

The presence of music in Greek worship: An iconographical approach*

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I. Preliminary thoughts: interface between music and religion

The relevance of the study of music in religious worship¹ consists not only of describing the forms of the musical accompaniment to ceremonies, but also of asking, from an ethnomusicological perspective, about the role of music in religion, as an instrument or even an act of communication between gods and men². In the meantime, in identifying the variety of forms of worship manifestations, we have to pay attention to the diversity of motives that influence the choice of musical instruments, according to the nature of the cult service.

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¹ This article concerns the homonymous lecture held on May 21, 2013, in the Istituto di Istruzione Superiore “Via delle Scienze” – Colleferro – Itália, no Liceo Classico “Via di Scroccarocco” – Segni. The texts result from an extract of the doctoral thesis entitled *Os instrumentos musicais na vida diária da Atenas tardo-arcaica e clássica (540-400 a.C.). O testemunho dos vasos áticos e de textos antigos* (3 volumes, São Paulo, Universidade de São Paulo, 2001). A first version was published originally in Portuguese, with the title: *Música e culto religioso. Estudo do Acompanhamento Musical das Procissões e Sacrificios Atenienses*, «Classica», pp. 13-14 (2002), pp. 81-100. I thank Ennio Sanzi for the invitation to publish an English version of the text. All drawings presented in this paper are done by the author.

² Aytai 1990, pp. 89-96.

In our study about music in religion, emphasis is placed on the accompaniment of ritual acts and sacred chants by musical instruments. We do not deal with the musical and literary genders of such chants (hymns, paeans, enchantments and magic recipes), as such subjects have been appropriately discussed by Gérard Lambin³.

We ought to be aware that music, in religious cult, is not only an element of communication in different types of rituals (processions, sacrifices, libations, fumigations, festivals, etc.), but music itself is a form of religious expression. This is the case for the choirs, which simultaneously constitute an expression of choral and choreographic art. There were four modalities of choral dances, according to their composition: choirs of girls, choirs of boys, choirs of citizens and mixed choirs (of girls and boys; of boys and adult men). With regard to manifestations of worship in the form of dances and choirs, we are interested in the historical record of accompaniment with musical instruments.

Religious expression includes events and manifestations that are today considered as part of profane phenomenological categories, but in Antiquity belonged to the sacred domain. Here, we consider instances of musical and athletic contest. Nowadays, the Olympic Games and the World Cup, as well as rock festivals or classic music concerts, are devoid of religious character. However, in ancient Greece such events were as religious as a mass or a sermon. Therefore, the study of musical *agon* is a part of the study of the use of music in religion. Nevertheless, within this paper, we focus in particular, on the use of musical instruments in processions and sacrifices devoted to different deities

II. Music and musical instruments in religious cults

Music was an indispensable component of Greek worship, being present in almost all of the religious manifestations: libations and sacrifices could not be accomplished without musical accompaniment⁴. Conversely, the development of music has always been strongly influenced by religion, so that almost all forms of musical performance – such as hymns, dithyrambs, choirs, musical *agones* and theatre – were somehow connected to religious life. It is

³ Lambin 1992, pp. 313-50.

⁴ *P.Oxy.* 675, col. I, on libations, and col. II, on animal sacrifices.

well known that, in the course of time, Greek musical art experienced important technical and theoretical developments beyond the religious domain. However, religious festivals remained the most important environment for such musical performance, despite its specialization, professionalization and secularization⁵.

According to the Greek perception of religious practices, the component of instrumental music within these manifestations was regarded as a natural constitutive element, insofar as they considered it astonishing when other peoples worshipped without music, as observed Herodot⁶ about the Persians, who completed their sacrifice rites without musical accompaniment.

On the basis of this Greek custom, there was the belief that music was a propitiatory agent of communication between the human and the divine, since it would be necessary for the god's acceptance of the sacrifice. The story told by Plutarch about Ismenias, a famous Theban *auletes*, is very illuminating about this feature: the Theban musician, known for his virtuosity and wealth, was playing the *aulos* during a sacrifice, but it seemed that the god was not listening to his music, insomuch that the religious service was at risk of failure, although the musical accompaniment was performed by a successful musician; so they decided to call a humble musician, and the god finally accepted the sacrifice⁷.

Music was used to ensure that the god could hear and meet human demands, as in the case of a fugitive who caught Zeus' attention with the melody he played on a Lydian *aulos*⁸. The same purpose of music is testified in another situation: during sacrifices completed on the battlefields, in which music was a necessary component for guaranteeing that the god met his followers' demands and fought beside them⁹.

However, a sacrifice could be fulfilled without music. The absence of music was the rule in chthonic rituals, such as the cult for

⁵ Cf. Haldane 1966, p. 98; Nordquist 1992a, p. 143.

⁶ Hdt. I 132.

⁷ Plut. *Quaes.Conv.* II 1.632c-d.

⁸ Pind. *O.* V 45.

⁹ Xen. *Const. Lac.* XIII 8: "When a goat is sacrificed, the enemy being near enough to see, custom ordains that all the fluteplayers present are to play and every Lacedaemonian is to wear a wreath" (tr. by E.C. Marchant, G.W. Bowersock in *Xenophon*, VII, Cambridge [MA] – London 1925); Aesch. *Th* 267: "That the gods fight on our side" (tr. by H. Weir Smith, in *Aeschylus*, I, . Cambridge [MA] 1926).

the Charites in Paros¹⁰. Apart from this particular situation, the absence of musical instruments was considered damage for worship and festivities¹¹. The references to sacrifices completed without musical instruments appear in literary sources as exceptions – indeed, rather than the description of a real situation, it seems us to be a literary appeal to reinforce criticism, for it would be an absurd to accomplish a rite without the presence of a musician. This is very clear in two situations when the musician has been discarded during a sacrifice: according to a story told by Athenaeus¹², Stratonikus, a distinguished but eccentric citharist, would have ordered an *auletes* to stop his music until the libations and prayers had been concluded, because he considered his inaptitude was disturbing the ritual; in a passage of Aristophanes' *Peace*, one discards the *auletes* Cheris for being unsuitable. The discarding of Cheris, often slandered by Aristophanes, as well as the rejection of the unskilful *auletes* by Stratonikus, reveals a social prejudice regarding professional musicians, mainly concerning *auletai* of humble origin who formed part of the so called musical proletariat, which acted mostly in rituals and funerals¹³. The social disdain even came from well-esteemed musicians, and from *auletai*, such as the above-mentioned Ismenias, who lamented to use of the term *auletes* to denominate funeral musicians¹⁴.

The prejudice toward such musicians of low social scale is perceptible even among vase painters, mainly red-figure vase painters, who often depicted sacrifice scenes. Gulög Nordquist highlights the fact that sacrifice scenes were represented without musicians¹⁵ – we know, however, that this does not mean that Athenians of the fifth century BC practiced official cults without music and musicians. The painters omitted the figure of proletarian *auletai*, considering them as not worthy of portrayal, sharing Aristophanes' judgement regarding these low class musicians.

¹⁰ Apollod. III 15-7; cf. Haldane 1966, p. 106.

¹¹ Plut. *Non posse* 1102 A.

¹² Ath. VIII 349c.

¹³ Aristoph. *Pax* 950-1; *Av.* 858; *Ach.* 16 and 866. Cf. Nordquist 1992a, pp. 163-165; Bélis 1999, pp. 84-86.

¹⁴ Apul. *Fl.* IV 3. D.Chr. XLIX 12. Concerning the relation between poverty and funeral musicians: Ael. *VH* XII 43.

¹⁵ Cf. Nordquist 1992a, p. 166.

Thus, since the absence of the musician in worship was considered an exception or an anecdote, this confirms that the rule was to use musicians during rituals. Thereupon, it is surprising that few authors have chosen the subject as object of systematic analysis. The first study dedicated exclusively to this theme was written by J.A. Haldane and published in 1966. In his article *Musical Instruments in Greek Worship*, he developed a basic literary analysis, using iconography only eventually, with the purpose of proving the evidence provided by written testimony. This author moved between sources with excessive chronological freedom, leading to temporal discrepancies: for instance, he used the Minoan sarcophagus of Haghia Triada, side by side with Boeotian vases and Parthenon friezes, as iconographical proof of Classical and Hellenistic literary testimonies¹⁶. However, he highlighted the multiplicity of instruments in Dionysian cults, anticipating the analysis completed twenty years later by Annie Bélis¹⁷.

It was necessary to wait twenty six years following Haldane's work for a new general and all-encompassing study concerning music in worship. In 1992, the Norwegian archaeologist Gullög Nordquist published the article *Instrumental Music in Representation of Greek cult*. The author decided to establish a counterpoint to Haldane's literary study, aiming, using the iconographical record of Attic vases, to answer the following questions: In which moment were musical instruments used during the cults? Which instruments were used in such situations? Who played these instruments? What was the relationship of the musician with the cult and other worshippers? Nordquist analysed iconographical material, dividing it into two ritual situations: processions and sacrifices, avoiding the singularity of orgiastic cults, in which music plays a very particular role. In order to

¹⁶ He concentrated his efforts on proving that the *aulos* was the key instrument in worship (justifying this phenomenon by the strength of its incisive sounds), despite his merit in recognising the use of other wind and string instruments in most sumptuous rituals, listing enough documental testimonies that brought down the reductionist view of the *aulos* uniqueness in religious acts.

¹⁷ Cfr Bélis 1986. From the organological standpoint, Haldane committed the unforgivable mistake of mixing indiscriminately *kithara*, *chelys* (*lyra*) and *phorminx*, classificatory distinctions that were already well established, when he wrote his paper, in the reference work by Wegner 1949. For instance, when referring to Homeric hymns, he mentions the *kithara*, when in fact the instrument mentioned in such texts would be either the Homeric *phorminx* or the *chelys* (*lyra*), as is the case in the second *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* (HH XXI 3).

understand the representations of music in worship, she highlights the specific approach the Attic painters gave to processions and sacrifices, as already emphasized by K. Lehnstaedt. Processions appear mainly on the work of black-figure painters, prevailing the interest in representing the collective worship of the *polis*, principally cults dedicated to the goddess Athena. Sacrifices were mainly the domain of red-figure painters, who forsook the preference for big groups participating in rituals, instead choosing scenes with few participants, in which religious acts were portrayed in a synoptic language, by condensing various phases of the ritual into the same scene; the attention of this generation of painters turned to particular cults, with preference for scenes depicting worship of Apollo¹⁸. From a musical perspective, G. Nordquist dared, to use iconography as a tool to question one of the basic principles of the historiography of ancient Greek music, the monody: in contrast to this premise, she presented consistent evidence regarding the practice of *sinaulia* during processions, by associating different instruments and surpassing the simple monody¹⁹.

Some scholars have researched the music used in particular religious cults. In 1970 Apostolos Athanassakis published a study on the music in Eleusinian ritual, inferring that the *aulos* and the *tympanon* were the principal instruments, based on an etymological analysis of the names of the personages referred to in myths concerning the arrival of Demeter to Eleusis. In the same way as Haldane, Athanassakis based his arguments primarily on literary sources, very shyly referencing iconographical evidence in just a single footnote²⁰.

Annie Bélis, in turn, dedicated a paper to music of the Dionysian cortege, pointing to the existence of a sonorous “Dionysian orchestra”, composed mainly of wind and percussion instruments, as well as voices, producing violent musical contrasts, resulting in a music of extremes, dominated by not melodious percussions, but the

¹⁸ Cf. Lehnstaedt 1970, *passim*; Nordquist 1992a, pp. 165-6.

¹⁹ We share her position in order to establish that Greeks eventually practiced orchestral music in daily life, having practical knowledge of harmonization, even if respecting harmonic simplicity. In the 90s, Gullög Nordquist published two other studies on music in ritual, systematically approaching subjects that until then had been dealt only in passing. One of them was devoted to the use of *salpinx*, the other, to musicians; cf. Nordquist 1992b; Nordquist 1994.

²⁰ Cf. Athanassakis 1970, nota 81.

sharp sound of female voices and by the low and rusky sound of the Phrygian *aulos*. She recalls, however, that iconography also represents the *barbitos* in Dionysian cortege, which would be suitable due to its low tuning. According to A. Bélis:

“The immediate effect of this opposition is to provoke, in the participants, a tension which adds to the frenzy caused by the acceleration of the rhythms beaten by the percussion: the trance deepens, the dance becomes increasingly fast”²¹.

Nonetheless, she maintains the conception that the *aulos* is the Dionysian instrument *par excellence*, thanks to its orgiastic and passionate effect pointed by Aristotle²².

In our iconographical study on the musical accompaniment of religious cults and rites, the musical practices in processions and sacrifices are important aspects, articulated in the context of the use of musical instruments²³. Starting with a systematization of iconographical evidence, we have picked out some specific examples of procession and sacrifice, in order to illustrate the cultural and musical universe that shaped the daily dynamics of such worship services.

II.1 Processions in general

On a *skyphos* from the National Museum at Athens (fig. 1 – cat. 1), dated from c. 585-80 B.C., we see a procession, presumably Dionysian: the participants advance with cultural dignity, bringing offerings allusive to the party held under the grace of Dionysus, the *symposion* – we identify, among the offerings, *kerai*, *skyphoi*, *karchesia* and *kantharoi*. However, as far as we know, the banquet was not a situation only for drinking, since music played a role as important as the wine, insomuch that the *lyra* – in this period still very

²¹ Bélis 1986, p. 20: “L’effet immédiat de cette opposition est de provoquer chez les participants une tension à laquelle s’ajoute la frenesi causée par l’accélération des rythmes battus par les percussions: la transe s’approfondit, la danse se fait de plus en plus rapide”.

²² Arist. *Pol.* VIII 1342.

²³ In this sense, we are quite close to the approach taken in G. Nordquist texts. We verify, on Attic pottery iconography depicting religious processions, the following instruments: *aulos*, *lyra*, *kithara*, *barbitos* e *salpinx*.

actively played by male banqueters (cat. 11; 12; 13)²⁴ – forms a coherent part of the set of objects offered to Dionysus, as it appears in the hands of the participant that leads the procession.



Fig. 1

From the second half of the sixth century B.C., we verify the absolute prevalence of the *aulos* in the accompaniment of processions. Indeed, according to literary testimony, the *aulos* was used in the accompaniment of the paean refrain or of the processional hymn, called *prosodion*, although it can be also played alone, as an instrumental solo²⁵.

The *prosodia* formed part of processional sacrifices and choirs. Proclus, in his work *Chrestomatheia*, included the accompaniment with the *aulos* in the definition of the *prosodion*. We should not forget that famous *auletai* such as Pronomos and Clonas excelled at composing *prosodia*²⁶. The *aulos* was often used even in processions in which the song was not a religious hymn or a paean: during the *hieros gamos* ritual, one took dolls dressed like brides, up to Mount

²⁴ In the Corinthian society portrayed in contemporary pots – or in little previous ones – it is the *lyra* that stands out at banquets. Cf. Krater. Middle Corinthian. Athana Painter. Paris, Louvre, E 629. Circa 590-75.

²⁵ Aristoph. *Av.* 857-8. Paus. VIII 38, 8. Cf. Haldane 1966, pp. 99; Nordquist 1992a, p. 144.

²⁶ Ps.-Plut. *Mus.* III 1132c; Paus. IX 12, 6.

Cithaeron, in a procession accompanied by the music of the *aulos* and the hymenaeus song²⁷.

The accompaniment of processions by *aulos* occurred substantially in two forms that correspond to two different cultual expressions: the choir, and the sacrificial procession. In accompanying choirs, the musical performance itself was the cultic expression, through which, in honour of a god, a hymn or a paeon was sung and a dance was performed – the *aulos* had a musical function, since music was the substance of this rite. The attitude of these processional choirs, either grave, joyful or orgiastic, depended on the nature of the ritual.

During sacrificial processions, the *aulos* was the instrument that at the same time provided the tempo and the melodic accompaniment of the cortege, which leads the victim to the sanctuary and after that to the altar, where it would be immolated and offered to the god. In this case, the function of the *aulos* is linked to an intermediation – an intermediation between cult officiants and the honoured god, between officiants and public, between cult and victim.

The iconography of Attic vases provides many examples in which the *auletes* takes part in the choir that honours some deity, both in processions and in worship before the altar, in scenes registered by painters of black- and red-figure techniques. In our catalogue, we list examples that evidence this situation, five in procession (fig. 3 – cat. 3; cat. 5; 6; 7; 8) and two in a cult service around the altar (fig. 2 – cat. 2; cat. 14), beyond the cases directly connected to Dionysian worship, during the Lenaea and Anthesteria festivals, when the *aulos* accompanied Bacchae processions with a controlled mood (cat. 15).

As a rule, the dancing choirs took part in rituals practiced by women. On the fragment of the base of a *loutrophoros* from Athens (cat. 6), we see a choir of girls wearing *peplos* doing a ritual dance to the rhythm of the music of an *auletris*, who differs from the others in her clothing: she wears a pleated dress, with sleeves by the elbows. On a krater by the Villa Giulia Painter (cat. 7), we see a choir of girls, hand in hand, following the music of the *auletris*, performing a circle dance, in a sober manner. The girls most likely sang a *parthenion*, while dancing in a circle next to a temple, as suggested by the column represented behind them.

²⁷ Ov. *Am.* III 13, 11-12.

Dances accompanied by the *aulos* also played an important role in offertory rituals at the altar, mainly during libations performed by women. In a complicated puzzle of incomplete fragments of a campaniform krater from the Athenian Acropolis (cat. 14), we identify a choir of girls dancing to the rhythm of the music played by an *auletris*, while carrying out a libation over the altar that will receive the sacrifice of a deer. In this situation, the *aulos* has a double ritualistic function: to give rhythm to the choral dance and to facilitate the acceptance of the libation by the deity.

On a red-figure *pyxis* from the National Museum at Athens (fig. 2 – cat. 2), the painter portrayed the preparations for a libation, while a group of girls dance and a woman, sitting in a *klismos*, plays the *aulos* directly before the altar – indicating the function of music as both a communicative intermediation with the honoured god and as an offering itself.



Fig. 2

Literary sources point to the *aulos* as the instrument that accompanied the *parthenion*²⁸, notwithstanding the possibility of the hymn sung during the choral dances of virgin girls being accompanied

²⁸ Ath. XIV 634 ff..

by *aulos* or *lyra*²⁹. We presume that the *aulos* was the principal instrument during the processional form of the *parthenia*, while during the circle dances one could use both alternately³⁰. We find interesting evidence on an Attic *hydria* conserved in Naples, in which a musician is depicted as the regent of a girls' choir: she switches the *aulos* for the *lyra*, denoting how each performance demanded specific musical instruments³¹.

The male choirs seem to translate a more sober atmosphere, as should be expected for civic worship, even when the honoured god is Dionysus. This is the case of three vases in our catalogue. In a black-figure *kylix* attributed to the B.M.N. Painter (cat. 8), an *auletes* accompanies a dour procession, marked by the elegant costumes of the participants and their sober attitude, giving some official pomp to the celebration. Some participants bring a *keras*, indicating the probable identity of the honoured god – Dionysus. A similar scene is represented on a contemporary amphora by the Swing Painter (cat. 5), in which the worshipped deity cannot be identified.

On the inner surface of a *kylix* from Paris attributed to the Triptolemos Painter (fig. 3 – cat. 3), the painted decoration is divided into two areas with iconographical narrative, the tondo, and the area around it. The scene around the tondo represents a procession, composed of thirteen male pairs, linked by *philia* bonds, indicated by fact of each couple being enveloped by a common *khlaina*³². The group is led by the *auletes* and by the coryphaeus, who conducts the cortege by raising his right hand flat. The scene is about a mixed choir, formed of adult and young men, presumably citizens – the mixed choir was suitable for artistic and religious socialization, through music and dance, of groups of male friends and lovers, adults and youths, who attended the same banquets, which they enjoyed together under the protection of Dionysus. And he was precisely the god honoured by this choir of homoerotic couples, as indicated by the scene on the *tondo*, with a boy offering a libation to Dionysus. According to A. Bélis, the vase represents a dithyramb choir that took part in a musical contest devoted to Dionysus³³.

²⁹ Alcm. frs. 66 e 78 Bergk.

³⁰ Cf. Haldane 1966, p. 104.

³¹ Cf. Furtwängler – Reichhold 1932, p. 171.

³² In respect to sharing the *khlaina* by male and female homoerotic couples or by heterosexual ones, as a symbol of *philia* relationship, cf. Calame 1996, p. 136.

³³ Cf. Bélis 1999, p. 146, fig. 1.



Fig. 3

In these three vases, the piper stands out from the others, thanks to his clothes, as a figure separate from the worshippers. In these three cases, beyond the *khiton*, he wears a special piece, typical of professional *auletai*, the *ependytes*: a sleeveless shirt, embroidered with geometric motifs, worn over the tunic, covering his body to just below waist, but leaving the movement of his arms free. On the amphora from Naples (cat. 5) and the *kylix* from Paris (fig. 3 – cat. 3), the musician uses also a *phorbeia*, a professional device useful for long musical performances such as processions, for it permits the *aulos* player to control his force in blowing the instrument. Thus we conclude, from the iconographical evidence that professional musicians were employed for the function of *auletai* in such choirs, despite the fact that up to Hellenistic period the members of the choir were not professionals, but citizens. However, in rituals with female choirs, the *auletridai* are not represented as professionals, but as amateur musicians, belonging presumably to the same social group as the choir singers, although the clothes of the *aulos* player in the *loutrophoros* from Athens (cat. 6) point to the possibility of a professional *auletris*.

II.2 Sacrificial processions

The *aulos* appears in many examples of sacrificial processions, mainly represented by black-figure vase-painters. Attic paintings mainly represent two specific moments of the procession with sacrificial victim: the cortege along the streets and the cortege's arrival at the sanctuary (the stage prior to the sacrifice)³⁴.

A fragmentary *pinax* from the Athenian Acropolis (fig. 4 – cat. 4) provides us with an example of an *auletes* performing along the procession's route. On fragment 2574, four women go forward in cortege, bringing two deers among other offerings; their steps follow the rhythm provided by the *aulos* played by a young musician wearing *khiton*, *himation* and *phorbeia*. On fragment 2575, in which the *auletes* is not youth, but a bearded man, the offerings set does not include an animal; we see instead two *kanephoroi* girls and a woman with a trident. The laurel branches and the deer on the first fragment suggest a procession to Apollo; on the other hand, from the trident on the second fragment we infer a procession to Poseidon.



Fig. 4

³⁴ Exclusively black-figures vase-painters represented the course of the sacrificial procession, with the rare exception of a fragment from Menidi contemporary to the Parthenon friezes (= fig. 8 – cat. 17), cf. Lehnstaedt 1970; Nordquist 1992a, pp. 165-166. On the other hand, scenes representing arrival at the sanctuary are depicted both by painters of black-figure and red-figure techniques.

Our catalogue counts two interesting examples of processional sacrifice devoted to Dionysus. On a *skyphos* attributed to the Theseus Painter, conserved in Stuttgart (fig. 5 – cat. 9), we find a sort of procession identified by J.D. Beazley as Dionysian³⁵. Unlike the more formal and sophisticated processions, here we see a more rustic form of worship, where the participants, including the *auletes*, are naked. The nakedness denotes simplicity and a lack of concern with the social appearance of the event, implying a private cult – the nudity of the musician indicates he is not a professional engaged in the service, but an amateur, a free citizen like the others.

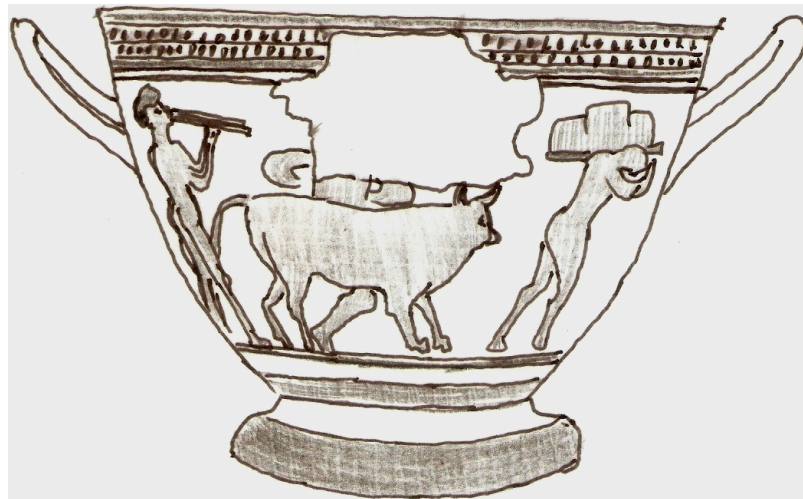


Fig. 5

The scene pictured by Theseus Painter differs radically from the procession depicted by Affector (fig. 6 – cat. 10), which probably illustrates a *pompe* performed during the Dionysia, where the participants dress elegantly. In a cortege represented along the two faces of the vase, the procession goes up to the sanctuary, when the group is received by a priestess standing behind the altar. Among the offerings (branches, leaf garlands, tray with fruits and food, *lekythoi*), a ram stands out, followed by the *auletes*.

³⁵ ABV 518. Cf. Black figure vase. The Theseus Painter (ABV 704/27ter; Add² 129). Tampa/Florida, previously Maplewood, Collection Noble, 25. Late sixth century B.C.



Fig. 6

II.3 Great public processions (the Panathenaic and Eleusinian processions)

Following the spirit of valorization of collective life, as a way of exalting community spirit, the Attic vase-painters took interest in the representations of the greatest of all Athenian processions, the *pompai*, held every four years during the Great Panathenaia. We find a series of black-figure vases, dated from 560-500 B.C., depicting the Great Panathenaia procession, which ran through the city from Piraeus to the Acropolis via the Panathenaic Way (cat. 23; Cf. fig. 10 – cat. 19; fig. 11 – cat. 20; fig. 12 – cat. 21; cat. 22).



Fig. 7

The only example prior to this date is a *kylix* from the British Museum (fig. 7 – cat. 16), attributed by modern authors to a Boeotian workshop, notwithstanding the possibility of being a Boeotian imitation of an Attic original, which would be the only complete representation of the procession previous to the reformulation of the Great Panathenaia dated likely from 566 B.C. Therefore, it is not a suitable testimony to illustrate the participation of musicians in such processions. Concerning the fifth century B.C., we find a unique example of a red-figure vase, dated from the third quarter of the century (fig. 8 – cat. 17), perhaps influenced by the Parthenon frieze, indicated by the fact that this is the only vase to represent the cortege advancing from right to left, just as in the Parthenon frieze³⁶.

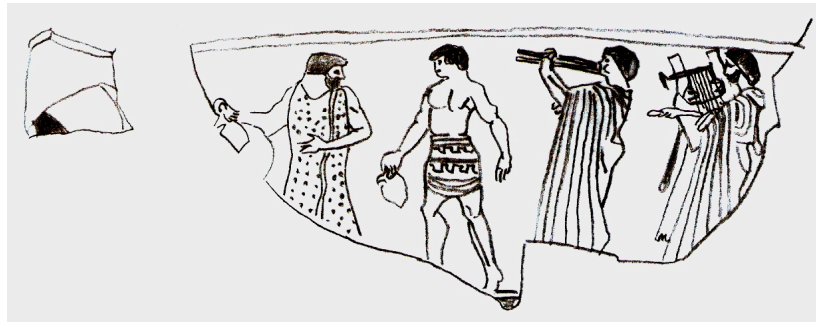


Fig. 8

Attic vase-painters converge in one aspect with regards to the Panathenaic *pompai*: the complexity of the musical accompaniment of such processions. In this sense, regarding the “musicalization” of the *pompai*, they corroborate the literary testimonies in respect to different regions and periods of the Greek world. Thanks to the splendour of the situation, other instruments could be added. According to an inscription, we know that the procession to Zeus Sosipolis in Magnesia included the participation of *auloi*, *syringes* and *kitharai*³⁷. The Delian procession celebrating Apollo’s return from the Hyperboreans used the same instruments³⁸. Literature, as well as the representation of Eleusinian *pompe* on a fragmentary Attic

³⁶ Except for the two pots from the first half of the sixth century B.C. (cat. 16 and 23), probably expressing the situation of the procession before the reformulation of the Great Panathenaia at about 566 B.C.

³⁷ SIG 589, 1, 46; cf. Haldane 1966, p. 99.

³⁸ Ps.-Plut. *Mus.* XIV 1136b.

loutrophoros (cat. 24), reveals that the model for the musical accompaniment of the Great Panathenaia procession was not an isolated phenomenon, but a constant in major public processions.

The Panathenaic *pompai* were accompanied by a sort of musical band, consisting of wind and string instruments, essentially the *aulos*, the *lyra* and the *kithara*. This musical formation remained until the arrival into the sanctuary, when they began the preparations for the sacrifices – *kitharistai* did not take part. From this moment onwards a single *auletes* was employed, with a specific role, different to his prior function during the procession. Thus we have two distinct situations of musical participation in Panathenaic procession, following a general scheme of representation of procession scenes: the cortege through the town and the arrival into the shrine. Concerning both ritual moments, we identify a continuity of the iconographical model through the periods of black and red-figure vases in Athens.

The earliest iconographical testimony is the *kylix* London B 80 (cat. 23), dated from about 580 B.C., most likely referring to the way the ceremony was performed before the tyranny. The scene, depicted on the inner circular frieze, represents the cortege's arrival into the sanctuary of Athena. A Doric column points to the architectonical space of the temple, in front of which one sees a *helix* that supports the image of a snake, posed behind the goddess' icon. The altar with a burning fire stands before the cultic image. A priestess arrives, with offerings and followed by a bull, leading the *komos* (the cortege). The music of the *aulos* conducted by the executioner calms the animal. The piper wears a *kithoniskos*, thereby differentiating himself from the other participants, who come walking or on a chariot, wearing a mantle or completely naked.

In this *kylix* from London the function of the *aulos* was probably to calm down the sacrificial victim. Where we see the *auletes*, the victim and the priestess before the altar, we do not see the procession, which is represented in the rest of the scene, but the precise moment that precedes the sacrifice. So, the Panathenaic orchestra, employed during the procession, is absent here, with only the *auletes* that accompanies the last steps of the animal before his immolation. Vases from the following decades depict the same situation again and again, pointing to the continuity of this ritualistic protocol, as testified by a *hydria* found in Caere, dated from mid-sixth century B.C. (cat. 25) and a *lekythos* conserved in Athens, from the turn of the fifth century B.C. (fig. 9 – cat. 18).



Fig. 9

The presence of the *auletes*, and the absence of the other musicians that took part in the *pompe*, when the cortege arrived into the sanctuary, where the sacrifice would be held before the altar and the temple, as verified in the iconography of the Great Panathenaia, should also occur in other major public processions that used an orchestra of wind and string players during the cortege. For instance, the arrival of the procession to the temple of Apollo in Megalopolis in Arcadia happened “with *aulos* and with *pompe*”³⁹. The use of the *aulos*, in this specific moment of the procession to Apollo (involving a sacrifice rite), proves the ritualistic relevance of this instrument for validating worship in view of general religious beliefs (according to ritual efficacy criteria), considering that the *lyra* and the *kithara* were most common in Apollinian cults, as well as the Thessalian girls choir in Delphi, which brought offerings to the god, while dancing and singing a hymn to the sound of *kitharai*⁴⁰. Likewise the paeon to Apollo composed by Limenios, performed at the Treasure of the Athenians in Delphi, was accompanied by the *kithara*, played by the poet-composer himself⁴¹.

³⁹ Paus. VIII 38, 8; cf. Haldane 1966, p. 99.

⁴⁰ Helioid. *Aeth.* III 1 sq. The Cretans used the *phorminges* in dances and choirs in honour of Apollo (*HH* III 515).

⁴¹ Inscription from the second century B.C., found in the French expeditions to Delphi from 1893-94. Regarding the Delphic hymns to Apollo cf. B  lis 1992. Directed by the same B  lis, in 1996 the Ensemble K  rylos recorded the CD *De la pierre au son: musiques de l'Antiquit   grecque et romaine*.

The composition of the musical band of the Panathenaic procession, disseminated to the modern public through the Parthenon friezes exposed in the Acropolis Museum, produced, as suggested by the iconography of the vases, a resounding and solemn orchestration with *auloi* and *kitharai*. The iconographical scheme – and probably the musical model – portrayed on the Parthenon friezes in the mid-fifth century B.C. was set a century before, according to the evidence of the amphora Berlin 1686 (fig. 10 – cat. 19), with two *auletai* and two *kitharistai*, wearing sumptuous clothes.



Fig. 10

A *kylix* conserved in a Swiss collection, dated from 560-50 B.C., represents a orchestral composition of wind and strings

instruments: we see two *auloi*, but, instead of the *kithara*, a *lyra*. How should we explain the use of the *lyra* in this *pompe*, the only example for the Panathenaic procession? Until that moment, the classical *kithara*, known as *Asia*, had not yet spread enough in Greece, particularly in Attica, despite its growing popularity in Delphi since 558 B.C. when Aristonicus of Argos was the winner in the new musical genre, the *kitharistikos nomos*. Around 540 B.C., the *kithara* spreads rapidly in Attica. In different situations, professional and even amateur musicians prefer the *kithara* to the *lyra*. The Athenian audience enjoyed hearing *kitharoidoi* and *kitharistai* in musical contests such as the Panathenaia, which was fostered by Pisistratus' government⁴². From this time onwards, from the Berlin amphora (fig. 10 – cat. 19) up to the red-figure fragments from the *demos* Menidi (fig. 8 – cat. 17), the *kithara*, besides the *aulos*, becomes an official musical instrument in the Panathenaic orchestra.

In the vase-painting, the composition of the orchestra varies regarding the number of individuals: a pair of *auletai* and a pair of *kitharistai* (fig. 10 – cat. 19; fig. 11 – cat. 20); one *auletes* and one *kitharistes* (fig. 8 – cat. 17; fig. 12 – cat. 21); and even one *auletes* and two *kitharistai* (cat. 22). Such numbers should not be considered as a realistic quantity, but as a numeric metaphor: they allude to a plural formation, as an orchestra with its string and wind sections. As it was not possible to depict the complete set of musicians necessary to produce the volume demanded by a great cortege that crossed the Athenian streets, the painter represented a pair of each instrument, or just the combination of each one.



Fig. 11

⁴² Cf. Simon 1953, p. 17.

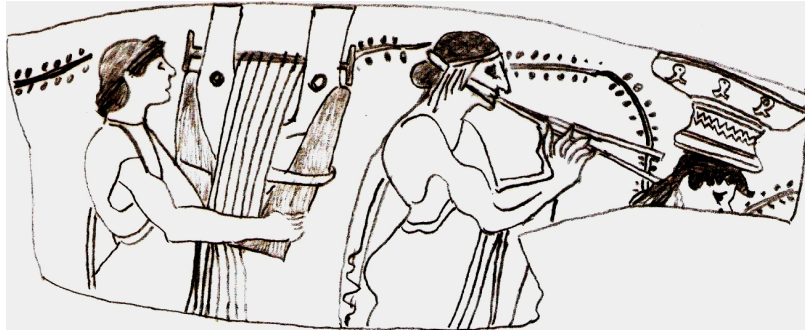


Fig. 12

An important aspect in the iconography of the Panathenaia is the indication that professional musicians were engaged in major civic festivities – and high level musicians, as suggested by the sophistication of the costume used by the instrument players of the Berlin amphora (fig. 10 – cat. 19). This is possibly the earliest visual document depicting the oriental luxury of professional musicians' clothes. Observing the *kitharistai*, we see, in detail, the pomp and refinement of their garments: the one on the right uses a *khlaina* and a long *ependytes*, over a white *khiton*, while the other, behind him, in the left corner, wears a red *khiton* and a *himation*. The *auletai* use *khiton* with short sleeves and *himation*. All the clothes, such as the *khitones*, *himatia*, *khlainai* and *ependytes*, are richly embellished, evidence that these were expensive garments, commissioned to the best tailors in the market.

As noted by Susan Rotroff, it is necessary to observe, the apparent contradiction between the iconographical record (for both Attic vases and Parthenon friezes), showing the band of *auloi* and *kitharistai*, and the literary testimony of Aristophanes, who speaks of a single citharoedus⁴³.

First, we should analyse the question of gender: Aristophanes speaks of a citharoedus, designated by the definite article ἡ (associating the female article and male noun), whereas the iconography reveals male musicians with the *kithara* in such *pompai*. For a long time the explanation given by Susan Rotroff and Isabel Henderson prevailed. They posited that Aristophanes ironically casts the masculinity of musicians linked to the New Music movement into

⁴³ Cf. Rotroff 1977. Aristoph. *Ec.* 730-745 uses the female article before the male noun (ἡ κιθαρωδός).

doubt, personified here in the figure of the *kitharoidos* – according to I. Henderson, Aristophanes was “playing for laugh”⁴⁴. However, insofar as we deepen our attention to Attic iconography, we identify scattered examples – certainly exceptions – of women acting as musicians in situations supposed to be exclusively male. We can mention for instance the presence of a woman playing *kithara* in a wedding procession (cat. 26). On a *oinokhoe* from Munich, we see a female figure with a “cradle cithara”, in this case a proper instrument for concert, due to its size – the author nevertheless disagrees about the gender of the musician, since Beazley considers it to be a male figure, while Lullies considers it female, based on the lines of the clothes over the chest, suggesting female breasts⁴⁵. Let us quote a late archaic sarcophagus, from a non-Attic context: a Turkish site, Gumuşçay, on which we see a woman with a *kithara* in a funerary scene⁴⁶. Let us also highlight a *lekane* showing a woman playing *kithara* before an altar (cat. 27). Thereby, even if we cannot assert that the female article used by Aristophanes carries realistic reference, the iconography, seen in a broader context, hints at the possibility that women could perform music in such contexts.

The second point to be analysed is that Aristophanes mentions only the *kithara*, while the iconography always shows the presence of the *aulos* in Panathenaic processions. S. Rotroff proposes the following interpretation: the Parthenon’s frieze section, as well as Attic vase scenes, would represent the procession’s composition as it arrived into the sanctuary, after its reorganization on arriving at the Acropolis; Aristophanes, for his part, would refer to the sacred cortege along the town towards the Acropolis. Thus she maintains that the *auletai* were engaged in the procession only in the Acropolis, probably because of their role during the immolation of the victims. In our view, the author makes a confusion here. The silence of Aristophanes regarding the *auletai* in the procession is not enough to conclude it was absent in the corteges that crossed the town. Quite the opposite, from a musical standpoint the *aulos* was necessary, both for its visual presence, with the musicians wearing a gorgeous *ependytes*, and for its function, in guaranteeing melodic continuity, since it provided a more steady support for singing, which was a crucial factor

⁴⁴ Cf. Rotroff 1977; Henderson 1957, p. 393.

⁴⁵ Cf. ARV 10/4; R. Lullies, in CVA Munich 2, text referring to pl. 84.

⁴⁶ Cf. Sevinç 1996, p. 259-60, figs. 12-13; Bundrick 1998, p. 26, note 51.

in a procession that had many participants and was attended by a large audience⁴⁷. Pollux's testimony, even if from a late date, endorses the iconographical evidence from Attic vases and from the Parthenon's frieze, for he reports the participation of both *auletai* and *kitharistai* along the great Panathenaic *pompai*, in opposition to S. Rotroff's interpretation⁴⁸.

II.4 Bloody sacrifices:

The sacrifice of animals was the main feature of Greek religion, for it propitiated the communication between gods and the faithful, when one "asked for help and support, and gave thanks for wishes already fulfilled"⁴⁹. As regards scenes depicting the act of bloody sacrifice, Attic iconography is unvarying with respect to musical accompaniment – the instrument is always the *aulos*. In the meantime, vase painters do not diverge from literary evidence, which points to its presence in every blood or food sacrifice⁵⁰. Herodotus, as we have mentioned before, thought very strange that the Persians used to practice bloody sacrifice accompanied neither by the *aulos* nor by any musical instrument at all⁵¹. Lucian of Samosata illustrates the presence of the *aulos* sound before the altar during the sacrifice:

"Then they bring it (the victim) to the altar and slaughter it under the god's eyes, while it bellows plaintively – making, we must suppose, auspicious sounds, and **fluting low music to accompany the sacrifice**" (ῥημίφωνον ἥδη τῇ θυσίᾳ ἐπαυλοῦν)⁵².

⁴⁷ The Aristotelian author of *Pr.* XIX 43 argues the solo sung to an *aulos* has advantages over the one sung to a *lyra*, in that the *aulos* joins with the voice, for both are wind instruments, with a continuous sound, so that the *aulos* covers up many singer's mistakes in the ears of the audience; the *lyra*, for the spectator, is less perceptible and, in not being blown, it does not mingle in the ear with the sound of the voice – its sound being thin, it always produces the impression of being separated from the voice. Haldane, 1966, p. 100 stress: "Naturally the kithara, lacking the stronger tones of the aulos, would by itself have formed insufficient support for the heavier type of procession. It was, however, eminently suited for the graceful advance of a group of dancers".

⁴⁸ Poll. IV 83.

⁴⁹ Cf. Ekroth 2007, p. 250.

⁵⁰ Cf. Detienne – Svenbro 1979, pp. 223 and 231.

⁵¹ Hdt. I 132, 1.

⁵² Luc. *Sacr.* 12 (tr. by A.M. Harmon, in *Lucian*, III, Cambridge [MA] – London 1921).

The relation between the *aulos* and bloody sacrifices was seen almost as an identity tag of Greek space and daily life. At least this is the impression that causes Euripides to note about Argos: “The altars of beaten gold were set out; and through the town the altar fires of the Argives blazed; the flute, handmaid of the Muse’s song, sounded its note sweetly”⁵³. Thus, the choir of Aristophanes’ *Birds* reveals that, to obtain gods’ favors, one sacrificed the animal and intoned the song accompanied by the Pythian clamour of the *auletes* – in the case, Choris, a professional musician mocked and even rejected in several passages of Aristophanes⁵⁴.

The Attic vase-paintings, as we may realise, avoided representing both the immolation act and bloody sacrifice, owing to a reason that we cannot determinate. Among the scenes in our catalog depicting bloody sacrifice with musical accompaniment, only eleven record the sacrificial act. The others present the moments before the sacrifice, such as: the arrival of the procession into the sanctuary when the cortege dispersed, bringing the animal for sacrifice⁵⁵; the washing of the victim’s head⁵⁶ and the washing of the priests’ hands⁵⁷ – two forms of preparatory purification rite for sacrifice; the arrival, accompanied by a *salpinx*, of the animals that were going to be sacrificed (cat. 14). Likewise, the painter may choose to represent the moment immediately following the sacrificial act, for instance, when the *auletes* moves away from the altar, where the vestiges of blood testify the completed sacrifice (fig. 13 – cat. 28). As a matter of fact, the most common scenes, mainly in black-figure vases, are representations of the arrival of the processional cortege into the sacred shrine, aiming to initiate the sacrifice ceremony, when the pompous formation will be dismantled and only a reduced group remains⁵⁸.

⁵³ Eur. *El.* 714-717. Euripides, *Electra*, (tr. by E.P. Coleridge, in *Euripides*, II, New York 1938).

⁵⁴ Aristoph. *Av.* 851-857.

⁵⁵ *Hydria*, black-figure. “Caere” style. Copenhagen, Nation Museum, 13.567. Mid-sixth century.

⁵⁶ *Stamnos*, red-figure. The Eucharides Painter (ARV 228/32). Paris, Louvre, C 10754. Circa 490-80.

⁵⁷ Bell-krater, red-figur. The Kleophon Painter (ARV 1149/9; *Para* 457). Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, 95, 25. About 430.

⁵⁸ Cf. Nordquist 1992a, p. 155; fig. 5 – cat. 9; fig. 6 – cat. 10; fig. 9 – cat. 18.; cat. 23.



Fig. 13

Sacrificial scenes have remarkable features. First, the chronological framework – all scenes were produced in the second half of the fifth century B.C., mainly in the later part of this period (four between c. 450 B.C. and 420 B.C., and seven between c. 420 B.C. and 400 B.C.). Secondly, the support – other than two scenes represented on *stamnoi*⁵⁹, the rest comprises kraters (nine vases), six bell-kraters, one volute-krater⁶⁰, and two calyx-kraters (fig. 14 – cat. 29)⁶¹, both of them in the manner of the Cadmus Painter and depicting a ritual devoted to Apollo. Thirdly, the treatment given to the subject – the painter presents different phases of the ritual at the same time, condensed into a single image, according to a synoptical language. Fourthly, thematic emphasis – in all cases, the ritual of *splanchnoptia* stands out, depicted in different phases. The burning of the victims' viscera becomes almost a symbol of all practices of immolation and

⁵⁹ 1) *Stamnos*, red-figure. Polygnotos (ARV² 1028/9; Add² 317). London, British Museum, E 455. About 440. 2) *Stamnos*, red-figure. Group of Polygnotos, undetermined. (ARV² 1051/17; Add² 321) London, British Museum, E 456. About 440.

⁶⁰ Volute-krater, black-figure. The Cadmus Painter (ARV 1184/1). Lecce, Museo Provinciale, J. 1093. About 420.

⁶¹ Calyx-krater, red-figure. Group of the Cadmus Painter. Switzerland, Basel market. About 420.

bloody sacrifice upon the altar. Fifth, the identity of the honoured god – in most vases the painters do not identify the deity to which one offers the bloody sacrifice⁶², except for three cases of worship to Apollo (fig. 14 – cat. 29)⁶³ and one to Hermes⁶⁴. Sixth, the ambience – the featuring of the characters, such as their costume, suggest that the scene concerns a private cult, since they do not wear sophisticated clothes like priests, musicians and even participants depicted by black-figure painters in great public processions. The participants of sacrifice scenes represented by red-figure painters, from the second half of the fifth century B.C., all dress in a simple way, wearing only a common *himation*; no member of such rites uses a special vestment, not even the piper, who does not differ from the others by his clothes. Hence, we suppose that the painter wanted to represent not a professional musician, but a free young man of school age, as we can deduce from the *splanchnoptai*, acting in worship organized by citizens as a part of their private religious life. Finally, the position of the *auletes* in cult service is remarkable – because just as in the processions, the musicians are depicted in the periphery of the scene. Being merely a part of the ritual equipment, they are usually not highlighted among the participants.

We should observe that, generally speaking, vase painters avoided showing the *auletai* taking part in sacrifices, although we know they were indispensable actors in such rituals. In the series of vases referring to the *splanchnoptia*, which is the main iconographical reference regarding the participation of musicians in sacrifices, the painters tried to represent them as amateur musicians, instead of professional ones. Behind the censoring by the painters, we believe two features intervened on the lack of visibility of the *auletai* in sacrifice services. First, the general prejudice against the *aulos* – that increased exactly in the period when this series was produced. Second, the negative image cultural elites had about professional musicians, who gradually began to dominate the scene from the late fifth century B.C., due to the growing complexity of the musical repertoire, technique and manufacture of instruments, which little by little became less accessible to amateurs.

⁶² Cf. Oakley 2013, p. 132.

⁶³ Bell-krater, red-figure. Agrigento, Museo Archeologico, 4688. About 430.

⁶⁴ See note 60.

The most interesting example of this, thanks to its richness in details, can be found on a calyx-krater from San Antonio (USA), attributed to the manner of the Cadmus Painter (fig. 14 – cat. 29). On the obverse, at the centre, we see an altar with volutes on a three-level base; over this altar, flaming stumps provide the fire for cooking the offerings. On the left of the altar, slightly above, a young man pours a libation from a *kylix* on the flames. On the same side, slightly below, a *splanchnoptes* holds the spit raised in diagonal position relative to his body. On the left corner, above the handle, we see a youth sitting. On the right of the altar, the second *splanchnoptes* puts his spit over the fire, for roasting the victims' *splancha* (innards: heart, lungs, liver, spleen and kidneys)⁶⁵. On the same side, on an upper level, the representation of the god – Apollo, with a laurel wreath, sitting in frontal position; in his hands, two attributes: on the right, a laurel branch, and, on the left, his *lyra*. Further on the right, a young *auletes* blows his instrument, accompanying the ritual of *splanchnoptia* and libation. Finally, on the right corner, above the handle, is a satyr, who links with the Dionysian frame on the reverse. Behind the altar, a tripod is laid on a column. A second tripod is represented on the upper field, on the left, above the *splanchnoptes*' head. In the lower field, on the right, beneath Apollo's feet, lies a *hydria*, which may be interpreted in different ways – it may be an award for the winner on a Delphian contest or a vessel for water, likely used for putting out the fire, for purifying the animal before the sacrifice or even the *splanchnoptes* after it.

On the left, the scene is framed by a palm tree, depicted above the handle, invading the reverse. Therefore, beyond the god, other elements such as the palm tree and the tripod indicate that the ritual occurs in sanctuary of Apollo, probably in Delphi. The tripods are built in connection with victories in dithyrambic contests, associated to Apollo in Delphi and Dionysus in Athens. On the reverse, a satyr stands out holding a *thyrsos*, amidst two maenads holding torches. In the upper field, on the right, above the left handle, a palm tree (mentioned before) marks out the sacred space of the offering scene from the obverse side; the same manner as the satyr above the other handle, the palm tree plays the same role of connecting the scenes of both sides of the vase.

⁶⁵ Cf. Oakley 2013, p. 132.



Fig. 14

The Dionysian scene must refer to a satyric drama represented during a festival organized in honour of Dionysus. Therefore, we can interpret the obverse of this vase as a representation of an offering ritual to Apollo, performed in his Delphian sanctuary and accomplished as thanks to a victory in a dithyrambic contest or another musical *agon*, as testified by the tripods, indicating the relation between the offerings and the victory in a competition.

The iconographical tradition presents, however, meaningful variations regarding the participation of the piper along the ritual, pointing in which moments he should play or, on the contrary, to make silence. Gullög Nordquist identifies six different situations⁶⁶:

- (i) One plays the *aulos* during the preparation for the victim's immolation, when the procession disperses on arrival at the sanctuary⁶⁷.
- (ii) One plays the *aulos* during the purification handwashing of the priests responsible for the sacrifice rite, completed in a vessel placed at the altar⁶⁸.
- (iii) The *aulos* is not played during the purification washing of the victim's head over a vessel⁶⁹.
- (iv) The *aulos* is not played after the immolation, whilst the priest roasts the sacrificial meat that will be consumed by the

⁶⁶ Cf. Nordquist 1992a, pp. 155-161.

⁶⁷ See notes 55 and 63.

⁶⁸ See note 57.

⁶⁹ See note 56.

participants of the ritual, before the *splanchnoptia*, as suggest the *splanchna* ready to be brought to altar for being roasted (fig. 15 – cat. 30).

- (v) One plays the *aulos* after roasting the portions of sacrificial meat to be consumed by participants, when the *splanchna* are taken to the altar in order to be roasted; the painter intends likely to set forth the *splanchnoptia* that is about to start⁷⁰.
- (vi) One plays the *aulos* when the *splanchna* are grilled on the altar (fig. 14 – cat. 29)⁷¹.

A bell-krater by the Hephaestus Painter, conserved in Frankfurt, may be considered the best example of such situations when the piper should silence his instrument (fig. 15 – cat. 30). A priest, the *hiereus*, roasts pieces of meat on the flaming altar devoted to Apollo, as revealed by the small statue of the deity with a laurel branch and bow standing on a pillar placed behind the altar, while a group nears – the group consists of one man and two youths, one of them is the *splanchnoptes*, the other, the *auletes*. The young musician, however, limits himself to hold the *aulos* in hand, abstaining from playing it.

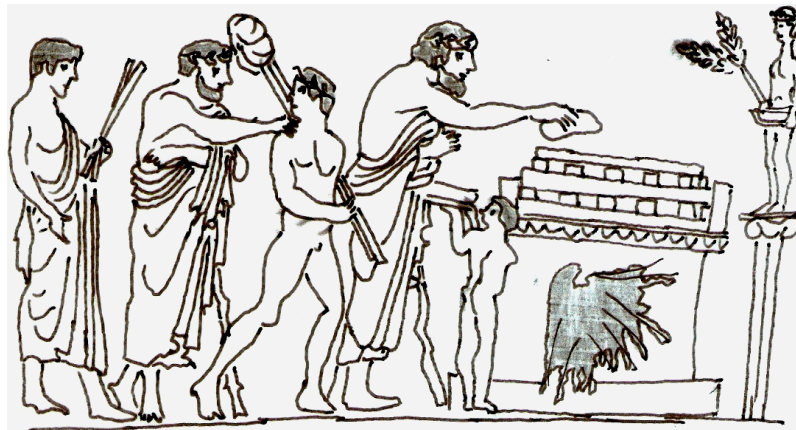


Fig. 15

⁷⁰ Bell-krater, red-figure. The Nikias Painter (ARV 1334/13). Lecce, Museo Provinciale, 630. Late fifth century.

⁷¹ 1) Bell-krater, red-figure. The Pothos Painter (ARV 1190/26). Nancy, Institut d'Archéologie, no inv. About 420. 2) Bell-krater, red-figure. The Pothos Painter (ARV 1190). British Museum, E 504. About 420. 3) Bell-krater, red-figure. The Petworth Group (ARV 1182/2). Port Sunlight, 5036 (x2140). About 420.

In both situations, being played or just in hands of a musician, the *aulos* is an indispensable instrument for sacrificial rituals, no matter which deity is worshipped. Jean-Louis Durand includes the *aulos* amongst the rite tools, in the same manner as the *sphageion*, the vessel that received the victim's blood⁷².

The *aulos* is necessary, on the one hand, during the cooking of food for the gods, the *splanchna* (the viscera, seen as condensed blood, according to Aristotelic theory)⁷³. On the other hand, it seems that it could remain silent during the cooking of the meat destined for men in the sacrifice, since it would not fulfill a mystical/propitiatory function, as there was no need in this moment for a dialogue with the god. It probably played the role of guaranteeing communication with the gods, to ensure that they listened to human demands and accepted as offerings the animals sacrificed on the altar.

At the same time, the *aulos* would have also a harmonising function, so inserting the bloody ritual in the frame of the *arete* of *sophrosyne*, in view of the enormous potential of the *hybris* contained in the violence of the immolation act. Thus, it would have a conciliatory function, particularly in moments of intense antagonism – as the solemn sweetness of the procession and the cruel violence of the instant when the victim was killed. The *aulos* music joined several goals: it soothed the animal; it called upon the gods to accept the blood pouring on the altar; and, through its lonely melodies, it fulfilled the complete silence of the audience, the instant the animal was immolated.

So the *aulos* was the musical instrument universally used during sacrificial acts, regardless of the honoured deity. Within the iconography of Attic vases, there is no case linking the *kithara* and the *lyra* to immolation or sacrificial flesh burning. One can oppose to this consideration the fact that Apollo could figure often with such instruments in hand, together with his sister Artemis, when they appear completing a sacrifice at an altar. Meanwhile, it should be noted first, that the sacrifice in such images consists always of a libation, and, secondly, that the context is mythological, where the musical instruments are depicted essentially not as ritual musical tools but as iconographical attributes for identifying the personality of the

⁷² Cf. Durand 1979, p. 148, pr. I-IV.

⁷³ Arist. *P.A.* II 1; cf. Durand 1979, p. 99: "The agreement is obvious between the scenes depicted in the image and the Aristotelian theory that the viscera are condensed blood, different in nature of the flesh or other meats".

god. Nevertheless, it is likely that the *kithara* and the *lyra* in hands of Apollo, in this situation called by Erika Simon the “opfernde Gott” (“sacrificing god”), served at the same time as a symbol of the musicians participation in sacrifices, even if in reality they used the *aulos* rather than the string instruments of Apollo⁷⁴.

This is why the generalization of Haldane seems to us mistaken, when he argues that the choice of the musical instrument to be used in sacrifice would depend upon the personality of the honoured deity⁷⁵. Indeed, according to the deity, other instruments could be added in different phases of the ritual, but never during bloody sacrifice, when the *aulos* had exclusivity⁷⁶. Let us take as example the worship of Pan and Apollo.

The instrument of Pan was the *syrinx*, although its invention has been assigned in mythology to Hermes⁷⁷. It was also used in many pastoral rites, such as the cults to the Nymphs, to Hermes and even to the Thracian goddess Attis. However, accordingly to Menander, the *aulos* was the instrument used in sacrifices to Pan⁷⁸. The *syrinx*, on the other hand, was used in accompaniment to the hymns sung in his honour⁷⁹.

Many cults to Apollo were accomplished with *lyra* or *kithara*, which counts as evidence of the adequacy between the ritual and the musical profile of the honoured deity⁸⁰. We know the *kithara* was used, in the sixth century B.C., to accompany the paeans sung by boys' choirs in spring celebrations at Apollo's altar in Megara⁸¹. During the epiphany ritual to Apollo in Delphi, a boys' choir sang the paean to the sound of a *phorminx*, to welcome him on his return from

⁷⁴ On scenes with offering gods cf. Eckstein-Wolf 1952; Simon 1953. For a different interpretation cf. Veyne 1990.

⁷⁵ Cf. Haldane 1966, p. 102.

⁷⁶ The *kithara* before the altar, in hands of a musician that watches the violent reaction of Heracles against Bousiris, is related to the context of sacrificial procession, in which it could take part, regardless of which god is worshiped. Cf. *Hydria*, red-figure. The Kleophrades Painter (ARV 188/70). Paris, Louvre, N 3376 (MN 401). Late sixth century.

⁷⁷ *HH* IV 39 sq. (invention of the *lyra*) e 512 (invention of the *syrinx*).

⁷⁸ Men. *Dysk.* 432-4: “Plangon, move more quickly. We should have finished sacrificing by now.... Play your pipes, Parthenis, Pan's song. This god, they say, should not be approached in silence” (tr. by V.J. Rosivach = <https://files.fairfield.edu/users/Rosivach/websites/rosivach/cl103a/dyskolos.htm>)

⁷⁹ Longus II 31.

⁸⁰ Cf. Haldane 1966, p. 100.

⁸¹ Thgn 777-9.

the land of the Hyperboreans⁸². At a later period in Delos, during epiphany worship, after completing the boy's choir performance accompanied by the *kithara*, a similar musical reception took place, when the boys' *lyrai* would sound at the time that Apollo entered the temple⁸³. We know even of a girl's choir from Thessalia, quoted above, that brought offerings to Delphi, as they danced and sang a hymn accompanied by the *kithara*⁸⁴. Despite the many stories opposing Apollo to the *aulos*, such as the myth on musical combat between him and Marsyas – a popular subject since the second half of the fifth century B.C. – all vases depicting bloody sacrifices carried out in honour to Apollo represent exclusively the *aulos*, whenever they show the musical instrument in the iconographical version of the rite (fig. 14 – cat. 29)⁸⁵.

We conclude in this regard, that it is risky to assume there was a univocal relation between the musical instrument employed in the ritual and the mythological profile of the worshipped deity. The reasons that led to the selection of a musical instrument as suitable for the cult cannot be assigned in such a simplistic way to mythology.

In our view, the choice of the instrument had more to do with the protocol that governed rituals rather than symbolic meanings determined by mythology, according basically to three features:

- (i) (i) to mystical precepts (the propitiatory purpose of the *aulos* in sacrifice)⁸⁶;
- (ii) (ii) to musical fundamentals (such as the role of the *kithara* in the *pompai*, resulting in a higher sounding effect and harmonization that highlights the contrast with the section of *auloi*, or the choice of a more appropriate instrument for accompanying a hymn, according to the composer's will);
- (iii) aesthetic effects (the visual spectacle of the orchestra with large sections of *auletai* and *kitharistai* in the major processions, all of them wearing lush costumes).

Finally, regarding music in sacrifices, we should still consider the role of the *salpinx* (a type of trumpet), a subject that did not receive enough attention until the study by Gullög Nordquist, *The*

⁸² Alc. fr. 1 Bergk.

⁸³ Call. *Ap.* 12-19.

⁸⁴ Heliod. *Aeth.* III 1 sq.

⁸⁵ Cf. note 61 and 63.

⁸⁶ Cf. Nordquist 1992a, p. 167.

Salpinx in Greek Cult (1994). J.A. Haldane called attention to the use of the *salpinx* in sacrifices, in their preliminary phase, when the participants stopped around the altar; according to him the function was to regulate the procedures, so that in every sign emitted by the instrument another animal would be brought to the executioner⁸⁷. It would also be helpful to silence the crowd, in order to make audible the prayers uttered by the herald. G. Nordquist considers that the literary evidence is not enough to support Haldane's interpretation⁸⁸. However, a *kylix* from Florence (cat. 31) seems to endorse his hypothesis, since it shows a youth blowing a *salpinx* in front of horses brought to sacrifice and a wild bull resisting the young men who attempt to dominate it. On the opposite side of the trumpet player stands the hangman sharpening his machetes. It is evident there is a relationship between the *salpinx* and transport of animals to sacrifice. In the meantime, Lehnstaedt maintains that horses, represented as sacrificial victims, would indicate the context of the Great Panathenaia⁸⁹.

According to Nordquist, the typically military character of the *salpinx* should be related with its function in worship⁹⁰. Written testimonies quote the use of the trumpet in cults connected with military life, such as in the official rituals completed during the departure of the Athenian fleet for the unfortunate expedition to Sicily⁹¹. Thucydides and Plutarch also refer to the presence of the *salpiktes* in heroic worship, as occurred in Plataea in honour to the Greek soldiers who died in the war against the Persians: the trumpet player headed the procession until the hero's tomb, emitting war signs, in an appropriate way for a ritual performed to a soldier died in battle⁹².

However, the *salpinx* took part also in rituals of non-military nature, such as sacrifices carried out by official Athenian embassies, the so-called *theoriai*, whenever they visited important places, as revealed by inscriptions from Delphi⁹³. One verifies the presence of

⁸⁷ Cf. Haldane 1966, p. 101.

⁸⁸ Cf. Nordquist 1992a, pp. 147-149.

⁸⁹ Cf. Lehnstaedt 1970, p. 201, n. K 84.

⁹⁰ Cf. Nordquist 1994, p. 245.

⁹¹ Thuc. VI 32.1. For a similar use existed in Crete, as reveal Gortyna inscriptions from the IV/III century B.C., cf. Guarducci 1942, part. pp. 185-186.

⁹² Thuc. III 58, 4; Plut. *Arist.* XXI 1.

⁹³ Cf. Nordquist 1994, pp. 246-247.

the *salpinx* in Dionysian worship as well, mainly in the naval car procession – called *katagogia* – that happened on the first day of the Anthesteria (fig. 16 – cat. 32).

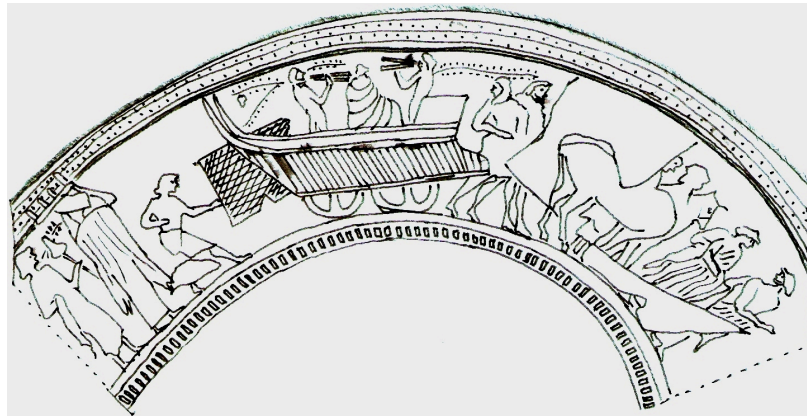


Fig. 16

Given the professional demand for such musicians in worship, many trumpeters, who were active participants in the army, were engaged in religious cult in peacetime. Some of them devoted their musical instruments in sanctuaries, as votive offerings⁹⁴. Unfortunately, archaeological excavations have not brought to light such bronze trumpets mentioned as offerings. Nevertheless, several terracotta figurines of trumpeters – or in the shape of the instrument – have been found in different sanctuaries⁹⁵.

What would be, then, the function of the *salpinx* in worship? First, it borrows its purpose of signalling or heralding from the military context, a function suitable for a high-sounding instrument

⁹⁴ *Anth. Pal.* VI 46 (= Antipater of Sidon): “Phrenicus, having quitted the wars and the altar, presented to Athena his brazen trumpet, erst the spokesman of peace and war, sending forth a barbarous clamour from his mouth”; VI 151 (= Tynnauus): “Miccos of Pallene hung in the temple of Ilian Athena this deep-toned flute of Ares, the Tyrrhenian instrument by which he formerly uttered many a loud message of peace or war”; VI 159 (= Antipater of Sidon): “I, the trumpet that once poured forth the bloody notes of war in the battle, and the sweet tune of the peace, hang here, Phrenicus, thy gift to the Tritonian maid, resting from my clamorous music”; VI 195 (= Archias): “To Athene of Troy Miccos of Pallene suspended the deep-toned trumpet of the War-God which he formerly sounded by the altars and on the field of battle, here a sign of civic order, and there of the death-cry” (tr. by W. R. Paton, *The Greek Anthology*, I, London 1916).

⁹⁵ Cf. Nordquist 1994, p. 247.

such as the trumpet – it gave signals at the commencement of the procession (Nordquist 1992a, p. 147-9). Secondly, as a metallic instrument, it had an apotropaic and magic mission, assigned to it by the Greeks, just as did many other peoples, to metals, mainly to bronze objects⁹⁶. For instance, it was believed that its high sound eradicated diseases⁹⁷. Some cultural qualities reinforced its capacity to fulfill these functions. As a warrior instrument, played exclusively by citizens, its meaning was linked to freedom. Its function in ceremonies, when used in processions, was connected likely with the condition of leading a procession, announcing it to the population. Unlike the secondary position occupied by *auletai* and *kitharistai* in processions, the trumpeters, when depicted, almost always appear as leaders. This is the case of a *lekythos* from London by the Theseus Painter⁹⁸ that represents a *salpiktes* heading a cortege, followed by a *kanephoros*.

III. Conclusion

Although the *aulos* was appropriate for accompanying hymns and procession choirs, many examples witness the use of other instruments in worship, mainly string instruments, as the *kithara*, depending upon the musical tradition associated with the repertoire usually performed at a given ritual or upon the honoured deity, pointing out that the latter is not a decisive factor in selection. In major processions, such as the Great Panathenaia, an orchestra of musicians accompanied the ritual, providing greater pomp and volume, by combining *kitharistai* and *auletai*. A particular case is verified in the use of *salpinx*, bound either to its military function or to the apotropaic effect of its metallic timbre, or even to its communicative competence in the procession through the crowd. The *aulos*' exclusivity occurs when bloody sacrifice rituals are fulfilled, since it was required for effective communication between the faithful and the deity. Lastly, musical performance, musicians (amateur or professional ones) and musical instruments were, as a general rule, almost indispensable components of Greek worship.

⁹⁶ Theoc. *Id.* II 36.

⁹⁷ Artem. IV 56.

⁹⁸ *Lekythos*, black-figure. The Theseus Painter (ABL 267/14). London, British Museum, B 648. Circa 500-490.

Iconography Catalog (Attic black- and red-figure vases):

- Cat. 1 (fig. 1): *Skyphos*, black-figure. The Comast Group. KX Painter. (ABV 26/21; Add² 7) Athens, National Museum, 640. About 585-70. Photo: F.V. Cerqueira
- Cat. 2. (fig. 2): *Pyxis*, black-figure. Not attributed. Athens, National Museum, room 54, vitrine 52 (April 1998). About 500. Photo: F.V. Cerqueira
- Cat. 3 (fig. 3): *Kylix*, red-figure. The Triptolemos Painter. Paris, Louvre, G 138. About 480. Photo: F.V. Cerqueira
- Cat. 4 (fig. 4): *Pinax*, black-figure. Not attributed. Athens, National Museum, Acropolis Collection, 2574-2575. Third quarter of the sixth century. Photo: F.V. Cerqueira
- Cat. 5: Amphora, black-figure. The Swing Painter (ABV 305/26). Naples, Museo Nazionale, 81186. Circa 550-30
- Cat. 6: *Loutrophoros* (fragment of the base), black-figure. Not attributed. Athens, National Museum, Acropolis Collection, 1208. Late sixth century
- Cat. 7: Calyx-krater, red-figure. The Villa Giulia Painter. Roma, Villa Giulia, 909
- Cat. 8: *Kylix* in shape of a crater, black-figure. The B.M.N. Painter. (ABV) Paris, Louvre, CA 2988 Circa 550-40
- Cat. 9 (fig. 5): *Skyphos*, black-figure. Theseus Painter (From 258, above). Stuttgart, Würtemberger Landesmuseum, KAS 74. About 500
- Cat. 10. (fig. 6): Amphora, black-figure. Affecter (ABV 243). Munich, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung, 1441. Circa 540-30
- Cat. 11: Krater, black-figure. The Ptoon Painter (ABV 83/1). Paris, Louvre, E 623 (Campana 38). About 580-70
- Cat. 12: Ovoid neck-amphora, black-figure. The Omaha Painter (Para 34/2; Add² 24). Omaha/Nebraska, Joslyn Art Museum, 1963.480. About 570
- Cat. 13: *Kylix* (Siana), black-figure. The C Painter (ABV 51/5). London, British Museum, B 382 (1867.0508.940). About 575-55

- Cat. 14: Fragments (bell-krater?), black-figure. Not attributed. Athens, National Museum, Acropolis Collection, 621. Last quarter of sixth century
- Cat. 15: *Stamnos*, red-figure. The Vila Giulia Painter (ARV² 620/32). Saint Petersburg, the Hermitage, 1588 (B 806). About 460
- Cat. 16 (fig. 7): *Lekane*, black-figure (Boeotian). Formerly identified as “*Early attic work, known as Vaurna*” (CVA British Museum 2, III H e, pl. 4a-b) Some authors identify it as a Boeotian ware, others as a Boeotian imitation of an Attic model. Found in Athens. London, British Museum, B 80 (1879.1004.1). Second quarter of sixth century. © Trustees of the British Museum
- Cat. 17 (fig. 8): Fragments (*kantharos?*), red-figure. The Pan Painter. Fragments found in Menidi/Attica, the excavations of April / May 1878, n. 1. Mid-fifth century. Likely contemporary to Parthenon friezes
- Cat. 18 (fig. 9): *Lekythos* (fragments), black-figure. Not attributed. Athens, National Museum, Acropolis Collection, 2298. About 500
- Cat. 19 (fig. 10): Amphora, black-figure. Painter Berlin 1686 (ABV 296/4; Add² 77). Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung, 1686. About 540-30
- Cat. 20 (fig. 11): Fragments, black-figure. Not attributed. Fragments found in Menidi/Attica, the excavations of April / May 1878, n. 9. Last decades of sixth century
- Cat. 21 (fig. 12): Fragments, black-figure. Not attributed. Athens, National Museum, Acropolis Collection, 2009. Late sixth century
- Cat. 22: Amphora (fragmentary), black-figure. Antimenes Painter (ABV 391). Athens, National Museum, Acropolis Collection, 816. About 500
- Cat. 23: *Kylix*, black-figure. Near Glaukytes. Switzerland, Basel, private collection (photo: Herbert Cahn, Basel). About 560
- Cat. 24: *Loutrophoros*, black-figure. The Swing Painter (ABV 309/97; Para 133; Add² 83). Eleusis, Archaeological Museum, 471 (873). About 550-30
- Cat. 25: *Hydria*, black-figure. Not attributed. Paris, Louvre, F 10. Mid-sixth century

- Cat. 26: Nack-amphora, black-figure. The Leagros Group. Berlin, Antikensammlung, F 1896. Late sixth century
- Cat. 27: *Lekane*, red-figure. Not attributed. Saint Petersburg, Hermitage. Third quarter of fifth century
- Cat. 28 (fig. 13): *Kylix*, red-figure. The Ancora Painter (ARV² 875/2, footnote). Adolphseck, Schloss Fasanerie (Collection Landgraf Philipp von Hessen), 134. Circa 470-60
- Cat. 29 (fig. 14): Calyx-krater, red-figure. Manner of the Cadmus Painter (H.A. Kahn). San Antonio, San Antonio Museum, 85.120.2. About 420-10
- Cat. 30 (fig. 15): Bell-krater, red-figure. The Hephaistos Painter (ARV² 1788/31bis). Frankfurt, Museum für Vor-und Frühgeschichte, VF β 413. About 450-40
- Cat. 31: *Kylix*, red-figure. Not attributed. Florence, Museo Archeologico Etrusco, 81600 (356). Last quarter of sixth century
- Cat. 32 (fig. 16): *Skyphos*, black-figure. Near the Theseus Class (ABL 253/15). Bologna, Museo Civico, 130. About 500

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- ABV = J.D. Beazley, *Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters*, Oxford 1956
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