

ATTIC INFLUENCES ON BOIOTIAN CUPS

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During the course of the archaic period Attic potters and black figure vase painters excelled at their crafts to become the leading artisans of the Greek ceramic industry. Their vase shapes, painted subjects and designs, and refined techniques and visual effects surpassed Corinthian black figure, the bastion of vase productivity into the 6th century B.C.E., and influenced artists located in various schools of Greek vase painting, eventually including that at Korinthos. The regions most heavily affected by Attic styles were those geographically closest to Athens, namely Euboia and Boiotia. Dependencies of Boiotian art on that of Attika contributed to Gisela Richter's motivation in combining the two into a single encyclopaedic entry (Richter, 1960: 88-118). Among the various Boiotian shapes decorated in black figure during the archaic era, that which surpasses all others in variety and number is the cup. Of this vase type the primary forms are kantharoi, skyphoi, and kylikes, and all of these reveal Attic influences in either shape or decoration, or both, at various times over the hundred years or so of archaic Boiotian black figure productivity.

The kantharos appears among the earliest of Boiotian black figure vases in the first quarter of the 6th century B.C.E. The subjects decorating these vessels include real and fantastic animals, mythological scenes, and the komos, subjects all readily at home on contemporary Attic vases. Only slightly later in date is a group of vases, predominantly kantharoi, known as the Boiotian Dancers Group (Kilinski, 1978; Kilinski & Maffre, 1999: 13-17, 32-37), some of whose artists have been suspected by Beazley, Cook, and Sparkes, among others, as Attic emigrants deriving from the Komast Group and other artists working in the wake of the Gorgon Painter (Kilinski, 1990: 35-36). Other Boiotian artists perpetuated the tradition of decorating kantharoi throughout the 6th century, often applying stock subjects from Attic Little Master cups to the narrow friezes on deep-bottomed kantharoi which are frequently comparable in scale to the Attic Band and Lip cups. Toward the end of the century one Attic potter, Teisias, immigrated to Boiotia where he continued his practice of vase making in the form of kantharoi and skyphoi (Kilinski, 1992). There, at least in the early stages of his Boiotian career, he advertised himself through his signature as an Athenian (TEISIAS EPOIESEN HAQENAIOS) and influenced at least one other Boiotian potter, Theodoros, with his distinctive style of kantharos design.

A Corinthian type of skyphos with horizontal handles appears in Boiotian black figure from the second quarter of the century, but not in quantity (Maffre, 1975: 467-476; Kilinski, 1990: 59, pl. 14). Other odds and ends include a cup-skyphos more popular in simple glazed issue than black figure (Ure, 1927: pls. 7-9), a Band skyphos echoing the Attic Cracow Class and, earlier, a Boiotian imitation of an Attic Komast cup (Kilinski,

1990: 58-59). There are also many Boiotian skyphoi of Ure's Class A1 along with variant forms (Ure, 1927: 58ff). To these are added the skyphoi by the Camel Painter, once considered to be an Attic artist due to the fashion and precision of his stylistic achievement (Kilinski, 1990: 22-24, pl. 22, 2-3; Boardman, 1998: 215, fig. 454). His painting style has affinities with that of Lydos and his subjects gravitate toward grouped athletes but do occasionally include mythological topics (e.g. Aias with the body of Akhilleus). The unexpected appears on his name vase, Baktrian camels, which might be explained by way of his presumed connection with Lydos, who may have been familiar with the Asian animal or its image in the Lydian Empire of King Kroisos. Or, perhaps as Schauenburg postulated (1955: 65), the Camel Painter may have seen the animal himself on a trip to Asia Minor, not an improbability since traffic between Boiotia and Aiolis continued, perhaps intermittently, from at least the time of Hesiodos' father into the Hellenistic age. Other, large skyphoi decorated with a grimacing gorgoneion brightly coloured on both sides of the vase have a problematic history in modern scholarship, but are now more often thought to be Boiotian (Andrioménou 1977, 279, fig. 10; Kilinski, 1990: 49; Boardman, 1998: 215). They were originally thought to be Attic (Vermeule, 1970: 17) and Freyer-Schauenburg has expressed mixed feelings about whether they are Boiotian or Attic products (Freyer-Schauenburg, 1976; but most recently considering them Attic, Freyer-Schauenburg, 1988: 48). Their Attic aura is due not only to their large size, vivid colouring, and quality black glaze, but also to the fact that their find spots are so diversified and far a field, ranging from Southern Italy to the North shores of the Black Sea. This understanding perhaps gives greater dimension to Boiotian exportation in the late 6th century, or at least for one group of Boiotian wares.

Stemmed cups make their appearance in Boiotian black figure during the second quarter of the 6th century (Brümmer, 1976: pl. 5, 5), but cluster at the end of the archaic period in the early decades of the 5th century. Many of these late works are so closely imitative of Attic models in shape and decoration that they are often difficult to distinguish from them (Kilinski, 1990: 58). Most prominent are examples imitating kylikes in and near the Attic Haimon Group. Torn between an Attic and a Boiotian origin for one such example in Würzburg, Erika Simon labelled her publication of the vase displaying a running Pan figure in the tondo "Ein nordattischer Pan" (Simon, 1976).

Two black figure kylikes of *c.* 470 B.C.E. from the Dianacopoulos Collection (Cat. 7 & 8) demonstrate very well the degree to which Boiotian artists attempted to emulate Attic styles, shapes, and iconography at the close of the archaic era. The short stocky stem of the vases (Figs. 4.1 and 4.4) with flaring foot and broad, shallow bowl with off-set lip and slightly curved, diagonally set handles imitate the fashionable drinking cups made in Athens in the early 5th century B.C.E.; they resemble more the Type C cup than any other form. The adaptation of the shape on the part of Boiotian potters from those in the Attic line occurred at a time when Athenian pottery was heavily imported into central Greece and the indigenous Boiotian impetus in black figure vase production had lost its bearing.

On the Dianacopoulos kylikes, parts of the secondary vase decoration include subjects rather familiar on Attic models. The single ivy leaf under each handle (Figs. 4.2 and 4.5) and excited women moving about at the extremes of the figured scenes find parallels on a number of Attic kylikes as well as on other Boiotian black figure cups of this period. Of the primary figures, the lone woman (Fig. 4.3) in a seemingly quiet stance and holding a thyrsos with an ivy sprig attached in the tondo of Cat. 8, alludes to the essence of Dionysos, and is an appropriate concept for any symposiast to encounter with each swig from the cup. Although she stands fully erect, an object resembling a campstool emerges from behind her drapery, indicating that she may have only recently arisen, perhaps in anticipation of the god, as she looks about over her shoulder. Or perhaps the artist simply associated the woman with furniture and a traditional indoor setting for women in Athenian vase painting. She recalls a similar figure on a Boiotian black figure kylix in New York by the Three Sirens Painter (Kilinski, 1990: pl. 35, 1). There the lone woman in the tondo faces forward, holding some unidentifiable object in her left hand while another object, perhaps a cloth, dangles from the tondo border before her. Another Boiotian parallel is the woman holding a mirror but looking over her shoulder in the tondo of a black figure kylix in the Canellopoulos Museum (Maffre, 1975: 488, fig. 37b), while yet another example in the Athens National Museum (Gahli-Kahil, 1950: pl. 6, 2), with more of the Dionysiac flare, displays a lone woman running right while looking left and holding a torch, indicating some night-time revelry. Yet a fourth parallel shows a lone woman walking right while playing a lyre (Andrioménou, 1977: 281, fig. 13). Sometimes the tondo is marked by a single circling ring in black glaze, as is the case for Cat. 8, and sometimes the painter increases this to two, as on Cat. 7. This other cup displays an ephebe (Fig. 4.6) casting off his cloak and cane in the tondo. The cane, positioned behind the youth, is seen momentarily still upright and appears to balance compositionally the bundle of cloth set against the tondo edge before him. The young man's gesture of stiff, outstretched arms and open palms gives the impression that he has just cast aside these objects. In all of these tondo scenes the narrative is minimal, if discernible at all. It is, moreover, the peculiar iconography dominating the vase exteriors that readily arrests our attention. On each cup in Cat. 7 and 8 are scenes of a male youth encountering a bull, set beneath what appears to be a single column, perhaps of the Doric order, although the columns rest on bases. Springing from the columns are what appear to be floral forms, and on Cat. 8 (Fig. 2) additional floral designs enter the figured scene by descending from the vase rim. The figured scenes are rendered in duplicate form on opposite sides of each vase. On one vase (Cat. 8) the bull is depicted head up as it lunges toward the ephebe with its forelegs in the air (Fig. 4.2). The youth likewise responds in a counter charge with a club raised overhead in his right hand. Another object, perhaps a sheathed sword, dangles at his left side and his out-stretched left arm supports a cloak, which he appears to use as a distraction for the bull. In these scenes on this vase the antagonists are only seconds away from contact, their postures and juxtapositions generating the excitement of the action just before the climactic moment. On the other vase (Cat. 7), the bull has already charged the youth; the creature's head is lowered in the attack making its action clear (Fig. 5). However, the youth has readily engaged the animal head-on in a hands-on posture. The bull seems to falter with one foreleg bent under its body and the youth appears to have brought this momentous capitulation about by

forcing the bull's head to the ground, pinning its head to the earth by stepping on its horns with his left foot. Behind the youth on each side of this vase can be seen his garment bundled into the branches of a tree. Correspondingly behind each bull here is another, smaller object, appearing like cloth but perhaps meant to represent a quiver. The dotted tendrils springing from the trees perform a secondary function in alluding to the god of wine. While the trees are absent from the scenes on Cat. 8, the tendrils make their appearance into the scene in a disembodied fashion, underscoring the notion of Dionysiac essence. The flanking female figures with animated hand gestures in these scenes on both kylikes function as 'brackets' for the violent action, generating excitement over the encounter of man and beast, and serve to turn our attention back toward the antagonists in the centre, following typical Attic formula in various confrontational scenes, such as the brilliant display by Euphronios on the Antaios crater in the Louvre.

The painted style of Cat. 7 and 8 is apparently by a single hand, based on the close parallels in treatment of the figures, drapery, and subsidiary ornament in glaze and through incision. I feel it appropriate that this Boiotian craftsman be named the Fossey Painter, after John M. Fossey, whose life's work has revealed so much about Boiotia and the Boiotians. It is plausible that the Boiotian craftsman responsible for these two cups was alluding to heroic characters popularised in Athenian vase painting of the time, for the artist seems to meld aspects of myth iconography involving Herakles and Theseus into the scenes. This should not be especially surprising since Attic vase painters had forged aspects of Heraklean iconography into elements of Theseus' narratives in the decades following the displacement of tyranny with democracy in Athens and when the younger hero begins to supplant the elder as a symbol of Athenian government. On Cat. 7 and 8 one youth grasping a bull under a column and the other clutching a club as a bull charges him by a column appear to be minimalist conflation of Theseus dispatching the Marathonian bull, Theseus slaying the Minotaur in the Labyrinth, Herakles' struggles with the Kretan bull and Erymanthian boar (Cf. Brommer, 1986: 31 and pl. 17), and perhaps even Herakles wrestling with the Nemean Lion (Cf. Gahli-Kahil, 1950: pl. 8, 2). All of these ventures were popular on Attic vases of the early 5th century B.C.E., and were likely prototypes for Boiotian craftsmen ready and willing to emulate them. Although on Cat. 7 (Fig. 4.5) we note that the youth has stripped for combat, having set his cloak into a tree, and that the object suspended behind the bull may be a quiver, there is still some uncertainty in labelling the hero Herakles since he is traditionally bearded in scenes where he subdues the Kretan bull while Theseus is generally beardless, like the ephebe here. Although a tree traditionally stands in the scenes where Herakles captures the bull, as a means of indicating an open-air locale, this aspect was transferred to scenes of Theseus dispatching the Marathonian bull by Attic artists (Neils, 1987: 38 and fig. 36). The felled position of the bull with a bent foreleg in the scenes on this vase should indicate that the youth is in the process of fettering the beast, despite the fact that the artist has not bothered to draw in lines of the rope and regardless of whether the hero is Herakles or Theseus. The beardless youth wielding a club on Cat. 8 (Fig. 2) may be Theseus attacking the Marathonian bull as his stance here is similar to those of him conquering the beast on Attic vases and on one of the Athenian Treasury metopes at Delphoi (Neils, 1987: figs. 5, 23, 26, and 35-36), but again there is an air of uncertainty that prevents us from

completely ruling out Herakles as he, too, uses a club on the Kretan bull but, as stated before, he is generally bearded. Given the likely mythical subject(s) on these Boiotian kylikes, the repetitive scenes on each of them may be reflective of the cyclical scenes on Attic models where the various deeds of Theseus are depicted, or simply that the Boiotian artist responsible for painting these scenes found it more expedient to repeat them than to design a variant or include an alternative subject. Another perspective on the particulars of the iconography focuses on Cat. 8. The scenes on the exterior of this cup are reminiscent of those on Attic vases in which Herakles' nephew, Iolaos, stands behind Herakles shackling the Kretan bull and holds a raised club in his right hand while gesturing with a cloak covered, extended arm on his left (Fig. 4.7). In this sense, the scenes on the exterior of Cat. 8 might be construed as a conflation of Iolaos and Herakles in one figure on the Boiotian cup, or perhaps the two different poses of the figures on the pair of Boiotian cups derives from the combined postures in a single scene such as that in Fig. 4.7. Although late Attic black figure vase painters were not immune to creating confusion or to conflating myth iconography in their painted scenes, this trait among late archaic Boiotian black figure cup painters was typical. Boiotian black figure kylikes frequently display mythical subjects borrowed from Attic stock but often specific elements germane to the narrative are lacking. So we find Sirens playing musical instruments on the rocks, but no sailors or a figure representing Odysseus are in sight (Kilinski, 1990, pl. 35, 2). Akhilleus crouches behind the fountain from which women flee, but there is no sign of Troilos (Fig. 4.8). Other Boiotian scenes may not necessarily require additional characters to be complete but are nevertheless somewhat nebulous in presentation. Perseus makes his escape carrying the foreboding satchel (*kibisis*) containing Medusa's severed head, but without reference to pursuing Gorgons to give him cause for alarm (Kilinski, 1990: pl. 34, 1). On another Boiotian kylix a satyr (?) is seen running with a tripod (Maffre, 1975: 492, fig. 39c). And on a rare Boiotian black figure kylix with an inner frieze, there are fully comprehensible scenes, such as Herakles shooting an arrow at the eagle approaching the tethered Prometheus, but also nebulous ones, such as Herakles before a seated Ares (?) and Hermes with Nikes or demonic figures (Shauenburg, 1970: pl. 18, 1-2). These scenes may be vignettes for which the artists felt the narratives were so well known at the time that it was not essential to provide all aspects of a story. But the conflations and deprivations of mythical narratives in these scenes may simply be indicative of a tired black figure painted style passed on by second rate Attic artists to Boiotian vase painters not completely familiar with (or caring about?) the particulars of Athenian popular myth.