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## THE WOLFISH LOVER: THE DOG AS A COMIC METAPHOR IN HOMOEROTIC SYMPOSIUM POTTERY

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### ABSTRACT

This paper examines the image of the pet dog on Greek red-figure pottery from the late archaic and early classical periods. At least half of the representations depict the dogs accompanying boys and men in the gymnasium, often in homoerotic scenarios. The article suggests that rather than being ancillary figures, contributing to a sense of realism in the background setting, the dogs themselves are visual metaphors for the *erastês*, adding an element of humor and tension to the scenes. In the absence of a depiction of an *erastês*, a dog may be shown as a comic metonymic

stand-in for the pursuing lover. These images are varied and multi-layered, with polyvalent meanings. Considering the representations of dogs within the context of the humorously and erotically charged symposium helps us to understand the function and meaning of the dog as a visual joke referring to the comically aggressive or foolish *erastês*.

Cette étude aborde les représentations du chien sur les vases à figures rouges, de la fin de l'époque archaïque au début de l'époque classique. Au moins sur la moitié d'entre elles le chien accompagne des hommes adultes et de jeunes garçons qui se rendent au gymnase, et souvent selon une mise en scène homoérotique. On propose l'interprétation suivante : loin d'être une figure secondaire contribuant, en arrière-plan, au réalisme de la scène, les chiens sont, en eux-mêmes, des métaphores des amants, et leur présence ajoute une touche d'humour et de tension érotique à la scène. Dans les images où l'*erastês* n'est pas représenté, le chien peut être placé à cet endroit comme un double métonymique et comique de l'amant chassant son aimé.

Ces représentations sont variées et multiples, avec des significations polysémiques. L'étude de la représentation des chiens dans un contexte plein d'humour et d'érotisme qu'est le banquet permet de mettre au jour la fonction et la signification du chien, un jeu/une plaisanterie visuelle renvoyant à l'*erastês*, si comiquement agressif ou éconduit.

### KEYWORDS

Greek painted pottery,  
gymnasium,  
symposium,  
athletes,  
dog,  
wolf,  
pederasty,  
homoeroticism.

### MOTS-CLÉS

Céramique grecque,  
gymnase,  
banquets,  
athlètes,  
chien,  
loup,  
pédérastie,  
homoérotisme.

In late archaic and early classical red-figure sympotic pottery, homoerotic images of young athletes surrounded by older men in the gymnasium are very common. Often accompanying the human subjects in the gymnasium is another figure: the pet dog. A rough statistical analysis from the Beazley Archive shows that dogs are represented on over 400 red-figure vases. At least half of these are depicted with athletes in the gymnasium, or otherwise accompanying boys or men, sometimes in explicit scenes of "courtship" [1]. Despite their prevalence on Greek pottery, however, dogs have been underrepresented in scholarship, and when mentioned, have simply been read as illustrations of everyday life, perhaps because our own cultural associations with "man's best friend" are so strong that we view the images through our own cultural assumptions. The temptation is to see these gymnasium scenes as documentary accounts, perhaps associating them with the matter-of-fact descriptions like Arrian's, who mentions that his dog "escorts me to the gymnasium, and sits by while I am exercising" [2]. The imagery on Greek painted pottery, however, is not factual evidence, but rather imaginary scenes in which fantasies and humor are given form [3]. This paper will show that the concept of the dog in ancient Greece was multi-faceted, symbolic, and often highly comedic. In fact, the dog could be used as a visual metaphor for the *erastês* himself (the generally older male lover of a younger boy) and the images of these seemingly innocent domestic canines were used in a

particularly rich way to generate humor during the symposium [4]. Indeed, animal scenes in general have been recognized as metaphorical and not just ornamental filler [5], and in light of the textual and visual evidence, the images of dogs, in erotic contexts especially, deserve closer examination.

The painted sympotic pottery of the late sixth and early fifth centuries BCE must be understood within the Greek pederastic context. The scenes under examination here depict the gymnasium, and were viewed in the symposium, the two most important loci for homoerotic interaction in the Athenian world [6]. Understanding the images portrayed, and their subversion of the norms, or adherence to them, requires an understanding of the cultural conventions surrounding pederastic practice. Furthermore, it must be understood that the homoeroticism of gymnasium imagery on symposium vessels, like the representations of dogs, does not provide a documentary realism, or necessarily offer a description of historical practice; rather the images play with the expectations regarding social standards in multiple ways. The approach this study takes is based on the fundamental concept that the viewers of these symposium vessels would have normative expectations of pederastic behavior in mind, so that the subversion or exaggeration of them in the images would read as comic. The association of the *erastês* with either the dangerous hunting dog or the mawkish lap dog could lampoon embarrassing and improper behavior of an *erastês* towards his *erômenos* [7].

[1] In general Beazley Archive searches, "dog" is combined with "athlete" 12 times. But this is a low number, since many athletic scenes are often not marked as such in the archive. For example, there are 126 instances of "dog and youth", and many of these boys may be athletes. "Dog and strigil" also appears at least 21 times.

[2] Arrian, *On Hunting*, 5. PHILLIPS & WILLCOCK 1999: 97.

[3] FERRARI 2003, PARKER 2015, SCHNAPP 1989.

[4] It is necessary to remark upon the convention of referring to these figures as the "*erastês*" and "*erômenos*". The assignment of these labels to the imagery is a modern scholarly creation. It is unknown how the ancient Greeks themselves would have referred to these figures.

[5] EDLUND 1980.

[6] "The *palaistra* is one of the several iconographic

markers in the Attic pederastic scenes that indicate the importance of pederastic activities to the visual construction of Athenian aristocratic society. This setting underscores the agonistic nature of gift giving and courtship, which were designed to enhance the status of both *erastai* and *eromenoi*. We have also noted that a majority of the pederastic depictions occur on drinking paraphernalia affiliated with the *symposion*, an aristocratic institution. *Kalos* inscriptions addressed to beautiful aristocratic youths, the walking sticks on which the *erastai* lean, and the mantles casually thrown over the shoulders of *erastai* have also been cited as aristocratic markers." BARRINGER 2001: 85.

[7] The mocking of bad pederastic behaviour in Attic comedy also singles out the tropes of the aggressive lecher, or the persistent hopeful *erastês*. SHAPIRO 2015: 190, 194-195.

In the images, the *erômenos* is recognized by his depiction as erotically beautiful and in the ideal age class: a post-pubescent youth who has not yet grown a beard [8]. This is indicated by developed musculature and a smooth face. Often these ideally depicted boys are also shown as smaller than the bearded males nearby, though this use of scale is less consistent in the corpus of Greek pottery than their general appearance is. When pot painters found it necessary to emphasize the perfection of an *erômenos*' age, they would also include the detail of the *ioulos*, the beginning of beard growth on the cheeks [9]. The *erastês* figure is usually likewise clearly marked. In clearly indicated gymnasium scenes, the younger boys are the practicing athletes, and shown nude, whereas the *erastês* figures are bearded men who are cloaked and often carrying a walking stick, an indication that they are merely visiting the gymnasium, not participating in exercises themselves [10].

The abundance of eroticized athletic images on symposium vessels encouraged and normalized the sexualization of youths in general [11]. These images also functioned to feed the desire for young beautiful protégés by helping to create a demand. Jacques Lacan's theories of the relationship between desire and demand can serve to explain the logistics of this process [12]. The upper age limit of the *erômenos* creates the inevitability of loss for the *erastês*. The relationship has a culturally prescribed ending, in which the *erômenos* becomes a fully enfranchised citizen, and then becomes an *erastês* to his own *erômenos*. Therefore, the brevity of the relationship creates the

eventual feeling of lack, which in turn creates the demand for the next *erômenos* [13]. To add to the already limited availability of the *erômenos*, those of ephebe age will be forced to remove themselves from their "Männerbund" for a good part of their final year of their military training, which would, according to Lacan's theories, intensify the desire felt by the *erastês* [14]. Desire for the young athlete is also maintained by the fixation upon sympotic images, creating a fantasy of the desired youths. Representations of young, beautiful boys, shown in the symposium would stimulate and further the older men's interest in the relationship, with all the responsibilities it entailed [15].

It is well documented that the behavior of both parties during pederastic courtship had prescribed ideals [16]. The *erastês* is the pursuer, and the *erômenos* is the pursued. We understand from texts that the "boy" should be disciplined and modest, and conduct himself with the utmost *aidôs* and *sôphrosunê* (shame and moderation) [17]. Therefore, young athletes would be the most desired of potential *erômenoï*, since their disciplined training requires these qualities, while their ongoing exercises suggest their physical beauty [18]. In such an asymmetrical relationship, however, these expected behaviors, are fraught with complications and tensions. The boundaries in question offer too many points of slippage for anyone to be completely above reproach. Transgressions are possible at every turn. Fisher notes that though the philosophical ideal of the pederastic relationship stressed the value of a reciprocal, mutual admiration of the minds, the expectation

[8] Up to the age of 20, approximately, though individuals vary in their maturation rate. MOLLER 1987: 750.

[9] *Hêbê* is estimated to be a two year period around the age of 16–18. FERRARI 2002: 133, 135, and FERRARI 1993: 104.

[10] While the age class markers are used in other scenes without erotic undertones, in the sexually charged contexts of the gymnasium and symposium, the eroticism is implicit.

[11] Shapiro argues convincingly that the eroticization of young men would have been expected and common, not just among elites, but city-wide. SHAPIRO 2015.

[12] Lacan's ideas of the fantasy of desire for the Other, and the demand for fulfillment, which is exacerbated by the feelings of lack, or stress of loss, fit the complexities of normative pederastic courtship as we understand it very well. LACAN 1966: 231.

[13] "Most of all, *hêbê* is fleeting, encompassing the brief span of time between the first appearance of down on the boy's face and the growth of a proper beard." FERRARI 2002: 133.

[14] On the *Männerbund*, see BREMMER 1990: 135, and FERRARI 2002: 113.

[15] On the civic duty of the pederastic relationship and

the role of the *erastês* as a mentor, see FERRARI 2002: 148, BREMMER 1990: 137, CAIRNS 1993: 170.

[16] These are monitored largely by public apprehensions of the behavior of both parties. One's reputation would rest upon this perception. HALPERIN 1990: 93–97. COHEN, D 1991: 196, 198. LEAR & CANTARELLA 2008: 192. BOEHRINGER & CACIAGLI 2015: 29–39.

[17] Although our understanding of these norms derives from texts such as Aristophanes' *The Clouds* and Aeschines' *Against Timarchus*, there are also conventional iconographic ways to depict these behaviors, e.g. by showing a youth draped and veiled to convey *aidôs* (FERRARI 1990: 190 and *passim*), or even with his foreskin ligatured, to indicate that he is sexually unavailable (see below), or of course by the manner in which he interacts with the *erastês*. Dover documents several examples of boys refusing the attentions of older men, DOVER 1978: 92. Cairns also discusses the importance of *aidôs* for boys at the symposium, CAIRNS 1993: 168, and the physical signs of *aidôs*: CAIRNS 1993: 6.

[18] The pinnacle of youthful beauty and athletic achievement is found in the person of Autolykos, in whose honor Xenophon's symposium was held. The *aidôs* and *sôphrosunê* of the young athletic victor are explicitly praised, and his beauty became the topic of the conversation for the night.



Figure 1

Pederastic courting scene in which a dog mimics the actions and intentions of the *erastês*. Athenian black-figure amphora, c. 540 B.C. Attributed to Group E.

BA 301064\*, ABF 134.30, Vatican City, Museo Gregoriano Etrusco Vaticano 352.

Drawing: Michelle Ranta, 2017.

that physical desire would be fulfilled on some level was also present [19]. However, though the norms dictate that an *erastês* was expected to be rather persistent and full of desire, the potential to be made ridiculous by failing to win his choice of *erômenos* was a constant concern, for he must be seen as pursuing the youth for high-minded reasons, not just sexual gratification. This paper deals with some of the ways in which humorous dog imagery addresses these concerns with biting hilarity, while referring to the social tensions possible during the symposium [20].

So, what role do the depictions of dogs play in what we will call pederastic courting scenes? They are portrayed in a myriad of ways, sometimes symbolically, and sometimes adding sexual humor to the episode. On a black-figure amphora in the Vatican, we see two

dogs amongst men who are shown to be engaged in different erotic behaviors: bringing each other love-gifts, using the stereotypical “up and down” seduction gesture, and even reaching for a young man’s posterior (fig. 1). The dogs in this scene, when mentioned by scholars at all, are said to connect the *erastai* to the hunt [21]. The hunt is indeed an important dimension of the dog’s metaphorical role, but these images are more than mere tools used to set the scene. The iconography may contain many associations at once, and while the hunt connection would have been immediately understood, the actions of the dogs in the scene deserve notice.

Upon closer examination, it is clear that dogs add a level of humor and diversion to the scene. The dogs seem to be mirroring their human counterparts: the one with the center couple not only puts its nose directly to the genitals of the *erômenos*, the younger man, but its tail arches up to “goose” the *erastês* alongside him, just as the *erômenos* is being “goosed” by the man behind him. Not only that, but its tail is directly level with and pointed in the same direction as the penis of the man behind him, towards the rear end of the other man, perhaps hinting at that man’s latent desires. The dog to the left seems to have similarly lascivious intentions, poking its nose up to the buttocks of the man in front of him. These dogs are clearly not merely attendants in the scene, but full participants, humorously doubling the actions of the men. At the same time, they also provide a commentary on the erotic wishes of the men who may be refraining from the action themselves out of *aidôs*. Furthermore, we know from expressions like *κυνόδεσμος*, among others, that one of the slang terms for the male member was *κύων* (dog) [22]. It is therefore possible that these canine companions also are a visual pun, giving their actions in this scene an added element of hilarity.

The cultural association of pederastic courtship with the hunting of wild game has received much scholarly attention in recent years [23]. The metaphor of the

[19] Fisher cites Plato’s *Phaedrus*, and both Xenophon’s and Plato’s *Symposium* (Plato 184d-185c) in FISHER 2008: 189, and also SHAPIRO 2015: 178.

[20] While humor may relieve social stress, it may also exacerbate it, as Halliwell shows. STEPHENSON 1951. HALLIWELL 1991: 286-287. HALLIWELL 2008: 127, 151.

[21] The hunt as a metaphorical understanding is covered extensively, especially in SCHNAPP 1989, 1997. BARRINGER 2001. LEAR & CANTARELLA 2008: 115. The metaphor, however, is not always to be read in a straightforward way: “The relationship, however, is actually more complex and ambiguous, [than the *erastês* always being the metaphorical hunter and the *erômenos* the hunted] involving a vacillating exchange of power between the

older *erastês*, who holds social status, and the *erômenos*, who, by virtue of the desire that he inspires in the *erastês*, possesses power.” BARRINGER 2001: 70.

[22] Lilja shows that “κύων” can mean penis or dildo, citing anonymous poets as well as Aristophanes: *Lysistrata* (158) and *Knights* (1029). LILJA 1976: 71-72. “κύων, dog, usually stands for the male member”, HENDERSON 1991: 127. “An example from Phrynichos (85; A 13) is typical: *kynodesmai* are “the things with which the Athenians tied up their private parts when they stripped, because they called the penis a dog”. MILLER 2004: 12.

[23] BARRINGER 2001: 85-89, SCHNAPP 1989: 79-81, and DOVER 1989: 87f.





Figure 2

A symposiast strokes a hare under his *klinê* while singing "O most beautiful boy". Interior tondo of an Athenian red-figure kylix, c. 490 B.C.

BA 9534\*, Athens, National Museum 1357.

Drawing: Michelle Ranta, 2017.

hunt in general has been well documented and shown to have been widespread in Greece throughout the archaic and early classical periods [24]. In literature, *erastai* are also closely associated with hunters. The correlation of the *erastês* with the hunting dog may help clarify some of the subtext in scenes that otherwise seem deceptively straightforward. Barringer notices that hunt scenes are often juxtaposed with pederastic encounters, especially in images of dogs chasing hares [25]. A black-figure lekythos in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston illustrates

how these ideas are visually correlated [26]. The parallels between hunting and pederastic courting, and the association between the animals and the men seem relatively clear. The upper register features a bearded *erastês* on the left seducing a younger *erômenos* on the right. The *erastês* is also accompanied by his hunting dog, who looks up admiringly at the *erômenos*, mirroring the *erastês*' actions [27]. This triad is flanked by other potential *erastai* bearing gifts. On the side, a dog chases a hare into a trap, just as the *erastês* seduces the boy.

Comparing the boy, or *erômenos*, to a hare seems to have been common in the visual repertoire [28]. This association has been noted as an important part of the idea of hunting as a metaphor for pederastic courting, and is central to this image, from a kylix in Athens (fig. 2) [29]. While the idea of a direct visual metaphor (the image of the hare standing in for the *erômenos*) has been suggested, scholars disagree as to whether we should read the imagery as a metonym [30]. I would argue, however, not only that this is possible, but that the images of dogs, as well as hares, may be read as symbolic stand-ins, and as such, become an integral part of the scene's narrative at the same time, with compacted, multiple meanings. Thus, the gaze of the lover itself upon the beloved has been equaled to the hunter pursuing the hunted. Often the dogs on red-figured pottery are looking up at the young athletes in admiration and expectation, subjecting them to their gaze, much as the potential *erastês* does. "Meleager calls the eyes of those who are desirous of falling in love with a young boy *παίδων κύνες*, because their eyes eagerly hunt for an object of love." [31].

The ambiguity and metaphorical complexity of the imagery on vases was part of its appeal, as Richard Neer has shown [32]. In this particular example,

[24] DOVER 1989: 87, SCHNAPP 1989: 71-87.

[25] BARRINGER 2001: 83.

[26] BA 300851\*, *ABF* 92, Boston, MA, Museum of Fine Arts 08.291.

[27] The question of whether the dogs in these scenes should be interpreted as love-gifts deserves some comment. Kilmer suggests that the dog was a common love-gift (KILMER 1993a: 47). There is textual evidence that dogs could be among the gifts offered by a potential *erastês* to an *erômenos*. These examples, however, are both meant to signify extreme extravagance and in all likelihood such gifts were not very common. Barringer explains that gifts are most often either cocks or game animals, and notes that "the presentation of animal gifts to the beloved" are "usually held in the arms or out to the recipient". BARRINGER 2001: 73. Dogs on Attic pottery are never presented this way, or even shown to be clearly "presented as a gift" at all. Koch-Harnack is also dubious: "Hunde als Geschenk auf Vasenbildern lassen sich nur vermuten, und ebenso spekulativ müssen leider auch die

literarisch überlieferten Pferdepräsente bleiben." KOCH-HARNACK 1983: 63.

[28] SCHNAPP 1989: 85.

[29] KOCH-HARNACK 1983: 88, PARKER 2015: 78, TOPPER 2012: 138, BARRINGER 2001: 77, LEAR & CANTARELLA 2008: 34. Barringer has an extensive discussion of pederastic courtship as a metaphor for hunting, but it seems clear not just that the idea applies to courtship in general, but that the roles can be applied more specifically to the participants themselves.

[30] Barringer touches on this idea, particularly regarding the hare, in passing (BARRINGER 2001: 103), but Lear & Cantarella disagree (LEAR & CANTARELLA 2008: 34).

[31] LILJA 1976: 123. Meleager IV, 12, 92, *Greek Anthology*, (Loeb Classical Library 67).

[32] "At their best, Attic vase-paintings are lavish, complex, and shifting. They insist on their own objecthood, their own brute physical opacity; they resist critical tactics that would render them transparent." NEER 2002: 184.

we see a man at a symposium, in his prime as an *erastês*, reclining and apparently singing the following, written in retrograde script emanating from his mouth: OPAIDONKALLISTE, (“O Most Beautiful of Boys”), while he strokes a hare crouched under his *klinê*. This scene can be read in several ways. The first is the most simple, in which we see the desirous *erastês*, thinking about his object of affection, and the hare below may simply be a love-gift he has yet to offer the boy. But the hare also reminds us of the hunt, and the equivalence of the *erastês* with the hunter; and therefore the *erômenos* is the hunted, as the hare was before it had been caught. Consequently, the viewer is also reminded of the *erastês*’ wish to pursue the boy and keep him as his *erômenos*, which further links the idea of the boy to the hare. Moreover, the words of the symposiast directly associate his touching of the hare with his desire for his *erômenos*, making the hare a clear stand-in for the *erômenos* himself. At the same time, however, as one continues to examine the image, there is a wistful humor at play in the dissonance between the concrete metaphor and the boy’s absence.

We can also see this complicated image-play at work in a cup tondo by the Panaitios Painter (**fig. 3**). We see a long-limbed, muscular hare running up the ground line of the tondo. Behind it is a similarly leggy boy, with hands outstretched in the “sprinter” pose. The painter has also cleverly put him in a crouching position, his height contained by the frame, which makes his arms and legs pinwheel in what appears to almost be the “*knielaufen*” formula, which in earlier archaic art signified flying. This young athlete is indeed fast, and could evade the swiftest hunter. The association of the boy with the hare in flying gallop is clear. The hare is the boy, the boy is the hare. Similarly, in the “hunt as pederastic courtship” metaphor, the animals’ relationship to the humans is metonymic [33].

This metaphor of *erastês*-as-hunting dog and *erômenos*-as-hare was so common that even simple chase scenes could imply such personification. Small oil containers such as *askoi* often carry animal chase scenes, such as the one by the Pan Painter in Oxford, which features a hound on one side chasing a hare (both in full flying gallop) into a net on the other side [34]. This neat capture of a wild hare may not be



Figure 3

An athlete sprints alongside a hare.

Interior tondo of an Athenian red-figure kylix, c. 520-500 B.C. Attributed to the Panaitios Painter. BA 203239\*, ARV2 1592, formerly London, British Museum E46, now in Leipzig, Antikemuseum d. Universität Leipzig.

Drawing: Michelle Ranta, 2017.

simply a hunting scene, as it seems on the surface. It implicitly carries pederastic meaning, for not only are live hares caught this way so that they may be given to *erômenoi* as love gifts, but these animals may be seen as stand-ins for the *erastês* and the *erômenos* themselves. The hound, as the amorous *erastês*, leaps forward towards the hare, who flees as the *erômenos* was expected to do at the initial stages of courtship [35]. Seen in this light, the entrapment of the hare may be a humorous indication of the inevitability of the *erastês* winning the affections of the youth.

The prevalence of dogs in athletic and courting scenes is thus metaphorically significant. This idea seems to have been part of the discourse of pederasty, as shown by the proverb in Plato’s *Phaedrus*: “as the wolves love lambs, so the *erastai* love boys” (ὡς λύκοι ἄρνας ἀγαπῶσιν, ὡς παῖδα φιλοῦσιν ἐρασταί) [36]. Henderson also notes that a “gaping wolf” (λύκος κεχηνώς)

[33] For other examples which directly relate *erastai* to dogs and *erômenoi* to hares in erotic contexts see BA 7479\*, Paris, Musée du Louvre F85BIS, and BA 200100\*, ARV2 20, Gotha, Schlossmuseum 48, and BA 203813\*, ARV2 280.18, 362.21, Mykonos, Archaeological Museum 7.

[34] BA 7414\*, Oxford, Ashmolean Museum 1979.20.

[35] DOVER 1989: 83.

[36] Plato, *Phaedrus*, 241c-d. Cf. an *askos* in Munich, which has a chase scene similar to the hound and hare described above, but actually depicts a wolf chasing a ram. BA 5751\*, Antikensammlungen: 2543, HOFFMANN 1977: Pl. 1. 5.



is a proverbial expression for a pederast [37]. In these expressions an element of danger is injected into the relationship, which encourages the younger participant to be reserved, in order to protect himself. This perhaps is part of the implicit education of the boys, since it places the burden of chastity upon the younger participants. The older men are encouraged to pursue the boys so that these *erômenoi* may themselves learn the power of restraint, the better to become a stable member of the citizen body, while the older men, spurred on by their socially encouraged desire and

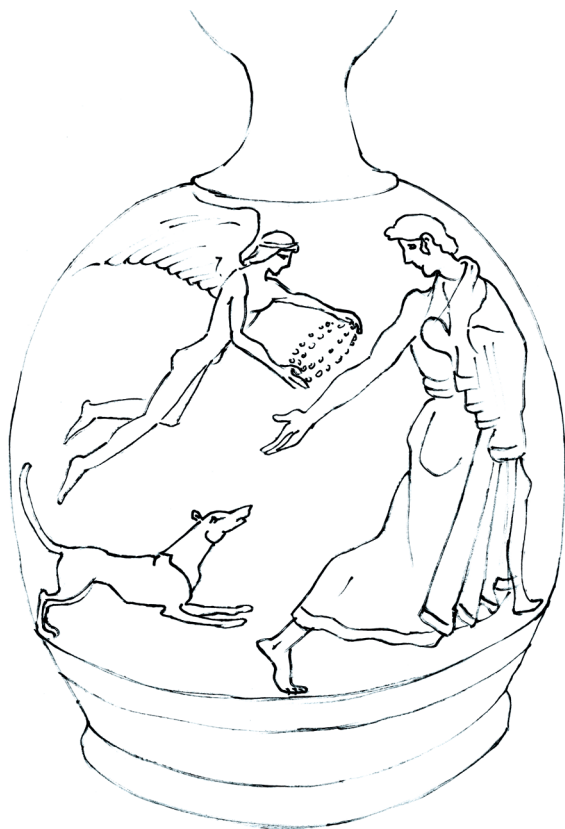
love for the boys, nurture and teach them. Comparing the *erômenos* to a lamb about to be ravaged by a wolf, and the *erastês* to the devouring canine, is a warning as well as a joke. The same is implied by some of these vase paintings. Of course, the images under discussion show pet dogs, not wolves *per se*, but the devouring canine as rapacious *erastês* applies to dogs as well, if we can judge from Greek literary conventions. As Saara Lilja notes: “the dog in old myths and in the Homeric epics may have sometimes been identified with the wolf”, and “λύσσα as etymologically akin to λύκος would suit a rabid dog’s wolf-like behavior.” [38]. Furthermore, as Lonsdale has remarked, “the dog is not far removed from his wild cousins, the wolf and jackal. Certain breeds of dogs were believed to contain wild blood. The Laconian hound had no less than seven alleged sires: lion, tiger, civet, cat, fox, jackal, and wolf.” [39] Note too that a term of abuse, κυνώπις (“dog-face”) can signify shamelessness, in particular, sexual intemperance. [40]

An even more explicit example of the dog as *erastês* and the *erômenos* as hunted may be found on a squat lekythos attributed to the Bowdoin Painter – a shape similar to the prototypical athletic oil jar, the aryballos, and most likely used by young athletes in the gymnasium (fig. 4). It depicts a hound with a figure of Eros in pursuit of a youth, who runs away rapidly [41]. As the boy runs full speed to the right, he turns around towards his pursuers and reaches his right arm back in a gesture of supplication. Sourvinou-Inwood has remarked that this pose is a trope that occurs in heterosexual pursuits [42]. She refers to the motif as the “fleeing woman”, although this pose clearly exists in the pederastic repertoire as well [43]. There may be a connection of this formulaic image to the hunt metaphor, assuming the fleeing hare may stand in for the pursued. Hull, in describing a hare hunt, notes that often the hare, after leaping sideways to get away from the hounds, “turns and looks back to see if the hounds can figure out what she has done.” [44] In this composition, Eros flies towards the boy, holding out a garland as a gift [45]. The hound gives chase,

Figure 4

Eros and a hunting dog pursue a youth. Athenian red-figure squat lekythos, c. 470 B.C. Attributed to the Bowdoin Painter. BA 208182\*, ARV2 687.224, Oxford, Ashmolean Museum 1966.512.

Drawing: Michelle Ranta, 2017.



[37] “A humorous reference to Spartan pederasty”, HENDERSON 1991: 211.

[38] LILJA 1976: 21. This is also discussed at length by Franco, who points out that there was indeed anxiety about the thin line between the pet dog and the savage wolf, FRANCO 2014: 30. See also CALDER 2011: 68-69.

[39] LONSDALE 1979: 151.

[40] LILJA 1976: 22 (Agamemnon, abused by Achilles *Iliad*, 1. 159), and LONSDALE 1979: 152: “In a moral sense the dog is turned into a shameful reproach for sexual intemperance.” See also FRANCO 2014: 86-89.

[41] DOVER 1989: 87-88.

[42] SOURVINOU-INWOOD 1987: 131-153.

[43] SOURVINOU-INWOOD 1987: 136-137.

[44] Hull seems to be describing animal behavior he has personally witnessed. While I hesitate to read any symbolic imagery in a naturalistic, positivist way, the fleeing motif does seem to replicate his descriptions. HULL 1964: 73-74.

[45] The garland is commonly offered as a love gift. DOVER 1989: 92-93.



Figure 5

An *erastês* on the prowl.

Interior tondo of an Athenian red-figure kylix, c. 480 B.C. Attributed to the Dokimasia Painter. BA 204493\*, ARV2 412.11, 1651, Ferrara, Museo Nazionale di Spina T931A.

Drawing: Michelle Ranta.

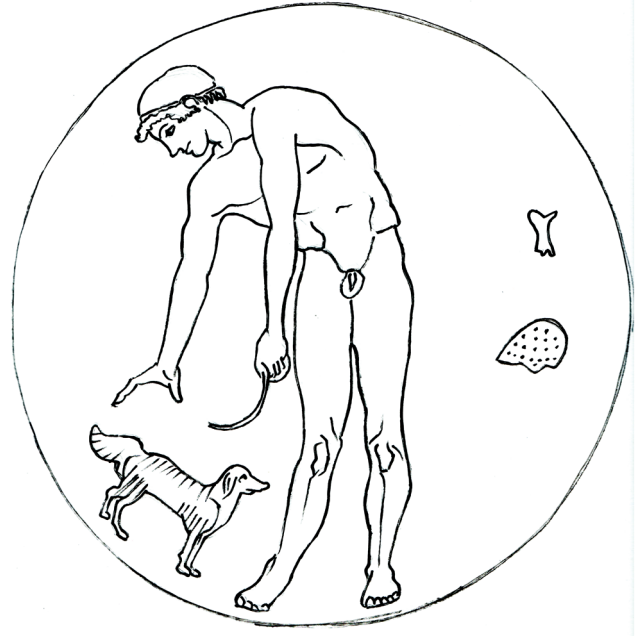


Figure 6

An athlete offers a fluffy Maltese dog the oil from his body. Labeled "Kalos Lykos" (Lykos/the wolf is beautiful). Interior tondo of an Athenian red-figure kylix, c. 470 B.C. Attributed to the Manner of the Tarquinia Painter. BA 211513\*, ARV2 1596.21, 872.23, Firenze, Museo Archeologico Etrusco 4220.

Drawing: Michelle Ranta, 2017.

looking up at the youth. Sourvinou-Inwood notes that images such as these suggest that the actions performed by the other figures are done so under the power of Eros [46]. The idea that the *erastês* is pursuing the youth in the guise of a hunting dog is sharpened by the fact that Eros parallels the dog's actions in the composition. The dog must be a stand-in for the *erastês* here, but the boy is then also a hare, behaving like one being chased (he turns his head to look back), while performing the formulaic gesture of the target in a love pursuit [47].

As previously noted, the gymnasium setting is a typical place for aristocratic pederastic courtship. A cup by the Dokimasia Painter shows a gymnasium scene on the exterior, and a complementary scene on the interior of the cup: an elegant *erastês* type stands in the center of the tondo, accompanied by an enormous Laconian hound (fig. 5) [48]. This associates the man with the wolfish hunting dog, but a further detail brings this idea home: the dog's hindquarters are hidden behind the *erastês*, but his tail protrudes from behind the man. The tail is exactly in line with the man's own rear end, and it appears as though the tail belongs to the man himself. The man would appear to be a hound-dog, on the prowl for young boys in the

gymnasium. The symposiast, admiring the athletes in training on the exterior, would find the wolfish lover at the bottom of his cup. This lampoons the drinker's own possible inclinations, the joke either serving as a warning on how not to behave, or a confirmation of the symposiast's already untoward desires [49].

In gymnasium grooming scenes we often have the *erastês* as dog, looking to be fed by the boys (fig. 6). Dogs, present during the boys' strigiling, stare up at them with rapt attention, shamefully begging like a sexually intemperate "κυνώπις" (dog-eyed) *erastês*. Often, as here, the young athlete offers the dog the excess olive oil after it has been scraped from

[46] SOURVINOU-INWOOD 1987: 132.

[47] There are other examples that offer support for the hypothesis that dogs and hares can be iconographically interchangeable with the *erastês* and the *erômenos* with Eros making the intention explicit. See BA 275164\*, ARV2 1643.58BIS, Lawrence, KS, University of Kansas, Wilcox Museum, N. 510, and also BA 207614\*, ARV2 653.4, Paris, Musée du Louvre 6211.

[48] See also BA 200982\*, ARV2 117.4, 1577, St Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum 664.

[49] Shapiro calls the gymnasium voyeurs "a species of athletics-pest", SHAPIRO 2015: 195.

his body after his exercises [50]. These scenes are usually interpreted as reflecting normal occurrences in everyday life. As we have seen, however, the idea of the simple genre scene in ancient Greek art has rightly been called into question, and I would argue that these cases represent visual humor based on a common pun, in that the dog could be seen as equivalent to the *erastês* [51]. Therefore, these scenes could be read as a comic take on the practice of potential *erastai* waiting around the gymnasium to lecherously watch the naked youths practice their events [52]. The dogs, as a metaphor for the *erastês*, also hang around the gymnasium waiting for the boys. These scenes are not merely anecdotes of daily life, but also an inside joke on the lifestyle of the *erastês*, begging for a scrap of the beautiful boy's attention. Dogs had multiple meanings in Greek culture, from vicious and savage to the most loyal and helpful. In some cases the dog represents the desperate, fawning individual [53]. This kind of mockery of the often rather sad position of the potential *erastês* is well known from Aristophanes' *Clouds*. Pet dogs were fed only scraps and bread used for wiping grease away from one's hands after eating [54]. Dogs in literature are often described as scavengers [55]. So, in these grooming scenes, with the dog literally feeding off the scraps of oil from the boy's body, there could be quite an erotic undercurrent of both the delectability of the *erômenos*, but also the hunger of the wolf-like dog. If the *erastês* is the dog, however, then the boy is equated with the hare, as the hunted *erômenos*, whom the dog, i.e. the *erastês*, desires to ravage.

The comic danger of the dog/*erastês* slipping into wolf-like behavior is emphasized on several pots in which young athletes grooming are accompanied by *kalos* inscriptions that state simply "LYKOS KALOS",

or "the wolf is beautiful". While the purpose of *kalos* inscriptions is still debated, many have been shown to underscore jokes in the images or have some other direct relationship to the scene [56]. *Kalos* inscriptions indeed seem to have a multitude of meanings, to judge from the contexts in which they are found [57]. As Niall Slater shows, the traditional interpretation of *kalos* inscriptions, which assumes that the name refers to the most sought-after boy of the day, is simplistic, and does not serve us well. He stresses the symposiastic play and the performative nature of the *kalos* inscriptions [58]. Many varied ironic and humorous uses of *kalos* inscriptions are documented, including the aryballos by Phintias which addresses the viewer directly in the vocative "o pai kale" [59]. Moreover, while the name Lykos was quite common in Greece, we must not overlook the comic potential in naming-puns, which are found throughout the corpus of Aristophanes.

This is the case with the cup tondo discussed earlier (fig. 6), which is inscribed "ΛΥΚΟΣ ΚΑΛΟΣ". Here the boy gestures towards the small dog awaiting the excess oil from the strigil after scraping. A sponge hangs on the wall behind him. The inscription would seem to refer to the animal, rather than the boy, since the dog is a major component of the composition [60]. The direct link between the "ΛΥΚΟΣ ΚΑΛΟΣ" inscription and the pet dog on this cup gives weight to the ideas that the slang term for pederast, *λύκος*, is indeed connected to the pet dogs present in gymnasium scenes. But here, the idea that the "wolfish pederast is beautiful" is juxtaposed not with a hunting hound, but with a very different type of dog: a small, fluffy, gentle breed [61]. This creates a humorous and unexpected contrast between the idea of the dangerous hunter and the mawkish lapdog that the

[50] For other young athletes strigiling with attendant dogs, see also BA 203991\*, ARV2 376.93, Boston, MA, Museum of Fine Arts, 01.8038, and BA 202005\*, ARV2 210.187, München, Antikensammlung 2453, and BA 3997\*, ARV2 377.99, Bruxelles, Musées Royaux R350, and BA 207322\*, ARV2 1562, 631.39, Boston, MA, Museum of Fine Arts, 13.191 (among many others). See also: PEVNICK 2014: 160-161.

[51] FERRARI, 2003: 37-54.

[52] Aristophanes, *Clouds*, 971-983. The speaker of these lines, the Just Argument, reveals himself to be a rather an old lecher himself, by describing the boys' nether regions a bit too zealously.

[53] Pindar, in *Pythian 2*, lines 82-84 contrasts the sycophantic "tail-wagger" *σαίωνων*, to the brave, direct wolf. LILJA 1976: 51.

[54] HULL 1964: 47.

[55] LILJA 1976: 17 and *passim*.

[56] FERRARI 2002: 19-20.

[57] SLATER 1999: 143-161, *passim*.

[58] Slater posits that the usual interpretation of an *erastês* requesting the potter to "name-check" his beloved is not a sufficient explanation for the corpus of "love-names" that exists. Perhaps the pottery is not as straightforward as the *kalos* names found in other contexts. "What I am suggesting is that the degree of their proliferation on late archaic vases exceeds anything we can plausibly ascribe to a simple desire of an *erastês* to communicate with an *erômenos*. Moreover, their placement on vases demands that they, like other inscriptions, be read out by those using them, especially in the symposion." SLATER 1999: 158.

[59] SLATER 1999: 153.

[60] ESPOSITO & TOMMASO 1993: 69, and PEVNICK 2014: 160.

[61] It is most likely a Maltese the pampered breed favored by small children, FRANCO 2014: 25, 195.



Figure 7

A young athlete holds a hare, athletic equipment surrounds him. Labeled "Lykos kalos". Interior tondo of an Athenian red-figure kylix, c. 490 B.C. Attributed to Onesimos.

BA 203376\*, ARV2 1595, 328.122, Kassel, Staatliche Museen Kassel, Antikensammlung ALG58.

Drawing: Michelle Ranta, 2017.

*erastês* is in danger of becoming, if he loses dignity in the pursuit of a boy (which, to be sure, would not be *kalos*). While the fierce hunting dog seems to be the prototypical visual metaphor for the *erastês*, the harmless-looking Maltese might also carry this connotation for added comedy. The joke would be quite savage, in imagining the reversal of the proper Athenian man, who in his role as *erastês* is reduced to a hopeful little lapdog to his *erômenos*, "tail-wagging" and "dog-eyed" [62]. Aeschines speaks of "the hunters of such young men as are easily trapped" (Τοὺς τῶν νέων, ὅσοι ῥαδίως ἀλίσκονται, θηρευτὰς ὄντας) [63]. In images like these, the association of the *erastês* with the tame, hopeful, admiring dog plays on these metaphorical connections, by twisting

[62] σαινῶ, fawning, tail-wagging, κυνῶπις, dog-eyed, shameful, lascivious.

[63] Aeschines, *Against Timarchus*, 1, 195, ADAMS 1919, translation. BARRINGER 2001: 88.

[64] Other examples of the Maltese in pederastic contexts include BA 203815\*, ARV2 362.24 Berlin, Antikensammlung F2178 and BA 214094\*, ARV2 1005.4, London, British Museum E 315.

the image of the predatory canine into the dependent one [64].

Another instance of the *kalos* inscription functioning as part of the pederastic joke occurs on a cup by Onesimos: in this image, a robed young man holds a hare by the back legs and the ears (fig. 7). The boy (as a potential *erômenos*) is linked metaphorically to the hare, and in this image they are also correlated visually. The hunting metaphor, always potentially present in a pederastic context, is activated by the mention of the wolf in the *kalos* inscription. In the background is a selection of athletic equipment setting the scene as the gymnasium, and the viewer supplies the narrative details. The boy seems to have just finished cleaning up after exercising and has been given a hare by some unseen *erastês*, the position filled by the viewer, the symposiast using the cup. François Lissarrague notes that *kalos* inscriptions may link the represented world with the world of the viewer through the performance of the text [65]. This *kalos* inscription therefore refers to the unseen *erastês* "ΛΥΚΟΣ ΚΑΛΟΣ", the pederast pursuing the boy in the gymnasium. Put into context, the metaphorical joke involving the viewer comes to light. The viewer himself is the proverbial wolfish lover being referred to in the inscription, which, read aloud during the symposium as the drinker discovers the image at the bottom of his cup, would produce much amusement. The holder of the cup would be compelled to perform his own comic "roast", at his own expense.

In the right context, the image of the dog and the pederast (λύκος), would be conceptually linked in the appropriate milieu, such as the symposium. Indeed, a series of curious cups in the shape of a dog's head from around the 480s helps us to locate the context of this metaphor solidly in the symposium (fig. 8) [66]. The jovial, humorous and casual role-playing that occurred during a symposium enables us to understand the use of these unusual vessels. The atmosphere of sexual tension could be lightened by jokes and games. When drinking from a dog cup such as this one, as the symposiast tilts the cup upwards to access the wine inside, the cup covers his face, creating a dog mask [67]. The drinker thus becomes a dog, with all of its humorous and lascivious connotations. The other symposiasts

[65] LISSARRAGUE 1999: 367.

[66] These dog shaped plastic vases seem to have been very popular: there are five in existence by the Brygos Painter alone.

[67] This phenomenon seems to have been first noticed by John Boardman: BOARDMAN 1976: 288. The "otherness" of these identities has been documented by François Lissarrague: LISSARRAGUE 1995: 6. Also: EBBINGHAUS 2008: 147-153.





Figure 8

Plastic Athenian red-figure cup in the shape of a hunting dog's head, c. 480 B.C. Attributed to the Manner of the Brygos Painter. BA 9998\*, Aléria, Musée Archéologique 67.467, 2170A. © Wikimedia Commons.



Figure 9

A symposiast reclines while playing a lyre. Detail of rim of Fig. 8. © Wikimedia Commons.

might laugh, imagining the reference to *erastai*, or perhaps the more puerile references to male genitalia [68]. With the drinker masked as a dog, the other symposiasts are cast in the role of the hunted, the *erômenos*. This may also invert the status of some of the party-goers, causing a comic role reversal.

The rim of this cup is decorated with three symposiasts, reclining, drinking, and playing music. These images are self-referential, linking the context for the use of the cup with the cup itself. The symposiast with the barbiton lyre looks out at the viewer with a frontal face (fig. 9). This may indicate that he is intoxicated, or otherwise in an altered state [69]. The mask-like appearance of this symposiast also relates to the function of the cup, mirroring the use of the dog face as a mask, and the altered states it represents. Literary sources offer several connections between drunkenness and dogs: "A gentle man who gets enraged when drunk" may be compared to "λυσσομανές τι κακόν", which alludes to a rabid dog" [70]. In Aristophanes' *Wasps*, during the trial of the dog, an anecdote about a drunken dog is presented: "One night Aesop was going out to supper. A drunken bitch had the impudence to bark near him." (Αἴσωπον ἀπὸ δείπνου βαδίζονθ' ἐσπέρας θρασεῖα καὶ μεθύση τις ὑλάκτει κύων) [71]. The word "dog" is used here as a term of abuse, indicating sexual shamelessness [72]. These connections among dogs, drunkenness, and unrestrained sexuality are not unrelated to this style of drinking cup, for before one can make use of the mask function, all the wine must be drained from the cup, making the

drinker a canine gluttonous drunk [73]. But humor and pathos come into play when we notice the manner in which the dog is depicted: he is the ideal Laconian hunting hound, but is shown with ears drawn back and a mournful expression, just another love-struck dog-eyed *erastês* watching a young athlete with wistful longing. He has become a sycophantic tail-wagger, hopeful for some boy's attention [74].

A cup by the Triptolemos Painter with young men and dogs on the exterior has an intriguing and rare interior tondo (fig. 10). It depicts a nude boy, identified as an athlete in training by his sponge, aryballos, and strigil hanging in the background. He holds a walking stick in his right hand, and touches the back of a dog with his left. The dog is energetically biting his upper thigh. The boy wears a red fillet and his infibulated penis is central to the composition. His *ioulos* facial hair marks him as of a particularly desirable age [75]. Although

[68] See above, on the term *κύνοδοσμε*, which equates the penis with "dog". This humorous ambiguity is also found in literature. LILJA 1976: 123.

[69] KORSHAK 1987.

[70] LILJA 1976: 120-121. Kallios, IV,11, 232, translated by PATON 1916.

[71] *Wasps*, 1401-1402. Transl. O'Neill.

[72] LILJA 1976: 75.

[73] "Dog gluttons" are also mentioned in Aristophanes, *Wasps*, 923.

[74] Pindar, in *Pythian 2*, 82-84 directly contrasts the sycophantic "tail-wagger" *σαίνων*, to the brave wolf.

[75] FERRARI 2002: 134-136.





< Figure 10

A dog violently bites the thigh of a young athlete while defecating.

Interior tondo of an Athenian red-figure kylix, c. 480 B.C. Attributed to the Triptolemos Painter.

Interior. BA 8843\*, last confirmed seen on the New York art market, Sotheby's, 1990. Image courtesy of Sotheby's (Sotheby's, *The Nelson Bunker Hunt Collection: Highly Important Greek Vases and the William Herbert Hunt Collection: Highly Important Greek, Roman and Etruscan Bronzes*, New York, 19.6.1990 (New York, 1990): Lot 11. Sotheby's, *The Nelson Bunker Hunt Collection: Highly Important Greek Vases and the William Herbert Hunt Collection: Highly Important Greek, Roman and Etruscan Bronzes*, New York, 19.6.1990 (New York, 1990): Lot 11).



< Figure 11

A well-behaved dog demonstrates the importance of reciprocal affection.

Exterior of fig. 10. Image courtesy of Sotheby's.

the dog bites into him vigorously, even appearing to have drawn blood, the boy seems unperturbed. His reaching towards the dog could be read either as mild restraint or a simple stroking gesture. This strange scene is exceptional in the corpus of extant Greek pottery.

The scenes on this remarkable cup have been interpreted as a "dog training school", with some even going so far as to suggest that they reflect a progression in training: the dog on the interior is in the beginning stages of his training, and on the exterior, the same dog has become successfully trained (fig. 11) [76]. It seems clear, however, that the scenes are humorous metaphors involving the complex relationship between a pursuing *erastês* and reluctant *erômenos*. If we accept that the dog is often a stand-in metaphor for the *erastês* himself, in the complicated image and word play of the symposium, then we can read these scenes very differently.

One of the comedic aspects of the tondo is the contrast between the calm, restrained athlete and ravaging dog, which is highlighted by his penis ligature, or *κυνόδεσμος*, literally "dog leash". This so-called "infibulation" was an important practice for athletes, not as any kind of protection for the genitals, but rather as a marker of sexual abstinence during training [77]. The containment of desire had far-reaching implications for the ideal citizen in the classical period, as Winkler, among others, has shown [78]. The consummate citizen would be the master of self-control. If not, one was on a slippery slope to being labeled

[76] This was argued in the Sotheby's catalogue: *The Nelson Bunker Hunt Collection*, New York, 19.6. 1990. But I agree with Seth Pevnick that a narrative progression is not necessary. PEVNICK 2014: 156.

[77] SWEET 1985: 48.

[78] WINKLER 1990: 57 and *passim*.

a κίναϊδος, or a licentious, profligate man. Scanlon's thorough and erudite study examines the textual evidence for sexual abstinence as a historical practice. He concludes that it was "widespread as early as the fifth century B.C. and inspired philosophers and others to cite such athletes as models of self-control" [79]. For the athletes and their spectators, the practical effect of this idea was that the activities of the athlete in training were further erotically charged. As Golden puts it, "if the abstinence reportedly observed by some athletes during their preparations for competition was widespread", then "the place of sex among the pleasures of a carousing victor must have been especially prominent" [80]. The symposium would be the primary locus for this, as symposia often followed athletic games, and were frequently held to honor a victor, like the one Xenophon describes.

With the practice of infibulation indicating sexual abstinence and restraint, and being expressed provocatively in Greek as κυνόδεσμος, the dog in the scene being held by the boy may signify something more than merely a dog-training session. It is possible that the scene represents the power and control the *erômenos* has over the sexual relationship. His ligatured foreskin (leashed dog) may be the metaphor that is the punch line of the scene, for while he is the picture of *sôphrosunê*, the dog (*erastês*) needs to be put on a leash! [81] With the young athlete signaling his sexual unavailability during training, and the dog ravaging the top of his thigh – the very location of intercrural sex – this is an inversion of the more typical scenes of letting the dog lick scraps from the strigil [82]. This dog-cum-*erastês* is not content with small favours and has indeed become a "κύων λυσοστήρ", a wolfish, rabid, mad dog [83].

But though he is bleeding, the boy seems unmoved. If this scene is meant literally, then this a non-realistic reaction is puzzling. In fact, however, it demonstrates the ideal *erômenos*: completely in control, prioritizing his athletic training and education by adhering to

the ideal of sexual abstinence, but also rejecting the aggressive advances of *erastai* with kindness. The interplay of power and control between *erastês* and *erômenos* is often fodder for iconography, and here there is a definite reversal of the usual position of the helpless hare, unavoidably running into the trap of the skillful hunter. Here instead, we see an unsuccessful hunter who has completely lost control.

The dog even appears to be defecating as he ravages the boy's thigh, adding yet another level of shameful-ness [84]. Depictions of symposiasts relieving themselves, elsewhere in the corpus of Greek pottery, seem to suggest the dangers of drinking to excess, as a comic warning to those partaking from the vessels on which they are shown [85]. One cup in Boston depicts a symposiast wiping himself after relieving himself, comically placed on the inside of the cup, as a warning after the fact not to overindulge [86]. Another cup in Brussels shows a boy of ideal *erômenos* age on another interior cup tondo, squatting and both urinating and defecating [87]. Some of these images also combine lack of sexual control with the other bodily functions. Such behaviors are associated with dogs, since they will transgress the taboos of coprophilia as well as being intemperate enough to mate in public [88]. A black-figure cup in Boston by the Amasis Painter makes this connection very clear: the exterior of the kylix shows two bearded men, vigorously masturbating, while under the handles next to each man's head, is a squatting dog defecating [89]. The actions of the *erastês*-age men and the hound dogs are bound together in their shamelessness. These comparanda attest to the meaning proposed here: that the dog biting the thigh of the youth is a metonym for the sexually intemperate, shamelessly drunk, untoward *erastês*. It is a humorous portrait of how not to behave when approaching a young man.

The exterior of the same cup shows a gymnasium scene with boys at various stages of grooming: one getting dressed in a cloak with a woven design on the

[79] SCANLON 2002: 230.

[80] GOLDEN 1998: 75.

[81] This was independently noticed by Pevnick: "the painter has created a visual pun in which the unleashed dog attacks the 'leashed' youth". PEVNICK 2014: 156.

[82] For the importance of the eroticization of the thigh, see PARKER 2015: 31-54.

[83] For a discussion of actual biting dogs, see CALDER 2011: 70-71.

[84] Pevnick calls this combination of violence and "simultaneous defecation" "unparalleled". PEVNICK 2014: 156. In his discussion of defecating dogs, Pevnick is convinced that they are comic in black-figure (p. 157), but seems unconvinced of the humor on the Triptolemos Painter cup (p. 158).

[85] SCHÄFER 1997: 56-7. Also see Plato, *Gorgias* 494B, which compares the life of a bird that excretes excessively with that of a sexually intemperate κίναϊδος.

[86] BA 201586\*, ARV2 174.22, Boston, MA, Museum of Fine Arts 08.31B. This image adds further humour by also showing the man with a limp, comically large penis.

[87] BA 201545\*, ARV2 169.7, Brussels, Musées Royaux R259. MITCHELL 2009: 90-91

[88] FRANCO 2014: 14, 191. Henderson notes that scotophagous humor can refer to anal intercourse in Greek comedy. HENDERSON 1991: 192.

[89] BA 310515\*. ABV 157.86, Boston, MA, Museum of Fine Arts 10.651. MITCHELL 2009: 44.

edge, another with an aryballos strapped to his arm, and another with a strigil. The other side shows two boys with walking sticks, again clearly in a gymnasium, as there is a grooming kit and strigil in the background. They are interacting with a well-behaving hunting dog, who stands with elegant posture and offers a paw to the boy on the right. There is a definite contrast with the dog depicted on the interior. Seen in a metaphorical sense, it may be read as humorous dating advice: how to seduce a *erômenos*. If these dogs represent the *erastês* as the wolf, to whom the *erômenos* is a lamb, then these scenes are a witty take on the power struggles of the pederastic relationship. While the *erastês* introduces the *erômenos* into Athenian society, and guides him in the practices of citizenry, the images on this cup show a comedic reversal of the educational relationship. In these scenes, the boys tame and train the wayward dogs, alluding to the ideal of the *erômenos*' self-restraint in the courting stage of the pederastic relationship [90]. The potential *erômenos* was expected to withhold his affections from the *erastês*, and tame his over-arduous gestures. The metaphor of the *erastês*-as-dog allows the pot painter to create humorous scenarios that play with and subvert these cultural ideals. Here, the *erômenos* is shown as the powerful member of the relationship, the *erastês* is reduced to a slobbering, "gaping wolf" (λύκος κεχηνώς).

This study demonstrates a few of the many ways in which the image of the dog can be used for humorous effect on symposium pottery. The visual pun of the *erastês* metonymically depicted as a dog lends itself to multiple comedic uses. There is role-reversal, mocking, sexual and scatological humor, as well as irony. The setting of gymnasium in which many of these scenes occur is ideal for what Mitchell calls "situation comedy", since the open competition for young men's attentions could lead to tension [91]. Considering these images were employed during the symposium, where the erotically agonistic atmosphere continued, the images could provide a locus of discussion and laughter. Personal connections to the images could be drawn, or alternatively, the imagery could be used as a deflection from social pressures. The dog, as a figure of both invective and affection, along with its associations with both danger and ribald humor, provided additional entertainment and meaning to the sympotic iconography of the late archaic and early classical periods. ■

[90] The message here, is not unlike the ideals put forth in Phaedrus' speech in Plato's *Symposium* 178b-180c, in which he suggests that the desire to avoid looking shameful to one's beloved is a force that holds everyone in society accountable.

[91] MITCHELL 2009: 35. For mocking and sexual rivalry, see HALLIWELL 1991: 286.



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