



Department of History and Archaeology

MA in Greek and Eastern Mediterranean Archaeology: From the Bronze
Age Palaces to the Hellenistic Kingdoms

Key Themes in Eastern Mediterranean Archaeology

**Subject: The iconography of Greek Drama (Tragedy,
Comedy and Satyr Play) in Attic Pottery from the Era of
the Peloponnesian War onwards**

(430 BC - late 4th century)

MA Dissertation

ARVANITI ELENI

ATHENS 2018

CONTENTS

1. Acknowledgements.....	3
2. Summary.....	4
3. Introduction.....	5
4. Tragedy: Some of the most well – known poets of the tragedy and the features of the tragedy.....	8
4.1 Catalogue of surviving vases with scenes from tragedy in Attic pottery, 430 – 320 BC.....	11
4.2 Representation of the surviving vases.....	15
5. Satyr Play: Some of the most well – known poets of the satyr play and the features of the satyr play.....	18
5.1 Catalogue of surviving vases with scenes from satyr play in Attic pottery, 430 – 320 BC.....	22
5.2 Representation of the surviving vases.....	26
6. Comedy: Some of the most well – known poets of the comedy and the features of the comedy.....	29
6.1 Catalogue of surviving vases with scenes from comedy in Attic pottery, 430 – 320 BC.....	37
6.2 Representation of the surviving vases.....	43
7. Comparison with the Phlyax vases.....	49
6.1 Representation of the Phlyax Vases.....	56
8. Conclusion.....	58
9. Bibliography.....	60

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Principally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude and special appreciation to my supervisor, Eurydice Kefalidou, *Assistant Professor of Classical Archaeology*, of the Department of History and Archaeology at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. She was always willing to help me and make me feel self – confidence and able to succeed my goal. Not only did she allow this paper to be my own work, but also she steered me in the right direction with her invaluable instructions, whenever she believed I needed it. I would also like to thank her, for the continuous support, patience, motivation and immense knowledge. The excellent cooperation and the opportunities I was given to conduct my research made me finish this thesis with the right way following the advice of my supervisor. Undeniably, her guidance really helped me in all the time of research and writing of this thesis.

I would like also to thank my parents for their motivation and their unstoppable support as without them my task wouldn't be so easy and it would not also be feasible to succeed my goal.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this thesis “The Iconography of Greek Drama (Tragedy – Comedy and Satyr Play) in Attic Pottery from the era of the Peloponnesian War onwards (430 – late 4th century BC)” is to examine the three genres of theatre depicting on vases in a specific period.

The particular thesis is composed of five chapters, each of them dealing with a different genre of the theatre and its representations of the surviving vases.

The chapter 1 is introductory and defines some general information about the ancient theatre.

The chapter 2 presents the genre of tragedy and it consists of three parts. Part 1 describes the most famous poets of tragedy and their characteristics, part 2 presents a catalogue of surviving vases with scenes from tragedy in attic pottery and the third one focuses on the representation of them.

The chapter 3 is also subdivided into three parts. Part 1 deals with the most well – know poets of satyr play and as well as with the features of the satyr play, part 2 is the catalogue of the surviving vases with scenes from satyr play in attic pottery and the third part is the representation of them.

The chapter 4 has also three parts dealing with the comedy. The first part concentrates on the comedy and not only the most famous poets of it but also with the most important characteristics of this specific genre of the theatre , the second part analyses in a catalogue the surviving vases with scenes from comedy in attic pottery and the last part illustrates a representation of them.

The chapter 5 makes a comparison with the Phlyax vases from the South Italy describing the similarities and the differences between these two types of vases.

Overall, the aim of this thesis is to present and to comment critically these specific vases with scenes derived from the three genres of the theatre.

INTRODUCTION

Drama (Tragedy, Comedy and Satyr Play) is one of the most important and greatest aspects of the Greek culture through centuries. It has been a dynamic mean by which ancient Greeks expressed various and basic elements of their philosophy and the way of thinking they had.¹ Apart from the sources through texts of ancient writers (like Aristotle) and of course the surviving theatrical texts, another important source through which someone can find important information on the ancient drama and all the aspects and details of its procedure (like for instance, the clothes actors used, the figures of different stories, the details of each myth which had been processed through drama etc), is also a great number of pottery scenes.

The period being studied here is that of between 430 and 320 BC. It is a turbulent time for the ancient Greek world. In 430 BC the great Peloponnesian War starts up, bringing upheaval in many city - states across the ancient Greek world. Sparta after almost 30 years will be the great winner over Athens during this war. The Peloponnesian War will mark the decadence of the classical period, during which the Greek states had prospered economically, military, demographically and in culture. This is also a period during which there will be many changes in the field of people's thinking.² Traditional views considering aspects like religion or the place of persons inside the society of a city - state start being objected. Trends in philosophy, like the Sophists' movement will be a new radical way of thinking and will cause many concerns from more conservative thinkers like Plato. Individualism also becomes more and more evident during this period.

It has to be noted that Western drama originates in classical Greece. The theatrical culture of the city-state of Athens produced three genres of drama: tragedy, satyr play and comedy. Their origins remain obscure, though by the 5th century BC they were institutionalized in competitions held as part of festivities celebrating the god Dionysus. Historians know the names of many ancient Greek dramatists, not least Thespis, who is credited with the innovation of an actor ("hypokrites") who speaks (rather than sings) and impersonates a character (rather than speaking in his own person), while interacting with the chorus and its leader ("coryphaeus"), who were a traditional part of the performance of non-dramatic

¹ Denham, 2012, 4

² Osborne, 2004, 52

poetry (dithyrambic, lyric and epic). It is also characteristic that such pottery was destined for a market of rich and well off clients, who through such items had the ability to promote their wealth and social status within the ancient Greek society.

Generally, a whole branch of classical archaeology is concerned with how to read images, like those on pottery. It is characteristic that the isolation of images not always straightforward and the audience without the actor is not always a reliable evidence for the nature of the performance. So, within this branch of archaeology there have been many scholars and scientists who have sought to study this matter, i.e. the subject of the depiction of everything having to do with ancient drama in ancient pottery.

No one could possibly deny that when the scholars discovered the iconographic material of the theatre they understood the great importance of it; this discovery led to a totally new field of theatrical studies which is important for understanding the theatre in the 4th century.³ Furthermore, the ancient authors have come to the conclusion that the archaeology, the iconography and the institutional history of the theatre depends on the epigraphic material and again the evidence helps the rise of the theatre in the 4th century.⁴ The history of the ancient theatre was discovered by the numerous metaphors and images that appeared on the pots. However, the majority of the 4th century vase - painting tends to represent masks used in broader contexts and figures playing in comic scenes.⁵ There is a variety of the visual material which comes from the antiquity and it is related to the theatre covering its chronological period, the places that constructed and the genres in which it belongs to. Many scholars believe that if it is easy to investigate the relationship between the text and the play, then it is also feasible to investigate the relationship between the play and the representation on the pots.⁶

Except all the above, we can mention here the cases of specific works like the one of Taplin O. with the title "Comic Angels and other approaches to Greek Drama through Vase - Painting (Oxford University Press, 1993), and his books titled *Pots and Plays: Interactions Between Tragedy and Greek Vase -Painting of the Fourth Century BC* (Getty Publications). As the author himself notes at the beginning of the

³ Csapo – Rupprecht – Green – Wilson, 2014, 8

⁴ Csapo – Rupprecht – Green – Wilson, 2014, 10

⁵ Green, 1995, 93

⁶ Green – Handley, 1996, 13

book *Pots and Plays* sets out to explore an outstanding case of the interplay between theater and the visual arts, like pottery. This is also, a kind of interplay between the world of ancient Greek Drama and the everyday life of those days. Those interactions, as O. Taplin points out, particularly strong at a certain time and place and until our days it is considered that they are well preserved (as someone can see through the surviving vases). It is mentioned here, that this time actually was around the fourth century BC when the art of drama had started expanding throughout the ancient Greek world from the place of its origin, i.e. Athens and Attica.⁷

However, it is truly said, that pottery is this field of art which has numerous materials and elements; for this reason it is essential to distinguish some specific criteria for the identification of the theatrical character of the vase painting. According to Kefalidou's research, it has become commonplace to distinguish direct from indirect motifs of theatrical categories.⁸ Many images of the theatre can be found through the direct and indirect motifs. There are four direct motifs and four indirect.

The direct motifs are those which are visible and they have an evident origin. The depiction of the theatrical stage and the mask, the representation of the clothes and the presence of different inscriptions which are linked to the theatre (names of the actors – words of the dialogues and the title of the play) are all of them the so - called direct motifs.⁹ On the other hand, concerning the indirect motifs, it is truly said that they are all of them which have patterns and motifs that they are not visible but they have signs leading to hypothesis for the correlation with presence of the stage of a specific theatrical play. The indirect motifs may be divided into four sub groups; the presence of the piper in unexpected depictions, the representation of group doing orchestral movements while he is uniformly dressed, the introduction of a specific mythological theme when the theatrical play was presented and the depiction of different figures in unusual roles.¹⁰ In the catalogue of each chapter there would be references for each vase analyzing the motifs that there are in it, individually.

The current paper focuses on the subject of the iconography of aspects of the ancient Greek Drama through the art of pottery. This research emphasizes at the first chapter on the most well – known poets of tragedy, their characteristics and some of their most famous texts. The chapter also mentions cases where someone can see a

⁷ Taplin , 2007, p. vi

⁸ Κεφαλίδου, 2008, 649

⁹ Κεφαλίδου, 2008, 650

¹⁰ Κεφαλίδου, 2008, 669

catalogue of various vases and pots that have depictions of scenes from plays of the great tragedy poets of ancient Greece (Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides) and the representation of the surviving vases depicting scenes from the tragedy. The second chapter deals with satirical play and the most well-known poets of it, mentioning also their texts and their innovations in the field of theatre. Furthermore, there is a catalogue of surviving vases with depictions of satirical plays from the 430-320 period. The third chapter analyses all those elements (poets, surviving vases etc) which are searched above, concerning comedy (Aristophanes) for the same period, while the last chapter compares the so called Phlyax pottery of southern Italy with all the cases of pottery and vases described at the previous chapters. The fourth chapter also includes the conclusions of this research and is characterized as an epilogue.

1st Chapter: Tragedy. The most well – known poets of the tragedy

1.1 Catalogue of surviving vases with scenes from Tragedy in Attic pottery art, 430-320 BC

When talking about ancient Greek Tragedy, of course the first name that comes in mind (at least concerning the point of time scale) is that of Aeschylus. About tragedy's history before Aeschylus, generally few things are known and we do not know much except for the names of some playwrights' and enticing. At the same time, it is difficult to verify notices about the career of those people. What is generally accepted until present day, is that Thespis has been considered as the inventor tragedy (through dithyrambs during the religious festivals in the honor of Dionysus) while Pratinas was considered to be the inventor of satyr play. Phrynichus on the other hand was considered as the one who had introduced the female characters in ancient drama.¹¹

Aeschylus (524-455 BC) is considered as the father of ancient Greek Tragedy, nevertheless, it seems that he was just the first one, whose full works have been saved and survived. The Persian Wars played actually a significant role in the life and work of Aeschylus, and this for instance can be seen through his work *Persians*, which was played for the first time around 472 BC. He wrote approximately seven to ninety plays but only seven have survived until today. It is characteristic that until now there is a standing debate whether his work *Prometheus Bound* belonged to him, which according to some was supposedly written by his son Euphorion. Fragments of some other plays have survived in quotations and more continue being discovered in fragments and pieces of ancient Egyptian papyrus, giving us some interesting and astonishing aspects about his work.¹²

His work *Persians* is based on historical events and is also connected with personal experiences of Aeschylus himself as he had participated at battles like that of Marathon as well the naval battle of Salamis which is the main motive in this play. The *Persians* focuses on one of the most important matters and themes of the

¹¹ Wellenbach, 2015, 55- 72

¹² Levi, 1986, p. 159

ancient Greek way of thinking, the so called *hybris*, which the Persian king Xerxes shows.¹³ Another major play of Aeschylus is the well known *Seven against Thebes*. The play was performed in 467 BC and it is connected with the role gods may play sometimes at people's lives. This was also the first play where is demonstrated the idea, that the ancient Greek polis (city) is a major factor for the human life and civilization.¹⁴

Quite known plays are also *The Suppliants* (performed in 463 BC) as well as the trilogy of *Oresteia*. This trilogy consists of the works named *Agamemnon*, *The Libation Bearers* and *The Eumenides*.¹⁵ On the other hand, we should also mention here the case of *Prometheus Bound*, which has already been mentioned above.

Except for Aeschylus, Sophocles also is one of the top and most important ancient Greek drama writers. He was born in Athens around 497 or 496 BC and he died around 406/405 BC. His first plays actually had been written later than those of the other great ancient tragedy poet, i.e. Aeschylus. It is characteristic that although he is the writer of 120 plays, just seven have survived complete until our days. These are the following: *Ajax*, *Antigone*, *Women of Trachis*, *Oedipus Rex*, *Electra*, *Philoctetes* and *Oedipus at Colonus*. Sophocles actually for almost half a century had been in Athens the most celebrated drama poet. He had participated in 30 competitions in total and he had won 24 of them, while he had never been judged lower than second. It is evident that Aeschylus had been defeated at some of those competitions from Sophocles, while Euripides had won 4 in total.¹⁶

One of the most important aspects and innovations of Sophocles was that he introduced the third actor. This development had been quite important as by this way the parts of the drama chorus were reduced and at the same time this created a greater opportunity for the development of characters and conflicts among the plays' characters.¹⁷ Also, according to Aristotle, another innovation of Sophocles had also been the introduction of scenery on stage. Sophocles himself would be the main drama and tragedy poet of Athens after the death of Aeschylus in 456 BC.¹⁸

Another great ancient tragedy poet was also Euripides. He was considered as the one of the three great Athenian tragedy poets of the fifth century, who actually

¹³ Freeman 1999, p. 244

¹⁴ Ibid, p. 246

¹⁵ Podlecki, 1966, p. 68

¹⁶ Loyd - Jones, 1994, p. 7

¹⁷ Freeman, 1999, p. 247

¹⁸ Sommerstein, 2002, p. 41

promoted a series of new ideas that had started evolving within the Athenian society of the late fifth century BC. Those ideas had to do for instance with the tendency of questioning traditional aspects of the way of thinking in classical Athens. For instance, through Euripides' works a kind of individualism was promoted which seems to be at odds with the idea of citizens' subduing to the political community of the city state.¹⁹

Considering the pottery painting of the era which interests us here, it is worth mentioning that the full classical idea of the effortless human dignity at that period had become a dominant feature. This feature had permeated attic vase painting of the last quarter of the fifth century BC. The red figure style, based on emphatic line drawing, found it difficult to translate into its traditional technique the harmonious poses in which the organic duty of the figure was attained by subtle transitions among its parts, and as a result this usually gives the picture of something which seems to be strenuous or inappropriate.²⁰

As someone can see through the examples of the various scenes that depict the plot and the characters of the various drama plays of the era, the artists of those vases had a rather good knowledge of the appearance of the human body at a quite great range of views and positions. But this knowledge is used with classical restraint. Quiet standing or sitting poses are typical, subtly varied to prevent monotony, and scenes of action, even battles are for decency toned down. Groups are also often unified solely by bearing or glance, which some painters make more expressive by shortening the lower lid of the eye.²¹

¹⁹ Justina ,1991, p. 183

²⁰ Cook, 1997, p. 171

²¹ Ibid, p. 172

Catalogue – Depictions of selected surviving vases

1. Attic red figured pelike Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, number: 98.883, Phiale Painter, 440/435 BC (Picture 1)

Two actors or members of the Chorus are prepared for the play; the first one has already been dressed, wearing a female mask, a veil and high boots with sharply edges. On the left hand, he holds a garment and he has his right hand up. The other one on the right is a young boy with short hair wrapped with a wide ribbon. The female mask is the same with his partner and it is on the ground between them.

Theatrical Iconography: For the first time, there is a mask on the ground. The costumes and the shoes are the direct motifs and they are the evidence that they are derived from the theatre and for this reason this pelike can be included in this catalogue with scenes from tragedy. ²²

2. Attic red figure calyx krater, (fragments). Samothrace, Archaeological Museum, inv: 65.1041. Sanctuary of the great Gods. Vase-painter whose painting belongs to the Pronomos' temporary works. End of the 5th century. (Picture 2)²³

On the fragments, there are the basic elements of the scene which are depicted in the main krater. In the centre, Dionysus is lying down and hanging Ariadne who is sitting on the same bed with him. Behind the bed there are three columns with two white masks on it: on the left, there is one with curly hair and on the right there is another one with short hair and the mouth open. In the central scene there are three women; a woman standing on the left from the bed, another woman sitting close to Ariadne and two women sitting on the right – close to the columns. In front of the bed, there is a man who is lying down and playing aulos and next to him, there is another man whose only his legs with boots are saved.

The other sides of the vase is saved totally in fragments and in the fragments are shown parts from different figures and objects; one of them is the limb of the leg

²² Κεφαλίδου, 2008, 696

²³ Κεφαλίδου, 2008, 701

with a horizontal line in the ankle which may be an indication of the boots or a type of a cloth.²⁴

Theatrical Iconography: In this attic red figure calyx krater appeared to be a mask which is a direct motif and due to this representation, this vase can also be in the catalogue of surviving vases with scenes from the tragedy.

3. Attic red figure volute krater (fragments). Wurzburg, University Martin Von Wagner, n: H 4781. Tarantas, in the beginning of the 4th century BC. (Picture 3)

In the upper side on the left, there are parts from different decorated garments of two figures, a tripod made of metal on a decorated pedestal, a part of a figure who is sitting and is on a footrest (probably Dionysus), the biggest part of a female figure who is sitting on a bed (Ariadne or Aphrodite because next to her is depicted Erotideas). On the right, it is a small part derived from the right hand of a figure that is wearing decorated garments and holds a white mask with curly hair. Maybe he is a hypocrite.

In the lower side, in the centre, under the tripod is depicted a flutist of the theater company, he is wearing the formal decorated chiton and a wreath made of laurels.

Furthermore, there are saved small and big parts of five figures who wear decorated peplos and three of them hold white masks with short curly hair. The one figure who does not hold a mask is a woman for sure as her skin is white and next to her legs there is a box. All the other figures' faces are not saved but their skin is like the color of the clay; it does not mean that they are men.²⁵

Theatrical Iconography: In this volute krater, the representations of the theatrical mask and the theatrical costume are the direct theatrical motifs and this is the reason that this vase can be in the catalogue of surviving vases with scenes from the tragedy.

²⁴ Κεφαλίδου, 2008, 701

²⁵ Κεφαλίδου, 2008,702

4. Attic red figure calyx - krater, Iphigenia in Tauris , Iphigenia painter, National Archaeological Museum of Ferrara, 380 BC (Picture 4)

In the case of the depiction of Euripides' plays in pottery (for the period between 430-320 BC), we could think about this particular calyx – krater. Through this vase we have the fullest recognition of the main characters in the scene when Orestes meets his sister Iphigenia in Tauris. The scene was depicted by Euripides in his well known play *Iphigenia in Tauris*. At the very center of the depiction we can see the shrine of goddess Artemis in which the primitive cult statue of Artemis stands. Iphigenia resting elbow casually on it seems bigger than the goddess' statue as well as the figures of Orestes and Pylades, who are depicted naked.²⁶

The painter gives us a splendid depiction of king Thoas in his barbarian costume, fanned by an attendant. There is also a female attendant beside Iphigenia who can be considered as having the role of the chorus of the play. Another female figure watching from the upper left corner of the scene may be Artemis herself. It can also be goddess Athena who doesn't seem having any substantial role at that moment but who, according to Euripides play, had given at the end of the plot instructions to Orestes and Iphigenia.²⁷

It also seems here, that the artist of that paint combined in this scene element from other parts of the plot. For instance, we can see that Orestes and Pylades sit on rocks and this bares in our mind the rocks they found themselves when they arrived at the shores of Tauris at the Black Sea. The offerings also carried by Iphigenia's attendant, could be connected to that point of the play, when Iphigenia, while carrying the statue of goddess Artemis, during a procession to the shore, actually steals it, while escaping to Greece. By this way, this vase may well work as a kind of visual display of the whole work and not only of the Orestes - Iphigenia meeting and recognition between one another. Nevertheless, the scene of recognition between them still is the main core of depiction of the vase.²⁸

Theatrical Iconography: A red figure calyx krater with two direct theatrical motifs; the representation of the construction (shrine of goddess Artemis) and the one of the theatrical costume. These two motifs are the indication that this krater can be in the catalogue of the surviving vases with scenes from the tragedy.

²⁶ Shapiro, p. 156

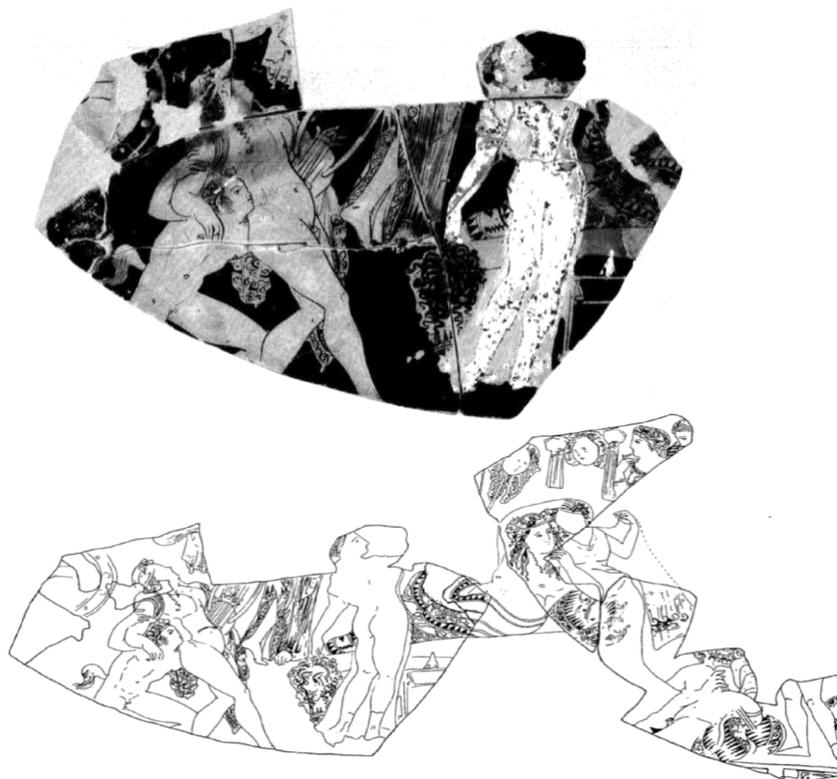
²⁷ Ibid. p. 156

²⁸ Ibid. p. 158

IMAGES



Picture 1: Attic red figured pelike, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, Number: 98.88, 440/435 BC. (from: Κεφαλίδου, 2008, 716)



Picture 2: Attic red figure calyx krater, (fragments), inv: 65.1041, Vase-painter whose painting belongs to the Pronomos favorites. End of the 5th century. (From: Κεφαλίδου, 2008, 720)



Picture 3: Attic red figure volute krater, (fragments), inv: H4781, Tarantas Painter, in the beginning of the 4th century BC. (From: Κεφαλίδου, 2008,719)



Picture 4: Iphigenia in Tauris. Attic red-figure calyx-krater attributed to the Iphigeneia Painter (name vase). Ferrara, Museo Archeologico Nazionale T1145. Ca. 380 BC (from: Shapiro, 2005, 157)

2nd Chapter: Satyr play – The most well – known poets of satyr play and the features of the satyr play.

2.1 Catalogue of surviving vases with scenes from satirical drama in Attic pottery, 430-320 BC

When talking about the ancient satyr play of the classical and Hellenistic era, as well as the main authors who represented this genre, it seems that satyr plays were written by the same poets who wrote tragedies, since the satyr play was part of the tetralogy. Satyr play was developed at the same time with Tragedy and Comedy and its name came from the Chorus members who depicted Satyrs. The realism and vitality as well as the full joy at the exact theatrical genre gave to it a series of characteristics. Among those characteristics for instance, someone could consider that the plot was comic, the end of each story was happy, the mythological stories were used more freely, while the use of verse was not so strict. At the same time, an important aspect was the effort to make the viewers more relaxed, after they had watched the tragic plays. The role of satirical drama was also to make more obvious the connection between ancient drama and the worship of god Dionysus.²⁹

At the very beginning of the appearance of the art of Drama, Satirical Drama was often conceived to be exactly the same genre as Tragedy, as at the beginning the Tragedy Chorus was consisted of Satyrs too. Nevertheless, when the tragedy genre started becoming more serious, considering its plots and stories, then Pratinas³⁰ from Fleiounta (an ancient city state at northeastern Peloponnesus) started creating the so called "joyful drama" as a special kind and genre of drama art. Satirical Drama had also been connected with the term "sikinnis" which had the meaning of the noisy and quick dancing and singing which was also accompanied by the use of lyre and intangible. In the process, each poet, during the dramatic games in Athens each year, would participate with three tragic plays and one

²⁹ Hristopoulos, 2001, p. 316 (with extensive bibliography)

³⁰ Pratinas was one of the first poets of ancient Greece. He had been active in ancient Greek drama around the period when Aeschylus had started his own career (at the first decades of the fifth century BC). He is considered as the one who introduced satirical drama genre and according to two epigrams about Sophocles, scholars have gathered information about the connection between Pratinas and satirical drama. It seems that Pratinas was the author of 18 tragedies plays and 32 satirical plays. but almost all of them have been lost nowadays, in William S., "Pratinas" in *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*, Vol. 3, John Murray, London, 2010, pp. 516-517

satirical drama play. Satirical drama, in other words, was the last part of each poet's tetralogy.³¹

From all the above, it is evident that the poets used the same stories as in tragedy but in a joyful way. One major aspect here was the use of insults and dirty language. Another important characteristic was the total absence of political satire. Some of the most usual themes in satirical drama were stories like the defeat of bad monsters and giants, love stories, magic and miracles. Such elements show that satirical drama seemed to have some connections with fairy tales. The plots of satirical drama, usually take place in the countryside or at exotic places, like Libya and Egypt.³²

To continue with, it would be an analysis of the satyr plays which are related to the most famous surviving trilogies or individual tragedies of the three most important tragic poets. The mention of these specific trilogies and tragedies is because as we will see in the next pages, these associate with the iconography.

Considering first of all Aeschylus, it is known that one of his satirical dramas was called *Prometheus Pyrkaeus* and belonged to his trilogy of his work *Perses*.³³ The two other works of this trilogy are *Phineus* and *Glaucus* which have been lost. The plot of the exact satirical drama, as its name shows, had to do with the story of Titan Prometheus who brought fire to people, after stealing it from the gods and who was punished for this by Zeus. In this satirical drama, the effort of Prometheus to steal the fire is depicted comically and as Plutarch mentions, there was a saved garment from the play where Prometheus warns a satyr not to embrace the fire, as he would lose his beard.³⁴

Another known satirical drama of Aeschylus is the so called *Proteus*. It was the one closing his trilogy of *Oresteia*. This play is completely lost except two lines which had been saved by Athenaeus. The story of *Proteus* seems having been based on the fourth book of Homer's *Odyssey* where Menelaus, the brother of Agamemnon tries to return back to his home, after the siege of Troy and finds himself on an island at the shores of Egypt. According to the myth, there he met the old, immortal king Proteus, who told him the way to return back to Sparta. It seems

³¹ Blume 1986, 175

³² Allan & Storey, 2005,8

³³ Ibid P. 176

³⁴ Smyth, 1930, 453-454

that in this play also there was a Chorus of Satyrs who provided a more joyful depiction of this story.³⁵

On the other hand, some other satirical dramas which are known as Aeschylus' plays, are *Lycurgus*, *Dionysus' Nannies*, *Boatmen* (which closed the trilogy of *Perseus*), as well as *Isthmiastai*. Actually, there is a big fragment from the satirical drama *Net Fishers* (this fragment belongs to the introduction of the play). In this satirical drama, one of the main characters of the play, named Diktys, pulls out of the sea fishing net, which is heavy as in it there is a big chest. Danae and her son Perseus were in it. Diktys then asks for the help of other men (probably the play's Chorus of Satyrs) in order to pull the net out of the sea.³⁶

Considering the case of Sophocles, it is characteristic that in 1912 Willamowitz and Hunt found out big parts of one of his satirical dramas, with the title *Ihneutai* (Trackers). The date of this play is still unknown but its plot is based on a known story from the Greek mythology. More specifically it has to do with the theft of Apollo's cattle from Hermes. In the play, the Satyrs try to find out them, as god Apollo asks for their help. When they discover Hermes in a cave of northwestern Peloponnesus, they hear the sound of lyre he is playing for the very first time. The end of this satirical drama is not saved, but we presume that the two brothers, Hermes and Apollo, reconciled to each other. Here it is not evident who exactly the leader of the Satyr's Chorus is, but probably it is god Pan.³⁷

Through the cover of an old Egyptian mummy, we also know the case of around 78 verses of another Sophocles' satirical drama called *Inachus*. These verses are fragmented. At this play, Hermes again is one of the major stars. He is accompanied by the Satyrs, as he enters the Underworld in order to kill Hades' ferocious dog, called Argos.³⁸

The most well known of all of them is the one titled *Cyclops*. Its date is unknown and most probably it was the play that closed one of Euripides' trilogies. The story of the play is taken by the ninth rhapsody of Homer's *Odyssey*, where the Cyclops Polyphymus is blinded by Odysseus. The crew of Odysseus here is depicted by ordinary men, like in Homer's traditional epic play while the Satyrs,

³⁵ Sommerstein ,2008,239

³⁶ Lesky 2003,383

³⁷ Ibid, p. 423

³⁸ Ibid, p. 424

who on the one hand, are weak and cannot confront Polyphemus directly but on the other hand, they will eventually try to get free of him with the help of Odysseus.³⁹

The setting of this dramatic play is the island of Sicily where Odysseus and his companions have found themselves. There, Cyclops *Polyphemus* lives with the Satyrs who are his subordinates. Odysseus asks their help in order to set them free from his tyranny, but they are afraid of Cyclops and they show the whole time absurd excuses in order not to help. Odysseus himself decided to act alone with his companions, succeeding on blinding the Cyclops. Meanwhile Polyphemus has got drunk and takes the leader of the Satyrs named Silenus with him in order to appoint him as his personal cup bearer, like Zeus did with Ganymede. This seems spontaneously to have some sexual implications (Ganymede was also Zeus' lover). The plot up to a point follows the story we see at Homer's *Odyssey*. Nevertheless, at the same time, the plot can be considered actually a combination of Homeric, fantastic and contemporary elements (since it was first played in front of an audience during the 5th century BC).⁴⁰

Considering the catalogue of surviving vases with scenes from satirical drama in attic pottery, for the period 430-320 BC, someone may have in mind some cases which are mentioned in the following pages: a) An attic red figured calyx krater (425 – 420 BC), b) An attic red figured volute krater (400 – 395 BC) c) An attic red figured calyx krater (400 – 390 BC) d) An attic red figured calyx krater (400 BC) e) An attic red figured cup (380 BC). It is important to be added here, that the vases are dated in this small period as this was the time when the Peloponnesian War began and the production of the pottery was limited.

³⁹ Griffith, 2015, p. 26

⁴⁰ Dougherty, 1999, pp. 313-338

2.2 Catalogue - Depictions of selected surviving vases

1. Attic red figured calyx Krater, Dinos Painter, Prometheus and Satyrs, Vase Number: 215266, Ashmolean Museum, 425 – 420 BC (Picture 1)

In this case, it's a representation of Prometheus holding a fennel stalk in his hand surrounded by satyrs with torches. This is one of the most popular scenes of the attic red figure vases dating from the second half of the fifth century.

On this krater, which was painted by Dinos painter the Prometheus scene includes four male figures and one of them, a bearded man standing with long hair and wearing a bottled garment that falls to mid – calf. However, there is an inscription consisted of five letters and identifies the bearded man as Prometheus. Furthermore, in both hands he holds a long staff with a flame emerging from a cup – like head.

Prometheus is surrounded by three satyrs called Sikinnis, Komos and Simos. The three satyrs are dancing and holding lit torches, made from pine shoots that have been tied together. Moreover, Prometheus holds staff which is a little bit different and has been identified by J. D. Beazley as the narthex, the hollow fennel stalk in which Hesiod and others tell us that Prometheus carried fire down to mortals from Zeus.

Overall, the satyrs are holding the first torches lit by Prometheus' fire and celebrating his gifts.⁴¹

Theatrical Iconography: In this calyx krater, the direct theatrical motif is the representation of the theatrical costume and this is the reason that it is in the catalogue of the surviving vases with scenes of the satyr play. Also, there are many vases with satyrs in strange roles, which is an indirect motif.

2. Attic red figured volute krater, Pronomos Painter, Naples NM 81673, Drawing by E. Malyon, H: 75cm. Ruvo di Puglia, South Italy, Museo Archeologico Nazionale 3240, Vase Number: 217500, c.400 – 395 BC (Picture 2)⁴²

Another quite characteristic example of the depiction of satirical plays in attic pottery (always within the 430-320 BC period) is the so called Pronomos Krater. In

⁴¹ Dougherty, 2006, 57

⁴² An important point here is that although nowadays this vase is at Naples National Archaeological Museum, initially it was found in the region of Ruvo di Puglia.

addition to god Dionysus and goddess Ariadne who are depicted at the center of the whole scene, there are also the prize tripods under each handle.⁴³

Moreover, around the two central figures of Dionysus and Ariadne, there is a whole "winning" team: we can see, for instance, the playwright himself, who is named Demetrios, the lyre player whose name is Charinos and the central aulos player named Pronomos. Furthermore, there are the actors who are fused with their roles and the chorus members in their satyr outfits, nearly all of them individually named with their real life names.⁴⁴ At the upper right part of the scene we can identify the leader of the satyrs' chorus Papposelinus talking with the actor who has the role of Hercules. Both characters can be distinguished through the dresses they wear, the mask the one holds, and the Hercules' club which the other has in his left hand. On his right hand, he holds a mask which generally can be identified as that of Hercules. We may also add here, that near the center of the scene where Ariadne and Dionysus are, there is a female figure. She has long curly hair and there is something like a diadem on her head. As this female figure is not possible to be an actress it has been hypothesized that she is a symbol of the goddess of games and as a consequence the goddess of theater. Also near the bed, where Ariadne and Dionysus are, we can see a man who is dressed in such a way that we may assume that he is a king.⁴⁵

At the rest of the scene at the upper and lower parts of it we can recognize the members of the Chorus. It is characteristic that their names are written beside each one of them. More specifically, we may read the names: *Eunikos*, *Charias*, *Kallias*, *Euagon*, *Nicomahus*, *Dorotheus*, *Dion*, *Filinos*, *Nikoleos*. They are all young and they are wreathed with ivy. They also hold their masks apart from Nikoleos who wears it. This one does not remain still but he seems dancing the so called "sikinnis" the usual dance during the satirical drama plays. Ten out of the chorus members have a similar appearance and outfit: they wear the characteristic dress with the large penis in front of them and the horse tail at the back. Their dresses are made in such a way so that they can seem as if they are goat skins.⁴⁶

At the other side of this krater Dionysus still is at the centre of the scene, together with Ariadne but in this case they are surrounded by Maenads, Satyrs and a

⁴³ Taplin ,2007,,30

⁴⁴ Ibid. p. 32

⁴⁵ Kefalidou. 698

⁴⁶ Ibid, p. 699

panther. Here there is a tripod and a column under the handle of the vase. This is a characteristic that this scene is connected to a religious festival honoring Dionysus. There have been many theories regarding the identity of the satirical drama. The presence of Hercules here as well as that of a female heroine with eastern like dresses, seems to be very important as it shows that the plot had to do with a heroic deed of Hercules somewhere in the east.⁴⁷

The plot possibly has to do with the story of the savior of Isione the daughter of the king Laomedon of Troy or with the story of Omphale, queen of Lydia. There also seem to be some questions considering the identity of the various persons who are depicted and whether they had been real. For instance, the person who is named Pronomos could be the well Theban aulos player with that name. He was son of Oiniades and famous in Athens at the end of the 5th century BC. Pronomos had also been a famous teacher; it seems that one of his students was Alcibiades. His fame was so great that as Pausanias mentions, the people of Theba had erected a statue in his honor at the Acropolis of the city. The presence of Pronomos here seems to be much more important than that of poet Demetrius and the lyre player Charinos.

There are also two exceptional and quite interesting elements that can be taken under consideration. The first one is that the people depicted here, had been thought (in the past at least) that they were connected only to the depiction of satirical drama. Nevertheless, those same actors, the musicians, the chorus, the playwright etc, were also involved in the depiction of three tragedies before the satyr play, as were the rules in each theatrical and dramatic competition. So, they are depicted here in satyr outfits since this play would have taken place at the end, after the three tragic plays. And perhaps it was after this fourth play that the cast took off their masks from their faces, awaiting for the audience's applause and the final judgment.

Actually this is a little bit strange since this is an attic vase with very strong and circumstantial details on it. The scene depicted on the vase could have no real importance like this one in southern Italy. Nevertheless, this site and region is known to be the one where many vases with depictions of ancient drama plays have been found. Many of those vases are attic in their origin.⁴⁸ However, there could be some

⁴⁷ Ibid, p. 700

⁴⁸ Taplin, 2007,32

possibilities that some of the inhabitants of the region of southern Italy had been in Athens or that generally had a few knowledge about ancient Greek Drama art.

Theatrical Iconography: In this case, there are also two direct motifs; the representations of the theatrical mask and the theatrical costume. The hypocrites are Hercules and a king and they have the same characteristics of the figures of the tragedy.

3. Attic red – figured bell – krater, Height ca. 30cm, Dionysos and company, Ferrara, Museo Nazionale di Spina, T161C, (inv 20483) , c.400 BC (Picture 4)

In this case we can see Dionysus and three of his companions surrounding two actors, one male and one female. This seems to be related to the genre of satirical plays in general but it may also have something to do with religious festivals honoring Dionysus.⁴⁹The two actors become one with their roles and the chorus members in their satyr outfits nearly all of them individually named with their real – life names. Moreover, this attic red – figured bell – krater was found at Naples di Puglia but now is in Naples.⁵⁰

Theatrical Iconography: This bell – krater has two direct theatrical motifs; the representations of the theatrical mask and the theatrical costume. These motifs make the vase to be included in the catalogue with the surviving vases with scenes from the satyr play.

4. Attic red – figured cup (fragment), Height ca. 12 cm., Dresden Albertinum, ab 473 , c.380 BC (Picture 5)

In it we can see an actor's hand holding a satirical drama play mask. The mask is bearded in such a way so that it resembles the figure of a satyr. This fragment comes from a cup which is unattributed, considering his maker and artist. Satyr play was certainly an integral part of the tragic competition in Athens, and it was normal for every artist to produce one to follow each set of three tragedies. In all probability this continued into the fourth century—a particularly nice later attic picture of an actor holding a satyr mask is found in this specific figure.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Taplin,2007,30

⁵⁰ Taplin,2007,32

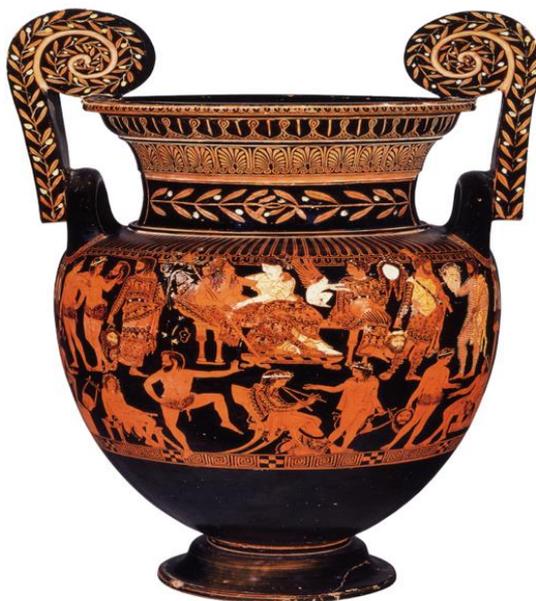
⁵¹ Taplin,2007,33

Theatrical Iconography: The representation of the theatrical mask is the direct theatrical motif and because of this, this red – figured cup is in the catalogue of the surviving vases with scenes from satyr play.

**IMAGES – REPRESENTATIONS OF ATTIC VASES DEPICTING
SATYR PLAY**



Picture 1: Attic red figured calyx krater showing Prometheus holding a fennel stalk in his hand surrounded by satyrs with torches, Dinos Painter, c. 425 – 420 BC (from: Dougherty, 2006,58)



Picture 2: Attic red – figured volute krater depicting satirical plays in Attic pottery, Pronomos Painter, Drawing by E. Malyon, Museo Archeologico Nazionale 3240. c.400 – 395 BC (from: Taplin, 2007, 31)



Picture 3: Attic red figured calyx krater showing Dionysus and his company, Museo Nazionale di Spina, T161C, c.400 BC (inv 20483) (from: Taplin, 2007, 31)



Picture 4: Attic red figured cup depicting an actor's hand holding a satirical drama play mask, Dresden Albertinum, c.380 BC. (From: Taplin, 2007, 33)

3rd Chapter: Comedy - Who are the most well - known comedians and whom the pottery makers know

3.1 Catalogue of surviving vases with scenes from comedy plays in Attic pottery, 430-320 BC

Another essential part of ancient drama was comedy. The development of comedy probably came through ancient local religious festivals in honor of Dionysus where also the element of carnival was evident. Through this development, various poets added their own personal elements. In the case of Aristophanes for instance, this is obvious through the use of elements in his plays that deal with the political and social realities of his time. Since the Hellenistic and later the Roman period, many scholars considered Aristophanes, as well as Eupolis and Cratinus as the three major comedians of the ancient times, adding later also Menander as the most important poet of the so called New Comedy era. But apart from these cases, there are also known some more poets of ancient comedy. In most cases, we have just known their names and maybe just one or two titles from their works.⁵²

The periods of the comedy are divided into three main categories. The Old Comedy (486 – 400 BC), the Middle Comedy (400 – 320 BC) and the New Comedy (320 – 120 BC). In the Old Comedy, the current issues of the city and the famous people are mocked; it also depicts the life in the city and makes the bonds of the community stronger.⁵³ It is also this type of theatre which is determined both from representations and titles. Furthermore, the Middle Comedy was developed in the fourth century and the characteristic of this period is that it is interested in the naturalism and in the behavior among people. It is the type of comedy which presents scenes from the daily life and it has permanent characters.⁵⁴ The last period of the comedy is the so – called New Comedy which was presented in the final quarter of the fourth century when there is an increase of the clay masks and the plots of these stories always involve a love story which ends because they have

⁵² Lesky, 2003, 583

⁵³ Green, 1994, 11

⁵⁴ Μάντζιου, 2002, 71

problems.⁵⁵ During this period, there is also a differentiation which is associated with the social classes in the community⁵⁶. Moreover, one of the basic subjects of the comedy was the cult of Dionysus which was the celebration of the vegetation and fertility.

The Greek word for the comedy is *komodia*, it is a term with two different parts (kome + ode). In antiquity three etymologies were presented: koma + ode (“sleep – song”), kome + ode (“village – song”) and komos + ode (“revel – song”). Undeniably, it seems to derive the last etymology which means “revel – song”; this term is used in order to show the celebration of the liberation, an event that happened in many places or civilizations and in different periods.⁵⁷

The most important old comic writer is Aristophanes who was born shortly after 450 B.C. and he died after 388 B.C. The plays of Aristophanes that have survived in medieval copies are eleven and the target of his plays was to rise the citizens and to transform significantly the change that the hero cannot tolerate any more.⁵⁸ It is also generally accepted that the majority of the evidence for comedy is inclined to be more comfortable than the artifacts related to tragedy and provides priceless information about the costumes and the masks of the heroes, the supports and the plots in particular.⁵⁹

Aristophanes through his work “*The Knights*” gives us important information considering the history of Comedy. He mentions Magnis who was one of the most important ancient Comedy poets. He had 10 victories during the Great Dionysia festival but we have known nothing else about him, except for two or three titles from his works. Another one, older than Magnis, was Chionidis who was the first winner of the state run competition for Comedy during the Great Dionysia in Athens in 486 BC.⁶⁰ Another old comedian was Ekfantides.

Apart from Aristophanes who was the basic comic writer of this period, Eupolis was also one of the comic writers who made his debut when he was at the age of seventeen in 429, was victorious at the Lenaea in one of the years from 429 to 426 and at the Dionysia of either 425 or 424 and had an especially memorable year in

⁵⁵ Brown, 1995,43

⁵⁶ Μάττιου,2002,71

⁵⁷ Storey – Allam,2005,169

⁵⁸ Easterling – Kenney,2008,356

⁵⁹ Revermann,2014,2

⁶⁰ Ibid, 584

421 with Toadies and Maricas.⁶¹ He was also an innovator in metrics and he was with Aristophanes and Cratinus in a common “route” as a part of the canonical triad.

Furthermore, except for the aforementioned comic writers, another important personality of that period is Cratinus. He is the first Athenian comic writer whose work can be characterized by some details, as he is one of the greatest of that period in Attica. Moreover, he is considered to be the oldest of the canonical three old comedy writers, but he is also in the same historical period as the other two. Cratinus used the language with an excessive way and he was reputed to be the Aeschylus of the Old Comedy.⁶² Despite the fact that his poetry was described as harsh he gained the first award while he was competing with Aristophanes and several sources regard him as a brilliant and creative poet.

In the meantime, as it has already been mentioned above Cratinus was one of the most important comedians of the 5th century BC. His career expanded from 460 to 423 BC. Cratinus through his plays had been especially critical against Pericles. For instance, his play with the title *Nemesis*, depicts Pericles as god Zeus, who is married with Nemesis. Through their union Helen is born. The symbolism here is clear. Pericles as god Zeus, is considered as the perpetrator of the war which Athens had to wage during the second half of the 5th century (Peloponnesian War).⁶³

Through Cratinus, it seems that people like Aristophanes, had taken important elements that characterized ancient Comedy in the process, like criticizing important political and social figures of their times. This is evident in the case of Eupolis in 412 BC through his play *Demus*. In this play Eupolis actually reminds of the good old days of Athens during Pericles' reign.

On the other hand, Cratinus comedy plays seem that they were boorish and coarse in their style. Of course something like this does not reduce their importance on the matter of political satire. At the same moment, such elements were quite indicative of the fact that in Comedy there was more freedom of criticizing. From time to time, it seems that the Athenian authorities had tried to limit this freedom but with no avail. During 440 BC for instance, that was a law according to which, comedy poets were obliged not to personally criticize city's public figures through their plays. Nevertheless, this law was never applied. It is also evident that Cratinus,

⁶¹ Rusten, 2011, 421

⁶² Trendall – Webster, 1971,173

⁶³ Ibid, p. 585

being a critic of his time, was also interested, as someone can see through his plays, in matters, like religion and art. For instance his play "*Thracian Women*" goes against the religion of goddess Vendis which had been imported in Athens from Thrace during the 5th century BC. In another of his plays with the title *Panoptai*, he harshly criticizes the sophists' philosophy.⁶⁴

Generally the importance and the role of Cratinus on the development of Old Athenian Comedy have been quite significant. As mentioned above, Aristophanes himself had pointed out this. One of his major changes in old comedy was that he had reduced the number of actors in just three persons. Before Cratinus, this number was not stable.⁶⁵

On the other hand, two known representatives of the Athenian old comedy had been Hermippus and Plato (the latter staged his plays at the same period as Aristophanes). Hermippus was quite caustic and as a result he had been sued many times. He was also known for using iambus in his plays. Plato nevertheless, had been far more caustic than Hermippus. It is characteristic that many of his plays are titled by the names of the politicians he was criticizing. Such plays are for instance those with the titles "*Hyperbolus*", "*Peisander*" and "*Cleofon*". Some other of his plays such as *Hellas* or *Islands* have to do with the general political situation of the greek world at his time. Quite important comedians had also been Kratis and Ferekratis.⁶⁶

Eupolis, in the meanwhile had been one of the most well known representatives of the Old Athenian Comedy. He staged his first play in 429 and within 17 years, until 412 BC, he staged seventeen comedies. He won 7 times (four times at Dionysia festival and three during the Linaia festival). It seems that through his works, like Aristophanes, he also criticized those public figures of Athens who had dragged the city into war for a long time. This is evident for example in his works titled "*Taxiarchoi*" and "*Prospaltioi*". Nevertheless, what seems to bother Eupolis more, in comparison to Aristophanes who made manifestations for peace, was the way the war was going on. In other words, Eupolis actually was more war-like but he did not like the way Athens waged this war.

Aristophanes himself is the most important representative of the Athenian old comedy. He was born circa 446 BC and died around 386 BC. In fact less is known

⁶⁴ Page, 1950, p. 196

⁶⁵ Bakola, 2010, p. 108

⁶⁶ Lesky, 2003, p. 588-589

about his life than about his works. The latter up to a point are a source for his life. Aristophanes had become a poet at an age when it was conventional for a poet to assume the role of teacher. This role had to do especially with the process of training the team of Chorus but also had to do with the special relations; he was creating with the audience of his plays, as he was also the commentator of the issues being depicted through his comic plays.⁶⁷ It is also characteristic that as it was common in the Old Athenian Comedy, at the beginning of a play, called *the parabasis*, the Chorus to give some information and details about the author and his life. Nevertheless, it seems that such information was mostly about the course and career of him as a dramatist.⁶⁸

A major aspect of his work was that he was critic of many important figures of his times. Such figures were for instance Euripides (in the field of art and theatre), Socrates in the field of philosophy, and Cleon in the field of politics. Through this criticism he expressed a kind of conservatism towards the wave of new ideas which had started sweeping across the Athenian society of the 5th century. This conservatism is expressed for instance through his criticism towards the Sophist philosophers of that period. His conservatism is also expressed through the process of drawing in his works a society and a world that seem to share some characteristics to the old Athenian society of the first half of the 5th century BC. This conservatism at the same time is combined with his desire for peace in a period when Athens had been heavily affected by the results of the Peloponnesian War.⁶⁹

Aristophanes during his life also mentioned that his plays were destined for a more educated and clever audience but, on the other hand, he mentioned that other times in the future, he would judge the audience according to the reception of his plays.⁷⁰ The audience of his plays as in the case of other drama genre plays (like tragedy and satirical plays) consisted probably of people from all social classes. It has also been argued that his plays had the scope mainly of entertaining the audience and winning as many competitions as possible. Nevertheless, we are not quite sure about the composition of the audience but it seems that the judges, who decided

⁶⁷ Dover, 1970, p. XIV

⁶⁸ Konstan, 1995, P. 6

⁶⁹ Koukouzeli, 2000, p. 239

⁷⁰ Barrett & Sommerstein, 2003, p. 284

about the winners during the competitions, took under consideration the mood of the crowd.⁷¹

At the same time, Aristophanes produced plays where the role of Chorus was essential for the development of the plot. This role was also connected to Aristophanes' effort to show that various demagogues in Athens, like Cleon, had been a burden for the city's citizens and especially for its wealthy citizens. For instance, this is depicted especially through his play "*The Knights*". In other words, it seems that Aristophanes expressed also the thoughts of certain Athens' social classes. The political conservatism of the plays may reflect the views of the wealthiest parts of the city on whose generosity and money all dramatists could count for potting on their plays.⁷²

11 out of around 40 plays of Aristophanes have fully survived. These are the following: *The Acharnians* (which was first staged in 425 BC), *The Knights* (first staged in 424 BC), *The Clouds* (first staged in 423 BC, but of which the revised version of 419-416 BC is the one we have today), *The Wasps* (422 BC), *Peace* (421 BC), *The Birds* (414 BC), *Lysistrata* (411 BC), *Thesmophoriazusae* (first staged in 411 BC), *The Frogs* (405 BC), *Ecclesiazusae* (circa 392 BC) and *Wealth* (around 388 BC). Some of the datable non surviving are the following: *Babylonians* (426 BC), *Banqueters* (427 BC), *Farmers* (424 BC), *Merchant Ships* (423 BC), *Proagon* (422 BC), *Amphiaraus* (414 BC), *Plutus* (Wealth, the first version in 408 BC), *Gerytades* (407 BC), *Cocalus* (387 BC), *Aiolosicon* (second version in 386 BC). On the other hand, the undated non surviving plays of Aristophanes are the following: *Anagyrus*, *Frying Pan Men*, *Daedalus*, *Danaids*, *Centaur*, *Heroes*, *Lemnian Women*, *Old Age*, *Peace* (the second version of the known play), *Phoenician Women*, *Polyidus*, *Seasons*, *Storks*, *Telemessians*, *Triphales*, *Thesmophoriazusae* (the second version of the known play) and *Women in Tents*. Some other works which are attributed to Aristophanes but which most probably belong to another poet are the following: *Dionysus Shipwrecked*, *Islands*, *Niobos*, and *Poetry*.⁷³

Considering also elements of Aristophanes' poetry, the language he used has been regarded as a characteristic example of attic dialect. The orator Quintilian believed that the charm and grandeur of the attic dialect of the 5th century BC, and

⁷¹ Barrett, 1964, p. 26

⁷² Hall & Geldart, 1967, p. 925

⁷³ Ussher, 1979, p. 234

which was represented especially through Aristophanes' works, became a model and example for orators to study and follow. He thought that it could be considered inferior only to the works and language of Homer.⁷⁴ A revival on the interest about the attic dialect during the 4th century BC can be considered as a factor that played some role on the survival of Aristophanes' plays.⁷⁵ He also acknowledged the role and influence of other comedians like Eupolis and Hermippus (who were his contemporaries) or older comedians like Cratinus, Crates and Magnes or for example the role of the great tragedy poets of Athens during the 5th century BC, like Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. It is notable that the language Aristophanes used was quite similar to that of Euripides. This is something that the contemporaries of both poets had mentioned during their times.⁷⁶

New Comedy that followed after the period of Old Athenian Comedy had representatives like Menander who was born around 342 BC and died at the first half of the 3rd century BC. This genre was developed exclusively in Athens and not at the new great cities of the Hellenistic world.⁷⁷ The production of comedies during the Hellenistic era was really great and this is evident through the list of at least 80 known comedy writers from this period.

Differences between Old and New Comedy, had started surfacing during the period of Middle Comedy, which can be traced during the last years of Aristophanes. Through those changes, New Comedy, compared to Old Comedy was more prone on amusing the spectators than speaking about the social and political issues. In other words there is a genre that was mostly interested in characters and situations. Elements like personal satire towards politicians or generally known personalities of the era do not exist anymore in the plays of New Comedy. Of course there are a few exceptions but nevertheless this is the main stream of New Comedy. New Comedy is not interested in political and social phenomena but instead, it is interested in situations and problems of common people's everyday life. It deals with aspects of their private lives and this is evident of New Comedy trying to depict realistic views of this everyday life.⁷⁸ One of the most common plots within the genre of New Comedy is the case of the love between a young man and a young woman, the

⁷⁴ Barrett & Sommerstein , 2003, p. 15

⁷⁵ Ibid p. 15

⁷⁶ Silk, 2002, p. 21

⁷⁷ Tsitsiridis, 2001, p. 86

⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 87

negative reactions of their families (especially their fathers), the financial difficulties the two lovers have to face etc. In such plays it is also common to see a slave helping the young couple in order to face all problems.

As already mentioned above, Menander is considered as the most important representative of the genre of New Comedy. His most well known plays are the following: *Dyskolos* (*The Grouch*), *Samia* (*Woman from Samos*), *Epileptontes* (*Men at Arbitration*), *Aspis* (*The Shield*), *Sikyonioides* (*The Sicyonians*), *Perikeiromeni* (*The Girl with the cut hair*).⁷⁹ Menander had been an imitator of Euripides and Aristophanes considering the use of style, prose and language. Such elements had to do with the keen perception of everyday life, the fondness for moral maxims and the analysis on people's emotions.⁸⁰

Considering the catalogue of surviving vases with scenes from comedies in Attic pottery, for the period 430-320 BC, someone may take in mind some cases which are mentioned in the following pages: a) An attic red figured calyx krater, c.425BC b) An attic red figured pelike, c.425 BC c) An attic red figured chous, c.420 BC d) An attic polychrome oinochoe, c.420BC e) An attic red figured chous, c.410 BC f) An attic red figured chous, c.410 – 400 BC g) An attic polychrome oinochoe, c.400 BC h) An attic polychrome oinochoe, c.400 BC i) An attic polychrome oinochoe, c.400 BC j) An attic polychrome oinochoe, c.400 BC k) An attic polychrome oinochoe, c.390 BC

⁷⁹ Papaioannou & Petrides, 2012, p. 166

⁸⁰ Cox, 2002, 391-394

3.2 Catalogue - Depictions of selected surviving vases

1. Attic red – figured calyx krater, formerly Malibu 82.AE.83. , c.425 BC (Picture 1)

The first pot that is going to be analyzed is the attic red – figured calyx krater depicting a comic chorus dressed as fighting cocks. It is one of the oldest vase paintings, showing scenes of comedy and it is derived from a choral scene. The subject of this specific scene is a performance depicting costumed figures.⁸¹ Specifically, the costume that they wear is the so – called *perizomata*, the shorts that have cocks' tails attached in back and put up *phalloi* in the front side and they are decorated with circles filled with dots, solid black circles with traces or added white. The piper wears a chiton, decorated with pictures of a charioteer on his left chest, winged horses, crosses, dots and a meander around the skirt. What is identified from the knees of two bird men is the fact that they are ready to run forward.⁸²

Theatrical Iconography: The masks and the comic costumes are two of the comic theatrical motifs and for this reason this particular pot is in the catalogue with comic scenes from the period 430 – 320 BC.

2. Attic red – figured pelike, Atlanta 2008.4.1 , c.425 BC (Picture 2)

The pelike appears a single figure wearing a mask and a costume which is decorated with dots. Many scholars believe that both this and the previous one represent costumed figures from a Dionysian procession while others support that it is a scene from a comedy in which a chorus of satyrs is transformed into cocks.⁸³ However, a pelike should refer to a chorus and most probably a comic chorus.

Theatrical Iconography: Both the mask and the costume reveal that this pelike can be included in the catalogue of comic scenes of the period 430 – 320 BC.

⁸¹ Csapo, 2010,9

⁸² Green, 1994, 31

⁸³ Csapo, 2010, 11

3. Attic red – figured chous, painter of the Perseus Dance, Vlasstos Collection, National Archaeological Museum of Athens, Athens BΣ 518. Group of Perseus Dance, c.420 BC (Picture 3)

The most famous comic attic chous which was found in Anavyssos near Sounion.⁸⁴ It is a representation of two seated male figures watching another figure sitting on heel and bouncing on a low stage.⁸⁵ It is also the only attic vase showing a stage or an audience and the first one showing a performer on it. Both of them wear long chitons and a strap on the head, the one who stands on the first step has beards and the other one wears a chiton but it doesn't cover the whole body.⁸⁶ Despite the fact that its subject is unique it has been preserved in a poor condition.⁸⁷

In the front of the oinochoe a man can be seen leaping or dancing on a slightly elevated platform. He raises his right leg and throws his right arm up in the air. His raised right foot is seen from beneath. The left foot is placed on the platform, turned slightly outward. More than that is no longer visible, as a section on the surface from the middle of the left lower leg to the edge of the platform and the upper part of the ladder is missing. This has actually been filled with plain clay. At the same time, we can see that a cloak hangs down from the left arm. In his hand the man also holds a sickle which seemed to be colored. A square bag also hangs from his left arm, while the body, arms, legs are depicted on the front. His head, on the other hand, is depicted in profile and the mouth is a little bit open. On his face we can see a thin moustache over his mouth and a thin layer of beard at the bottom of his face. The bridge of the nose is caved in and concerning his curly hair, there is a fillet which once was painted probably in white. Slight traces of white have been preserved up to our days at the edge of it. A few longer curls lie on the temple, cheek and neck.⁸⁸

At the other side of this scene there are two figures sitting on two chairs of the ancient Greek klismos type. One of them seems to be older as he is bearded. The man is wrapped completely in his himation and by this way his arms and feet are

⁸⁴ This vase initially belonged to the private Vlasstos collection but after years it was donated to the National Archaeological Museum of Athens.

⁸⁵ Taplin, 1993, 9

⁸⁶ Κεφαλίδου, 2008, 697

⁸⁷ Csapo, 2010, 26

⁸⁸ Froning 2014,305

completely covered. In his curly hair he wears a white band with a wreath of ivy. The leaves of this ivy seem to be also painted in white.⁸⁹

Beside the old man there is another younger one. This figure does not seem to be so well preserved in comparison to the older figure. The bigger part of his face misses except for the inner corner of the right eye. At the same time, the surface of the neck, the upper part of the body and the left upper arm are also missing. Also, both his shoulders do not exist. The outlines of the elbow and the forearm of the right arm are still recognizable, but the hand is lost. Once he wore a wreath in his short curly hair as well. His cloak covers only his legs. The upper part of the body was naked. The young man turned to the dignified bearded man and pushed him with his elbow. His right forefinger pointed to the actor. In his left hand he holds a long rod, curved on one end, upside down.⁹⁰

Considering these two figures, there have also been many suggestions about their identity. Bulle for instance, thought that they are an aristocrat erastes and his boy lover,⁹¹ although this idea probably is not right. Others like, for instance, John Beazley, Margarete Bieber and Arthur Pickard - Cambridge think that those persons were nothing more than just an ordinary audience in front of the actor.⁹² Caputo, on the other hand, thought that the bearded man was a priest of Dionysus and the young man beside him a choregos, i.e. the wealthy citizen who paid for the theatrical plays.⁹³ This last opinion has met wide approval until our days and it has been also completed with the idea that the bearded man is the poet.⁹⁴

Theatrical Iconography: Concerning this chous, the representation of the construction (stage) is the only one depiction of the comic motifs and because of that it can be included in the catalogue of the attic comic scenes.

⁸⁹ Hughes, 2006, 421

⁹⁰ Froning, 2014, 311

⁹¹ Bulle, H1937, 52-53

⁹² Pickard - Cambridge, 1973, 211

⁹³ Caputo, 1935,275

⁹⁴ Csapo,2010, 26

4. Attic polychrome oinochoe, Athens, Agora P23900. H: 24.5 Komast, Metropolitan Museum – New York, c. 420 BC. (Picture 4)

A single dancing figured is appeared in the fragments of this polychrome oinochoe wearing a scarf swinging in his arms and boots; the thick – big lips, possibly padded, the belly of the figure is not similar with those of comic actors.⁹⁵

Theatrical Iconography: It is placed in the catalogue of attic comic scenes because of the direct motif that is the representation of the mask.

5. Attic red – figured chous by Nikias Painter, Paris Louvre, N 3408, Cyrene,c. 410 BC (Picture 5)

This attic red – figured chous is a depiction of Heracles standing on a chariot driven by Nike and pulled by four centaurs, a wreathed man goes ahead holding two handheld lamps. In this depiction what is connected with the comedy is the mask – line faces as the centaurs faces are like the slave mask but they have equine ears.⁹⁶ Furthermore the bearer’s face is repeated as a slave – mask on a late Middle Comedy relief.

Theatrical Iconography: This attic red figured chous, has two direct theatrical motifs; the representations of the costume and the construction (chariot), these two motifs are the indication that it can be included in this catalogue with comic scenes from the period 430 – 320 BC.

6. Attic red – figured chous from Meidias workshop, Leningrand, ΦΑ 1869.47, Phanagoria, South Russia, c.410 – 400 BC. (Picture 6)

There is a depiction of five children related to the comedy and they are presented wearing elaborated chitons, there are also five masks and three actors.

Theatrical Iconography: The mask is one of the direct comic motifs and this is the evidence that it is rightly consisted of the catalogue with the attic comic scenes.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Crosby, 1992, 79

⁹⁶ Trendall – Webster, 1971, 117

⁹⁷ Trendall – Webster, 1971, 117

7. Attic polychrome oinochoe, Athens, Agora P 23856, H: 14,5, Tyro and her sons : Pelias and Neleus, National Museum at Athens, c.400BC (Picture 7)

This attic polychrome oinochoe with part of an inscription and the head of the right hand figure is depicted here. In this specific oinochoe only the upper part has been preserved with a part of an inscription over the figure standing on the right. It is a scene of Tyro and her sons, Pelias and Neleus. The inscription is incomplete on the left but can easily be restored in order to read "[ΠΕΛΙΑ]Σ ΤΥΡΩ ΝΗΛΕΥΣ". The scene has to do first of all with Sophocles' work *Tyro*. According to the story, her twin sons had been exposed at birth and when they became young men, they saved her from her wicked mother in law Sidero. They also had with them the trough inside which they were exposed. This is one of the most well-known scenes of identification in ancient Greek mythology and it was ridiculed by Aristophanes in *Lysistrata*. This part from the exact oinochoe was found at the ancient Agora of Athens and it is dated circa 400 BC.⁹⁸ This identification scene is also mentioned by Menander in his work *Epitrepontes*.

Theatrical Iconography: In this oinochoe, the inscription ("[ΠΕΛΙΑ]Σ ΤΥΡΩ ΝΗΛΕΥΣ") is the direct comic motif and because of this inscription, this specific vase is in the catalogue with comic scenes of the period 430 – 320 BC.

8. Attic polychrome oinochoe, Agora P23985. Drawing by Piet de Jong. Courtesy, Agora Excavations, the American School of Classical Studies, c.400BC. (Picture 8)

There is a depiction of two figures in comic costume and it is hard to figure out.⁹⁹ Seemingly, two not in natural shape fat figures look each other with an indefinite object between them, possibly a dog.¹⁰⁰ Above the figures there are preserved the inscriptions with neat black letters "...ΟΝΥΣΟΣ" on the left which means "Διώνυσος" and "Φορ..." on the right which can be restored as Φορμίω(ν); the names of the depicted figures.¹⁰¹ The surface is badly damaged and the picture hard to decipher. Apparently two grotesquely fat figures face each other and probably

⁹⁸ Crosby, 1992, 78

⁹⁹ Crosby, 1992, 81

¹⁰⁰ Crosby, 1992, 82

¹⁰¹ Csapo, 2010, 28

between them it is a dog. The names of the figures are partially preserved and the one surely is that of Dionysus, while the other seems to be that of Phormio. So it seems that here there is a depiction of Eupolis' comedy *Taxiarhoi*, where Phormio, the well known general of Athens gave lessons in campaigning to Dionysus.¹⁰²

Theatrical Iconography: The attic red – figured chous has also a direct motif, which is the representation of the construction (stage of the theatre) and because of that it is included in this catalogue with comic scenes from the period 430 – 320 BC.

9. Attic polychrome oinochoe, Athens, Agora P23907. H: 24,5, Obeliaphoroi, c.400BC (Picture 9)

In these fragments of the specific polychrome oinochoe two bearded figures are depicted, wearing a chitoniskos, a short garment or exomis slipped below his right shoulder and probably a double fillet. The figures carried an obelias cake on the shoulders of obeliaphoroi in the procession in honor of Dionysos. *Obeliaphoroi* is known as a title of the comedy by Ehippos. It seems that it came from the same workshop like the previously mentioned piece. It depicts two heavy bearded men running while carrying a white object on a spit. The second man wears a white cap and black cuffed boots. The broken horizontal line across his thighs suggests that he may be wearing a short chiton too. At the same moment, there is a known work of ancient Athenian comedy writer Ehippos with the title "*Obeliaphoroi*" which was written around 370 BC. The oinochoe, as mentioned before, is older by at least 20 years, but during Ehippos' time (Middle Comedy period) many comedies' titles were the same like those of plays from the Old Comedy period.¹⁰³

Theatrical Iconography: In this oinochoe, the evidence of the direct motif is the representation of the theatrical masks and because of them; the oinochoe is included in the catalogue with comic scenes from the period 430 – 320 BC.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Ibid, p. 82

¹⁰³ Ibid, p. 81

¹⁰⁴ Crosby, 1992, 80

10. Attic polychrome oinochoe, London, B.M. 98.2 – 27.1, A man rowing a fish, British Museum, close to the 400BC (Picture 10)

This attic polychrome oinochoe depicts a man rowing a fish having his feet on the back and he seems to be looking around over his left shoulder to see where he is going. It is a scene which is a copy from phlyax vases of South Italy.

Theatrical Iconography: Surprisingly, this oinochoe is in the catalogue with comic scenes from the period 430 – 320 BC because of an indirect motif; the depiction of the figure in unusual roles (a man rowing a fish).¹⁰⁵

11. Attic red – figured bell krater, Heidelberg, Antikenmuseum der Universitat B 134, ca. 390 BC. (Picture 11)

The last pot which is presented in the catalogue is a comic performance showing two members of the chorus of a comedy with a female chorus. The figure on the left wears a costume and a mask for a female role. He holds a torch and he has pushed the mask to the back of his head so that it is easy to see the actor's beardless face.¹⁰⁶ Both masks have small mouths and their eyes are depicted spherical and widely open. On the right it is a figure representing a young man dancing and having one bent leg and the other stretched out. In order to maintain the dramatic illusion it is visible that the chorus man shows his face.¹⁰⁷

Theatrical Iconography: Both the comic costume and the masks are the comic direct motifs that show an attic comedy which can be included in the catalogue with the comic scenes of the period 430 – 320 BC.

¹⁰⁵ Crosby, 1992, 82

¹⁰⁶ Froning, 2014, 308

¹⁰⁷ Trendall – Webster, 1971, 119

IMAGES



Picture 1: Attic red – figured krater showing a comic chorus dressed as fighting cocks, c.425 BC, Courtesy, Ministero per I Beni ele Attivita Culturali, Department of Archaeology, Italy, N: 82.AE.83 (from: Robertson,1992,251)



Picture 2: Attic red – figured pelike showing a single figure wearing a mask and a costume decorating with dots, c.425 BC, Courtesy, Michael C. Carlos, and Museum of Emory Archaeology, 2008.4.1 (from: Csapo, 2010,10)



Picture 3: Attic red – figured chous representing two seated male figures watching another figure sitting on a heel, c. 420 BC, Athens, National Museum, BΣ 158, Drawing by E. Malyon (painter of the Perseus Dance) (from: Taplin, 2007,46)



Picture 4: Attic polychrome oinochoe showing a single figure dancing, c.420 BC, Agora, Athens, P23900 (from: Crosby, 1992, 86)



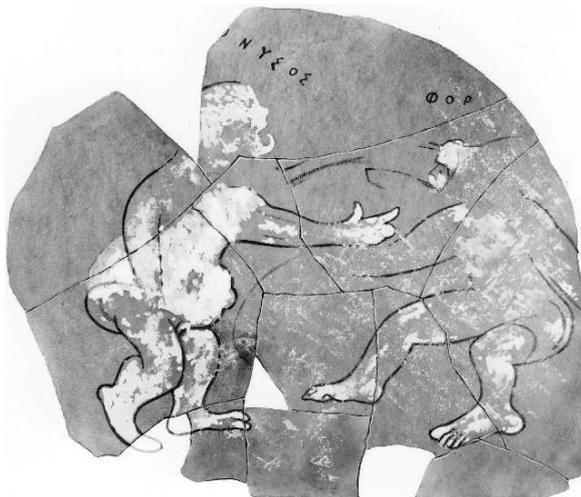
Picture 5: Attic red – figured chous depicting Herakles standing on a chariot, c.410 BC, Paris, Louvre, N3408, Nikias Painter (from: Trendall – Webster, 1971, 118)



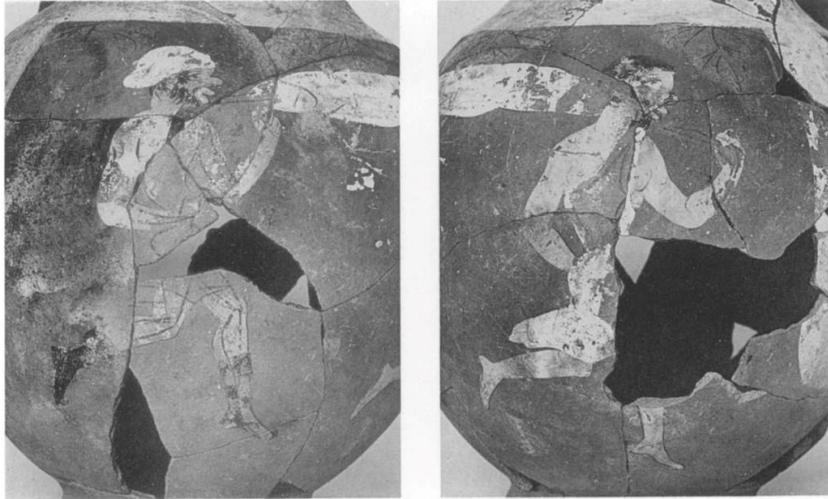
Picture 6: Attic red – figured chous depicting five children, c.410 – 400 BC, Phanagoria, S. Russia, ΦA 1869.47 (from: Trendall – Webster, 1971,118)



Picture 7: Attic polychrome oinochoe depicting a figure with inscriptions over his head, c.400BC, Athens, National Museum, P 23856 (from: Crosby, 1992, 85)



Picture 8: Attic polychrome oinochoe depicting two figures in comic costume, c.400 BC, Agora, Drawing by Piet de Jong, P 23985 (from: Csapo, 2010, 29)



Picture 9: Attic polychrome oinochoe showing two bearded figures, c.400 BC, Agora, Athens, P23907 (from: Crosby, 1992, 86)



Picture 10: Attic polychrome oinochoe showing a man rowing a fish, c.400 BC, British Museum, London, B.M. 98.2 – 27.1 (from: Crosby, 1992, 88)



Picture 11: Attic red – figured bell – krater showing two members of the chorus of a comedy with a female chorus, c.390 BC, Heidelberg, B134 (from: Trendall – Webster, 1971, 119)

3.3 Comparing the Phlyax pottery of southern Italy with all the cases of pottery and vases described at the previous chapters

As it has already mentioned above, observing the cases of vases from southern Italy and more specifically the so called Phlyax Pottery, someone can understand that there seems to be a close relation between them and the attic vases of the 430-320 BC period, considering both their artistic style and the way they depict scenes from various comic plays. According to the surviving written testimonies from the ancient times, the term "Phlyax" is either connected to mime dancers who participated in comic theatricals or it means those theatricals themselves.¹⁰⁸ From a long time ago their existence actually interested many scholars in interpreting them and in seeing what could be their connection to the attic pottery art and the process of depiction of ancient Attic drama plays (more specifically Old Comedy plays).

Considering the cases of depictions of ancient Greek comedy plays in chosen surviving vases someone may consider the case of the so called *Telephus Vase* in Wurzburg. It is illustrated by the so called Schiller Painter and it is dated circa 380 BC (Picture 1). This vase preserves probably the most convincing evidence of a scene specific illustration of fifth century attic comedy. Its existence seems to question and undermine some traditional assumptions about the performance of old comedy beyond Athens and Attica region.¹⁰⁹ The parodies of ancient Greek Tragedy that this play develops and the mentioned vase depicts can be considered a quite interesting comment in the sophistication of audiences even outside Athens. This point is a sign of undermining first of all the assumption that western Greeks (i.e. those of southern Italy and Sicily) had an indirect contact with the attic drama as well as the attic pottery. The second assumption which has been undermined is that the old comedy's topicality would have naturally limited its appeal as a marketable export beyond Athens to other parts of Greek world, which would have had little interest in the re-performance of material whose cultural and political context was unknown or at best vague. Those who said that at the *Telephus Vase* in Wurzburg

¹⁰⁸ Konstantinopoulou ,2013, p. 6

¹⁰⁹ Sells, 2011, p. 80

there is a depiction of Aristophanes' play *Thesmophoriazusae*, were Eric Csapo and Oliver Taplin.¹¹⁰

The exact scene in this vase has to do with Aristophanes' parody of Telephus and it is from his work *Thesmophoriazusae*.¹¹¹ This vase comes from the western part of the ancient Greek world, i.e. southern Italy (Apulia) but it is presented here, as its style is exactly the one met at attic red figure vases of the fifth and the early fourth century BC.

In the vase, Telephus is depicted in the middle of the scene, holding a knife in his right hand and holding a wine skin which is supposed to be a baby (as in Euripides play) while at the bottom of it we can see Persian booties. Since the "baby" is actually filled with wine, it could give the impression of bleeding in case it was torn apart. All these details actually are exactly the same with the plot and more specifically the hostage incident at *Thesmophoriazusae*. In Euripides' Telephus, the main character seizes something that looks like a baby and holds a knife towards it, threatening to kill. In the process he finds out that there is no baby.¹¹² The persons depicted here is evident that they were masks which at the same time may depict important characters of Aristophanes' play.

To the character's right, a woman carrying a large skyphos rushes in the direction of the wineskin. In the *Thesmophoriazusae*, the woman who had been bereft of her "child" grabs a sacrificial bowl and runs to catch the blood of her "baby". The man, who seems to be a parody of Telephus, has his left leg on the altar, trying supposedly to find refuge. At the same time there are some more specific details which seem to connect this depiction with Aristophanes' *Thesmophoriazusae*. The one is that Telephus wears a feminine headband on his head. Also the garment worn by the suppliant at this vase is not in disagreement with the details of Aristophanes' play. It is somewhat shorter than the usual female garb. This is also an indication of the play's main plot, where some men tried to depict themselves as women in order to participate at Thesmophoria festival. Another element here has to do with the presence of a mirror above the two characters that are depicted at the vase (in the middle, between them). Its presence seems to indicate that the whole scene takes place inside a sanctuary. Maybe this is a sanctuary of Hera or Artemis

¹¹⁰ Csapo 1986, 1993, p. 205

¹¹¹ Bosher, 2012, P. 283

¹¹² Csapo, 1986, 380

since many mirrors have been found in archaeological sites where their temples were.¹¹³

Another element that can be noted here is that at the beginning of Aristophanes' play the slave of poet, Agathon, who is one of the play's main characters, runs towards an altar. This element reminds us the scene who sees on the vase with the one person holding the sacrificial bowl, running towards the altar. At the same time the character on the vase is without beard which shows that he tries to disguise himself as a woman.¹¹⁴

Apart from the above case, another example may be considered also that of the so called *Goose Play* vase (Picture 2), which is dated around 400 BC. It is painted by the so called Tarpoley Painter¹¹⁵ and it shows three characters on the foreplay. A man who is beardless and stage naked (which means he wears the exaggeratedly padded body suit which was part of the costume of all male comic characters in Athens), holds a staff in his right hand and faces the second figure. In the center of the panel it is an older man (we can see that his hair and close shaved beard are white) also stage naked, standing on tiptoe and with his two arms raised up. He looks back over his shoulder at the first figure. Both they are standing at the point of the orchestra. On the right it is a raised stage, which seems to be over a meter high. On it there is a dead goose and its head dangles over the stage end, as well as a basket with two kids, a himation discarded down and an old woman with her hand out stretched towards the two men. Behind her the scene can be seen.¹¹⁶ Over the two male characters there is a bearded mask while further behind the first man there is also the figure of a young naked person. Taking under consideration the phrases which seem to come out of the mouths of the characters depicted here, it is evident that this scene is from one of Aristophanes' plays. The phrases seen here indicate that the Attic dialect in drama art had remained unchanged even at the Doric speaking colonies of Magna Graecia.¹¹⁷

One other case of a vase from the period studied here is that of the so called *Berlin Hercules Vase* (Picture 3). This is another bell - krater vase from the region of Apulia which is dated around 375-350 BC. It disappeared during the Second World

¹¹³ Ibid, p. 384

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p. 387

¹¹⁵ Boshier, 2012, p. 283

¹¹⁶ Marshall, 2001, 54

¹¹⁷ Hall, 2007, p. 6

War. The vase depicts a scene from another Aristophanes' well known play named *Frogs*. The depiction in this vase, in comparison with the two mentioned above, seems to be the poorest in artistry, when it comes on the depiction of Old Comedy plays. As someone can see from left to right the scene here depicts a Doric column, which seems apparently to be a representative of a building or of a porch. This column is approached by a naked man (stage - naked like the cases in the previous vases mentioned) wearing the usual tights, stomach and rear padding, and the mask of a comic actor. There seem to be traces of the usual big penis, but which have faded.¹¹⁸

The ugly mask is indicative of the features of Hercules: it has a thick beard and bushy hair, while there are also some whitish traces that may be indicative of the lion skin on the figure's back.¹¹⁹ The right hand of Hercules swings a club towards the door, while his left hand grabs an animal skin, just to the right and below this hand stands an altar, and behind this trots a donkey mounted by a second actor. On the shoulder of this figure sits a large bundle apparently attached to a stick, a small section of which was still barely visible behind the chin of the rider,¹²⁰ at the time the vase had been photographed (during the 1940's).

There are obviously many theatrical elements in this scene, which have been analyzed by E. Csapo.¹²¹ Here Hercules and his companion who probably is his slave Xanthias, they show ankle and wrist seams which suggest comic tights. Also a further seam running up the donkey's right foreleg may reveal a pantomime ass. The aggressive knocking in the image corresponds to the centaur style hammering castigated by Hercules in the text. The figure astride the donkey but carrying a bundle can be identified with the slave Xanthias. The image is thus a rather economic portrayal of the comic banter and metatheatrical play (marked by jokes about hackneyed "laboring slave" scenes in contemporary comedy) concentrated at the first fifty lines of the play *Frogs*.

On the other hand, considering the case of southern Italian vases depicting tragedy plays, someone may understand their resemblance to the attic red figure pottery of the same era. For instance, the theme from *Aeschylus trilogy*, in other words, the *Oresteia Trilogy*, through the years would also be depicted in the pottery

¹¹⁸ Sells, 2011, p. 87

¹¹⁹ Csapo, , 2010, p. 59

¹²⁰ Sells, 2011, p. 88

¹²¹ Csapo, 2010, p. 58-61

art of other parts of the ancient Greek world. Also, during the fourth century BC we can see this at vases from southern Italy. In Magna Grecia where the favorite plays of the great Attica tragedians (Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides) were often revived in local productions, it is expected to find vase - paintings more closely following the plot of the play. This is the case of a Lucanian red figure panathenaic amphora¹²². At this amphora we can see Electra and Orestes. Orestes seems to appear suddenly from the place he had been hiding in order to address Electra. The latter until then seems to be totally unaware of his presence and she is caught sitting at the tomb of their father Agamemnon in melancholy. As at the attic skyphos mentioned above, there is an attendant beside Electra who seems to be a kind of shorthand for the chorus.¹²³

Pylades actually here is depicted as somehow smaller and inconspicuous, in order Orestes to be shown as the great hero. It also seems that the young boy at the scene is similar to another figure depicted at a pelike, the so called *Exeter pelike*. Nevertheless, his identity is quite obscure, since there is no exact information through the Oresteia trilogy about any other specific male. His detachment from the action on another plane, suggests that he could somehow operate as a geographical signpost like for instance Argos, in the form of a local hero. The tomb of Agamemnon has been streamlined, with the emphasis now put on the armor of the old warrior. A nice touch in the offering vase, perhaps a form of self - advertisement on the part of pottery painter.¹²⁴

Another pottery where we can also find depiction of the scene at the tomb of Agamemnon is a red figure amphora from Posidonia of southern Italy which is dated around 350 BC. The vase is 46 cm high and today it is at the History and Art Museum of Geneva. It is thought to be a work of the so called Orestes painter.

The exact scene had been an object of argument between some scholars like Aellen, Cambitoglou, Chamay and Taplin. The three first had thought that it is not necessary to connect the scene depicted at this amphora with the work of *Aeschylus Choeforoi*. They believed that there was no point and interest for those who watched this scene whether the persons depicted were really Orestes, Electra and Pylades.¹²⁵

¹²² The amphora today is at the National Museum of Naples.

¹²³ Ibid p. 124

¹²⁴ Ibid p. 125

¹²⁵ Aellen, Cambitoglou , Chamay, 1986, p. 77-80

Nevertheless, Taplin doesn't follow such an idea. He believes that by this way the value of the exact vase can be underestimated. The same goes on, as he believes with the winged figures that can be seen at the top of the pillar which is on the tomb of Agamemnon in the middle of the scene. These figures have snakes on their heads and their hands, and according to Taplin, they are Erinyae.¹²⁶

Such figures like the Erinyae had started being depicted in pottery art more and more often during the 4th century BC. Concerning the Aeschylus' play *Choiforoi*, Orestes starts viewing these creatures at the end of the plot (verses 1048-1063), which until then are totally invisible. It is probable that Aeschylus had been the first tragedy poet in ancient Greece who had given a human form to such mythological entities. In the meanwhile, it is characteristic that there is no depiction of them in pottery art until the middle of the fifth century BC and although those creatures were common in many stories of the Greek mythology they have been connected mainly to the story of Orestes. So it seems that according to Taplin it is important to recognize these figures at this pottery as Orestes and Electra respectively. Nevertheless in this scene someone can see that Electra is on her knees, something that in other vases and potteries is not observed. In other potteries Electra is either standing or she is on the tomb of Agamemnon. Maybe in this case, she is on her knees in order to see the lack of hair from Orestes she finds on their father's tomb. This is why she can't see her brother who seems to be behind her. The exact figure is Orestes since his hair like those of Electra are short. Anyway this is a detail which Aeschylus mentions in his play.¹²⁷

Except the above cases another which can be considered as quite interesting, is that of a red figure krater from Syracuse. The artist of this depiction is known as the Painter of Capodarso. The vase and the scene on it are dated from 330 BC. It is found at the Regional Archaeological Museum of Syracuse. The scene depicts a kind of building which is depicted as low platform standing on transverse square woods. At the back part of this structure we can see Doric type ancient pillars. The upper part of them is garmented with flowers. Between those pillars there are three spaces and at each of them we can see a figure. At the first one from the left there is an old man with white hair and beard. At the middle one there is another bearded man (but younger than the first one) who seems thoughtful about something

¹²⁶ Taplin, 2007, p. 54

¹²⁷ Linardaki, 2017, p. 17

holding his chin. The third one on the right is a woman who wears a long dress with garments (like the man in the middle). In front of the two central pillars of the scenery, there are two young girls with soluble hair and with long white dresses.¹²⁸

This scene is considered to depict a part from the *Oedipus Tyrannous* tragedy of Sophocles, as the work had been played in Sicily one hundred years after its creation by the great Athenian poet. The scene seems being connected to the plot from the verse 924 and beyond, where the shepherd from Corinth disclose to Oedipus his real identity. Iokastes is being depicted as she also hears the truth, while the two girls most probably are Ismene and Antigone, who nevertheless had not been presented at that point of the plot. So there are actually here four possibilities: a) The pottery artist connected two different scenes of the play, b) He just wanted to add his personal touch, by adding the two girls, c) This is the depiction of another play and d) This is how Oedipus Tyrannous was depicted in Sicily during the fourth century BC.¹²⁹

If this is really one of the works of Sophocles, then we may understand the reason the artist of this vase used this scene. The reason was the tense of the exact moment which had a great impact on the viewers of the play. It is a scene where we can see the unexpected change of the fate of Oedipus and the other central figures of Sophocles' play, something that is a central aspect of tragedy, according to Aristotle.

Considering the works of Euripides, the scene of Perseus being attacked by the Maenads is beautifully depicted at a red - figure dish which is attributed to the Group of Oxford and is dated around 360 BC. The dish is from southern Italy. The scene is full of tension, as we see the Maenads attacking Perseus with weapons. The sword wielded by one of the Maenads is an indication of the painter not showing absolute fidelity to the literary source, i.e. Euripides' play.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Kefalidou, 2008, p. 705

¹²⁹ Ibid, p. 705

¹³⁰ Ibid. p. 162

IMAGES



Picture 1: The Telephus Vase in Wurzburg with depiction probably of scene from Aristophanes plays Thesmophoriazues. Circa 380 BC, Terracotta, red figure, Wurzburg Museum Germany (from: Csapo, 1986, 380)



Picture 2: The Goose Play Vase from the Tarpeley Painter, dated circa 400 BC, southern Italy, Terracotta, red figure, 30.6 x 31.8 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Arts, New York (from: Taplin, 2007, 13)



Picture 3: Berlin Hercules Vase (formerly, Berlin 3046, “ Staatliche Museen zu Berlin) (from: Sells, 2011, 287)

4th Chapter: Conclusions - Epilogue

To recapitulate, by all the above we can reach to the conclusion that during the period being mentioned in this research (430-320 BC) the depiction of scenes from ancient Attic drama plays on vases and pottery was quite common. This is evident in the case of the depiction of scenes from the plays of the three great Athenian tragedy poets, Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, from the plays also of the most important poet of the comedy, Aristophanes and Aeschylus in the case of satyr play.

It is certain however that, the Golden Age of Greece and especially of Athens is the middle of the fifth century. Attic vases were painted in a different way and artists created important handcrafts. The red figured technique was better than the black one and the human body was portrayed either naked or clothed, either in motion or at rest. During the fourth century BC, Athens boom period has disappeared and bust one has appeared. Then, Greek cities in Southern Italy and Sicily affected Italian style and artists preferred Greeks from indigenous Italians'. Favorite subject was the work of Aristophanes, Cratinus and Antiphanes. They used their themes for decorating their pottery.¹³¹

Through the research of this study, it is found out that the Athenian ceramic industry began to decline during the devastations of the Peloponnesian Wars (in the end of the fifth century) and the production continued through the fourth century but in much smaller quantities. The most important region which was widely well known was the Greek West and it was the area where they produced pottery of great value. The greatest quantity of the pottery continued to be red – figured, although during this period two other techniques were developed: Gnathia at Taras and Centuripe in Sicily.¹³²

Furthermore, between the theatre and the vase painting there is an interaction which cannot be investigated as some texts and monuments have not survived totally. On the other hand, the vases with scenes from comedy or the Phlyax Pottery prove that they have a direct relationship with the theatre and the representation as it is distinguished the scene, the doors, the ladder and sometimes all of them in one scene. Through the comic representations it is easily to inform for the garments of

¹³¹ Norris, 2000, 49

¹³² Taplin, 2007, 15

the phlyax scenes which have masks with intensive characteristics of the masks which are emphasized in a badly way. A basic characteristic of these figures is the oversized phallus. Some of the vases have the characteristics of the domestic production while some others try to imitate those from Athens and in this field a basic role had the Greek colonies which were established in many cities of the South Italy and in Sicily.

It is concluded that the vase painters preferred the comedy as a theatrical genre but this does not mean that there were not vases with depictions from the tragedy; this is the proof that the vases of the South Italy had a direct relevance with the attic drama.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

1. Κεφαλίδου, Ε. (2008), *Η Εικονολογία της Αττικής Τραγωδίας*, στο: Α. Μαρκαντωνάτος & Χ. Τσαγγάλης (επιμ.), *Αρχαία Ελληνική Τραγωδία – Θεωρία και Πράξη*, Αθήνα pgs: 637-725
2. Μάντζιου Μ.,(2002), *Σχέση Δράματος και Τέχνης*, Πανεπιστημιακές Εκδόσεις Κρήτης, pgs: 63-99
3. Aellen C., Cambitoglou A., Chamay, J., (1986) *Le peintre de Darius et son milieu: Vases grecs d' Italie meridionale*, Association Hellas et Rome, Geneva
4. Bakola Em., (2010) *Cratinus and the Art of Comedy*, OUP Oxford, UK Oxford
5. Barrett D., & Sommerstein Al., (2003) *The Birds and Other Plays*, Penguin Press, London
6. Barrett D., (1964), *Frogs and other plays*, Penguin Press, London
7. Billing C.M., "Representation of Greek Tragedy in Ancient Pottery: A Theatrical Perspective", in *New Theater Quarterly*, August 2008, Vol. 26 No 3: 229-245
8. Blume H.D., (1986), *Introduction to the Ancient Theatre*, MIET editions, Athens
9. Boshier K., (2012), *Theater outside Athens: Drama in Greek Sicily and South Italy*, Oxford University Press, UK Oxford
10. Brown J. R., (1995), *The Oxford Illustrated History of Theatre*, Oxford University Press
11. Brommer, F., (1959) *Satyrspiele: Bilder griechischer Vasen*, Berlin
12. Bulle, H., (1937) "Das Theater zu Sparta", *Sitzungsberichte der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philologisch - historische Abteilung*, Heft 5, Munich
13. Caputo, G., (1935). "Palcoscenico su vasso attico", in *Dioniso*, 4: 275
14. Cook R.M., *Greek painted pottery*, Routledge, London and New York, 1997
15. Cox Ch. A., (2002). "Crossing Boundaries through marriage in Menander's *Dyskolos*", in *Classical Quarterly* 52: 391-394
16. Csapo, E., *Actors and Icons of the Ancient Theatre*, Oxford University Press, UK Oxford, 2010
17. Csapo E., (1986). "A Note on the Wurzburg Bell Crater H5697", in *Phoenix* 40: 380

18. Dougherty C., (1999). "*The Double Vision of Euripides' Cyclops: An Ethnographic Odyssey on the Satyr Stage*", in *Comparative Drama*, Vol. 33, No 3, pp. 313-338
19. Dougherty C., (2006), "*Prometheus – Gods and Heroes of the Ancient World*", Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, London
20. Dover K.J., (1970) "*Introduction*", in *Aristophanes: The Clouds*, Oxford University Press, UK Oxford
21. Easterling P.E. & Kenney E.J., 2008, *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, Cambridge University Press
22. Freeman C.,(1999) *The Greek Achievement: The Foundation of the Western World*, Viking Press, New York
23. Froning H., (2014) "*Comedy and Parody: Some reflections of the "Perseus Jug" in the Vlastos Collection*", in *Essays of Greek Pottery and Iconography in honor of professor Michalis Tiverios*, edited by Panos Valavanis & Eleni Manakidou, University Studio Press, Thessaloniki
24. Green J.R., (1994) *Theater in Ancient Greek Theatre*, Routledge, London and New York
25. Griffith M., (2015) *Greek Satyr Play: Five Studies*, California Classical Studies, Los Angeles,
26. Hall Ed.,(2007) "*Introduction: Aristophanic Laughter across the centuries*" in *Aristophanes in Performance, 421 BC - AD 2007: Peace Birds and Frogs*, MHRA, London
27. Hall F.W. & Geldart W.M., (1967) *Aristophanes Comedies, Tomus I*, Oxford University Press, Oxford,
28. Hristopoulos, M.,(2001) "*Satirical Play*" in Alexiou E. et al. *Letters I: Ancient Greek and Byzantine Literature*, Vol. I, E.A.P., Patra
29. Hughes A, (2006). "*The Perseus dance Vase Revisited*", in *OJA* 25: 413-414
30. Justina G., *Euripides and the instruction of the Athenians*, University of Michigan Press, New York, 1991
31. Konstan, D., (1995) *Greek Comedy and Ideology*, Oxford University Press, UK Oxford
32. Konstantinopoulou V.,(2013), *Vases of Southern Italy and Attic Comedy - Pottery depictions of Southern Italy and Athenian comedy of the 4th century BC*, Department of Theatrical Studies, Patrai University, Patrai,

33. Koukouzeli A., (2000), "*Literature and Ancient Theatre*:", in *Introduction in the Greek Culture, Volume A, Notable Points of the Greek Culture*, E.A.P., Patrai
34. Lesky Al., (2003) *History of Ancient Greek Literature*, translated by Agapitos Tsopanakis, Kyriakides Brothers Edition, Thessaloniki
35. Levi, P., (1986)"*Greek Drama*", in *The Oxford History of the Classical World*, Oxford University Press, Oxford
36. Linardaki A.,(2017) *Potteries of Southern Italy and Theatre*, Patra University, School of Humanitarian and Social Sciences , Theatrical Studies Department
37. Loyd - Jones H.,(1994) *Sophocles: Ajax, Electra, Oedipus Tyrannous*, Harvard University Press, New York
38. McPhee D. Ian, (1976), *Attic red figure of the late 5th and 4th centuries from Corinth*, University Cincinnati and La trobe University (Australia), pgs: 380 - 396
39. Marshall, C.W., (2001). "A Gander at the Goose Play", in *Theatre Journal*, Volume 53, No 1: 54
40. Norris M., (2000), *Greek Art from Prehistoric to Classical: A resource for Educatorss*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art
41. Page, D.L., (1950) *Greek Literature Papuri*, Oxford University Press, UK Oxford
42. Papaioannou S., & Petrides A.K.,(2012) *New Perspectives on Post Classical Comedy*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne
43. Pickard - Cambridge, A.,(1973) *The Theater of Dionysus in Athens*, Oxford University Press, Oxford
44. Podlecki A., (1966) *The Political Background of Aeschylean Tragedy*, University of Michigan Press
45. Revermann M., University of Toronto, (2014), *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Drama*, Cambridge University Press
46. Rusten J.S., (2011), *The birth of comedy: texts – documents and art from Athenian comic competitions ca. 486 – 280 BC*. Translated by Jeffrey Henderson, Baltimore, Johns, Hopkins University Press
47. Sells, D., (2011) "*Old Comedy and its performative rivals of the fifth century*", thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, University of Toronto, Toronto

48. Shapiro H.A., *Myth into Art - Poet and Painter in Classical Greece*, Routledge, London
49. Silk M.S., (2002) *Aristophanes and the definition of Comedy*, Oxford University Press, Oxford,
50. Smyth H.W., (1930) *Aeschylus: Agamemnon, Libation - Bearers, Fragments*, Harvard University Press, New York
51. Sommerstein, (2002) A.H., *Greek Drama and dramatists*, Routledge editions, London
52. Sommerstein Al., (2008) *Aeschylus Fragments*, Loeb Classical Library
53. Storey Ian C. – Allan A., (2005), *A guide to ancient Greek drama*, Blackwell Publishing
54. Taplin O., (2007) *Pots and Plays: Interactions between Tragedy and Greek Vase painting of the Fourth Century B.C.*, Getty Publications, Los Angeles
55. Taplin O., (1993) *Comic Angels and other approaches to Greek Drama through Vase Paintings*, Oxford University Press, Oxford
56. Trendall A.D. – Webster T.B.L., (1971), *Illustrations of Greek Drama*, Phaidon
57. Tsitsiridis, St., (2001) "*Hellenistic Drama*", in *Literature I: Ancient Greek and Byzantine Literature, Volume II - Hellenistic and Imperial Period*, E.A.P., Patrai
58. Ussher R.G., (1979) *Aristophanes*, Clarendon Press, Oxford
59. Wellenbach M., (2015). "*The Iconography of Dionysiac Choroi: Dithyramb, Tragedy and the Basel Crater*", in *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, 55: 72
60. William S., (2010), "*Pratinas*" in *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology*, Vol. 3, John Murray, London, pp. 516-517