OXFORD

POLYTHEISM AND SOCIETY AT ATHENS

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Polytheism and Society at Athens

Worshipping Athena: sacrificial animals brought to an altar on which stands Athena's owl; beside the altar a column bears a votive relief.

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The *Anthesteria* and other Dionysiac Rites

If one had to identify an Athenian festival day that had an emotional appeal (at least for men) like that of modern western Christmas, the best candidate would be 'Beakers' (*Choes*) (middle and constantly mentioned day of the festival known to scholarship as *Anthesteria*).[1] Callimachus describes an Athenian who lived in Egypt faithfully observing it; according to the local historian Possis, it was first introduced to Magnesia on the Maeander by the great Themistocles when living there in exile. There was even a story of Timon the misanthrope forced to celebrate it, with a single companion.[2] It seems to have been, like Christmas, inescapable.

Our sources associate the festival with the Limnaion, the old temple (unidentified) of Dionysus 'in the Marshes' (a characteristically undistinguished address for this least monumental of gods).[3] That may seem to indicate a single celebration on the outskirts of Athens itself. But the central day was given over to parties held in private houses, which it is easier to imagine taking place throughout Attica. It may be better to envisage the *Anthesteria* as a diffused festival, in which case local sanctuaries of Dionysus will have stood in for the one 'in the Marshes' for those who chose to stay in their demes.[4] But the central ritual of the 'marriage of Dionysus' will have occurred in Athens only. This was not a festival of public pomp and expenditure,[5] and all three days have names associated, in an appropriately homely way, with different kinds of pot: storage jars (*pithoi*), beakers for drinking wine (*choes*), and cooking pots or, as some think,[6] water jars (*chytroi*).

[1] On the sparse attestation in sources relating to Athens of the name *Anthesteria* see Hamilton, *Choes*, 5; Thuc. 2.15.4 speaks of 'the older *Dionysia*'.

[2] Callim. *Aet*. fr. 178.1–5; *FGrH* 480 F 1; Plut. *Ant*. 70.3. The collection of testimonia in Hamilton, *Choes*, 149–71, is most useful.

[3] A cult epithet of this type does not speak directly of the god's nature in the way that e.g. Lysios would. But it speaks indirectly, in that the sanctuary of a different type of god (Zeus or Apollo) would probably not have been located 'in the marshes', and, had circumstances forced it to be so, would none the less have been differently identified *dignitatis causa*. On the location see Pickard-Cambridge, *Dramatic Festivals*^{2}, 19–25. The notion which crops up here and there in the modern literature that the temple in the marshes was seen as a point of access to the underworld is based on a forced reading of the *parodos* of Ar. *Ran*., and a questionable analogy with the cult at Lerna.

[4] Cf. p. 76 above (with the different view of Henrichs in n. 108).

[5] 'It occurred largely on the level of folk custom', Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 215. As Burkert notes, it is absent from the 'skin sale records' (*Athenian Religion*, 227–8).

[6] On the meaning of *chytros* see n. 28.

The problems of reconstruction, unfortunately, are much more severe in relation to the *Anthesteria* than any other major festival. Some activities are firmly associated with particular days of the festival, while others have to be found a place; other important elements may or may not belong to it at all. And there are difficulties even with activities assigned to particular days. According to the orator Apollodorus, the temple of Dionysus in the Marshes was open 'once a year only, on the 12th of the month Anthesterion', the central day of the festival. But good sources attest activity at the temple both on the previous day and 'at the sacred *Chytroi*', which prima facie should be the day after. The most popular solution is the hypothesis that days (whether in general, or by a special archaic reckoning used for festivals) began at sunset; the activity at the temple on day one will have occurred after sunset (thus on Anthesterion 12), that 'at the sacred *Chytroi*' can be put after sunset on day two. But the postulate of a dusk to dusk festival calendar is a very insecure one[7] (and we are still left with a temple open for rather more than twenty-four hours). It might be simpler to suppose that Apollodorus exaggerates, and to allow activity at the Limnaion to spread over three full days. Other hypotheses are possible.[8] The point may seem a small one, but it is symptomatic; if one is trying to assemble the miscellaneous data into a coherent sequence, to give the festival a kind of plot, a set of small uncertainties of this type quickly multiply into very large ones. A wholly consensual account of the *Anthesteria* would begin and end with the proposition that a drinking competition took place on the second day; consensus would break down even over important details of that competition. The reconstruction that follows will need to be rather pernickety, and dry.[9] I will begin with elements that are, however problematically, assigned a date; and I will allow sources to speak for themselves where possible.

They broach the new wine at Athens on the eleventh of Anthesterion, calling the day 'Pot-opening' (*Pithoigia*). And in the past, it seems, they used to pour a libation before tasting the wine and pray that the use of this drug (*φάρμακον*) should prove harmless and beneficial to them.[10]

[7] For the festival-day theory see works cited in Hamilton, *Choes*, 45, n. 119; for criticism Mansfield, *Robe of Athena*, 434–47, and Hamilton, 47, n. 127 [+]; also W. K. Pritchett, *ZPE* 49 (1982), 262–3.

[8] Jacoby rejected the precise indication of a day in Apollodorus (*Neaer.* 76) as interpolated. In regard to the first day, some distinguish between the sanctuary (open) and the temple itself (still closed), or even locate the ceremony in the streets outside the sanctuary: see n. 13, and Hamilton, *Choes*, 45–6 (who is not sympathetic); cf. N. Robertson, 'Athens' festival of the new wine', *HSCP* 95 (1993), 197–250, at 224 and 242, for the same approach to ceremonies of day three. Hamilton, *Choes*, 42–50, revives Didymus' location of *Choes* and *Chytroi* on the same day (in *Σ* vet. Ar. *Ach.* 1076a (ii)), a position which is normally and in my view rightly rejected on the authority of Philochorus (*FGrH* 328 F 84). See too n. 29.

[9] 'A mere statement of the recorded facts is easy': Farnell, *Cults*, v, 214. I have not found it so. For a radical critique of existing reconstructions, see now Humphreys, *Strangeness*, Ch. 6.

[10] Plut. *Quaest. conv.* 3.7.1, 655e.

In itself that account suggests a ceremony performed in private houses, but the following is usually associated with it:[11]

Phanodemus says that the Athenians used to bring the young wine[12] to the shrine[13] of Dionysus in the Marshes from the pots (*pithoi*) [this detail suggests the identification with '*Pithoigia*'] and mix it for the god, then sample it themselves. This is why Dionysus was called Of the Marsh, because that was the first occasion when young wine was blended with water and drunk mixed. That is why springs were called nymphs and nurses of Dionysus, because water makes wine grow when mixed in. And so, delighted by the mixture, they celebrated Dionysus in song, dancing and invoking him as Of fair Flowers and Dithyrambos and Baccheutes and Bromios.

Some at least of Phanodemus' expressions refer to the distant past ('that was the first occasion'), very likely the time of Dionysus' first arrival in Attica under king Amphictyon.[14] The point of aitiology is to explain the present, but, if certain titles of Dionysus are the feature of the present which is here being explained, it is not guaranteed that the wine-mixing at the shrine continues too. But, if we suspend doubt on this point, the two sources taken together give us a communal wine-opening at a public sanctuary, culminating (if the last sentence of the second passage still refers to the festival) in informal song and dancing. The time of day is not identified.[15] Presumably any male citizen who chose could attend, probably any free male inhabitant of Attica. A very bustling scene we must imagine if so.[16] We would like to know whether men of the outlying demes brought their *pithoi* all this way or went to local shrines (or simply opened their jars at home, reciting Plutarch's formula). Both sources stress that, on this one day of the year on which wine-drinking (a practice of every day of the year), was a subject of explicit

[11] Phanodemus *FGrH* 325 F 12 ap. Ath. 465a. *Aliter* Robertson, *HSCP* 95 (1993), 224–7, who puts it on *Chytroi*, and Nilsson, *Studia*, 123; id., *Geschichte*, 587, who puts it at the start of *Choes* (thus requiring the Athenians to make two trips to the Limnaion on that day); a tendency to play down the *Pithoigia* still in Hamilton, *Choes*, 9 and 50 ('the *Pithoigia* need hardly concern us'!). Nilsson's views on this matter were formed before the publication of the important Callim. fr. 178.1–2.

[12] For this sense of γλεῦκος (wrongly abolished in the 1996 supplement to LSJ) see Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 217, n. 6; cf. N. Robertson, *HSCP* 95 (1993), 211–12.

[13] This correction of Jacoby (πρὸς τὸ ἱερόν for πρὸς τῷ ἱερῷ) appears necessary, given that word order demands that the phrase be attached to φέροντας, not κιρνάναι, unless we agree with Bravo, *Pannychis*, 87, n. 32, that Athenaeus is excerpting too carelessly for arguments based on proper style to operate. If Jacoby is right, Deubner's ceremony in the vicinity of, but not in, the sanctuary ('Strassengelage', *Attische Feste*, 94, n. 5; 127–8) is ruled out.

[14] Philochorus *FGrH* 328 F 5.

[15] Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 216–18, not implausibly puts it in the evening, partly because of the supposed 'festival day' (see above).

[16] Vividly evoked by Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 218. Transport of the largest type of *pithos* would scarcely be practicable. Nilsson and Robertson (n. 11) suppose that the wine was not brought to the shrine in *pithoi* (the Greek bears either view). *Σ* vet. Hes. *Op.* 368 makes the *Pithoigia* (rather than the *Choes*) the occasion for treating slaves and hired hands. This would imply a setting within the house. Probably it is just a mistake. Tzetzes on Hes. *Op.* 368 speaks of the *Pithoigia* as a 'communal *symposion*', a turn of phrase of which D. Noel, 'Les Anthestéries et le vin', *Kernos* 12 (1999), 125–52, makes too much.

attention, the need for cautious and civilized drinking practices was emphasized.[17]

Phanodemus is again a main source for day two:

> Phanodemus says that the festival of the Beakers (*Choes*) at Athens was founded by king Demophon, who wanted to entertain Orestes on his arrival in Athens. But since he did not want him to approach the shrines before his trial nor share in libations, he ordered the temples to be closed and a beaker (*chous*) of wine to be put beside each person, saying that a cake would be given as prize to the first to drink up. And he instructed them, on finishing drinking, not to take the crowns they were wearing to the temples, because they had been under the same roof as Orestes, but to put them each around his own beaker and take the crowns ['the crowns' deleted by Meineke, to give a vague 'and take them'] to the priestess at the shrine in the marshes, and then sacrifice the remnants [perform the remaining sacrifices?] in the shrine.[18] And from then the festival was called Beakers.[19]

From the version of this *aition* put in Orestes' own mouth by Euripides, we learn further that he was seated at a separate table and that the drinking took place in silence; both these further details are normally taken to be aitiological too. In *Acharnians*, our most important source, Aristophanes introduces a herald who proclaims 'Hear ye, people. In accord with ancestral tradition, drink the *Choes* on the trumpet signal. Whoever drinks up first will get a wineskin . . . '. The proclamation seems to be addressed to all citizens. But the hero Dikaiopolis is then invited to what appears to be an official public *Choes*: having won the drinking competition he claims his prize from 'the king (archon)'. (But, though a guest, Dikaiopolis takes his own wine in his own *chous*.[20]) A public ceremony, held in the mysterious Thesmotheteion, is mentioned also by Plutarch. The contest won by Dikaiopolis was embedded—and this was surely the norm—in a full-scale banquet.

Unlike Dikaiopolis, most Athenians must have revelled privately, with relatives and friends; at this private level the drinking competition is not

[17] Bravo, *Pannychis*, *passim*, would extend the scene into the night with a mixed *παννυχίς* (cf. p. 166, n. 43). But the link of such practices with the *Anthesteria* is based entirely on the reconstruction of several very fragmentary poems.

[18] It is not clear whether the priestess received crown plus *chous* or just crown. The uncertainty remains whether or not one deletes *τοὺς στεφάνους* with Meineke. *θύειν τὰ ἐπίλοιπα* is generally taken to refer to pouring out the remaining undrunk wine as a libation. Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 231, objects that *θύειν* is not *σπένδειν*. But there were no 'remaining sacrifices' for individuals to perform, as far as we know.

[19] Phanodemus *FGrH* 325 F 11 ap. Ath. 437c–d.

[20] Eur. *IT* 947–60; Ar. *Ach.* 1000–2, 1085–7; 1202. In the fragment of Eratosthenes concerning a comparable Alexandrian festival quoted in Ath. 276a–c the host is envisaged as providing the banquet in the normal way. But even in Aristophanes the host will evidently provide much—only not the *chous*. It is not important that in Euripides (and hence Plut. *Quaest. conv.* 2.10.1, 643a), there is no hint of these special arrangements: Orestes could not bring his own *chous*. Thesmotheteion: Plut. *Quaest. conv.* 1.1.2, 613b (? cf. Alciphr. 4.18.11, *θεσμοθέτας ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς κώμοις* [Reiske: *ταῖς ἱεραῖς κόμαις/κώμαις* mss.] *κεκισσωμένους*); cf. N. Robertson, *HSCP* 95 (1993), 215.

attested, but can surely be assumed.[21] Slaves feasted too, as is confirmed even by an entry in the Eleusinian temple accounts which mentions the cost of a sacrificial victim, jugs and wine 'for public slaves for Beakers'. It was, says Callimachus, a 'white day' for slaves. If the practice of solitary drinking extended to private houses they cannot, by definition, have shared their masters' table, but they probably ate and drank in the same room.[22]

After the separate parties, the sense of collective experience was renewed when participants converged on the old temple of Dionysus to dedicate the crowns. One would like to take this as the occasion when 'the revelling-under-the-influence crowd' (κραιπαλόκωμος . . . λαῶν ὄχλος) mentioned by Aristophanes thronged the precinct in the marshes 'at the sacred *Chytroi*'.[23] But, as we have seen, on a plain reading 'at the sacred *Chytroi*' suggests that they came back the following day, if for no attested purpose, as 'the crowd of revellers with hangovers' (κραιπάλη can indicate either drunkenness or its aftermath).

According to Phanodemos as quoted above, when the temple of Dionysus in the Marshes was open for the *Choes*, others were closed (roped off, as we learn from other sources).[24] Hereto links a crucial detail added by a single lexicographer, Photius: 'Unclean day: at the *Choes* at Athens in the month Anthesterion, in which the souls of the dead are believed to come up, they used to chew buckthorn from morning and anoint their doors with pitch'. We have, therefore (unless we disbelieve Photius' explanation of the custom),[25] to

[21] Dikaiopolis won a wine-skin whereas Phanodemus speaks of a cake as prize; it has often been supposed that we have here the contrast between public and private (so e.g. Deubner, *Attische Feste*, 99). Private feasting is well attested, and if the feasting is held in private houses the drinking should be too; we cannot, then, literally imagine a single trumpet signal initiating the competition throughout Athens. But Nilsson, *Eranos* 15 (1915), 185–6 (*Op. Sel.* 1, 150–1) and Hamilton, *Choes*, 12–13, envisage a single public drinking competition breaking up into a plurality of private parties; Auffarth, *Drohende Untergang*, 211, has a mass drinking competition perhaps in the agora.

[22] This is certainly the case in the louche story (locale in Greece unrecorded) told by Ath. 437e of Dionysius the renegade Stoic. Slaves' participation: *IG* II^2 1672. 204; Callim fr. 178.2. That masters waited on servants and that servants enjoyed *parrhesia*, as at the *Peloria* of Thessaly (Baton *FGrH* 268 F 5), is not stated; I doubt whether Callim. fr. 178. 2 with 19 suggests it (R. Scodel, *ZPE* 39, 1980, 37–40).

[23] The passage (Ar. *Ran.* 217–19) is so taken by Radermacher, Stanford, Dover and Sommerstein, untroubled by heortological complications, in their commentaries ad loc. I have wondered whether Ar. *Ach.* 1076, 'at the time of the *Choes* and *Chytroi*', might suggest that the festival was sometimes called '*Choes* and *Chytroi*' and that either day-name could then be used colloquially to indicate the festival as a whole. I cannot prove use of *Choes* for the whole festival in living usage, many instances being ambiguous, but Skylax, *Periplous*, 112 (T 28 in the collection of testimonia in Hamilton, *Choes*) and Dem. 39.16 are plausible cases; in scholiastic usage (e.g.) T 22–6 in Hamilton, *Choes*, 158, may well be cases. The present passage of *Frogs* is the best candidate for *Chytroi* not used specifically of the day; one might also think of the *chytrinoi agones* (n. 36).

[24] Poll. 8. 141. K. F. Johansen, 'Am Chytrentag', *ActaArch* 38 (1967), 175–98, detects such roping off illustrated on the r.f. krater *CVA* Copenhagen 4, fig. 148 1a–b (*ARV*^{2} 1156, no. 11; Auffarth, *Drohende Untergang*, 230, fig. 10) and the r.f. sherd *CVA* Bucarest 1, fig. 32.1. I do not understand the spikes attached to the supposed ropes.

[25] As do Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 218, 220, n. 26 (with useful information on buckthorn and pitch); Bremmer, *Soul*, 111–12; N. Robertson, *HSCP* 95 (1993), 206–8. None of these shows

add the souls of the dead to the cast list. Though Photius says vaguely that they came up 'in the month Anthesterion', it was precisely 'at the *Choes*' that protective measures were taken against them. 'At the *Choes*' might refer to the festival as a whole, not the specific middle day, but it was on the middle day that we know the temples to have been closed, and it was on this day that polluted Orestes arrived. The day of the drinking competition must have been one 'polluted day', even if there were others.[26]

Most of our knowledge of the *Chytroi* comes from a paraphrase (including a short fragment) of Theopompus given in one scholion to Aristophanes, and a series of snippets quoted from the same context in Theopompus by another.[27] The paraphrase tells us that, according to Theopompus, the survivors from the flood boiled a pot (*chytra*) of mixed seeds (*panspermia*), from which the festival was named.[28] The scholion containing the verbatim extracts runs:

> Theopompus explains the origin as follows: 'So the survivors named the whole festival by the name of the day on which they returned to good spirits', then 'and they sacrifice on *Choes* (?) to none at all of the Olympian gods, but to Hermes Chthonios. From the pot which is boiled by everyone in the city none of the priests eats. They do this on the [numeral probably missing] day', and 'the survivors appeased Hermes on behalf of the dead'.

'On *Choes*' (the best reading, despite some manuscript complications)[29] is horrendous: we must simply suppose an error for 'on *Chytroi*'. Once that has been accepted, we learn that on *Chytroi* every household prepared a *panspermia* for Hermes Chthonios which had some relation to the dead (the 'sacrifice' to Hermes, the *panspermia* and the offering brought to appease Hermes on behalf of the dead being surely identical).[30] The signals that we

anything wrong with Photius' view (*μ* 439 s.v. *μιαρὰ ἡμέρα*) that I can see. Hesych. *μ* 1314 is slightly different: *μιαραὶ ἡμέραι τοῦ Ἀνθεστηριῶνος μηνός, ἐν αἷς τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν κατοιχομένων ἀνιέναι ἐδόκουν*.

[26] There is oscillation between singular and plural in the relevant lexicographical notices (see previous note). The conclusion about *Choes* itself can be avoided only by the conjoined hypotheses (countenanced by Jacoby, comm. on Philochorus *FGrH* 328 F 84, p. 365) that (1) Photius' 'at the *Choes*' is loose and (2) the closure of the temples on Anthesterion 12 has no connection with the day's impurity.

[27] Theopompus *FGrH* 115 F 347 (a) and (b).

[28] Both *chytros* and *chytra* are by etymology vessels used for pouring liquids (*χέω*: cf. Farnell, Cults, V, 219) and *chytros* may have retained that association more strongly (Nilsson, *Studia*, 135–6), but this does not warrant positing an original libation ritual (with Nilsson) in lieu of that attested, still less (with N. Robertson, *HSCP* 95 (1993), 199–205) dissociating the Theopompus material from *Chytroi* altogether. Calame, *Thésée*, 330, suggests that the secondary sense of *Chytroi* as geological 'basins' (i.e. in this case holes in the ground, points of access to the underworld) is also relevant.

[29] See the long note in Nilsson, *Geschichte*, 594, n. 7, with the addendum of Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 239, n. 4. Nilsson's solution is that the sacrifice in question occurred on the evening of day two, still *Choes* by the civil calendar but already *Chytroi* by the sacred. This is artificial, overcrowds that evening (which also, by a different application of the 'festival day', hosts the revel of Ar. *Ran*. 217–19!—n. 23), and leaves day three empty.

[30] *Aliter* Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 239.

receive from Theopompus about the character of *Chytroi* are mixed. On the one hand its mythical forerunner was the day on which the survivors of the flood 'returned to good spirits'. On the other, offerings were made to none but Hermes Chthonios, and those offerings were unsuitable food for persons bound to purity.[31]

Yet, since we are told explicitly that priests did not eat of them, it follows that ordinary people did; Hermes received only a share. These domestic offerings to Hermes are not easy to interpret. They relate, no doubt, in some way to the 'souls' who are wandering free at the festival, but (*pace* much older scholarship)[32] they are not addressed to them. The notion that they are 'the first European intercession for the dead' is charmingly anachronistic; other objections aside, whereas the dead of the *Genesia* are individuals, one's own kin, who need cult, those of the *Anthesteria* are treated as an undifferentiated swarm.[33] Hermes Chthonios is not a god of the dead, but the god who presides over passages between this world and that below.[34] The survivors of the flood in Theopompus' *aition* will have prayed to him, very appropriately, to grant an easy descent to their dead comrades. Perhaps the prayer in this case was to lead back down those souls who had come up earlier in the festival.

Theopompus associates the *Chytroi* aitiologically with the flood. The *aition* offered by the Chiot Theopompus is not guaranteed to represent 'native exegesis', but he knew Athens well, and it very probably does. A mysterious testimonium '*Hydrophoria*: a mourning festival at Athens for those who died in the flood' has often been linked with the *Chytroi*; so has an allusion in Pausanias to annual offerings of honey and barley cake made at the rift (near the temple of Zeus Olympios) where the flood waters disappeared.[35] The point must be left unresolved; if the *Hydrophoria* did indeed fall on this day, then libations of water (we assume) were poured to the dead in addition to the *panspermia* offered to Hermes Chthonios.

[31] Cf. Parker, *Miasma*, 338, on *LSCG* 154 A 23, 156 A 8.

[32] e.g. Nilsson, *Studia*, 134; id., *Geschichte*, 595; Farnell, *Cults*, v, 219; Deubner, *Attische Feste*, 112; Meuli, *Ges. Schr.*, 922, n. 5. (The case might, however, be strengthened if the rite ἐὔδειπνος, n. 48 below, is assigned to this day.) An association between *panspermia* and the dead is common but not invariable (cf. Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 238–9; add the testimony of an anonymous writer on *mirabilia* adduced by X. Schutter, *Kernos* 9, 1996, 341, after E. Rohde, *Acta Soc. Phil. Lips.* 1, 1871, 42, that οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι τοὺς τελευτήσαντας ἐπὶ τὸν τάφον ἄγοντες καὶ πανόσπριον ἐπέφερον, σύμβολον τῆς παρ' αὐτῶν εὑρέσεως τῶν ἁπάντων).

[33] Auffarth, *Drohende Untergang*, 234; the phrase quoted is Deubner's approving paraphrase, *Attische Feste*, 112, of L. R. Farnell, *Greek Hero Cults and Ideas of Immortality* (Oxford 1926), 346. The newly attested possibility at Cyzicus of honouring dead persons at the *Anthesteria* (*SEG* XXVIII 953. 51–56) proves little, given that living persons too could be so honoured (Michel 534.20–1).

[34] See Sourvinou-Inwood, *Death*, index s.v. Hermes Chthonios; more generally on Hermes and Hades, Farnell, *Cults*, V, 11–15; Nilsson, *Geschichte*, 508–9.

[35] So, most confidently, Nilsson, *Studia*, 136–8; id., *Geschichte*, 181; followed e.g. by Auffarth, *Drohende Untergang*, 237, on Phot. s.v. Ὑδροφόρια; Paus. 1.18.7; agnosticism in Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 242, n. 16 (more views in Hamilton, *Choes*, 38, n. 96). Nilsson's treatment of Plut. *Sulla* 14.10, which prima facie attests 'many commemorations' of the flood at other occasions in Anthesterion, is criticized by N. Robertson, *HSCP* 95 (1993), 201–2.

Despite all this, Dionysus was not wholly excluded from day three. As we have seen, 'revellers with hangovers' may have returned to his precinct on that day; and we hear of a minor dramatic competition at the *Chytroi*, for comic actors; it was 'revived' by Lycurgus. A recently restored fragment of Callimachus appears to attest a belief that the 'older *Dionysia*', as Thucydides calls the *Anthesteria*, hosted the city's 'choral festivals' until Dionysus Melanaigis, god of the city *Dionysia*, was brought in by Eleuther.[36] Despite Lycurgus' attempted revival, only faint traces of the *Chytroi* competitions appear later.

I turn to elements undated within the festival. The lexicographer Photius is again our main or sole authority for two. 'Jokes from the wagons. At Athens at the festival of *Choes* revellers on wagons mocked and abused those they met. They did the same later at the *Lenaea*.' That is clear enough: much harder is:

> 'Outside, Carians, it's the *Anthesteria* no longer' [an iambic trimeter]. Some say that this proverb derives from the large number of Carian slaves; during the *Anthesteria* they feasted and did not work, and when the festival was over their owners used to send them out to work and say 'outside, Carians, it's the *Anthesteria* no longer'. But some give the proverb in this form 'Outside, Demons (*Κῆρες*), it's the *Anthesteria* no longer', on the grounds that souls roam around the city at the *Anthesteria*.

The Carian version has a variant explanation whereby Carians once occupied part of Attica and were given hospitality by the Athenians at the festival. Much has been made of this 'proverb', in one form or the other.[37] But what we have is not a ritual formula actually used at the *Anthesteria*, but a proverb applied in quite different circumstances, 'in relation to people who always want to get the same thing' (in and out of season). There is no knowing when such a floating formula got free from whatever mooring it may have had in real ritual practice, nor what distortions it may have suffered since. As direct evidence for the *Anthesteria* this testimonium is best, however regretfully, abandoned. It tells us something of what ancient scholars knew or believed about the festival. But these beliefs (good times for slaves; open door hospitality; roaming souls) only confirm what we knew already.

Surviving *choes*, by contrast, introduce a new dimension. The antiquarian Crates speaks, a little obscurely, of a type of vessel which has been 'after a fashion consecrated and is used only at the festival' (of *Choes*). Whatever he means, it is universally agreed[38] that we can recognize a *chous* when we see

[36] See *Hecale* fr. 85 Hollis, as supplemented by W. S. Barrett (an important addendum to *Athenian Religion*, 94, n. 116); Thuc. 2.15.4. For testimonia on the *chytrinoi agones* see Hamilton, *Choes*, 38–4; N. Robertson, *HSCP* 95 (1993), 246, adds *ithyphalloi*, from Ath. 129d.

[37] Phot. (and Suda) s.v. *τὰ ἐκ τῶν ἁμαξῶν* and *θύραζε Κᾶρες* (the latter = Paus. Att. *θ* 20 Erbse); for the variant Carian explanation see e.g. Zen. 4.33. For an excellent *mise au point* see Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 226–7. Burkert's own theory that the 'Carians' are mummers disguised as primeval inhabitants of Attica has been influential (Bremmer, *Soul,* 113–20; Auffarth, *Drohende Untergang,* 233–4), but relies too heavily on analogy; and for any Athenian the primeval inhabitants of Attica, if there were any, were Pelasgians, not Carians.

[38] If on unstated grounds, as T. H. Carpenter notes, *CPh* 89 (1994), 372–5 (review of Hamilton, *Choes*). Crates: ap. Ath. 495a–c.

one, and that a good proportion of the well over 800 known examples bear some relation to the festival. On a recent count,[39] 279 small *choes* have a yet smaller *chous* depicted somewhere on themselves, as a way, surely, of evoking the *Choes*. Much the commonest subject of *choes*, 'miniature' *choes* in particular, is children. In particular, enormous numbers show chubby naked little boys, still crawling or not a great deal older, often wearing amulets, sometimes crowned; various activities are portrayed, but regular elements are tables, grapes, and little *choes*, which too are often crowned. The specialized association between a type of vessel and a type of scene evidently requires an explanation. It is usually and plausibly sought in the epigraphic and literary evidence which represents the *Choes* as an acknowledged milestone in a child's life. This evidence is late but also clear. It consists of a small boy's gravestone of the second century AD, inscribed 'Of the age of the *Choes* rites, but fate anticipated the *Choes*'; a reference, from roughly the same period, to 'marriage, birth, *Choes*, ephebate' as occasions in relation to which a member of the society of Iobacchoi was required to treat the company; and the statement of Philostratus that 'Athenian children are crowned with flowers in the month Anthesterion in the third year from birth', this event occurring in a context of drinking and sacrifice.[40] The miniature *choes* allow this late-attested function of the *Choes* as a rite of passage to be backdated to the classical period. This is doubtless why 'Pyraichme, good nurse' is shown with a *chous* at her feet on her grave relief, of the fourth century.[41]

Further details remain very unclear: when during the festival did the crowning occur? What further rituals were entailed? Did the children, now ritually removed from the perils of babyhood, discard amulets after 'their' *Choes*?[42] Is Philostratus' 'in the third year' a fixed rule, or a norm? (By realistic criteria, the children on the pots are of varying ages; but these criteria may be inappropriate.) The function of the actual *choes* is very uncertain too; the type of the miniature *chous* with predominantly child-related iconography is found only *c.*420–390 BC, whereas a vase with actual ritual work to do could not

[39] Hamilton, *Choes,* 88. What follows is heavily dependent on this work, in particular his strengthening of the case built up by several scholars for the view that 'for students of the *Anthesteria*, it is the small *choes*, not the large ones, that are meaningful' (83).

[40] *IG* II^2 13139; *IG* II^2 1368 (*LSCG* 51) 130; Philostr. *Her.* 35.9 de Lannoy (p. 187 Kayser). Hamilton, *Choes,* 72–3, rejects the conclusions generally drawn from these passages. But his argument, from the associated grave relief (Deubner, *Attische Feste,* pl. 16.1), that the boy who died 'of the age of the *Choes* rites' was 'considerably older than three' is misguided: my colleague R. R. R. Smith tells me that the child shares characteristics (particularly in his hairstyle) with the baby Eros and is in fact considerably younger than three. The joke in Ar. *Thesm.* 746 is also relevant, as G. L. Ham observes, 'The *Choes* and *Anthesteria* Reconsidered: Male Maturation Rites and the Peloponnesian Wars', in M. W. Padilla (ed.), *Rites of Passage in Ancient Greece* (Lewisburg 1999 = *Bucknell Review* 43, 1999), 201–18, at 204.

[41] *AM* 67 (1942), 222, no. 30 (*SEG* XXI 1064); *AntK* 6 (1963), 9 with pl. 3.2.

[42] Cf. Auffarth, *Drohende Untergang,* 243–4. G. L. Ham, op. cit., argues that *Choes* concluded the 'babyhood' phase, seen by Plato (*Leg.* 789e, 792a, 793e) as lasting up to the third birthday; both crawlers and toddlers can symbolize it.

Fig. 17. Chous showing a naked boy wearing amulets, with a chous: *c.*420 BC.

come and go in that way.[43] Nor is the meaning of the iconography at all obvious: what is just childish play, what by contrast evokes ritual, and in

[43] Ham, op. cit., supposes the population losses of these years to have caused the ritual to receive unique emphasis. She detects two main types of scene on the miniature *Choes*: banquet (= the *Choes* banquet); procession (= the procession to the Limnaion).

Fig. 18. Chous showing a naked girl wearing amulets, with a chous: *c.*420 BC. One of a pair with Fig. 17.

what ways? The most serious issue is raised by the rarity of little girls on these scenes.[44] Some suppose that a link between the rite of passage and the central themes of the festival was established by giving the little children a sip of

[44] Cf. Hamilton, *Choes*, 145, n. 68 ('virtual absence'). G. L. Ham, op. cit., supposes the ritual to have been for boys only.

much-diluted wine, as a harbinger of adulthood.[45] But drinking in the Greek world was predominantly for men. Philostratus' reference to the crowning of 'children' need not include girls. On the other hand, if girls were excluded from the ritual, it is odd that they should appear on *choes* at all. What is clear is that boys were viewed as the primary beneficiaries.

There remain elements that do not certainly belong to the *Anthesteria*. Since the discovery of a lovely fragment of Callimachus, a ceremony known as Swinging (*Aiora*) or Wandering Woman (*Aletis*, from a song that accompanied the swinging) has generally been assigned to its third day. 'Swinging' to the accompaniment of songs is also attested in Colophon,[46] and sounds like an old Ionian festival custom. In Attica the wandering woman was said to be (whether from early times we do not know; evidence begins only in the third century) a variously identified 'Erigone'. Erigone might be the daughter of Icarius, who introduced wine to Attica but was murdered by the ungrateful peasants, supposing he had poisoned them; or she might be the daughter of Aegisthus, furious over the acquittal of Orestes by the Areopagus; and still further possibilities were canvassed.[47] However it was, she had hung herself from a tree in grief, and the Athenian women (probably just *parthenoi*) were required to swing on a plank of wood hung from a tree once a year in expiation.[48] The fragment of Callimachus tells how an Athenian in Egypt remembered the customs of his home. 'He never forgot either the dawn of jar-opening nor when the Orestean Choes bring a ''white day'' for slaves. Celebrating too the annual rite for the child of Icarius, your day, Erigone so bemourned by Attic women, he once invited his friends to dinner ....' 'The dawn of jar-opening' and 'Orestean Choes' are the first two days of *Anthesteria*, but Callimachus could have mentioned the first two without mentioning the third; even the syntax, which links *Pithoigia* and *Choes*, detaches the third

[45] So e.g. Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 221 (the special association between *Choes* and children's burials there mentioned has since been refuted: Hamilton, *Choes*, 70–1); Simon, *Festivals*, 94.

[46] If, that is, the relevant fragment from Aristotle's *Constitution of the Colophonians* refers to a local custom (fr. 515 Rose ap. Ath. 618e–f). On the Attic rite cf. p. 184.

[47] *Etym. Magn.* 62.5–12 s.v. *ἀλήτις* offers five; cf. Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 241–3; Kearns, *Heroes of Attica*, 167. The identification with Icarius' daughter was made famous and possibly created (but see Nilsson, *Op. Sel.* I, 425) by Eratosthenes in his poem *Erigone* (see now A. Rosokoki, *Die Erigone des Eratosthenes*, Heidelberg 1995).

[48] Hygin. *Astron.* 2.4.5: 'quod ea se suspenderat, instituerunt uti tabula interposita pendentes funibus se iactarent ... itaque et privatim et publice faciunt, et id Aletidas appellant.' Latin sources which speak of hanging masks in trees (e.g. Lact. Plac. on Stat. *Theb.* 4. 691 and 11.644) are generally supposed to be conflating *Aiora* with the Roman *oscilla*: see M. P. Nilsson, *Eranos* 15 (1915), 187–200 (*Op. Sel.* i, 152–65), at 189; Nilsson also argues against the association with the grape-harvest (*vindemia*) (the only dating a source offers) given by Hygin. *Fab.* 130: Erigonae diem festum oscillationis instituerunt ... et ut per vindemiam de frugibus Icario et Erigonae primum delibarent (Icarius shares Erigone's honours, wrongly, also in *Σ* min. Hom. *Il.* 22.29 and Ael. *NA* 7.28, which even adds her dog). Further details of the ritual are lacking except for *Etym. Magn.*42.3 *αἰώρα· ἑορτὴ Ἀθήνησιν ἣν καλοῦσιν εὐδειπνον* (Hesych. *ε* 6751 is corrected to give a similar sense). This might suggest funerary offerings (cf. Aesch. *Cho.* 484), rather than the banquet of the living of Callim. fr. 178. 3–5.

festival a little.[49] Some but not decisive support for linking *Aiora* with *Anthesteria* can be found in the myths (which associated 'Erigone' either with a Dionysiac hero or with Orestes, source of the strange customs of Beakers) and in swinging scenes on *choes*. But a positive counter-argument is available if it is true, as once source claims, that *Aletis* was the actual name of a festival day; the day named *Aletis* cannot also be the day named *Chytroi*.[50] Whatever the answer, our picture of the *Anthesteria* is not very greatly affected, since the days are past when we could assign a 'meaning' to the ritual of swinging itself.[51] If it was on *Chytroi* that the swinging took place, the complexity and diversity of these ancient festivals is underlined; and women or at least *parthenoi* acquire a function in an otherwise very masculine festival. But *Aiora* may have been an independent minor festival, date unknown.

The ship-cart of Dionysus is more important. Some four black figure skyphoi show Dionysus riding, with flute-playing satyrs, in a ship which is also a cart with old-fashioned wheels; on a skyphos in Bologna the cart is accompanied by mortals in procession, leading a sacrificial cow or bull.[52] The usual, and not unreasonable, assumption is that an Athenian ritual is reflected, even though similar representations appear earlier outside Attica, and in Attica do not outlive the sixth century. This ship on land, unlike that of the *Panathenaea*, seems to symbolize the idea of the god's arrival from the sea; that idea in turn is a special application of the idea of Dionysus as a god of advents and epiphanies, never more than a temporary visitant to a city. The fifth-century comic poet Hermippus, in parodic mode, invites the Muses to list 'all the blessings Dionysus has brought in his black ship, since he has been a ship-master over the wine dark sea'.[53] This advent could, therefore, be beneficent. But when did it occur? The argument for assigning it to the *Anthesteria* is partly by elimination – at the *City Dionysia*, the obvious alternative, Dionysos was carried in as a statue, not from the sea – partly by analogy with a similar ritual celebrated in Smyrna, in the second century AD, at a Dionysiac festival held in the month Anthesterion.[54] That analogy (rather perilous, given that

[49] Callim. fr. 178.1–5. Note the asyndeton in line 3 and tense change in line 5.

[50] So R. Pfeiffer, *Kallimachosstudien* (Munich 1922), 102–4, stressing Hesych *α* 2953 s.v. *Ἀλῆτις· ἑορτὴ Ἀθήνησιν, ἡ νῦν Αἰώρα λεγομένη, καὶ ἡμέρας ὄνομα, ὡς Πλάτων ὁ κωμικός* (fr. 233); cf. Hesych. *α* 2217 s.v. *Αἰώρα· ἑορτὴ Ἀθήνησιν*. Pfeiffer later (commentary on fr. 178. 1–5) countenanced the other view, which is widely accepted (as e.g. by Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 241–3; Burkert stresses visual evidence, but Hamilton, *Choes*, 48, n. 130, notes that only two of the six swinging scenes he adduces occur on *choes*).

[51] For a late attempt see J. Hani, *REG* 91 (1978), 107–22.

[52] See Auffarth, *Drohende Untergang*, 214, n. 4, who adds a fragment from Tübingen (and some non Attic representations) to the instances regularly adduced; his whole discussion, 213–20, is rewarding. Bologna skyphos: here fig. 19.

[53] Hermippus fr. 63. Advents: see Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 201, who cites Otto; M. Massenzio, *Cultura e crisi permanente: la 'xenia' dionisiaca* (Rome 1970); M. Detienne, *Dionysos à ciel ouvert* (Paris 1986: Engl. tr. by A. Goldhammer as *Dionysos at Large*, Cambridge, Mass. 1989), chs. 1–2.

[54] On all this contrast Burkert, *Homo Necans* 201 (*Dionysia*); Auffarth, *Drohende Untergang*, 213, n.3 (*Anthesteria*), both with earlier references. Smyrnaean Anthesterion doubtless corresponded to Attic Anthesterion: Trümpy, *Monatsnamen*, 102.

Fig. 19. Procession escorting Dionysus in a ship chariot, by the Theseus painter (*c.*500 BC.)

striking ritual practices of the second century AD are not usually best explained as survivals from the ancient Ionian heritage) does at the least prove that a god could arrive by ship outside the sailing season.[55] But even the winter festival *Lenaea,* for which unlike the *Anthesteria* both a procession and abundant meat sacrifices are attested,[56] might by that argument become a candidate. The problem remains unresolved.

Then there is the marriage of the god. This is, it seems, the only attested ritual enactment of a wedding between a Greek god and a mortal;[57] and it is known, a brief lexicographic notice aside, from just two texts (so unreliable is our access to what we would most like to know). The Aristotelian *Constitution of the Athenians* says briefly (3.5) 'the king used to occupy what is now the Boukoleion, near the Prytaneum. There is proof of this; even now it is here that the meeting and marriage of the wife of the king (i.e. the *archon basileus*) with Dionysus takes place.' The phrase here translated 'meeting and marriage' was long translated, sometimes with shock, sometimes with gusto, sometimes with mere puzzlement, as 'sexual intercourse and marriage'; but

[55] Nilsson's early claim (*ARW* 11, 1908, 401 = *Op. Sel.* I, 23) that the ship carriage ritual marked the opening of the sailing season was chronologically difficult, as he later realized (*Arch. Jahrb.* 31, 1916, 334 = *Op. Sel.* I, 205); his solution, that ritual likes to anticipate actuality, is not wholly convincing.

[56] Meat sacrifice at the *Anthesteria*, but on no large scale, is attested by *SEG* XXXIII 147.33–4. The bovine on the Bologna skyphos does not fit well our image of the *Anthesteria*.

[57] Cf. Wilamowitz, *Glaube*, II, 75–6.

it is certain that a ceremonial 'meeting' is what is spoken of.[58] There was therefore no joint marriage procession from the Limnaion to the Boukoleion (since that is where the couple first met); nor do we know for certain that sexual union was simulated. The second source is Apollodorus in his attack on Neaera:[59]

> This woman performed the secret rites on behalf of the city, and saw what as a non-citizen she should not have seen, and, despite being the kind of woman she is, entered the place that none of all the many Athenians may enter except the wife of the *basileus*, and administered the oath to the Reverend Women (*Gerarai*) who help with the rite, and she was given as wife to Dionysus, and on behalf of the city performed the many sacred secret rites to the gods.

Apollodorus goes on to explain that a specific law defined what was required of the wife of the *basileus* in terms of purity of origin, and that this law was displayed beside the altar in the temple of Dionysus in the Marshes, where too, it seems, the *basileus*' wife 'administered the oath' to the Reverend Women. These details provide the only specific grounds (disputed iconographic evidence aside) for associating the marriage of Dionysus with the *Anthesteria*: the *basileus*' wife and the Reverend Women had as their headquarters the temple in the marshes, a temple only opened for the *Anthesteria*, and should therefore have had a role to play at the festival; and if the oath sworn by the Reverend Women was administered in that temple, this ceremony, which the orator implies led up to the marriage, must have occurred at the *Anthesteria*.

The chain of argument appears, just, to hold firm.[60] But it is left to our imagination to fill in many details. We can only guess how the god was represented.[61] Presumably the nuptials of gods, like those of men, occur in the

[58] See A. Wilhelm, '*ΣΥΜΜΕΙΞΙΣ*', *AnzWien* (1937), 15–30 = *Akademieschriften zur griechischen Inschriftenkunde* II (Leipzig 1974), 582–600, who gives an intriguing survey of reactions to what he proves to be the false translation. It fitted well with the prevailing 'fertility cult' paradigm: Frickenhaus and Deubner, *Attische Feste*, 102, even proposed—but I draw a veil over the gross suggestion. The implications of Wilhelm's study have only been semi-assimilated in subsequent literature.

[59] Apollod. *Neaer*. 73.

[60] The link of Dionysus' marriage ('sacred marriage' has no authority in this context) with the *Anthesteria* has long been generally accepted (for the older scholars see Deubner, *Attische Feste*, 101). Hamilton, *Choes*, 55–6, makes a good case for scepticism, citing S. M. Peirce, 'Representations of Animal Sacrifice in Attic Vase-Painting 580–380 B.C.' (diss. Bryn Mawr 1984) (*non vidi*), 149: 'If the *basilinna* and the *gerarai can* celebrate rites other than on the twelfth of Anthesterion or in the Limnaion [as they can], then there is no reason to assume that the rites they celebrated [i.e. the marriage to Dionysus] *must* have been in the Limnaion on the twelfth of Anthesterion.' My emphasis on the oath taking place during the *Anthesteria* is an attempt to circumvent that point; it depends on the assumption that the same altar is referred to in chs. 76 and 78 of Apollod. *Neaer*.

[61] See Auffarth, *Drohende Untergang*, 222.

evening;[62] but the evening of which day?[63] A procession which escorted the god to his bride[64] would have made the extraordinary event vivid to many more Athenians. We might associate with it the 'jests from the wagons', and the ship-cart ... Processional scenes on actual *choes* used to be adduced in support (one even shows Dionysus with a personified 'Pompe', identified by inscription);[65] but that support broke when Andreas Rumpf, in a golden article of six pages important also for the *Thesmophoria*, pressed home the implications of the truth that between *choes* and *Choes* there existed no necessary iconographic connection. Anything can appear on a *chous*, even, for instance, the races between 'dismounters' held at the *Panathenaea*.[66] Many *choes* do relate in a reflexive way to the festival, no doubt, but the scholar wishing to use them to extend our knowledge of it is trapped in a double bind: reference to the festival can only be secure if what is shown is something we already know. Such references as there are are likely to be impressionistic, not documentary.[67] The interesting suggestion has been made that in certain scenes depicting the union of Dionysus and Ariadne we should detect something like 'Ariadne as the wife of the *archon basileus*' or 'the wife of the *archon basileus* as Ariadne'; on this view, an interference takes place between the continuing ritual and its mythical model. But that is to assume that Ariadne (who never set foot in Attica) is indeed the relevant mythical model in this context. We seem rather to need a myth of quite different shape, an Attic equivalent to the myth of Dionysus' arrival (for an arrival is surely what is needed) in Aetolia; king Oeneus loaned his wife to the amorous god, and was granted a vine in return.[68]

[62] So Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 233, against Deubner, *Attische Feste*, 109. But the assumption is far from certain.

[63] A wedding on day two is *communis opinio*. But the only objection I can see to day one is the possibility that the Limnaion was not then open for the preliminaries (Apollod. *Neaer*. 76: see above). Burkert's argument, *Homo Necans*, 233, that an impure day had to be avoided may not be reliable in relation to so extraordinary a wedding; if sound, it commends the evening of day two only if we accept the postulate of a sacral evening-to-evening calendar (whereby the evening of day two belongs to day three).

[64] So Simon, *Festivals*, 92.

[65] Metropolitan Museum 25.190; G. van Hoorn, *Choes and Anthesteria* (Leiden 1951), no. 759; Metzger, *Représentations*, pl. 45.1 (*Recherches*, 60, no. 18).

[66] 'Attische Feste—Attische Vasen', *BJb* 161 (1961), 208–14; cf. Hamilton, *Choes*, 67–9. That even the treatment of Dionysiac themes on *Choes* usually finds parallels on other vessel types was shown by Metzger, *Recherches*, 55–76. The object shown on the *chous* New York MMA 24.97.34 (Deubner, *Attische Feste*, pl. 11.2–4; Parke, *Festivals*, pl. 44) which is often interpreted as 'children enacting the Basilinna's marriage procession' (so Parke) (it also appears on the krater Copenhagen NM 13.817), is convincingly explained as a kottabos stand by J. Reilly, *AA* 1994, 499–505.

[67] Metzger, *Recherches*, 68–9.

[68] Main source Hyginus, *Fab.* 129; see R. Seaford's note on Eur. *Cycl.* 9. *Basilinna* as Ariadne: E. Simon, *AntK* 6 (1963), 6–22, and *Festivals*, 97–9; followed e.g. by Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 233, Seaford, *Reciprocity and Ritual*, 267–9; doubted by Schöne, *Thiasos*, 66; M. H. Jameson in *Masks of Dionysus*, 55; and the ever-sceptical Carpenter, *Fifth-Century Dionysian Imagery*, 66–7. It is argued that the proto-king Theseus surrenders Ariadne to the god on Athena's orders (Pherecydes *FGH* 3 F 148) just as the *basileus* surrenders his wife. But the *Anthesteria* ritual seems to relate crucially

These sceptical conclusions can serve to introduce 'Mask of Dionysus' vases, as it will be better to call them in place of their hotly contested traditional name '*Lenaea* vases'; for the accepted criterion for membership in this class of vases is simply the presence of a mask of Dionysos suspended on a pillar, around which women perform ritual actions. According to an authoritative recent study, the seventy or so vases in question fall into three groups: one of twenty-eight black figure lekythoi of the period 490–480, one of twenty-five red figure stamnoi predominantly of the period 460–440, and a third of related vases not falling into either of these classes.

> The unity of both of these series [the black figure lekythoi and red figure stamnoi] is defined by typology of vases, attribution to a restricted number of painters, and the formal structure of the image. In the first case, the composition is organised in relation to a central pillar bearing one or two masks seen in profile and shows women, exceptionally satyrs, walking or dancing, playing the aulos, and making gestures of greeting to the god. In the second case, the mask, still in the centre of the composition, is seen frontally, behind a table from which women make use of containers of wine.[69]

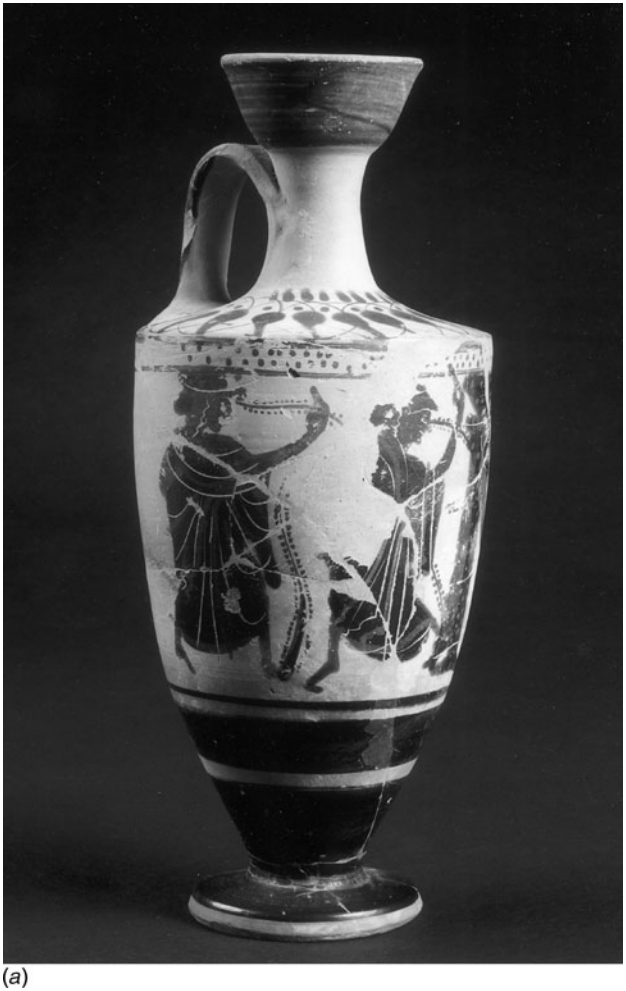
The women who draw wine from the vessels on the red figure stamnoi are often accompanied, around the back of the vase, by women in movement, who in the latest example are dancing excitedly. The two series differ in important respects, but it is argued that vases from the miscellaneous group bridge the divide: though wine is wholly absent from the canonical group of black figure lekythoi, for instance, it appears on several related scenes on vessels of other shapes which, like the lekythoi, present the pillar Dionysus not frontally but in profile.

With a few isolated exceptions, scholars long assumed that these vases constituted a more or less documentary record of an identifiable public ritual; but was it one performed at the *Lenaea*, or at the *Anthesteria*? Ecstatic dancing (emphasized on the black figure lekythoi) argued for the *Lenaea*; the manipulation of wine which dominates the red figure stamnoi made the case for the *Anthesteria*, though there was always an unacknowledged difficulty in supposing that a secret (and in fact unattested) wine-mixing ritual performed by the Reverend Women was exposed to the eyes of anyone who chose to purchase a stamnos.[70] A few scholars thought that informal, private

to Dionysus' presence in Athens; the fortunes of a non-Athenian woman on Naxos are not relevant. The Oineus parallel is inexact too, because Dionysus' union with Oineus' wife is unofficial, whereas Apollodorus unambiguously attests for Athens the vocabulary of marriage (*ἐξεδόθη*). But it seems closer.

[69] Englished from Frontisi-Ducroux, *Le Dieu-masque*, 67–8; this study reviews earlier writings very thoroughly. For a useful summary of the data see R. Osborne in *Tragedy and the Historian*, 204–5. A remarkable and enigmatic new *chous* ascribed to the Eretria painter (published by O. Tzachou-Alexandri in J. H. Oakley and others, *Athenian Potters and Painters*, Oxford 1997, 473–90) offers a mask of Dionysus, attached to a stepped structure, and much else (a table bearing a *liknon*, flanked by a young man named Epimetheus, who drinks, and an older Prometheus). Our uncertainties increase ...

[70] On the fact that all surviving 'Mask of Dionysus' *stamnoi*, like a majority of *stamnoi* of all types, were found in Etruria see Frontisi-Ducroux, *Le Dieu-masque*, 69–70.

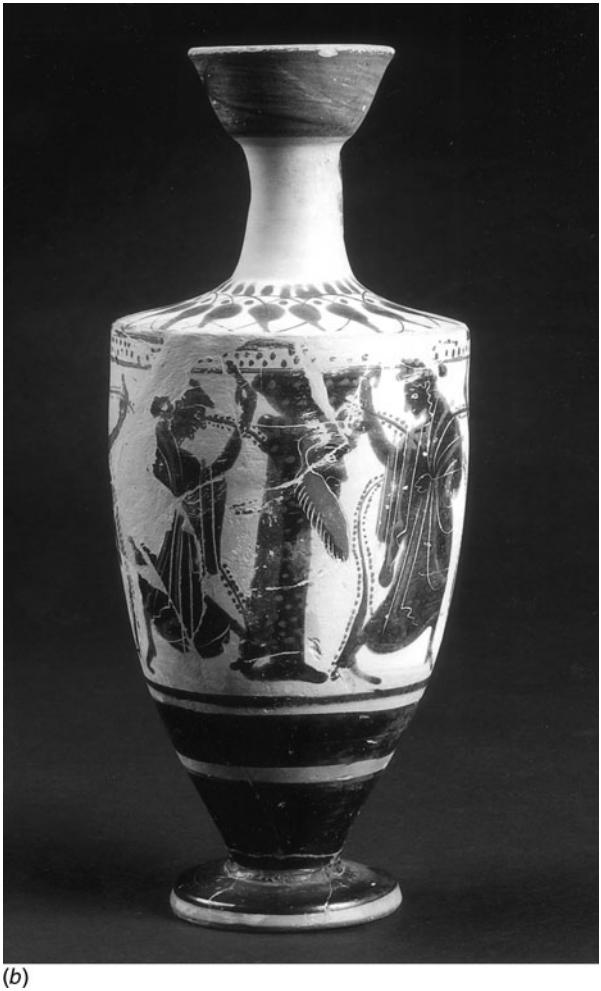


(*a*)

Fig. 20. Dancing around the column Dionysus, on a black figure lekythos; *c.*490 BC.

festivities might be portrayed.[71] A much more cautious attitude prevails today. The author of the very fine study just quoted stresses that these images are products not of documentary realism but of the 'social imagination'. What the historian can derive from them is a set of representations created by the social imagination of Athens: a representation of Dionysus as the god of the gazing mask, the god of a gaze towards which the dancing women on the black figure lekythoi invariably turn and which confronts the user of the red figure stamnoi directly; a representation of ritual possibilities, in particular of ways of exploiting space around a fixed central point, the gazing god; a

[71] e.g. C. Robert, *GGA* (1913), 366–73, cited by Frontisi-Ducroux, *Le Dieu-masque*, 41.



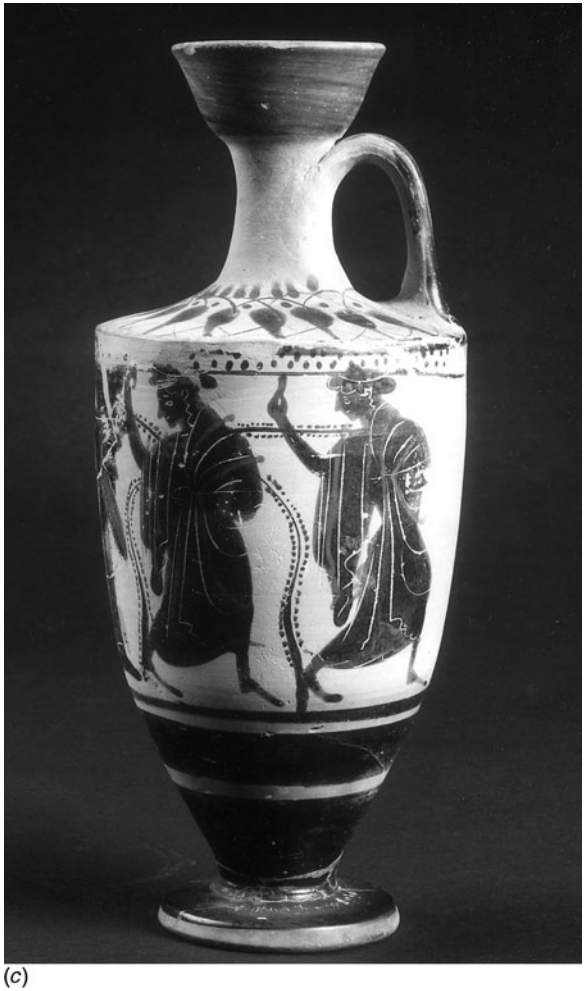
(*b*)

Fig. 20. *Continued.*

representation of women's relation to wine and to Dionysus, one which stresses the continuity between the grave and eminently respectable ladies who manipulate wine on the *stamnoi* and the dancing Maenad.[72]

Yet these formulations would permit a relation, if a complicated one, to actual rituals. The hugely varied images presented to us each year on Christmas cards are unquestionably products of a social imagination, but it is a social imagination of Christmas, not of Easter. Gods are not easily separated in

[72] Frontisi-Ducroux, *Le dieu-masque*, *passim*, esp. 167–74. S. Peirce, *AntCl* 17 (1998), 59–95, argues that the women are definitely portrayed as drinking (not merely distributing) wine, but that iconographical schemata are deployed which mark them as still respectable.



(*c*)

Fig. 20. *Continued.*

Greece from their instantiations in particular shrines and epithets and festivals; it is not clear that the starting point for the imaginings revealed on the 'Mask of Dionysus' vases is 'Dionysus' as opposed to 'Dionysus as worshipped in a particular ritual context'. The ground becomes slippier if the unity of the corpus of 'Mask of Dionysus' vases comes into question. The differences between the black figure lekythoi and the red figure stamnoi are just as notable as the similarities, it can be argued. And why separate off the 'Mask of Dionysus' vases among the many Dionysiac scenes painted by the artists

(*a*)

Fig. 21(*a*). Ritual around the column Dionysus, *c.*460 BC. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Gift of Edward Perry Warren. Photograph © 2004 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

who created the red figure stamnoi?[73] No one has yet deconstructed the mask of Dionysus hung on its pole: this, it is agreed, is so specific and singular an image that we can be sure of its real existence out there. But many are the ways in which it might have been deployed. Can we at least hold on to the association between the pillar Dionysus and women? Something very

[73] For both points see R. Osborne in *Tragedy and the Historian,* 206–7; for the latter T. H. Carpenter, *JHS* 103 (1993), 203–5 (but see now, contra, R. Hamilton, in E. Csapo and M. C. Miller, eds., *Poetry, Theory, Praxis. Essays in Honour of William J. Slater*, Oxford 2003, 43–68). Carpenter stresses that we are dealing with the work of a small number of painters only.

(*b*)

Fig. 21(*b*). Reverse of Fig. 21(a). © 2004 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

important remains if so, a form of domesticated Athenian maenadism.[74] Yet even this has been questioned. On the latest of the red figure stamnoi the women have turned into full-blown dancing maenads with inscribed maenadic names—Dione, Mainas, Choreia, Thaleia. Perhaps those figures on the earlier stamnoi who look so much like respectable Athenian ladies are in fact nymphs ...[75] Yet the distinctive and down-to-earth image of the mask on a

[74] So Osborne, op. cit. Note *IG* I^3 1030 *bis*, a stone mask of Dionysus dedicated by two women.
[75] Carpenter, *Dionysian Imagery*, 60, 80–2; for Carpenter we are dealing with 'unspecific Dionysian scenes composed of stock Dionysian elements' (81).

pole, combined with the gravity of the women on the earlier stamnoi, does not encourage us to view the scenes as just a medley from the mythological repertoire.

We can hold on, provisionally, to the idea of domestic Athenian maenadism. But we lack a context for it. And that lack is not a matter of a missing antiquarian detail of small interest. We would like to know whether these rituals were performed by thirty Athenian women, so to speak, or by thirty thousand. There is some attraction in supposing that these were widespread domestic rituals, something within the direct experience of the male drinkers who used the vases.[76] Such domestic rituals could have occurred at the *Anthesteria*, among other occasions. But we can go no further than this.

This inescapable uncertainty is particularly unfortunate for a reason which has seldom been noticed. While much has been said in what precedes of the *Anthesteria* pleasures of men, slaves and children, the only women mentioned have been the priestess of Dionysus, the wife of the *archon basileus* and her fourteen assistants, and (with a question mark) the girls swinging for Erigone. On that showing, the *Anthesteria* emerges, for a major three-day festival, as remarkably woman-unfriendly, even by Athenian standards. (The *Apatouria* was probably woman-unfriendly too, but that is less surprising given its fundamental concern with phratry-membership and thus with citizenship.) If associated with the *Anthesteria*, the 'Mask of Dionysus' vases might have given women a larger place, if not in the sun, at least in a secluded place.[77]

I turn to interpretation—or rather, from smaller problems of interpretation to larger ones. The festival is, at a first glance, made up of disparate elements; most obviously, days one and two honour Dionysus, day three (for the most part) honours Hermes Chthonios. The older interpreters tended to accept that it was, indeed, a composite. On the one side there was a festival of new wine, designed, as they put it in language borrowed from the anthropology of the day, to break the taboo on the new vintage; on the other, a form of 'All Souls'. These had, as a matter of historical chance, coalesced. Thence derived the mixed character of the festival, part joyful, part polluted. Occasionally a point of contact between the two aspects was sought, tentatively, in the dominion of the underworld gods over both death and growth.[78]

More recently,[79] it has come to be generally and surely rightly believed that the mix of fair and foul in the festival is intrinsic and uneliminable. According

[76] Frontisi-Ducroux, in Bravo, *Pannychis*, 123–34, is sympathetic to Bravo's 'mixed *pannychides*' (n. 17 above) as one possible context.

[77] This would apply particularly if one imagined many separate groups of women active in this way (masks being easy to secure). But for Nilsson, the main proponent of the association with the *Anthesteria*, the women of the vases were simply the Reverend Women of Apollod. *Neaer.* 73 (p. 304 above). All we would get then would be public interest in their role.

[78] Nilsson, *Studia*, 130–1: 'Chytri *quodammodo* cum illis sacris Choum cohaerent ...'.

[79] Largely in consequence of the important treatment in Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 213–47. But Hamilton, *Choes*, 14–15, and N. Robertson, *HSCP* 95 (1993), 197–250, still seek to minimize gloomy elements.

to the sources, the 'polluted day' when the temples in general were closed and people chewed buckthorn for protection against ghosts was day two, the day of the drinking competition, not day three, the day of sacrifice to Hermes Chthonios. (The main point stands even though not every detail is quite certain.) About the drinking competition itself there is an irreducible abnormality which is not confined to the aitiological derivation from polluted Orestes—this silent, competitive drinking from separate cups at separate tables, in violation of all the norms of sharing and sociability governing the Greek symposium, in flagrant violation too of the norms of civilized drinking affirmed at the *Pithoigia* the previous day.[80] We can grant, on the good evidence of Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, that the competition was but one element within a doubtless hugely enjoyable banquet which will not have been conducted in silence. But it was an element, and formally it set the tone. Wakes do not cease to be commemorations of the dead however riotous they may prove.[81] One can provide the festival with a plot whereby, in strong contrast to the old model, day two is the time of maximum crisis, abnormality and pollution (but is the 'marriage' part of it, or part of a putting right?); normality returns on day three, the day when the survivors of the flood recovered their spirits.[82] But this return to normality is at best a gradual one, since the offerings on day three are still touched with impurity.

So the *Anthesteria* has become a festival of oppositions and of paradox. It is a festival at which some social norms are overturned—slaves dine with their masters, young men insult their betters from wagons—and even (so to speak) some cosmic norms: the dead roam the streets, a god visits the city (arriving from the sea?) to take a mortal bride. Wine is consumed with caution on day one, with abandon on day two. On day three (in aitiology) the flood waters withdraw, and the world is revealed anew. All this confusion is initiated by the opening of the jars of new wine.[83] The festival can be seen as an instance of a 'reversal ritual accompanying a critical passage in the agricultural or social year', an ideal type of which there exist very many further examples

[80] The quantity drunk at the drinking competition is usually supposed to be the measure of a *chous*, i.e. 3.28 litres (Hamilton, *Choes*, 84, n. 1). High-speed draining of such a quantity is surely Scythian drinking, even if Dikaiopolis' claim to have taken it unmixed (Ar. *Ach.* 1229) is a comic impossibility.

[81] On the other hand, this possibility of dissonance between formal occasion and actual experience is in all seeming a regular phenomenon which any theory of ritual needs to accommodate. There is nothing frightening about having the dead around the house at Christmas, says Nilsson from childhood experience (*Eranos* 15, 1915, 182 = *Op. Sel.* I, 147).

[82] So Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 213–47, who relates the ambivalent mood of the festival to his general theory of sacrifice, which is seen as a guilt-producing act which participants make good by symbolic means. He sees the *Choes* as a kind of eating of the god (embodied in wine), who is then re-assembled (as the 'pillar Dionysus' of the 'Mask of Dionysus' vases) and given a bride. Auffarth, *Drohende Untergang*, 241, goes too far in declaring sacrifice itself to have been suspended on day two: contrast n. 56.

[83] Jane Harrison's charming old theory (*Prolegomena*, 40–5) that the *Pithoigia* related to jars though which souls escaped from the underworld, as on a well-known amphora in Jena (Jena Univ. 338; *ARV*² 760.41; *LIMC* s.v. *Hermes*, no. 630), has a certain symbolic truth.

more or less (here lies the rub) resembling one another and the *Anthesteria*.[84] But there are theoretical difficulties in the comparativism that underlies the appeal to an ideal type. What exactly do we learn, other than that similar things are found elsewhere too?[85] We learn, it may be answered, about recurrent linkages: the association found in Athens, say, between a new wine festival and return of the dead is not a unique but a widely observable phenomenon. That is indeed worth learning; what is not clear is what comparison can contribute to explaining such linkages, unless it is to risk perilously general claims about how societies of certain types necessarily ritualize the year. And if the ideal type becomes categorized as a 'régénération totale du temps',[86] as a moment of return to the primeval, and we then claim that our festival too has these characteristics, we are in danger of substituting a synthetic ideal type for the *Anthesteria*.

A complementary approach to the festival's complexity might be through its god. According to an influential modern view,[87] Dionysus' essence lies in the power to complicate reality, to dissolve the culturally constructed world by breaking down the oppositions that define it. A master of illusions, he produces drunkenness and madness; he destroys the barriers between man and animal, male and female, young and old, free and slave, city and country, man and god. No ritual form other than a ritual of reversal would be appropriate to such a god. And it is precisely at the *Anthesteria* that the paradox inherent in his relation to the city finds its richest expression.[88] In myth he is the god who lures the women to the mountains in defiance of the established authorities of the masculine world; yet his cult is in fact as deeply embedded as any other in the religion of the city. At the *Anthesteria* he may have been represented, through the ship-cart, as a visitant from abroad. But to this stranger the 'king' yields up his wife as bride.

The marvel of this ritual, its authentic mystery, was long obscured by reductive classification as 'fertility magic'. At the centre of our vision of the

[84] See already H. Jeanmaire, *Dionysus* (Paris 1951), 48–56, and Meuli, *Ges. Schrift.*, 296–8; the approach has been developed by Versnel in several works, most recently *Transition and Reversal,* 115–21 (whence the quotation); Bremmer, *Soul,* 117–23; Auffarth, *Drohende Untergang,* 1–37 (who gives the theoretical and comparative context—Eliade, Lanternari, *et al.*) and *passim*.

[85] My concern is with the explanatory power of comparison. I do not doubt that comparison often has a valuable heuristic role, in suggesting questions to put to the sources; but the answer given by the sources is then crucial. Comparison can also suggest phenomena likely to have occurred even if not (for understandable reasons) attested in sources. But in the present case I would not import (e.g.) 'periods of sexual licence' to the *Anthesteria* from rituals of reversal known elsewhere.

[86] This phrase of Eliade is taken up by Meuli, *Ges. Schrift.*, 297, n. 2.

[87] The 'archaeologies' of modern views of Dionysus by Albert Henrichs (*HSCP* 88, 1984, 205–40; *Masks of Dionysus,* 13–43) are an indispensable orientation. On the recent fortunes of 'Otto's polar Dionysus', most appealing to postmoderns, see *Masks of Dionysus*, 29–36 (and on the similar language of the ancients *HSCP* 88, 1984, 235). The rhetoric of this approach can fly out of control, but for a particularly powerful application in relation to a specific area (sexuality) see Csapo's study (n. 105 below).

[88] See Seaford, *Reciprocity and Ritual,* 235–80, 'Dionysus and the polis'.

Anthesteria must be the very presence of Dionysus, as new wine, and as god.[89] Whatever its further implications, the giving of the *archon basileus*' wife to Dionysus is a supreme gesture of hospitality, the god's acceptance of her a supreme token of presence. Yet an old problem will remain. Dionysus habitually has no dealings with the dead, death and the Dionysiac being, rather, opposite poles of a magnet. Even when, as a god of eschatological mysteries, he becomes powerful to aid the individual to a better lot in the afterlife, he is in no sense a lord of the nameless dead such as roamed at this festival.[90] And in fact, if we believe our most reliable sources, Dionysus received no offerings at the *Chytroi* (even if some rites were still performed in his honour). One cannot understood the *Anthesteria* without its specific god, Dionysus, nor reduce it to him.

I conclude with a summarizing redescription of the festival. The *Anthesteria* makes a collective event out of what might just have been an event in the life of the individual household.[91] And this appeal to 'everybody', 'the whole city' (women perhaps excluded), this mixing up in one celebration of the whole citizen body, appears particularly characteristic of Dionysiac festivals and of the place of Dionysus within the city.[92] Whether this wine-broaching was an important event in dietetic terms (would supplies of old wine have run low?) is hard to tell. But in a wine-drinking society the change of wines is one of the most potent 'natural symbols' (to reapply Mary Douglas's term) of transition that is available. The Athenians dramatized it by making it occasion for Dionysus' marriage, the most vividly realized advent of a god attested in all Greek cult. The *Anthesteria* is indeed a time of strange advents, of Dionysus, of the dead, of (in myth) the polluted Orestes. The rowdy god's presence licensed young men to cheek their elders 'from the wagons'. Wine-drinking itself was made an object of attention (as not at other Athenian festivals), by the prayer for safe use of wine on day one, and by the deliberately hectic use made of it on day two (two faces of Dionysus, but both revealed within ritual bounds). With new wine came new Athenians, the children (boys?) now ceremonially crowned. It is frustrating that we know so little of the context of this crowning. If it happened at one of the banquets of day two, the question becomes one of who dined with whom, which we do not know; but, if we imagine a restricted group of often related males at each banquet, the context would

[89] The marriage receives proper emphasis from Daraki, *Dionysos*, 73–116. But her analysis is skewed by taking Heraclitus too literally and treating Dionysus as a 'maître-des-morts'.

[90] See Nilsson, *Geschichte*, 594–8; S. G. Cole in *Masks of Dionysus*, 276–95. Opposite poles: Parker, *Miasma*, 64.

[91] So Burkert, *Homo Necans*, 217.

[92] So Seaford, *Reciprocity and Ritual*, 246, citing *inter alia* the Delphic oracle quoted in Dem. 21.52 which urges the Athenians ἄμμιγα πάντας to honour the god. I do not accept Seaford's correlate, that Dionysus stood for the city in opposition to its subgroups such as the *oikos* (ibid. 344–62, and in *Masks of Dionysus*, 115–46); the *Anthesteria* suggests the opposite. For I. Venturi, *Dioniso e la democrazia ateniese* (Rome 1997), looking from a broad, ancient near-eastern comparative perspective, the Attic Dionysus is anti-regal and anti-gentilician.

have been more intimate than the induction to the phratry at the *Apatouria* that followed it quite soon. At a rather domestic gathering of this kind, slaves might readily be allowed a place of temporary equality. To the upcoming generation (the new wine?) corresponds in a way the old wine, the generations gone. But the symmetry is imperfect, because it was not at the *Anthesteria* that families paid cult to their own forefathers. The questions why the dead roam at the time of the New Wine and why that time is so polluted remain tantalizing ones. Comparativism tells us, in its rough and ready way, that societies feel the need for periodic clean sweeps and fresh starts, that fresh starts feel fresher if pollution precedes, and that the idea of a fresh start can readily be attached to a natural symbol of change such as the new wine. These are regrettably vague formulae, but must serve until better are found. The new wine festival could accordingly recall not just the first bringing of wine to Attica, but the resumption of ordered human life after Deucalion's flood.[93]

OTHER DIONYSIAC FESTIVALS AND RITUALS

Dionysus springs the bounds of a festival-by-festival approach. This is partly because, as we have seen, the location at particular festivals of several important rituals is insecure. But there are also characteristic forms of Dionysiac behaviour which occur at more than one festival or even outside the festival context. It is not without reason that scholarship sometimes speaks of Dionysiac, but not, say, of 'Athenaic', ritual. It is of aspects of such Dionysiac ritual, and behaviour, that this section will treat. But first a skeleton outline must be given of the other Dionysiac festivals, primarily the three dramatic festivals *Lenaea*, *Rural Dionysia* and *City Dionysia*.[94]

In Athens as in Delphi, Dionysus is a god of the winter, and *Rural Dionysia*, *Lenaea*, *Anthesteria* and *City Dionysia* succeed one another at intervals of roughly a month over the period from about December to March. The part-Dionysiac festival *Oschophoria* falls at an uncertain date in the autumn.

Seeking comic embodiments of the delights of peace, Aristophanes in *Acharnians* revealingly chooses not just one but two festivals of Dionysus. We have already met his comic version of Beakers; and the phallic procession held earlier in the play in honour of the eponymous god Phales (241–79) is almost our only important source for the ritual of the *Rural Dionysia* (at which in many demes

[93] The relation between flood myths and festivals of new beginnings was noted by Meuli, *Ges. Schrift.*, 299. Scholars had often, by contrast, seen the *Chytroi* myth as a re-application of a motif first trivially suggested by the role of water in the *Hydrophoria* ritual (n. 35). Meuli's suggestion is a nice instance of the heuristic value of comparison.

[94] For full treatment see Pickard-Cambridge, *Dramatic Festivals*^{2}, *passim*, and Csapo/Slater, *Ancient Drama*, 103–38.

plays were also performed).[95] *Lenaea* too is rather obscure. It included a procession and many sacrifices; it was doubtless during the procession that insults were hurled 'from the wagons' as at the *Anthesteria*: one of the two Greek verbs for 'to insult in a ritual context' was in fact πομπεύω, literally 'I process'. (But πομπή also yields the sense '(empty) display'; both 'pomp' and that which punctures it come from the same root.) Nothing more to our purpose is known for certain about the *Lenaea*, except the unexpected fact that the hierophant at some point invoked Dionysus in his Eleusinian persona as Iacchus. But dancing by women had a place if the name derives, as is now generally supposed, from Λῆναι, 'maenads', rather than from those wine-presses, ληνοί, which should not have been in use at the time of the festival in mid-winter.[96]

As for the *City Dionysia*, the most spectacular ritual was a procession which culminated in the sacrifice of at least a hundred animals in the sanctuary of Dionysus. This was, after the *Panathenaea*, the greatest procession of the year, and, though the details are much less well known, here too we find graded participation: citizen 'wine-skin bearers' and (probably) 'loaf-bearers' (*obeliaphoroi*) contrast with metic 'tray-bearers' in their purple robes; the *choregoi* who finance the performances are repaid for their expense by a position of gold-clad dignity (shamelessly insulted on a famous occasion by Midias, according to the victim Demosthenes), and gold glints too from the golden sacrificial basket carried by a maiden 'basket-bearer'. All analogy suggests that the phallus which the Athenain colonists at Brea were required to send home 'for the *Dionysia*' was carried in this procession; such a requirement cannot have been imposed on the Brean settlers alone, and it will follow that numerous phalluses accompanied (perhaps) one chief one.[97] The procession apparently paused during its route through the agora for choruses to sing in honour of the Twelve Gods and of others.[98]

[95] A procession is also attested (along with sacrifice and competition) for the demes Acharnai, Eleusis and Piraeus: *SEG* XLIII 26 (b) 4–6; *IG* II² 949.30–4; Appendix 2 s.v. *Dionysia*, τὰ ἐν Πειραιεῖ. See further Appendix 2, s. v. *Dionysia*, τὰ κατ' ἀγρούς.

[96] Procession: Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 57.1; sacrifice: *IG* II² 1496. 74, 105, 146; 'from the wagons' : see n. 37 above; hierophant: Σ vet. Ar. *Ran.* 479c. A sacrifice at the *Lenaea* by the Eleusinian *epistatai* is mentioned in *IG* II² 1672.182. Schöne, *Thiasos*, attributes to the *Lenaea inter alia* a procession imitating the return of Hephaestus to Olympus (45–6). But the argument that only a ritual basis can explain the scene's long-lasting appeal to painters is not compelling: it would make an odd procession in actual cult. On the 'Lenaea' vases see p. 306.

[97] See on all this Pickard-Cambridge, *Dramatic Festivals*², 61–2. Phalloi: *IG* I³ 46.15–17 (Brea); cf. *SEG* XXXI 67 (Paros, in the 370s), and Smarczyk, *Religionspolitik*, 158–61. Analogy: the *Rural Dionysia*, the Delian *Dionysia* (Pickard-Cambridge, 62, n.4), and cf. Plut. *De cupid. divit.* 8, 527d (Pickard-Cambridge, 62, n.3). What happened to the phalluses after use is not known: it does not seem to me to follow from the reference to burning something 'on 16 figwood *phaletes*' in *Com. Adesp.* fr. 154 that they were burnt, since this is a joke with a *para prosdokian* element.

[98] Xen. *Hipparch.* 3.2: Xenophon proposes that during processions the cavalry should ride round the shrines in the agora paying their respects, and adds an analogy from existing practice: ἐν τοῖς Διονυσίοις δὲ οἱ χοροὶ προσεπιχαρίζονται ἄλλοις τε θεοῖς καὶ τοῖς δώδεκα χορεύοντες. The passage puzzles me. The context in Xenophon shows that the reference cannot be to choral

Quite distinct from the procession (it is universally now agreed), which brought sacrificial victims to the god, was an earlier 'bringing in of the god' in statue form which, so to speak, renewed the first mythical coming of the god to the city. (The 'bringing in' was felt to be so integral that it was replicated in the Piraeus *Dionysia*, which, though formally just one instance among many of the *Rural Dionysia*, grew into an expensive major festival, almost a second *City Dionysia*.[99]) The god's advent was celebrated, it has been strongly argued, with rituals performed in the agora, an al fresco drinking party (the 'reception' or *xenismos* in the strict sense) in the north-west corner and, at an *eschara* (hearth altar) by the altar of the Twelve Gods, a goat-sacrifice accompanied by hymns of which a surviving dithyrambic fragment of Pindar may be a specimen.[100] The eventual destination of the god's statue was the theatre. Such a reception could have led on to the *komos* or revel-procession which is also attested.[101] Or the *komos* may be distinct, and unlocatable. On whatever day it occurred, the *komos* was probably a drunken evening event, and it is one of the rare contexts in which wearing of masks by some participants is explicitly attested.[102] We should note finally the civic rituals—display of tribute, parade of orphans, proclamation of honours—that introduced the first morning of actual performances.[103]

After this foundation-laying, I revert to Dionysiac rituals. 'The traditional festival of the *Dionysia*', writes Plutarch nostalgically, 'was conducted in a homely and cheerful way (δημοτικῶς καὶ ἱλαρῶς): an amphora of wine, a vine tendril, then someone dragging a goat, someone else following with a basket of figs, and presiding over it all [or 'finally'] the phallus (ἐπὶ πᾶσι δ' ὁ φαλλός)'.[104] The phallus is basic. What was carried was not in fact just a phallus but a phallus on a long wooden pole, which could be decorated to suggest the shaft of a very long, thin penis; the phallus itself, in this and other iconographic contexts, is normally given an eye, like an animate thing. What

performances in the theatre itself (though it could perhaps be to the *eisagoge* ritual: Pickard-Cambridge, *Dramatic Festivals*^{2}, 62). But are we to suppose that the choruses that were destined to perform in the theatre marched in the processions as choruses, and had also prepared hymns to render at sites en route? Or who are these 'choruses'? Pindar fr. 75 could be an instance of such a hymn, for reasons given by Sourvinou-Inwood, *Tragedy and Religion*, 96–8 (though she links it rather with the *eisagoge*).

[99] See Pickard-Cambridge, *Dramatic Festivals*^{2}, 44, n. 2 ('bringing in'), 46–7.

[100] See Sourvinou-Inwood, *Tragedy and Religion*, 67–100, for this reconstruction from converging if never quite explicit indications (and for the many topographical issues relating to the *eisagoge*, which I have left vague). Pindar: fr. 75.

[101] Led on: so Sourvinou-Inwood, *Tragedy and Religion*, 89. Attested: in the law of Euegoros quoted in Dem. 21.10. The old view, revived by P. Ghiron-Bistagne, *Recherches sur les acteurs dans la Grèce antique* (Paris 1976), 226–7, that κῶμος here = χοροὶ ἀνδρῶν remains implausible (Pickard-Cambridge, *Dramatic Festivals*^{2}, 63, 103). Lamer's argument, in *RE* s.v. *Komos*, 1289, that a *komos* always entails movement still has force (*aliter* Ghiron-Bistagne, 231–8).

[102] See Dem. 19.287, as correctly interpreted by Sourvinou-Inwood, *Tragedy and Religion*, 70, with reference to Aeschin. 2.151. Drunkenness: Pl. *Leg.* 637a–b.

[103] Pickard-Cambridge, *Dramatic Festivals*^{2}, 59.

[104] Plut. *De cupid. divit.* 8, 527d.

a typical phallic procession was like it may be idle to enquire, since sportive variation was probably the norm. That in Aristophanes is very simple (but there are good plot reasons for this), a single phallus to be 'held upright' by a single carrier. An extraordinary black figure vase of the mid-sixth century in Florence shows on its two sides something very different, six naked (and sometime ithyphallic) men straining under a giant phallus, on which is perched (or fastened) a huge demonic figure, who bears in turn, on one side of the vase, a diminutive rider.[105] An extract from a Hellenistic antiquarian, Semos of Delos, describes the singular costumes and songs of two teams or troupes (*ithyphalloi* and *phallophoroi*) associated with phallic processions, but does not make plain where in the Greek world the rather precise performances that he evidently has in view took place. Similar teams or troupes (the word is appropriate in order to stress that more was required than just to carry the pole) surely performed in Attica too, or Aristotle could not have derived comedy from 'the leaders of phallic rites'. But what kind of Athenians assumed the ambiguous honour (if Athenians indeed they were) we do not know.

How was a festival affected by being conducted under the presidency of a phallus? Modern westerners might react to such a symbol with a blend of embarrassment and amusement; the breach of a central convention of modesty might seem to demand, or at least to license, uncontrolled behaviour of many kinds. Inhabitants of a city full of herms cannot have been so embarrassed by exposed genitalia, but comic phalli could still raise a laugh among children, and a phallic procession was surely not conducted in an atmosphere of grim solemnity. Pindar's Apollo laughs at the ithyphallic antics of the mules of the Hyperborean land.[106] The phallus probably struck an informal, uninhibited note, therefore. But it was also, above all, a symbol and a celebration, or at least an acknowledgement, of male lust.[107] The proof lies not so much in aitiological myths that explain the rite through incidents of frustrated lust, nor yet in the thoroughly lustful song with which Dikaiopolis in Aristophanes accompanies his phallic procession, as in the manifest continuity between the rituals and the perpetual aching desires of Dionysus'

[105] On all this see the brilliant study by Csapo, 'Riding the Phallus', with pictures and detailed study of the cup Florence 3897 (here Fig. 22; Deubner, *Attische Feste*, pl. 22 (a drawing); Csapo/Slater, *Ancient Drama*, pl. 19). For a simpler phallus pole on a r.f. cup by the Sabouroff painter (Malibu 86.AE.296) see ibid. pl. 1c. Aristophanes: *Ach.* 259–60. Semos of Delos: *FGrH* 396 F 24 ap. Ath. 622a (Csapo/Slater, *Ancient Drama*, 98). For *ithyphalloi* in Attica see Demochares, *FGrH* 75 F 2, and Hyperides fr. 50 Jensen ap. Harpocr. ι 10.

[106] Pind. *Pyth.* 10.36, cited by F. Lissarrague, 'The Sexual Life of Satyrs', in *Before Sexuality*, 53–81 (a splendid account), at p. 55; G. Hedreen, *JHS* 124 (2004), 51–8. I have not been able to see A. di Nola, 'Riso e oscenità', in his *Antropologia religiosa* (Florence 1974), to which Lissarrague refers. Children: Ar. *Nub.* 539.

[107] See the remarks of A. Henrichs in *Papers on the Amasis Painter and his World* (Malibu, Calif. 1987), 94–9, who builds on Burkert, *Greek Religion*, 166. Both recognize that phalluses mean different things in different contexts (though the old explanatory tools of 'aversion' and 'fertility' seldom achieve much).

(*a*)

(*b*)

Fig. 22. Phallos poles on the two sides of an Attic black figure cup, *c.*560 BC.

companions the satyrs, so comically depicted on such a huge number of vases. The satyrs are not merely negative examples of a lust that is undiscriminating and outrageously uncontrolled; they also express, in comically transferred form, a recognition and even a complaisant acceptance of the power of desire within those who are not satyrs but men.[108] Such desire is stimulated by Dionysus in his capacity as god of wine, as the ancients often pointed out. But to be maddened by desire is also in itself a Dionysiac experience, in the sense of being a form of 'madness'. Aphrodite is patroness of love or desire when seen as a relation between two persons. Viewed merely in its effects on a desiring male subject, desire derives rather from Dionysus.[109] No ancient source, when listing the domains of Dionysus' competence, mentions 'sexuality'. Yet it is hard to dispute that issues of sex or at least gender were close to the heart of his appeal.

We must turn now to the 'Anacreontic vases', a series of vases dating from *c*.530–*c*.460 which show males ('Booners') revelling in what appears to be women's attire;[110] they take their most familiar name from a belief, no longer accepted, that they depict a fashion specifically associated with the luxurious poet Anacreon and his circle. That the figures depicted are unusually dressed men, not women in false beards, is now generally agreed; their beards, it is true, are unnaturally large, but that is an artifice of the painters to underline the paradoxical contrast between the nature of their subjects, and their garb. Bearded though they are, they wear or sport some or all of the following items: turban, long tunic, soft boots (the *kothornos*), earrings, lyre (the *barbitos*), parasol. Some items in this list had once been men's garb, or had 'oriental' associations; but taken as a whole the booners' outfit unquestionably looked effeminate to the vase-painters' eyes. The proof, or one of them, lies in two white ground lekythoi now in Paris which were evidently designed

[108] Myths: those relating to Ikarios and Prosymnos (Csapo, 'Riding the Phallus', 266–7, 275–6). Dikaiopolis' song: Ar. *Ach*. 261–79. Satyrs and human sexuality: cf. E. Hall in M. Wyke (ed.), *Parchments of Gender* (Oxford 1998), 13–37; Moraw, *Mänade*, 247 (identification with satyrs); Isler-Kerenyi, *Dionysos*, 105 and 227 ('essere satiri voleva dunque dire essere felici'). Negative examples: Lissarrague in *Before Sexuality*, 66. The satyrs come to express others things too not directly related to Dionysus: there is something of the child in them, and they are also an oblique way of imagining slaves (for links between their sexuality and that of slaves see Lissarrague, op. cit., 56–7; the satyrs of literature too have many servile traits, and are often depicted in temporary servitude (R. Seaford, *Euripides* Cyclops, Oxford 1984, 33–6). On their childishness see Lissarrague in *Masks of Dionysus*, 219–20).

[109] The figure of Eros does not appear with Satyrs on vases before the mid-5th c.: Lissarrague in *Before Sexuality*, 66.

[110] See especially D. C. Kurtz and J. Boardman, 'Booners', *Greek Vases in the J. Paul Getty Museum* 3 (1986), 35–70; F. Frontisi-Ducroux and F. Lissarrague, 'From ambiguity to ambivalence: a Dionysiac excursion through the "Anakreontic" vases', in *Before Sexuality*, 221–56; M. C. Miller, 'Re-examining Transvestism in Archaic and Classical Athens: the Zewadski Stamnos', *AJA* 103 (1999), 223–58 (a splendid study with much essential comparative literature on cross-dressing). On occasional forms of cross-dressing by satyrs and maenads see C. Caruso, 'Travestissements dionysiaques', in C. Bérard *et al.*, *Images et société en Grèce ancienne* (Lausanne 1987), 103–9; Miller, op. cit., 245–6.

Fig. 23. 'Booners', with flute-girl, *c.*490–470 BC.

as a pair.[111] They depict two identically dressed figures in identical postures; but one is a booner, one a woman. With their unshaven beards, the booners are not seeking to disguise their gender; they are merely 'putting on women's clothes', a phrase and a practice quite often found in association with formal and informal Dionysiac rites up and down the Greek world. Just this is done by Pentheus in Euripides' *Bacchae*; and in that play as in Aeschylus' *Edonoi* Dionysus himself is accused of effeminacy (in *Bacchae* the effeminacy is chiefly manifested in hairstyle, but in Aeschylus also in dress). In comedy, the god's unmanliness both of dress and character has become a trope.[112]

The context of the booners' activities is for us to guess. They are regularly associated with revellers, drinking, and music, and often seem to be dancing.[113] The best view is probably that they are upper-class men amusing themselves at symposia and the *komoi* that could follow on from them, though it is certainly not excluded that such behaviour could also find a home in slightly more formal Dionysiac contexts. Why did they do it? Dionysus' own effeminate locks are, according to Euripides' Pentheus, a snare for women, and we know the image of the marriage of Dionysus and Ariadne to have been erotically charged in a way that almost no other divine amour

[111] See Frontisi-Ducroux/Lissarrague in *Before Sexuality*, fig. 7.18–19 (Musée du Petit Palais, Paris, 335 and 336), also figs. 7.11, 7.14–15, and their comments pp. 218–19; Miller, op. cit., 240. This point is not addressed in the critique of Miller in R. T. Neer, *Style and Politics in Athenian Vase-Painting* (Cambridge 2002), 222, n. 84. Neer may be right that Miller restricts the canon too much by excluding figures (such as his fig. 12) who have some accoutrements, but not all, of 'full dress' booners: these partial booners are oriental but not effeminate.

[112] Transvestite rites: Csapo, 'Riding the Phallus', 262–3 [+]. Pentheus: Eur. *Bacch.* 836, 852. On the dramatic representation of Dionysus (Aesch. fr. 59, 61; Eur. *Bacch.* 353, θηλύμορφος, and 453–9, long hair and pale skin; Ar. *Ran.* 46, cf. Cratinus fr. 40) see Csapo, 261–2.

[113] Drinking and revellers: see Frontisi-Ducroux/Lissarrague, op. cit; Miller, op. cit., 236–8 (ibid. 245–6 on a lekythos in Princeton which might indicate a procession). Music and dancing: S. D. Price, 'Anacreontic Vases Reconsidered', *GRBS* 31 (1990), 133–75, at 143, n. 28. M.-H. Delavaud-Raux, *RA* (1995), 227–63, goes so far as to see them as parodying the female Dionysiac dances depicted on the '*Lenaea*' vases (p. 306 above); Price too (op. cit.) sees them as performers. Symposia and *komoi*: see the texts adduced by Csapo, 'Riding the Phallus', 262.

was.[114] But the booners of the vases are not obviously interested either in women or in men; the scenes lack erotic overtones altogether, as if gender confusion has put their protagonists beyond sexuality.[115] Initiatory cross-dressing, even if still associated with Dionysus, is something quite different. The booners are upper-class Athenians, it has been suggested, who felt under threat from the emerging democracy and subconsciously chose this indirect way to assert their right to be different, to act as they pleased. At the symposia shown on pots, individuals also dressed up as Scythians, Phrygians and later as Persians. The point would be to be mildly outrageous, therefore.[116]

The suggested line of descent from the booners to the bad boys' clubs of the late fifth and early fourth centuries is intriguing and plausible, but we seem also to need some account of the attraction of this particular form of irregular behaviour. The most interesting guide is Euripides' portrayal of Pentheus' cross-dressing in *Bacchae*, even if some elements (such as Pentheus' prurient desire to spy on wild maenadic revels) are relevant only to the situation within the play. We can note, first, that the point of assuming women's clothes is to become like a maenad (915). It is as if the most authentic human followers of Dionysus are the maenads, and a man who wishes to come close to the god must imitate their condition.[117] But, second, there is a high shame-barrier that Pentheus must surmount in order to do so: 'I cannot put on women's clothes', he says at one point categorically (836). Thirdly and crucially, cross-dressing and madness are brought as close together as can be. On the level of plot, Dionysus declares that he must instil in Pentheus a 'mild frenzy' if he is to overcome his inhibitions against assuming such garb (851). But the result is that we first see Pentheus mad when we first see him in women's clothes (912 ff.); that is to say, ecstasy appears as a consequence of transvestism no less than as a precondition for it. Two of the Dionysiac madnesses, drunkenness and lust, are always available to men; cross-dressing permits a kind of access also to the third, that intoxication without wine normally reserved for women.

[114] Xen. *Symp.* 9. 2–7; cf. Daraki, *Dionysos*, 97–103, esp. 99 on how the couple of Dionysus-Ariadne 'abolishes the division which opposes marriage to desire'; M. H. Jameson, 'The Asexuality of Dionysus', in *Masks of Dionysus*, 44–64. Cratinus fr. 278 speaks of the sexual yearning of Dionysus' 'concubine' (unidentified) for the absent god. The obvious parallel for Dionysus as embodiment of a gentle sexuality attractive to women is Adonis. This is yet another aspect of the gender complexities of the cult.

[115] So Frontisi-Ducroux/Lissarrague, op. cit., 228–9 (and, on the 'transcendence of sex' of Dionysus himself, 232, n. 109); Miller, op. cit., 247, speaks of a 'sexless third gender'.

[116] So Miller, op. cit., 246–53, with reference to M. Garber, *Vested Interests: Cross-dressing and Cultural Anxiety* (London 1992), a work which associates group cross-dressing with 'category crisis'. Miller notes the offensive *θηλύτητες ἐσθήτων* ascribed to Alcibiades in Plut. *Alc.* 16.1. On Athenian hellfire clubs see O. Murray in id. (ed.), *Sympotica* (Oxford 1990), 149–61. Scythians etc.: see B. Cohen in I. Malkin (ed.), *Ancient Perceptions of Greek Ethnicity* (Washington 2001), 242–51.

[117] See Frontisi-Ducroux/Lissarrague, op. cit., 231: they observe that on vases from c.510–460 Dionysus is typically accompanied by satyrs and by nymphs, not mortal men (though the case is different earlier, especially in the work of the Amasis painter).

I have treated phallic processions and cross-dressing as distinct phenomena. But they converge in the ambit of the *ithyphalloi*, performers who according to Semos of Delos wear masks of drunken men and women's clothes as they escort the phallus. Semos' description mentions no particular polis, but the combination of mask (probably), cross-dressing and phallic pole is found on a red figure cup by the Sabouroff painter, now in the Getty museum.[118] The juxtaposition of sexual identities here reaches a paradoxical extreme, with the symbol of masculine desire being carried by feminized men. And at this extreme there is blurring too of the neat distinction made hitherto between phallic rites, which are about sex, and Dionysiac transvestism, which is about ecstasy. To take the extreme case as key to the whole complex may be an error. But it has been argued that a certain ambivalence often attended phallic rites conducted by men, a hinted awareness that the phallus which one brandished as if to penetrate others might also enter oneself.[119] An Argive rite in which men sat astride a phallus-pole was explained by a scandalous myth which made Dionysus himself a catamite.

That intriguing argument cannot be taken further here. I revert instead to the question of women. Women, we have seen, are the god's privileged congregation. Yet, as has often been noted, the occasions in Attica when they could certainly worship Dionysus are very few. Every two years a team was dispatched to join the Delphic Thyiads revelling in mid-winter on Parnassus. This was full-blown maenadism, but only small numbers can have been involved. Within Attica, the fourteen *gerarai* performed secret rites at the *Anthesteria*, and also participated in two further mysterious minor festivals (*Theoinia* and *Iobaccheia*). At the deme level, we find a recognition of the special status of women vis-à-vis Dionysus in the stipulation that meat from a sacrifice to Semele at Erchia was *γυναιξὶ παραδόσιμος* ('which may be handed over/for handing over to women').[120] The *Lenaea* is a blank sheet, on which we may inscribe whatever fancy dictates, though we must certainly stop short of a mass exodus to the mountains. But only if we allow fancy quite

[118] Malibu 86.AE.296 (Csapo, 'Riding the Phallus', plate Ic: ibid. 265–6 for the link with the *ithyphalloi*, perhaps first noted by J. R. Green, *Greek Vases in the J. Paul Getty Museum* 2, 1985, 105, n. 7). Semos: n. 105 above. Semos describes their attire without drawing attention to its femininity, but lexicographers make the obvious implication explicit (Hesych., Phot., Sud., s.v. *Ἰθύφαλλοι*). The passage associating ithyphallic rites with passive homosexuality quoted by Csapo, 263, from Suda *β* 403 lacks authority: it comes from Synesius, *Laus. Calv.* 21. But Demosthenes made a similar slur, Dem. 54.17. The figures on the Malibu cup are apparently wearing bald masks: both beards and bald masks pick out masculine traits which are in deliberate tension with feminine dress.

[119] This is the central thesis of Csapo, 'Riding the Phallus'. It depends to a large extent on a detailed exegesis, which cannot be discussed here, of the Florentine cup (Fig. 22 above). A fragment of a Clazomenian neck amphora (Csapo, pl. 8b) is unambiguous, but not necessarily representative. Wholly unconvincing is the interpretation in these terms of Pentheus' seat in a pine tree in Eur. *Bacchae*. Scandalous myth: most fully Clem. Al. *Protr.* 2.34.3; Csapo, 275–6.

[120] Parnassus: see p. 83 above; *gerarai*: see p. 304, and *Athenian Religion*, 299–300; Erchia: *LSCG* 18 a 48.

large scope will we be able to give women en masse any substantial role in the public festivals of Dionysus.

Alongside the public festivals we dimly descry, through a mist of official male disapproval, informal bacchic rites that were open to women; Aristophanes indeed represents them as very popular, but, beyond a reference to 'cymbals', reveals nothing of their content or organization (were they 'initiations'? could men attend too?).[121] The only bacchic 'initiations' that are clearly attested in Attica are a specialized form, the 'orphic-bacchic' rites administered, to both sexes, by 'orpheus-initiators'. The formal purpose of these was to secure well-being in the afterlife, but they included bacchic 'play', and some may have undergone them chiefly with a view to more immediate enjoyment. And Dionysiac experience under another name was available in the rites of Sabazius, of 'Mother' and in other elective cults.[122] It is not in his relation to women alone, unfortunately, that the unofficial Dionysus almost entirely escapes our view. Plato once speaks with disapproval of certain 'purifications and initiations' in which participants imitate drunken Nymphs, Pans, Silens and Satyrs.[123] The passage is a much-cited one, necessarily, there being no other direct evidence till much later for dressing up in such guises as part of a ritual. The popularity of such practices remains hard to judge.

But stay, it may be objected, ought we not to use our eyes, in studying this god whose blank and pitiless gaze so often still confronts ours directly?[124] Can we not exploit the uniquely abundant evidence of the vase-paintings to get beyond these frustratingly vague formulations? The material is indeed abundant, and students of Dionysus have the experience unfamiliar to hellenists of

[121] Ar. *Lys.* 1–3; cf. the *Dionusiazousai* of Timocles.

[122] On all this see *Athenian Religion*, 161–2, 191–4. Orphic-bacchic: Eur. *Hipp.* 953–4; Pl. *Resp.* 364e; both sexes (and the possibility of recurrent 'initiation'): Theophr. *Char.* 16.12. Little can be done with the metaphorical reference to Bacchic initiation in Ar. *Ran.* 357. There is certainly initiatory/mystic language in Eur. *Bacch.*, though opinions differ about its extent; it could in my view as well derive from orphic/bacchic rites as from separate 'Bacchic mysteries' of the type supposed by R. Seaford (*CQ* 31, 1981, 252–75 and in his edition of the play, Warminster 1996) and R. Schlesier, 'Die Seele im Thiasos. Zu Euripides, *Bacchae* 75', in J. Holzhausen (ed.), *ψυχη-Seele -anima*. FS Karin Alt (Stuttgart/Leipzig 1998), 37–72; cf. ead., 'Dionysos in der Unterwelt'.

[123] Pl. *Leg.* 815c; cf. Seaford, *Reciprocity and Ritual*, 266. Combinations of komasts or padded dancers with satyrs in early 6th-c. iconography are sometimes taken as evidence that the 'satyrs' are in fact men (Hedreen, *Silens*, 156, though he envisages performance rather than mere dressing up; for a different nuance see Isler-Kerenyi, *Dionysos*, 47, 83, cf. 139). The vases showing Dionysus, with satyrs, in his ship-cart (p. 302 above) may attest satyr-mimicry in public cult. The Platonic passage is central to the argument of Bérard, *Anodoi, passim*, that the vases which associate satyrs with goddesses (only once a god) emergent from the earth relate to initiations: the emergence of the deity stands for the initiate's rebirth. He takes the 'hammers' borne by the satyrs as noise-making instruments. Other difficulties aside (cf. p. 423, n. 28), the predominance of female 'initiates' appears inexplicable on this theory. C. Bron, 'Porteurs de thyrse ou bacchants', in C. Bérard (ed.), *Images et société en Grèce ancienne* (1987), 145–53 (cf. Moraw, Mänade, 197–99) detects a ritual in certain images showing a seated veiled woman with satyrs.

[124] On the special importance of seeing and being seen in Dionysiac cult (Eur. *Bacch.* 470; masks; frontal depiction already on the François vase) see Isler-Kerenyi, *Dionysos*, 180, n. 92 [+].

confronting an almost uncontrollable mass of evidence.[125] But the truths that emerge are, in the main, big and general ones about the role of Dionysus in the Greek imagination, not historical or cultic particularities.[126] The Dionysiac world of the vases is a world of, in Euripides' phase, 'congregationalized hearts'; Dionysus is seldom alone, almost always accompanied by his satyrs or maenads or both.[127] Conversely, the familiar type of votive relief which shows a procession of worshippers approaching the deity is rather rare in the cult of Dionysus; this god's place is among his worshippers, not detached from them behind an altar. The satyrs and maenads together incorporate the whole gamut of Dionysiac 'madness'; the satyrs are subject to drunkenness and sexual frenzy, the maenads undergo an ecstatic encounter with wild nature.[128] Some satyrs (though not till the mid fifth century) are almost housetrained, others very wild; maenads range across the same spectrum, though the savage extreme in their case is horrendous, whereas in that of satyrs it is mainly comic. Both sets of representations express, like Euripides' *Bacchae*, Dionysus' ambivalent potential. Mythical maenads, who tear animals limb from limb, blur into 'real' maenads, who demurely ladle wine from jars in front of an image of the god; there is no sharp line of division. There can be no such blurring of mythical into real satyrs; but masquerades in which men dressed up as satyrs (and satyr plays) to some extent provide here too a real dimension, even if the frequency of such mumming is very uncertain.

The god himself is unimaginable without his followers but does not resemble them. He is seldom drunk, seldom mad, never sexually aroused. The relationship with Ariadne, often depicted, is dignified and restrained. Even in grim situations he retains a smiling tranquillity which comes suddenly to seem sinister. (Was he a model for Plato's portrayal of Socrates?) The calmness of the god of madness is a characteristic Dionysian paradox. His followers surrender their individuality in the collective excitement. But they do not achieve union with the source of that excitement, however close they may seem to approach. Dionysus eludes them, and retains his enigmatic smile.

[125] See Carpenter, *Archaic Dionysiac Imagery* and *Fifth-Century Dionysiac Imagery*; Schöne, *Thiasos*; Moraw, *Mänade*; Isler-Kerenyi, *Dionysos*; p. 306 above on Lenaea vases; C. Gasparri in *LIMC* s.v. *Dionysos*.

[126] Moraw, *Mänade*, argues from iconography that maenadism first became familiar in Attica in the late Pisistratid epoch (249; 252 is more cautious), and that mixed private *thiasoi* became accepted in the 5th c. (199–200; 259); Isler-Kerenyi, *Dionysos*, 178–82, postulates Bacchic mysteries for the period *c.*540. None of these points seems to me at all secure.

[127] Schöne, *Thiasos*, 1. The mixing of genders in the 5th-c. iconographic *thiasos* is probably (but see the previous note) a non-realistic feature, in that in actual cult citizen maenads did not mix with men (for whom the satyrs stand). In 6th-c. iconography the companions of the satyrs often yield to their advances, but lack clear maenadic traits; the true maenads of later imagery repel the satyrs (S. McNally, *Arethusa* 11, 1978, 129–30; F. Lissarrague in *Before Sexuality*, 65: 'maenads are as chaste as they are sober'; Moraw, *Mänade*, 42–5). We seem to move from scenes which have the *komos* (men plus *hetairai*) as template (Schöne, 116–18) to an effective if unrealistic deployment of the prototypical worshippers of both genders.

[128] For a defence of the application of the language of 'madness' or 'possession' even to real maenads see J. N. Bremmer, 'Greek Maenadism Reconsidered', *ZPE* 55 (1984), 267–86, at 281.