréco-romaines d'Égypte* (Paris 1990) no. 1007. The usual style, however, was to carry the sacred barque: Boardman (above, note 80) 8-12; J. Boardman, *The Greeks Overseas: Their Early Colonies and Trade* (4th ed. London 1998) 137-8; S. el-Sabban, *Temple Festival Calendars of Ancient Egypt* (Liverpool 2000); S. Weber, 'Archaisch ostgriechische Keramik aus Ägypten außerhalb von Naukratis' in U. Höckmann and D. Kreikenbom, eds., *Naukratis. Die Beziehungen zu Ostgriechenland, Ägypten und Zypern in archaischer Zeit. Akten der Table Ronde in Mainz, 25.-27. November 1999* (Möhnesee 2001) 141.

Figure 17 is not a float from an Athenian procession, but it does give us an idea of how a Dionysian ship was conceived by Egyptianised Greeks at the very time that Athens cobbled together its Dionysian Parade partly out of originally Egyptian forms. Of particular interest is the way the Karnak fragment unites aspects of the *phallophoria* with aspects of the Dionysian ship. The ship-wagons are associated with satyrs. It is satyrs who man the wagons, provide the music, and also satyrs who pull the wagon along. These are doubtless the counterparts of the satyr choruses and the abusive men on the wagons attested for the Athenian Parade and they are obviously very drunk—it puts in context Demosthenes' complaint that the Athenians made Meidias a naval and then a cavalry commander even though he was incapable of riding a wagon across the marketplace during the Parades – we are probably to imagine him literally falling off the wagon with drink.⁸² But satyrs also ride upon the Karnak ship, and we have the remnants of a pair of pipes suggesting a satyr playing music in much the same posture as on the Attic ship-wagons. On the other hand, the Karnak ship has things in common with the phallos of the Florence *phallophoria* (Figure 5). Both are carried, and people have noticed the keel-like curvature of the phallos that serves as the base of the float, but the most important similarity is the presence on the Karnak ship of satyrs or satyrs and komasts who ride upon phalloi, just as satyrs and komasts ride upon the phalloi depicted on the Florence cup. The akrostolion of the Karnak ship is shaped like a phallos, with the characteristic horse-ear and eyespot that we find on the Florence phallos. A smaller satyr rides a phallic projection on the figurehead while suggestively attaching a double-headed phallos to his rump.⁸³ The Dionysian ship from Karnak, therefore, has much in common with the Dionysian ship-wagons in Athens but also much in common with the phallic imagery of the Florence cup. There are independent reasons for connecting the Attic ship-wagons with the Athenian Dionysia, but this commonwealth of motifs might offer some confirmation. At Athens phallic ritual and imagery are exclusively associated with the Dionysia (urban or rural) and not the Lenaea or the Anthesteria.⁸⁴

⁸² D. 21.171: ὑμεῖς γάρ, ὃ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, ἐχειροτονήσατε τοῦτον τῆς Παράλου ταμίαν, ὄντα τοιοῦτον οἶός ἐστι, καὶ πάλιν ἵππαρχον, ὀχεῖσθαι διὰ τῆς ἀγορᾶς ταῖς πομπαῖς οὐ δυνάμενον...

⁸³ Detailed in Csapo (above, note 32) pls. 8A-B.

⁸⁴ Cf. H.W Parke, *Festivals of the Athenians* (Ithaca 1977) 109; Pickard-Cambridge (above, note 2) 36.

7. Conclusions

I will now urge a few conclusions upon you. The most important is that the Dionysian Parade was not dull, solemn, formal or particularly dignified. It was, on the contrary, an exercise in the representation of a Golden Age plenitude: food, drink, money, music, dance, unbridled fantasy and unbridled licence were all presented or represented in dazzling abundance. The object was to fill the Parade route with enough to drown the eyes and ears with colour, movement and sound, and to stun the mind with the sudden bounty of Dionysus. It was no small affair. Even if we confine our guesswork to the participants directly attested by our meagre evidence, the Parade, at the height of the Athenian empire, would directly involve over 8,000 people, including probably hundreds of performing choruses: *phallophoroi*, *ithyphalloi*, beast and beast rider choruses, and satyrs.

<i>KANEPHOROI</i>	1 (100??)
MEN ESCORTING CATTLE	400
MEN ESCORTING BULL	10
<i>OBELIAPHOROI</i>	250
<i>SKAPHEPHOROI</i>	500
<i>HYDRIAPHOROI</i>	500
<i>ASKOPHOROI</i>	500
COMPETING CHOREGOI	30
COMPETING CHOREUTS	1165
PIPERS	200
TRIBUTE BEARERS	500
SATYR CHOREUTS	200
SATYRS MANNING WAGONS	500
CHOREUTS IN VARIOUS KOMOI	300
<i>ITHYPHALLOI</i>	50
<i>PHALLOPHOROI</i>	3000
<hr/>	
SUBTOTAL	8106 (8205)

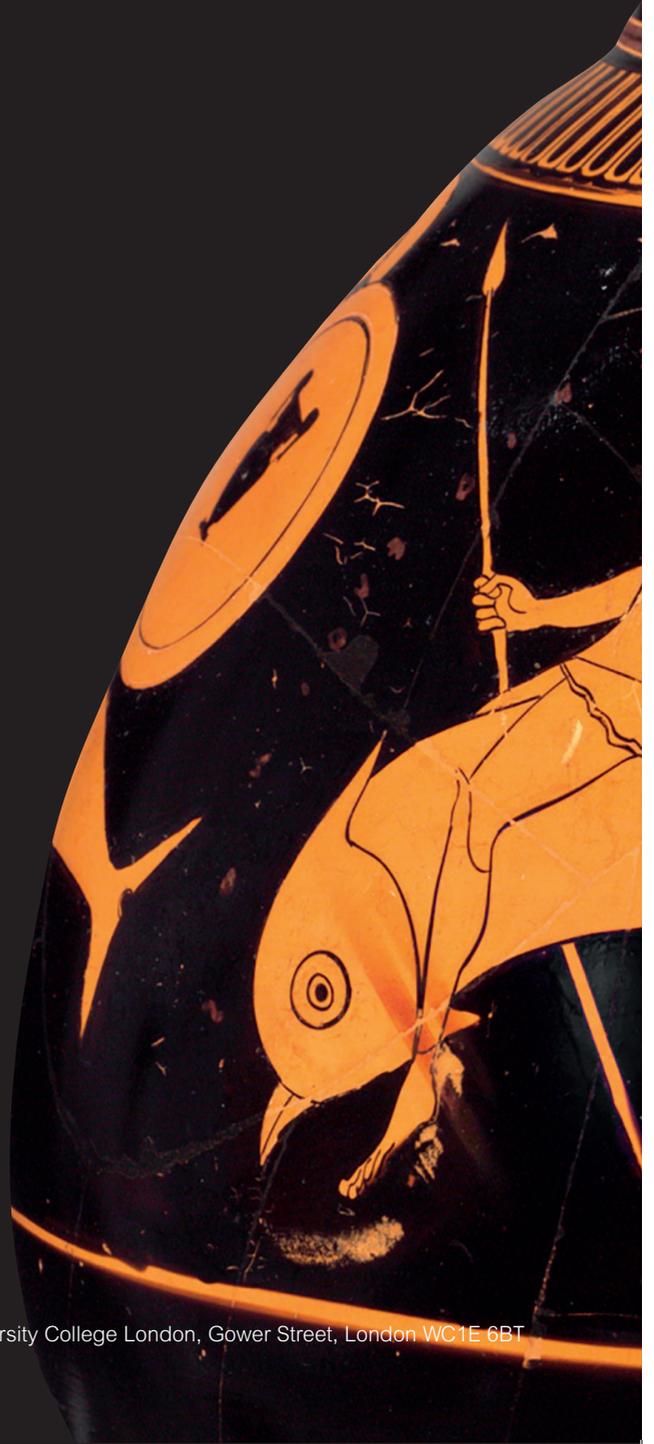
To this figure we should add many spontaneous participants (like Androtion's father, Curebion and Meidias) and all the paraphernalia in the form of sacrificial beasts, floats, phalloi, wagons, costume, props, food, dance and music. Somewhere hidden in this vast array we must also fit the sacred and civic officials who alone, it seems, have attracted the attention of the most recent scholarship.

A second conclusion is that several series of vase paintings suggest that something took place between about 570 to 560 BC to inspire vase painters to represent Dionysian scenes and, in particular, motifs drawn from a Dionysian procession: including satyrs, costumed choruses, wagons, drunkenness, ribaldry and phalloi, features that come together only in the Dionysian Parade. This something I argue was the creation of the Dionysia.



FIGURE 18.
ATTIC BLACK-FIGURED AMPHORA, AMASIS PAINTER,
 ca. 525 BC, WÜRZBURG L 265. *Photo: M.C. Miller.*
 © Martin von Wagner Museum der Universität Würzburg.

A last conclusion, or suggestion, as it is a subject perhaps for another study, is the degree to which the theology of Dionysus Eleuthereus arises out of this ritual: his character as 'the god who comes', generates madness and bounty, and suddenly disappears; a god connected to ships, phalloi, sacrifice, music, dance and indeed to processions. If, for example, we were to look only at the physiognomy of satyrs (Figure 18), we could immediately link it to ideas about the Parade: the big eyes for taking in the spectacle, big ears for the music, and wrapt attention for the amazing displays; the fact that satyrs are generally drunk, musical, phallic; the fact that satyrs combine the wildness of uninhibited nature with the civilised regimentation of the dance; but most of all the fact, that, like the Parade they are gregariously plural, fill all available space with amusing antics, and like the Parade are always in perpetual seemingly spontaneous motion. The Parade, one could argue, created the Athenian Dionysus, gave definition to the power he exerted upon his worshippers, and gave visual representation to his gifts of exuberance and plenitude.



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