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HESPERIA

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HONORARY SHARES OF SACRIFICIAL MEAT IN ATTIC VASE PAINTING

VISUAL SIGNS OF DISTINCTION AND CIVIC IDENTITY

ABSTRACT

A group of Attic black- and red-figure vases from the late 6th and 5th centuries B.C. is decorated with scenes that prominently feature legs of meat in iconographic contexts other than sacrificial butchering. These leg joints are interpreted as honorary shares of sacrificial meat awarded to select individuals at the festivals of the polis; the honorary shares included more meat than the shares distributed to the general public. Because leg joints were awarded as honorary shares to the priests who officiated at sacrifices, they came to represent honorary shares in general. By extension, the leg joints that appear in painted scenes symbolize meritorious participation in city festivals, and thus can be viewed as expressions of civic identity.

In ancient Greece, animal sacrifice was a practice that honored the gods and brought people together through the sharing of meat.¹ It was widespread at the level of the state, which organized large sacrifices during important festivals and distributed meat to the people, as well as in private life. As an integral part of private and public life in ancient Athens, animal sacrifice inspired Attic vase painters, who often depicted various aspects of the sacrificial process, such as the procession to the altar, the butchering of the animal, the burning of the part offered to the gods on the altar, and the feasting during which the animal was consumed. Visual representations of sacrifice have received much scholarly attention during the past few decades, particularly with reference to Athens.²

Drawing on earlier scholarship on the visual representation of sacrifice, this article focuses on a related topic. A corpus of Attic vase paintings from

1. I thank Stella Drougou, Miltiadis Hatzopoulos, Panos Iossif, and Michalis Tiverios for their helpful comments; Clay Cofer for comments and insights on different versions of the article; Stephen Tracy and Molly Richardson for discussion of epigraphic matters; and Gunnel Ekroth for important feedback on some of the ideas presented here,

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2. Detienne and Vernant 1989, Peirce 1993, van Straten 1995, and Gebauer 2002 are among the most recent and significant contributions to the

topic. For a history of research on sacrifice since the 19th century, with bibliography, as well as representative epigraphic, literary, iconographical, and archaeological testimonia, including faunal finds, see *ThesCRAI*, 2004, pp. 59–134, s.v. sacrifice: “Les sacrifices dans le monde grec” (hereafter, Hermary and Leguilloux 2004).

the late 6th and 5th centuries B.C. features images of meat—specifically, of leg joints—in scenes that do not depict sacrificial butchering. The leg joint, a constituent and characteristic feature of the paintings, comprises an animal thigh and lower leg, usually with the hoof still on it. Although the leg joints in this corpus appear in iconographic contexts that do not depict sacrificial butchering, I argue below that they nonetheless allude to the process of animal sacrifice, and that these leg joints were perceived as sacrificial meat. I also explore the significance of these painted images of leg joints in the context of Athenian culture during the 5th century B.C., particularly in light of the Athenian system of sacrifices and meat distribution as it is known through the epigraphic record.

Earlier scholarship has taken note of these images of leg joints in non-sacrificial scenes, but there has been no attempt to examine and explain them systematically. Most scholars have dealt with the topic in passing, acknowledging that the painted images of leg joints were conceptually associated with animal sacrifice.³ Indeed, as I document below, the epigraphic record attests that the leg joint was customarily assigned as an honorary share to the priest who oversaw a sacrifice. But I argue here that in the Attic vase-painting tradition, the leg joints that appear in nonsacrificial scenes may represent special portions of meat awarded as honorary shares to individuals who were not priests. On the one hand, a painted leg joint may represent a leg of meat or a special share of meat awarded to an individual who has won an athletic or musical competition. On the other hand, a painted leg joint may symbolize an honorary award of sacrificial meat granted to a city official of high standing, or to a nonpriestly individual who has participated in the sacrifice. In other words, ancient audiences familiar with the system of sacrifice and meat distribution in Athens would have interpreted the leg joints that appear in nonsacrificial scenes as awards for distinction in city festivals, or as honorary shares rewarding the contribution of individuals to the polis. By extension, then, these images of leg joints highlight the significance that Athenians placed on participation in civic life.⁴

The underlying assumption of this study is that images are not straightforward reflections of reality; they are expressions in visual terms of ideas with which their creators were preoccupied. An approach based largely on semiotics can elucidate what the images of leg joints signified for the society that created and viewed them.⁵ In the interpretation offered here, I am not concerned with the particular details of specific painted scenes. Rather, I attempt to explain a single recurring feature, the leg joint, as a meaningful visual sign in different discursive contexts. Although the nuanced meaning of a leg joint depends on the particular context in which it appears, I argue that the leg joints depicted in this corpus of images represent

3. E.g., Peirce 1993, pp. 235–236; van Straten 1995, pp. 153, 155; Himmelmann 1997, p. 30; Gebauer 2002, pp. 334–336 (discussion of vases), 550–559 (catalogue of vases); Hermary and Leguilloux 2004, p. 125, nos. 545–550 (here 7, 9, 16, 34, 35, 36, 48). Hermary and Leguilloux (2004) interpret leg

joints as sacrificial meat that was transported away from the sanctuary.

4. It is likely that in contexts outside of Athens, these images were perceived differently. With respect to the subject matter of Attic vases, I agree with the thesis of Osborne (2004) that Attic vases were painted primarily with the

Athenian public in mind.

5. Bérard 1983 and Bérard et al. 1989 remain important sources for such an approach with respect to ancient Greece in general and Attic imagery in particular. See most recently, with references, Ferrari 2002.

shares of sacrificial meat that were awarded for meritorious achievement in civic life.

In the first section of the article, I discuss the significance of meat in the diet of ancient Greeks and its symbolic meaning in the sacrifices of the polis. In the second section, I focus on the butchering of sacrificial victims and the distribution of the meat as it is attested in epigraphic sources, summarizing what is known about the portions that were distributed to priests, other participants in the sacrifice, officials of the polis, and victors in athletic and musical competitions, as well as to the general public, including women. The thematic associations in vase paintings between images of leg joints and the concept of sacrifice are also shown. In the third section, I present and discuss a catalogue of 54 painted vases depicting leg joints in nonsacrificial contexts. Finally, I interpret the images of leg joints in Attic vase painting as visual signs of the honorary shares of meat assigned to worthy individuals in the polis.⁶

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF MEAT IN THE POLIS

Written sources and iconography reveal that meat was a highly valued food during classical antiquity. Ample references in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* indicate that meat was a prized foodstuff in the 8th and 7th centuries B.C. Homeric heroes are often shown consuming meat and wine, and they set an example for later Greeks.⁷ According to Homer, granting someone meat, a cup of wine, and a good seat at the table was a way to honor them (*Il.* 8.162). Socrates cites this line in Plato's *Republic* when he proposes that in his state, "we, too, at sacrifices and on other like occasions, will reward the good so far as they have proved themselves good with hymns and the other privileges of which we have just spoken, and also with 'seats of honor and meat and full cups.'"⁸ Further, ancient medical authors considered meat to be a source of nourishment well suited for athletes on account of its high nutritional value.⁹ The significance of meat as a food is attested in visual representations as early as the beginning of the 6th century B.C. At that time, tables loaded with a variety of foodstuffs, including meat, were shown frequently in symposium scenes on Corinthian and Attic black-figure vases, and subsequently on Attic red-figure vases.¹⁰

In addition to this evidence, faunal studies carried out in recent years have enriched our knowledge of the consumption of meat in antiquity.

6. Since the focus of this article is Attic iconography and Athenian culture of the late 6th and 5th centuries, priority has been given to visual and other sources for 5th-century Athens. Two Italic red-figure vases may be mentioned here as examples of similar scenes painted in workshops outside of Attica; to my knowledge, they are the only such examples, and they are notably later than the corpus examined here: (1) Apulian bell krater, 410–380 B.C.;

Trieste, Museo Civico S.411; *CVA*, Trieste [Italy 43], (I) IV, pl. D 3 [1921]: 1–2; (2) Lucanian column krater, 350–300 B.C.; Paris, Musée Rodin TC970; *CVA*, Paris, Musée Rodin [France 16], pl. 36 [724]:1–3. It should be noted here that the relevant epigraphic record for the first half of the 5th century is limited, while that of the late 6th century is virtually nonexistent. It is therefore often necessary to refer to Attic inscriptions of the later 5th and

4th centuries B.C. Inscriptions outside of Athens are discussed only when they illuminate aspects about which the Athenian epigraphic record is silent.

7. E.g., *Il.* 8.231, 9.217; *Od.* 1.112, 3.33, 12.19, 14.109.

8. *Resp.* 468d–e, trans. P. Shorey, Cambridge, Mass., 1930.

9. See Zaphiropoulou 2004, pp. 89–100, for discussion and sources.

10. See below, pp. 31–33 and nn. 81–83, for bibliography.

The combined evidence indicates that domestic animals—mostly sheep, goats, pigs, and cattle—formed the principal source of meat.¹¹ The ox was mainly a working animal. Its value was high and it was not consumed ordinarily, but rather during state-sponsored festivals or when it was too old to work in the fields.¹² Sheep and goats were kept for milk, cheese, and wool, as well as for meat. Pigs, on the other hand, were kept purely for their meat.¹³ Dogs and donkeys were two domestic animals that were consumed as food in ancient Greece, albeit to a much lesser extent than pigs, sheep, and goats.¹⁴ The Greek diet during the Classical period also included meat from animals taken in the hunt or purchased in the market: hare, boar, wild goat, and deer, as well as a long list of birds, most common among them the chicken.¹⁵ Meat was roasted, or boiled with vegetables in a stew.¹⁶ Owing to the lack of long-term refrigeration, meat was commonly cured. Meat could be smoked, salted, or turned into sausages, which were intensively traded in the market.¹⁷

A critical question regarding meat consumption in ancient Greece concerns its frequency. It is generally accepted that meat was not eaten in antiquity as often as it is in modern times;¹⁸ in fact, many scholars believe that meat had a limited role in the diet of the Greeks during the Classical period.¹⁹ It is difficult, however, to quantify or even verify this idea, which has become a truism in scholarship, on the basis of the archaeological data and written sources. The only available quantitative information comes from 4th-century Athens, where on the basis of the epigraphic record it has been calculated that a citizen had the opportunity to acquire meat from public sacrifices at least once every eight or nine days—roughly 40 to 45 times a year.²⁰

Meat consumption was closely linked to animal sacrifice in ancient Greece. On linguistic grounds it is the scholarly *opinio communis* that every time an animal was slaughtered for food in ancient Greece, there was a

11. The faunal information from sanctuaries is generally more detailed than that from settlements. Collections of “sacred laws” such as *LSCG*, *LSCG Suppl.*, *LSAM*, and *NGSL* reveal that most cults used sheep, pigs, and goats in sacrifices. See van Straten 1995, pp. 170–186, on animals sacrificed in ancient Greece according to inscriptions, votive reliefs, and vase paintings. For a survey of faunal material from sanctuaries mainly from the Iron Age, see Hägg 1998 and Reese 2005. In domestic contexts the types of animals consumed vary significantly according to region. See Boessneck 1994 (4th-century Kassope); Prummel 2003 (Hellenistic houses from New Halos); Snyder and Klippel 2003 (Iron Age through Orientalizing period, Kastro, Crete). For a general overview of recent research projects and bibliography, see

Kotjabopoulou et al. 2003.

12. Rosivach 1994, p. 147. See pp. 69–70 for a tabulation of the minimum number of oxen (724 in all) sacrificed according to the *Dermatikon Accounts* for the years 334/3–331/0 (*IG II²* 1496); and pp. 108–120 on the *boonai*, officials elected by lot in 4th-century Athens to supervise the purchase of oxen for state sacrifices.

13. Dalby 1996, p. 59.

14. Dalby 1996, p. 60. The meat of puppies, usually boiled, is recommended in the Hippocratic Treatises for various conditions; see, e.g., *Mul.* 217.34, 230.23; *Morb.* 56.11. Dog bones that showed the marks of butchery comprised 1.3% of the total assemblage at the Iron Age–Orientalizing settlement of Kastro on Crete (Snyder and Klippel 2003). For a good overview of the literary and archaeological evidence

on the consumption of dog meat in Classical Greece, with a discussion of related problems, see Roy 2007.

15. For a discussion of wild animals and birds in Greek diet with references to literary sources, see Dalby 1996, pp. 61–65.

16. E.g., *Hdt.* 3.23.5; *Hippoc. Acut.* 20.21; *Aer.* 18.18; *Morb.* 2.56; *VM* 13.17; *Arist. [Pr.]* 865b.32, 893b.31, 966a.28 (a comparison of the properties of boiled versus baked meat).

17. On sausages and meat preservation, see Frost 1999. One of Aristophanes’ characters in the *Knights* is a sausage seller, and the comedian does not paint a very flattering picture of him.

18. Dalby 2003, p. 213.

19. Jameson 1983, p. 10; Bats 1988, p. 36; Rosivach 1994, p. 10; Wilkins 1995, p. 104; Garnsey 1999, p. 123.

20. Rosivach 1994, p. 66.

ritual acknowledgment of the gods.²¹ While it is unlikely that we can ever be certain whether ritual animal slaughtering was systematically practiced in private life, it is clear that at the level of state religion, animals were ritually slaughtered on a daily basis. The complex system of animal sacrifices in the Athenian state during the 5th and 4th centuries is documented in an extensive epigraphic record.²² Meat from sacrifices during large polis festivals or local deme festivals was distributed to the population for consumption at the sanctuary or elsewhere.²³

The sacrificed animal was butchered according to specific rules and was divided among the gods, the priests and other functionaries, and the worshippers.²⁴ The gods were given the sacrum and tail (ὄσφῦς) and the femur, which were burned on the altar, and possibly other parts that were deposited for the gods on a table.²⁵ The viscera (σπλάγχνα) were consumed by the core group of participants who sponsored the sacrifice.²⁶ The priests received some of the best parts of the animal as honorary shares, as did city officials and victorious athletes. The remaining meat was cut into pieces of more or less the same size and distributed to the population.

Among the personnel associated with the killing and butchering of the animal was the μάγειρος, the culinary specialist during the Classical and Hellenistic periods. He was a butcher, a meat seller, and also a cook serving at private or public occasions.²⁷ Literary and epigraphic sources reveal that during the Classical and Hellenistic periods, sanctuaries employed *mageiroi* to perform sacrifices or butcher animals. It is not known whether this was a standard practice or an exception, although one can imagine that the

21. Jameson 1988, p. 87; Detienne 1989a, p. 3; Vernant 1989, p. 25. On the linguistic evidence leading to this conclusion, see the essential work on the vocabulary of sacrifice in ancient Greece: Casabona 1966, pp. 30–32 (*hiereion*) and p. 80 (*thyō*). In Classical Greek the verb θύω indicates both offering an animal to the gods and slaughtering it for food; ἱερείον denotes a sacrificial victim, as well as an animal slaughtered for meat.

22. This topic is presented in detail in Rosivach 1994. For a reconstruction of the sacrificial calendar of Athens as it was revised toward the end of the 5th and the beginning of the 4th centuries B.C., see Lambert 2002; Gawlinski 2007.

23. Meat distributions in Classical Athens are discussed in the following section. Occasionally, cult regulations used the phrase οὐ φορά, “not to be carried out,” to indicate that meat had to be consumed in the sanctuary instead of being taken elsewhere, as was customary. See the 4th-century calendar of the deme of Erchia, *LSCG* 18,

lines A11, A21, A51, Γ10, Γ64, Δ6, Δ10–11, Δ38, Δ46, Δ55, E7–8, E20–21, E26–27, E30, E63–64. Ekroth (2002, pp. 313–325) discusses the phrase οὐ φορά.

24. On the rules for butchering meat and distributing it between gods and men, see Berthiaume 1982, pp. 44–61; Durand 1989; Le Guen-Pollet 1991; van Straten 1995, pp. 115–133; Gebauer 2002, pp. 290–293; Ekroth 2008a.

25. Literary evidence suggests that the femur bone covered in fat was the usual offering to the gods as early as Homer and through the Classical period. During the Classical period, the *osphys* became another established offering to the gods. In fact, Attic vase paintings rather uniformly represent the *osphys* alone burning on the altar, possibly because it effectively conveyed the idea of the divine share for ancient Athenians. On divine sacrificial shares in literary sources and vase painting, see van Straten 1995, pp. 118–131. On the identification of the *osphys* as the sacrum and tail on the basis of literary

and iconographic evidence, see van Straten 1995, pp. 128–130. Faunal material provides archaeological confirmation that the *osphys* and femur were offered as divine shares by the Geometric period. Caudal vertebrae and thighbones were the main offerings burned for the gods at the Classical altar of Aphrodite Ourania in the Athenian Agora (Reese 1989, p. 64), the Geometric altar of Apollo Daphnephoros in Eretria (Chenal-Velarde and Studer 2003), and the Archaic altar of the Artemision at Ephesos (Forstner 2003). On the deposition of edible offerings, including part of the sacrificed animal, on a table for the gods, see Gill 1974 and 1991, esp. pp. 7–19. On the use of variation in the ritual of animal sacrifice as a way of structuring the relationship between humans and gods, see Ekroth 2008b.

26. See van Straten 1995, pp. 131–141.

27. On the role of the *mageiros*, see Berthiaume 1982; Schmitt Pantel 1992, pp. 334–339.

services of *mageiroi* were necessary at large festivals where many animals were slaughtered. *Mageiroi* are encountered with moderate frequency in sanctuary regulations of the Classical and Hellenistic periods.²⁸ The earliest secure attestation of a *mageiros* from mainland Greece can be dated around the middle of the 5th century B.C. It is a dedication by a *mageiros* inscribed on a bronze plaque from the Asklepieion of Epidaurus.²⁹

In conclusion, archaeological, visual, and written evidence demonstrates that meat was a highly valued source of nourishment in ancient Greece. Further research on faunal material from secure contexts is necessary in order to obtain a more nuanced understanding of meat consumption. On a symbolic level, the butchering of the sacrificial animal and the distribution of its meat affirmed the cosmic order, the division between gods and men.³⁰ Members of the polis of Athens were entitled to take part in collective activities, such as sacrifices, and to receive a portion of the sacrificial meat of the polis. Participating in the sacrifices of the polis was also a performance of one's civic identity, an activity that strengthened one's feeling of belonging to the polis.³¹ On a practical level, the system of sacrifices in the Athenian polis has correctly been identified as a redistributive mechanism, whereby state resources were spent in order to secure food for the population.³²

HONORARY SHARES AND MEAT DISTRIBUTION AT SACRIFICES IN CLASSICAL ATHENS

What principles governed the distribution of sacrificial meat (κρεονομία) to the members of the polis? Attic inscriptions of the 5th and 4th centuries are a rich source of information on the honorary shares of meat distributed to priests, victorious athletes and musicians, and city officials, as well as the equal shares distributed to the people at large. In addition, Attic vase paintings depicting sacrifice and butchering suggest that leg joints represented the portions of meat that were the end product of the sacrificial process. In the following sections I summarize the evidence for the shares of meat granted to various categories of people.³³

PRIESTLY PREROGATIVES

Athenian priests and priestesses received as their prerogatives—γέρα or ἱερώσυνα³⁴—parts of the sacrificed animal (usually along with the hide), as well as other comestibles such as bread, or in some cases they received

28. Payments to *mageiroi* are recorded in *IDélos* 372, line A105; 406, line B72; 440, line A38; 442, line A221; 444, lines A28, A32.

29. Athens, National Museum 8166: Berthiaume 1982, p. 13; *LSAG*², pp. 181–182, no. 16, pl. 34; *IG IV*² 1, line 144.

30. Vernant 1989; Ekroth 2008b.

31. For a discussion of collective activities and civic identity in Archaic and Classical Greece, see Schmitt

Pantel 1990. On the concepts of polis and state cult, see Aleshire 1994; Sourvinou-Inwood 2000; Dignas 2002, pp. 1–12.

32. Rosivach 1994, p. 3.

33. For the purposes of this survey I examined all the Attic inscriptions of the 5th and 4th centuries in *LSCG* and *LSCG Suppl.* The following Attic inscriptions present the most important information on these subjects: *LSCG* 2 = *IG I*³ 246; *LSCG* 10 = *IG I*³ 244;

LSCG 11 = *IG I*³ 255; *LSCG* 12 = *IG I*³ 35–36; *LSCG* 13 = *IG I*³ 82; *LSCG* 18 = *SEG XXI* 541; *LSCG* 19 = *IG II*² 1237; *LSCG* 28 = *IG II*² 1356; *LSCG* 29 = *IG II*² 1359; *LSCG* 30 = *IG II*² 1360; *LSCG* 33 = *IG II*² 334; *LSCG* 45 = *IG II*² 1361; *LSCG Suppl.* 8 = *IG I*³ 137; *LSCG Suppl.* 11 = *IG II*² 47; *LSCG Suppl.* 19 = *SEG XXI* 527.

34. E.g., *LSCG* 2, line 3 (γέρα); *LSCG* 19, line 4 (ἱερώσυνα).

money.³⁵ According to the inscriptions, priestly portions from sacrificial animals were determined on the basis of the private or public nature of each sacrifice, the significance of the cult, the divinity and its sex, the kind of animal sacrificed, and whether the animal was skinned.

The leg joint was the most common priestly prerogative from the edible parts of the sacrificed animal in Athens during the 5th and 4th centuries.³⁶ The leg is obtained by cutting along the shoulder or hip joint and is a recognizable body part, unlike the small cuts of meat that were distributed to the population at large. The leg joint is a sizeable piece of high-quality meat, an attractive reward obtained early in the process of animal butchering.³⁷ Inscriptions refer to it as the σκέλος or κωλή. It is unclear from the epigraphic record how these two terms differed or whether they were interchangeable.³⁸ A reference in Athenaeus (9.368f), however, suggests that both terms signified the same thing.

The thematic association of leg joints with the sacrificial process is vividly illustrated on several Attic vases that depict the butchering of animals.³⁹ A late-6th-century cup in the Villa Giulia displays a few stages in the sacrificial ritual (Fig. 1).⁴⁰ On one side of the cup, two youths are shown carrying an animal toward a bearded man. The man, only partly preserved, is clad in a long sleeveless tunic with embroidered decoration and holds a knife in one hand. On the basis of similar representations, he can be identified as the officiant at the sacrifice, most likely the priest.⁴¹

35. For 5th- and 4th-century Attic inscriptions referring to payments of priests in cash, see Loomis 1998, pp. 76–87. For the economics of priesthood with reference to Hellenistic Asia Minor, see Dignas 2002, pp. 246–271; she aptly remarks (p. 249) that “priesthood is about receiving priestly shares.”

36. According to the epigraphic record, the leg joint was also the usual priestly prerogative in Kos. Different body parts were assigned to priests in Asia Minor, while the small sample of relevant inscriptions from other regions of the Greek world does not allow us to generalize about the standard priestly prerogatives from sacrificed animals. For a survey of the topic with references to inscriptions, see Le Guen-Pollet 1991.

37. In addition to these practical considerations, Durand (1989) explores the “topography” of sacrificed animals and the significance of each body part. He proposes that each part of the animal assumed its significance according to its proximity to the perceived center of the animal body, the *splanchna* (pp. 92–100). Durand assigns a symbolic dimension to the choice of the leg joint as the priestly prerogative (pp. 104–105), explaining that the significance of the priest’s share derives from its prox-

imity to the *splanchna*, “the point of contact between men and gods” (p. 105).

38. On *skelos* and *kole*, see Le Guen-Pollet 1991, pp. 17–18. *LSJ* defines *kole* as the thighbone with the flesh on it, and *skelos* as the leg from the hip downward. A late-5th-century inscription from Epidaurus (*LSCG* 60) mentions two σκέλη per sacrificial animal (σκέλος . . . ἄτερον σκέλος; lines 10–12, 15–16, 27, 29, 30–32). A 4th-century inscription from Piraeus on the organization of the Orgeones of Bendis mentions as a priestly prerogative a κωλήν διανεκῆ δεξιάν (*LSCG* 45, lines 4–5). These two inscriptions suggest that *skelos* and *kole* signified either the front or the hind legs of an animal. On the other hand, in the regulation of the *genos* of the Salaminioi (*LSCG Suppl.* 19 [= Lambert 1997], lines 32–33), the term *skelos* appears with the definite article, which may suggest that a piece of meat was commonly allocated to the priests (Le Guen-Pollet 1991, pp. 17–18).

39. Vases with scenes of sacrificial butchering and meat processing are collected in Gebauer 2002, pp. 296–321, nos. Z1–Z30 (Attic examples); and pp. 324–332, nos. Zv 37–40 (non-Attic examples). The following vases include scenes of sacrificial butchering in which

leg joints appear: Gebauer 2002, nos. Z3, Z5, Z10, Z21, Zv37 (Corinthian), Zv38 (the Ricci hydria, eastern Greek), S3a. In some instances, it is unclear whether the representations depict butchers during a sacrifice, or simply meat sellers or butchers (e.g., Gebauer 2002, pp. 313–314, nos. Z18, Z19, figs. 181, 182); see Sparkes 1995. On the iconography of butchering, see also recently Hermary and Leguilloux 2004, pp. 124–125, nos. 535–544.

40. Rome, Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia, no inv. no. The vessel is from an unknown tomb of the Banditaccia Cemetery at Cerveteri, published in Gilotta 1995.

41. On the identification of priests in vase paintings depicting sacrifice, see Gebauer 2002, pp. 471–478, with bibliography and examples. Gebauer’s iconographic examination suggests that it is not possible to identify a priest solely on the basis of his long tunic. When the figure also holds a knife or a kantharos, however, this identification is more likely (Gebauer 2002, p. 476). On the iconography of priests and priestesses, see also Mantis 1990; *ThesCRA* V, 2005, pp. 3–31, s.v. prêtres et prêtresses (V. Pirenne-Delforge); and Connolly 2007.



Figure 1. Animal carried to sacrifice, youth carrying leg of sacrificial meat, and butcher brandishing knife. Attic red-figure cup, ca. 510–500 B.C. Rome, Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia (no inv. no.). Gebauer 2002, p. 728, fig. 137. Reproduced by permission, Italian Ministry of Culture, Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici dell'Etruria Meridionale

Indeed, a partly preserved dipinto next to him reads H[IEP]EYΣ, securing this identification.

On the other side of the cup, the killing and the butchering of the animal have already taken place. On the left, a youth in a loincloth is shown carrying a leg joint on his shoulder. It is unclear where he is going, but he is probably removing the leg from the butchering site. A partly preserved dipinto next to him, [. . . ΣΤΕΣ], indicates his name. The head of the sacrificed animal lies on the ground between his feet. On the right, another youth in a loincloth brandishes a knife. The knife in his hand and the contorted position of his body indicate that he is a butcher. A dipinto next to him reads HEXEΣYXOΣ. A running youth with a rattle(?) (κρόταλα), presumably a komast in the ensuing feast, is shown in the tondo of the vase. The association of leg joints with the concept of sacrifice is very clear in this instance.

A fragmentary cup by the Epeleios Painter, in Heidelberg and Florence, also depicts different moments of a sacrifice in abbreviated form (Fig. 2).⁴² On the left, a bearded figure in a long tunic, possibly a priest, offers a libation over a fiery altar. To his right, two youths in loincloths carry a large shallow basket containing unidentified objects. One of the youths also carries a small three-handled basket (κονοῦν). To the right appear two more youths, one naked and the other clad in a loincloth, each of whom carries a leg joint on his shoulder. On the far right, a partially preserved

42. Heidelberg, Rupprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg, Antikensammlungen B26 and B77, and Florence, Museo Archeologico Nazionale 151589: Gebauer 2002, p. 736, fig. 167.

Figure 2. Scene of sacrifice, youths carrying legs of sacrificial meat on the right. Attic red-figure cup, ca. 510–500 B.C., Epeleios Painter. Florence, Museo Archeologico Nazionale 151589. Gebauer 2002, p. 736, fig. 167. Drawing by G. Marchi. Reproduced by permission, Italian Ministry of Culture, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Florence



youth brandishes a knife with his right hand in the same way as the youth on the previous cup. He too is to be identified as a butcher.

The figures in loincloths who appear on the two vases must be identified as individuals aiding the priest in the process of sacrifice, including the butchering.⁴³ A loincloth is the appropriate clothing for the laborious chores they perform: butchering animals as well as carrying leg joints, baskets, *kana*, and so forth. It is unclear from the iconography whether the figures should be identified as slaves, professional *mageiroi*, or simply youths charged with the task of helping out in the ritual. The painters of these vases were apparently interested in identifying the tasks of the various individuals, as they have clearly depicted the various steps that are considered significant for the successful completion of the sacrificial butchering.⁴⁴ Furthermore, both painters confirm the association of images of leg joints with the concept of sacrifice.

A decree regulating the priesthood of the priestess of Athena Nike around 448 B.C. prescribes a priestly salary of 50 drachmas along with the legs (*σκέλη*) and the hides of all the public sacrifices (*LSCG* 12, lines A8–11). A fragmentary “sacred law” dated around 430 B.C. is dedicated in part to regulating prerogatives for the priests and priestesses of a series of cults (*LSCG* 11). It indicates how prerogatives varied on the basis of cultic requirements, the kind of animal being sacrificed, and the public or private nature of each sacrifice.⁴⁵ A few examples from this law are worth mentioning. An unnamed priest is allotted the hides from animals that were skinned and one drachma per sacrificed animal (*LSCG* 11, lines B5–6). Further below, a priestess, probably of Athena, is granted the animal’s legs, one drachma, and possibly the animal’s hide in public sacrifices. If an ox was slaughtered in a public sacrifice, she was allotted multiple shares of the meat. At a private sacrifice, the same priestess obtained the hides and the legs from skinned animals, but only the legs from animals whose skin was singed but not removed during the butchering process (*LSCG* 11, lines B10–15).

Along with the leg joints, priests sometimes also received part of the ribs, an ear, or a sausage.⁴⁶ Sometimes priests received multiple shares of meat and not a leg joint, as was the case with the priestess of Athena in *LSCG* 11.⁴⁷ They also often had the right to claim sacrificial meat and other edible offerings deposited on sacrificial tables for the gods.⁴⁸ On the whole, however, the epigraphic evidence suggests that in 5th- and

43. Gebauer 2002, pp. 479–481; van Straten 1995, pp. 168–169.

44. So also Gebauer 2002, pp. 479–481, in his discussion of the representation of the figures who assist in the sacrificial process, including the butchering.

45. The priestly prerogatives are listed on the highly fragmentary face B of the slab, and some of the entries must be restored. However, the repetition of formulaic sentences in the list of prerogatives has led Sokolowski (*LSCG* 11) to a rather secure restoration of the damaged entries.

46. In a 5th-century cult regulation from the deme of Paiania, the priestess gets a leg and part of the ribs from a sacrifice to Hekate (*LSCG Suppl.* 18, lines A34–35).

47. In another case the priest’s prerogative was apparently twice the regular portion of meat, a so-called *dikreas* (*LSCG* 2, lines 3–5, ca. 500–450 B.C.).

48. See Ackermann 2007 for a 4th-century B.C. sacrificial regulation from the deme of Aixone (*LSCG* 28), where the offerings for the gods placed on sacrificial tables are granted to the priests; see also Gill 1974; 1991, esp. pp. 7–19.

4th-century Athens, the main priestly prerogative from the edible parts of a sacrificed animal was the leg joint. Considering that priests obtained legs and other shares of meat from public as well as from private sacrifices, it is clear that they had the capacity to earn significant quantities of meat per year. We can therefore assume that they had easy and consistent access to meat, and that they also profited financially by selling part of the meat and the animal skins awarded to them.⁴⁹

COMPETITIVE AWARDS

Priests were not the only individuals who received leg joints as sacrificial shares. Sacrificial meat, occasionally including leg joints, could also be distributed as an award (*ἀθλον*) in competitions that took place during festivals. A quotation that Athenaeus attributes to the poet-philosopher Xenophanes of Kolophon indicates that leg joints were presented as awards in competitions in Greece in the 6th and 5th centuries B.C.: “Because although you sent only a kid’s ham (*κωλῆ*), you took home a meaty leg of a fatted bull, a mark of honor for the man to whom it falls, whose fame will spread throughout Greece and will never fail, as long as the Greek tribe of bards endures.”⁵⁰ It is unclear whether the winner to whom Xenophanes refers took part in an athletic or musical competition, but his fame, according to the poet, will always be remembered through the songs written for him. At the same time, the passage indicates the relative value of leg joints from different animals: the leg of a bull was valued more than that of a kid because it contained more meat, and perhaps, on a symbolic level, because it came from a stronger animal.

An inscription from Thasos dating to the middle of the 5th century B.C. (*LSCG Suppl.* 63) confirms that there too sacrificial meat was distributed as awards to winners in athletic competitions, although it is not clear what part of the sacrificed animal was given to the winners.

Hellenistic inscriptions from Keos, Kos, and Amorgos show that leg joints or portions of sacrificial meat were given away as *athla* in athletic events, particularly in competitions among the youth.⁵¹ While similar information from Classical Athens is lacking, it is certainly not out of the question that meat was distributed as a reward for excellence to youths participating in the games. Providing victorious athletes in the Panhellenic

49. Such trade would be a practical necessity, especially for priests who amassed large quantities of meat or hides during large sacrificial events. Undoubtedly these priests and priestesses made significant profits. On the value of oxhides, for example, see Jameson 1988, pp. 107–112. The epigraphic record leaves no doubt that there was a precise economic value attached to the priestly shares from sacrificed animals: the priestly *hierosyna* could be given to the priest in kind or in cash. Thus, some inscriptions clarify that instead of receiving part of the sacrificed animal, usually the leg, the

priest could receive a monetary equivalent (e.g., in the sacrificial calendar of the *genos* of the Salaminioi, Lambert 1997, p. 87, lines 35–36). The monetary value of the priestly prerogative varied according to the value of the sacrificial animal as a whole and the value of the specific portion (Lambert 2002, p. 399).

50. Ath. 368f, trans. S. D. Olson, Cambridge, Mass., 2006.

51. Portions of sacrificial meat were given away as awards in children’s competitions in archery and javelin in 3rd-century Keos. The same event included men’s athletic competitions. Victorious men, however, were usually awarded

weapons relevant to the event they competed in, and money (*LSCG* 98, lines 32–33; Golden 1998, p. 112). The sale of the priesthood of Hermes Enagonios at Kos, dated ca. 250–240 B.C., ordains that the left leg of a sacrificial animal be given away as an award to the winner of a children’s torch race (Parker and Obbink 2001, p. 245, no. 6, lines 61–62). In late-2nd-century B.C. Aigiale at Amorgos, the meat of an entire sacrificed ram was dedicated as awards to the victors in men’s and children’s athletic competitions at a festival of a cult founded by a certain Kritolaos (*LSCG Suppl.* 61, lines 74–86).

games with free nourishment at the expense of the polis was a well-known practice in Athens and elsewhere.⁵² The distribution of part of the sacrificial meat to young victors as an award in athletic events was an act that facilitated their incorporation into the community of Athens, and promoted the creation of a civic consciousness already at a tender age.⁵³

REWARDS ON THE BASIS OF OFFICE OR SERVICE

Officials and contributors to the sacrificial ritual other than priests also received part of the sacrificial meat. These individuals generally received portions (μερίδα) of meat that had been cut into roughly equal pieces for the public distributions (κρεανομία).⁵⁴ The inscription regulating the finances and organization of the sacrifices of the Little Panathenaia from ca. 335/4 and 330/29 B.C. (*LSCG* 33 = Rhodes and Osborne 2003, no. 81) and an early-4th-century inscription regulating details of a cult of Asklepios (*LSCG Suppl.* 11) are the main Athenian sources on this subject. According to the Little Panathenaia decree, the *hieropoioi* performed two sacrifices, one for Athena Hygeia and another one in the Old Temple of Athena.

The following magistrates and contributors to the sacrificial ritual benefited from these sacrifices: the *prytaneis*, 50 in number, received five portions each, the nine archons three, the *tamiai* of Athena one, the *hieropoioi* one, and the *stratego*i and the *taxiarchoi* three (Rhodes and Osborne 2003, no. 81, lines B9–14). The Athenians who participated in the procession and the *kanephoroi* obtained the usual portions (κατὰ τὰ εἰωθότα, lines B14–15).⁵⁵ As is often the case with ancient Greek public records, the inscription does not discuss details that were common knowledge, in this case the amount of meat that the participants and the *kanephoroi* received. The Asklepios inscription calls for the meat of the leading ox to be distributed among the *prytaneis*, the nine archons, the *hieropoioi*, and the members of the procession (*LSCG Suppl.* 11, lines 13–16).

DISTRIBUTIONS TO THE PUBLIC

After the allocation of portions to priests, victorious athletes, officials, and other contributors to the sacrificial process, the remaining meat was distributed to the people of Athens. This distribution of meat took place in large open spaces such as agoras or, in the case of the city of Athens, the Kerameikos.⁵⁶

52. The so-called Prytaneion Decree (*IG I²* 77), roughly dated to the time of Perikles, accorded Athenian victors in the Panhellenic games the honor and privilege of dining for free for life in the Prytaneion (lines 11–15), an honor shared only by a select group of people. On the Prytaneion Decree, see Thompson 1971, with previous bibliography; on dining at the Prytaneion, see Schmitt Pantel 1992, pp. 147–168.

53. Osborne 1987, p. 181. For boy athletes and victors generally, see Golden 1998, pp. 104–112; at Olympia,

see Kondoleon 2004, p. 40.

54. *LSCG Suppl.* 19, line 41 (μερίδα); *LSCG* 33, line 25 (κρεανομία). The term δεισία appears once in the inscriptions and apparently also means a portion (*LSCG* 28, line 10).

55. The word κωνηφόρος is a commonly accepted restoration in the text of the Little Panathenaia decree; cf. *LSCG* 33, line B15. See Rhodes and Osborne 2003, no. 81, line B15.

56. Thus, the decree of the deme of Skambonidai (*LSCG* 10, ca. 460 B.C.) calls for a distribution of sacrificial

meat during the Panathenaia and the Diipoleia in the agora of the deme (lines A15–21). If the restoration of the word “Kerameikos” is correct in the Little Panathenaia decree, then it appears that in the second half of the 4th century B.C., the Kerameikos was a location commonly used for meat distributions in large-scale state sacrifices (“the meat will be distributed to the people of Athens at the Kerameikos, as in the other meat distributions”; Rhodes and Osborne 2003, no. 81, lines B24–25).

The meat could be distributed either raw or cooked. It is unclear what the standard practice was, since most Athenian regulations do not explicitly call for one or the other. In the few cases where the condition of the meat is specified, Athenian decrees call for the distribution of raw meat.⁵⁷ When the meat was distributed cooked, it was probably boiled and not grilled.⁵⁸ During the interval between the slaughter of the animals and the distribution of meat, the choice portions destined for the priests and other officials were removed, along with the viscera that would be roasted, and then the carcasses were butchered. It appears that, in some instances, meat distribution was separated from the slaughtering by as much as two days.⁵⁹ Such an arrangement may have allowed the meat to age and become tender, and it may also have made it easier to accommodate large crowds at the site of distribution; during large-scale sacrifices, it may have been impractical for large crowds to gather inside the sanctuary.⁶⁰

The meat distributed to the public was cut into more or less equal portions, but there is little information about their size. Indeed, if the cuts were all approximately the same size, they were probably not equal in terms of quality.⁶¹ It is likely to have been common knowledge that the portions of meat distributed to the people should be equal in size.⁶² In some instances, the size of the portion was apparently determined by weight.⁶³ Of course, the size of the portions may have varied significantly through time and in different places, according to economic fluctuations and the purchasing ability of the institution responsible for acquiring the sacrificial animals.⁶⁴ The conversion of sacrificed animals into equal portions of meat eliminated potential disputes, while at the same time reinforcing the egalitarian ideology of the polis.⁶⁵

It is generally accepted that the meat produced in large-scale state sacrifices was distributed to the male citizens of Athens, who in turn shared it with their families. In some cases, however, noncitizens also directly obtained shares of sacrificial meat; according to the epigraphic record, meat

57. *LSCG* 10, lines C18–19, ca. 460 B.C. (law of the deme of Skambonidai); *LSCG* 13, lines 25–26, 421/20 B.C. (state law on the Hephais-teia); Lambert 1997, p. 86, lines 23–24, ca. 363/2 B.C. (law of the *genos* of the Salaminioi).

58. Ekroth 2008a, pp. 274–276.

59. See, e.g., *IG* II² 1183, lines 32–35 = Rhodes and Osborne 2003, no. 63, lines 32–35.

60. Ekroth 2008a, pp. 277–279.

61. On this issue, see Ekroth 2008a, pp. 270–272.

62. The regulation of the deme of Skambonidai is an exception in explicitly decreeing equal shares (véμειν δὲ ἐς ἴσον πάντα; *LSCG* 10, line C12).

63. A 3rd-century B.C. inscription from Keos regulates the distribution of raw meat to the participants of a festival on the basis of weight (*LSCG* 98,

lines 11–14). A regulation of a cult of Apollo from Athens dated ca. 430 B.C. decrees that the *epistatai* who distribute meat to the citizens should themselves receive meat weighing up to two minae (*LSCG Suppl.* 8, lines 12–14).

64. Compare the estimates of the size of portions made by Rhodes and Osborne on the basis of two 4th-century Athenian inscriptions: on the basis of an inscription from the third quarter of the 4th century B.C. (*IG* II² 1183, lines 32–35 = Rhodes and Osborne 2003, no. 63, lines 32–35), most likely from the small Athenian deme of Hagnous, they calculated that the 500 drachmas allotted for the sacrifices would purchase 500–700 kg of meat, yielding a portion of approximately 2 kg of meat for each citizen of Hagnous. In the case of the Little Panathenaia decree (*LSCG* 33 = Rhodes and

Osborne 2003, no. 81), they calculated that 41 minae would buy 50 oxen yielding 5,000–6,000 kg of meat for the sacrifices at the altars of Athena and of Athena Nike. This would allow 20,000 people to obtain 275 g of meat each (Rhodes and Osborne 2003, p. 403).

65. On the influence of the model of *isonomia* on the equal distribution of meat, see Berthiaume 1982, p. 50. Detienne (1989a, p. 13) and Schmitt Pantel (1992, pp. 45–52) correlate the equal distribution of meat with equality before the law in a democratic system. This concept was clearly articulated by Loraux (1981, p. 620): “manger à parts égales, c’est produire et reproduire l’égalité politique.” For discussion of the principles of meat division and distribution in Greek sacrifice and their relationship to the concept of equality, see also Ekroth 2008a, pp. 282–284.

was distributed to metics on various occasions.⁶⁶ Furthermore, women sometimes received portions of the sacrificial meat.⁶⁷ The question of whether women received shares of meat directly deserves further discussion here, because several of the images in the catalogue (21, 22, 24, 25, 38) depict a woman holding a leg joint or offering one to a man.

Until recently, women's ability to directly obtain sacrificial meat has been underestimated.⁶⁸ Women were generally present at public sacrifices during festivals of the state and the demes, and they were also the exclusive participants in numerous women's rituals that included sacrifices (e.g., the Thesmophoria). Further, considering their strong and varied roles in religious ritual and their regular participation in sacrificial ritual, it should be assumed that as a rule they had ample opportunity to benefit directly from meat distributions, and that only in particular cases did they not receive meat directly.⁶⁹

To sum up, the epigraphic record of distributions of sacrificial meat in Athens during the 5th and 4th centuries attests that among the edible parts of the sacrificed animal, the leg joint was the principal priestly prerogative. Literary and later epigraphic evidence outside of Athens suggests that leg joints were also distributed as awards to victorious athletes. Honorary shares from sacrificial victims, usually in the form of multiple portions of meat, were also awarded to city officials as well as to individuals who played significant roles in the sacrificial ritual. The remaining members of the polis obtained shares of meat that were more or less equal in weight.

66. In the regulation of the deme of Skambonidai (*LSCG* 10, ca. 460 B.C.), for instance, it is emphasized that the metics should also obtain meat (lines C7–9), which is to be distributed in equal parts (line C12). The cult regulation for the Hephaisteia (421/20 B.C.), a state festival of Athens, decrees that an entire ox should be reserved for the metics (*LSCG* 13, lines 25–26).

67. According to the 4th-century sacrificial calendar of the deme of Erchia (*LSCG* 18, 400–350 B.C.), women obtained an entire sacrificial animal and consumed it in the sanctuary on two occasions: at a sacrifice to Semele (lines A45–51) and at a sacrifice to Dionysos (lines D35–40).

68. The view that women did not receive sacrificial meat was most forcefully expressed by Detienne (1989b). He pointed to the fact that women did not have the political rights of male citizens and suggested that they also were “kept apart from the altars, meat and blood” (Detienne 1989b, p. 131). That this was clearly not so is borne out by literary sources and archaeological evidence; see Kron 1992, esp. pp. 640–642. Detienne's argument has

been convincingly rebutted in Osborne 1993 (repr. in Osborne 2000). On women and religion in general, see Blundell and Williamson 1998; Dillon 2001. On women's ritual practice, see Goff 2004; and Connelly 2007, particularly on Greek priestesses. On women's roles in sacrificial rituals, see Goff 2004, pp. 42–43. On representations of women in ritual actions on Attic vases, see Lewis 2002, pp. 43–54. On the visual evidence for women and sacrifice, see Gebauer 2002, pp. 482–486.

69. The epigraphic record offers evidence on the inclusion and exclusion of women from sacrifices, cult activities, and meat distributions (Osborne 1993, p. 397; see the collection in Dillon 2001, pp. 237–239, 243–244). Interestingly, the expressions used in most inscriptions to describe the distribution of meat to the people elude exact interpretation. For instance, a regulation from an Athenian deme (possibly Hagnous) describes in rather broad terms the recipients of the sacrificial meat as “the ones present, the ones who join the meeting and the ones who join in offering security” (*IG* II² 1183 = Rhodes and Osborne 2003, no. 63,

lines 34–35). I suggest that this class probably included women, who would have participated in the sacrifice as members of the procession and may also have performed more specific functions (e.g., as *kanephoroi*). In the Panathenaia, meat from the sacrifices to Athena Polias and Athena Nike was distributed to the members of the procession provided by each deme (*LSCG* 33 = Rhodes and Osborne 2003, no. 81, lines B25–27). Women certainly participated in the Panathenaic procession as *kanephoroi*, but it is unclear whether they participated in the procession in other capacities. It is likely that they did, since the culmination of the procession was the presentation to the goddess of the new peplos woven by the *ergastinai*, girl-weavers from aristocratic families, and considering that the Panathenaia was a festival aimed at strengthening the fabric of the city as a whole. If indeed it is established that women participated in the procession as delegates of their demes, it follows that they directly received meat in the *kreanomiai*. On women's roles in the Panathenaia, see Lefkowitz 1996.

Thus, the system of public sacrifices brought people together by creating a community that shared the sacrificial meat.⁷⁰ This community was not limited to the citizens of the state of Athens but included women and occasionally metics. Meat distributions benefited the wider community while maintaining social, religious, and other hierarchies. The system of sacrifices in Athens honored the gods, glorified the state, reinforced the political and social status of certain individuals, and ultimately benefited all the members of the community.

LEG JOINTS IN NONSACRIFICIAL CONTEXTS: DISCUSSION AND CATALOGUE

I turn now to a catalogue of 54 vases that depict leg joints in contexts other than sacrificial butchering. It is intended as a list of examples rather than an exhaustive compilation; representative scenes are illustrated.⁷¹ All vases are red-figure except for two black-figure examples (34, 50). Most can safely be dated to the first half of the 5th century B.C., primarily in the first 30 years; only a few pieces date to the last quarter of the 6th century.⁷² More than half (about 60%) are drinking vessels, predominantly cups; the remainder comprise an assortment of shapes. I have classified the vases in four primary groups⁷³ on the basis of their iconography: (A) multiple human figures and leg joints; (B) single human figures and leg joints; (C) suspended leg joints; and (D) Eros figures and leg joints.

Group A (1–27), the largest group, includes a little more than half of the corpus. It is characterized by vase paintings in which leg joints feature in scenes of social interaction among men (A1: 1–17) or men and women (A2: 18–27). In most cases, an individual offers a leg joint as a gift. In subgroup A1, boys, youths, and bearded men give away or receive a leg joint usually, but not always, as an erotic gift (e.g., 2–4). Such encounters often occur in a public space, such as the gymnasium, although the setting is not always indicated by the painters.⁷⁴

Typical of vases in subgroup A1 are scenes such as the one depicted on a cup by the Briseis Painter in the Bowdoin College museum (2; Fig. 3). On one exterior side, two youths apparently compete for the affection of a third. The pursued is covered in his himation from top to bottom, and one of the youths offers him a leg joint. A small fragment of a cup by the Boot Painter depicts a leg joint being handed to a seated youth (5; Fig. 4). It is not clear whether sexual overtones were intended by Makron in the tondo of a cup now in the British Museum (7; Fig. 5), which shows a

70. Schmitt Pantel 1992, p. 10. On the various functions of feasting, including creating alliances and uniting social groups, see Hayden 2001.

71. The catalogue is the result of research in the Beazley Archive, in *ARI*, and in the books and articles mentioned in the bibliography.

72. I have cited dates for the vases according to published sources. The

dates are approximate, however, since numerous examples in the catalogue were purchased on the antiquities market, and those that have a provenance are not accompanied by a published archaeological context.

73. Two additional groups included in the catalogue consist of vases whose fragmentary condition discourages analysis (group E, 50, 51), and vases on

which leg joints cannot be securely identified (group F, 52–54).

74. The gymnasium was a well-known place for erotic encounters, homosexual and pederastic in particular. Cf. Aristophanes' mostly disapproving comments in *Nub.* 973–980; *Av.* 139–142; *Pax* 762–766; *Vesp.* 1023–1028. On Eros in the gymnasium, see Scanlon 2002.

naked boy bringing a leg joint and bread to a seated, bearded figure. Makron decorated a series of cups (6–9) with similar tondos, which are combined with representations of symposia and gymnasium life on the exterior of the cups.

On the vases in subgroup A2, women participate in scenes of gift giving, either offering or receiving a leg joint.⁷⁵ On a cup by the Briseis Painter in Tarquinia (19; Fig. 6), four mixed couples are shown engaged in conversation or gift exchange. One woman offers a man a fruit and receives a leg joint in return.⁷⁶ In a few cases a woman offers a leg joint to a man, as on one exterior side of a cup by the Painter of Brussels R330 in Erlangen (21; Fig. 7).⁷⁷ Its tondo is decorated with a youth and a young woman facing each other, while the other exterior side features a Nike between two men. The phallic shape of the ornamental lotus flowers that frame the gift-giving scene suggests that the leg joint is offered to the youth as an erotic gift.⁷⁸

The vases in group B (28–38) feature solitary figures holding a leg joint. For example, on a lekythos of the PL Class in the British Museum (28; Fig. 8), a bearded man in a himation leans on a staff while holding a leg joint in his extended right hand. It appears that the figure is about to offer the meat to someone, but this is the only decoration on the vase. On a palmette eye cup by Oltos, a youth wearing a loincloth and wreath carries a leg joint on his back (30; Fig. 9:b). In other instances, Oltos combines a tondo depicting a youthful figure running and carrying a leg joint (32; Fig. 10), with exteriors showing scenes of mythical bravery. The examples collected here (32, 33) pair the deeds of Herakles on one side with the gods fighting the giants on the other.⁷⁹

The function of the leg joint as a meaningful sign in and of itself is underscored by the examples in group C (39–42). In the scenes on these vases, a leg joint is simply suspended in the background, in the same way that objects of daily use such as bags, vessels, or writing tablets are often depicted. An oinochoe by an artist in the manner of the Brygos Painter in Hamburg (41; Fig. 11) depicts a leg joint in the background, between two seated men and a standing youth who holds a pipe case. The tablet hanging

75. The exchange of gifts between men and women is often depicted on Attic red-figure vases. In some cases erotic overtones are clearly discernible in the exchange. See Lewis 2002, pp. 185–194, with previous bibliography.

76. Fruit is a common erotic gift in scenes of heterosexual courtship; for examples and discussion, see Lewis 2002, pp. 185–194. Apples in particular were believed to possess magical and erotic powers, and were associated with marriage. Fruits, usually apples, were thrown at or offered to persons whose erotic attention one desired. See Raab 1972, p. 52, and more extensively Faraone 1999, pp. 69–78.

77. On the significance of women's active participation in gift giving in an erotic context, see Lewis 2002, pp. 187–193. Lewis accurately observes the angst this active participation has caused scholars because it contrasts sharply with the literary sources. Perceiving these images as direct reflections of reality, scholars have had the tendency to interpret the women as prostitutes or *hetairai*. As Lewis explains, however, recent scholarship has redescribed the images as complex painted statements about social relationships, including erotic relationships, and courtship. Vase painters, and obviously their patrons, must have had good reasons to imagine women as active

participants in courtship. Ferrari (2002, pp. 12–34, esp. pp. 12–17) extensively discusses this issue with respect to the figure of the female spinner in scenes of male–female interaction. Spinners in such scenes have usually been interpreted as *hetairai*, but in light of the combined evidence of literary sources and vase paintings, such scenes should be understood as statements about feminine virtue.

78. On the erotic symbolism of the “phallic” lotus flower in vase painting, see Koch-Harnack 1989, pp. 72–89.

79. On 31 Herakles is paired with a solitary Hermes.



in the background and the pipes in the youth's hand suggest the gymnasium as the context for this scene. A fragmentary cup in the Hermitage (42; Fig. 12) is unusual in depicting not only a suspended leg joint but a woman apparently placing a piece of meat on a spit.

Subgroups D1 (43–47) and D2 (48, 49) comprise seven vases decorated with Eros carrying a leg joint. In subgroup D1, Eros appears alone, often on lekythoi, while on the two vases in subgroup D2, Eros is represented in multifigural scenes. This small group of vases establishes a thematic association between love or desire and leg joints. At least one of the two multifigural scenes with Erotes may be taking place at a gymnasium (48), as suggested by the flutist and singer depicted on the other side of the vase.⁸⁰

GROUP A: MULTIPLE FIGURES AND LEG JOINTS

A1: MEN ONLY

1 Volute krater

Ferrara, Museo Archeologico Nazionale T381. *CVA*, Ferrara 1 [Italy 37], pls. 3, 4 [1647, 1648]; *ARV*² 589, no. 3; *Paralipomena* 393; *Beazley Addenda*² 129. H. 0.50, Diam. 0.38 m.

A, neck: Victorious kitharode. A, body: Zeus handing infant Dionysos to nurses. B, neck: Men and youth, possibly at gymnasium; one man hands the youth a leg joint. B, body: Athletes with halteres and javelins, flute player in center.

Altamura Painter, ca. 475–450 B.C. (Beazley Archive).

2 Cup

Fig. 3

Brunswick, Bowdoin College Museum of Art 1920.2. *ARV*² 407, no. 22; *Paralipomena* 371; *Beazley Addenda*² 232; Koch-Harnack 1983, pp. 135, 254, no. 100, fig. 67; Gebauer 2002, p. 553, no. Zv58.

No dimensions available.

A: Two youths with staffs courting a third youth between them. The youth

Figure 3. Scene of erotic pursuit: youth offering a leg joint to another. Attic red-figure cup (2), ca. 480–470 B.C., Briseis Painter. Brunswick, Maine, Bowdoin College Museum of Art 1920.2. Photo courtesy Bowdoin College Museum of Art

80. It has been suggested that the proliferation of representations of Eros on red-figure vases of the first half of the 5th century B.C. should be correlated with the Archaic homoerotic ethos of the Peisistratids (Shapiro 1989, pp. 119–120, 122–124). It was during the second half of the 6th century B.C. that the cult of Eros was institutionalized: a certain Charmos (Paus. 1.30.1), apparently an *erastes* of the tyrant Hippias (Kleidemos *apud* Athenaeus, 13.609d), dedicated an altar to the god in the Academy.

on the left offers a leg joint to the middle youth. Column between middle and right youth. B: Two youths courting a third youth between them. The youth on the right offers a bag to the middle youth. Column and pipe case in the background. I: Youth with staff; sponge, aryballos, and strigil suspended.

Briseis Painter, ca. 480–470 B.C. (Gebauer).

3 Cup

Dunedin (N.Z.), Otago Museum 39.107. *ARV*² 893, no. 24; *JHS* 71, 1951, p. 187, no. 79, fig. 6:a, b (A. D. Trendall).

No dimensions available.

A: Two youths court a youth seated in the center. The youth on the right offers a leg joint; the youth on the left offers a pouch. A shield hangs in the background. B: A seated youth with a writing case gestures to a youth on the left. A third youth with a pouch stands to the right. I: Two himation-clad youths face each other; outcrop of rock to the right. Dipinto: ΗΟΠΑΙΣΚΑΛΟΣ.

Splachnoptes Painter, ca. 475–425 B.C. (Beazley Archive).

4 Cup

Once in the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome; now lost. Koch-Harnack 1983, p. 254, no. 101; Gebauer 2002, p. 554, no. Zv60.

H. 0.10, Diam. 0.24 m.

A: Men courting youth; one offers a leg joint. B: Female figure (Nike?) between two men. I: Young warrior with helmet, shield, and spear.

Ca. 480–470 B.C. (Gebauer).



Figure 4. Leg joint offered to youth. Attic red-figure cup fragment (5), ca. 450 B.C., Boot Painter. Parma, Museo Nazionale di Antichità C59. *CVA*, Parma 1 [Italy 45], (I) III I, pl. 10 [2030]:1. Reproduced by permission, Italian Ministry of Culture

5 Cup fragment

Fig. 4

Parma, Museo Nazionale di Antichità C59. *CVA*, Parma 1 [Italy 45], (I) III I, pl. 10 [2030]:1; Gebauer 2002, p. 559, no. Zv87.

H. 0.037, W. 0.047 m.

Hand (figure not preserved) offering a leg joint to a seated, himation-covered youth.

Boot Painter, ca. 450 B.C. (Gebauer).

6 Cup fragment

New York, private collection. Kunisch 1997, p. 166, no. 49, pl. 22:49; Gebauer 2002, p. 552, no. Zv50.

H. 0.064, W. 0.04 m.

I: Draped man seated with staff, youth with leg joint.

Makron, ca. 490–480 B.C. (Gebauer).

7 Cup

Fig. 5

London, British Museum 1843.11-3.44 (E62). *ARV*² 471, no. 194; *CVA*, London 9 [Great Britain 17], pp. 51–52, pls. 52 [828], 53 [829]:A, B; van Straten 1995, p. 236, no. V228, fig. 162; Kunisch 1997, p. 67, fig. 30, pl. 78:234; Gebauer 2002, p. 551, no. Zv49, fig. 206; Hermary and Leguilloux 2004, p. 125, no. 546c.

H. 0.137, Diam. 0.332 m (including handles, 0.411 m).

A: Draped men seated with hare and sprig; youth seated with staff; aryballos, bag, sponges, and strigils suspended. B: Draped men with staffs and sprigs, some seated; sponges, strigils, and aryballoi suspended. I: Seated bearded man with staff; on the right, a naked youth offers the seated figure a tray with bread and a leg joint.

Makron, ca. 490–480 B.C. (Gebauer).



Figure 5. Boy offering leg joint and bread to seated man. Attic red-figure cup (7), ca. 490–480 B.C., Makron. London, British Museum 1843.11-3.44 (E62). Photo © Trustees of the British Museum

8 Cup

Switzerland, private collection. Kunisch 1997, p. 217, no. 533/2, pl. 174:533/2; Gebauer 2002, p. 552, no. Zv52.

H. 0.127, Diam. 0.332 m (including handles, 0.417 m).

A: Three pairs: men and women. B: Three pairs: youths and women. I: Draped man seated on chair with staff, youth with leg joint and bowl of food.

Makron, ca. 480 B.C. (Gebauer).

9 Cup

Toronto, private collection (E. Borowski); and Florence, Museo Archeologico Nazionale PD 317. *ARV*² 467, no. 120; Kunisch 1997, p. 165, no. 47, pl. 21:47; Gebauer 2002, p. 551, no. Zv48, fig. 205; Hermary and Leguilloux 2004, p. 125, no. 546b.

H. 0.138, Diam. 0.332 m (including handles, 0.439 m).

A, B: Symposium. I: Boy holding leg joint in left hand and offering bread to seated figure.

Makron, ca. 490–480 B.C. (Gebauer).

10 Calyx krater

Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum 1102. *ARV*² 504, no. 5; *Beazley Addenda*² 252; Koch-Harnack 1983, p. 254, no. 102; *CVA*, Vienna 3 [Austria 3], III I, pl. 101:3, 4.

H. 0.333, Diam. 0.32 m.

A: A bearded man with a staff hands a leg joint to a naked boy holding a hoop. Nonsense graffiti appears between the heads. B: On the left, a youth with a staff.

Aigisthos Painter, ca. 460 B.C. (*CVA*).

11 Oinochoe

Munich, Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek 2449, from Vulci. *ARV*² 507, no. 31; *CVA*, Munich 2 [Germany 6], pls. 85 [281]:1, 86 [282]:4, 5; Gebauer 2002, p. 554, no. *Zv*63.

H. 0.295 m.

Draped man leaning on staff; he stretches his right arm out to a naked youth in front of him, who is holding a leg joint.

Aigisthos Painter, ca. 470 B.C. (Gebauer).

12 Skyphos

Laon, Musée Archéologique Municipal 37.1034, from Eretria. *ARV*² 832, no. 32; Koch-Harnack 1983, p. 254, no. 103, figs. 69, 70; *CVA*, Laon 1 [France 20], III I, pl. 51 [923]:5, 6; Gebauer 2002, p. 556, no. *Zv*73.

H. 0.122, Diam. 0.153 m (including handles, 0.228 m).

A: On the left, a bearded man leans on his staff in three-quarter rear view. B: On the right, a youth, holding a staff in his left hand, offers a leg joint in his extended right hand.

Amphitrite Painter, ca. 460 B.C. (Gebauer).

13 Pelike

Boulogne, Musée Communale 134. *ARV*² 293, no. 47; *Beazley Addenda*² 211; Koch-Harnack 1983, p. 109, fig. 44(A); van Straten 1995, p. 235, no. V221; Gebauer 2002, p. 553, no. *Zv*55.

No dimensions available.

A: On the left, a youth with a staff and a feline on a leash offers a rooster to a boy on the right; a dog is seated to the right. B: Man leaning on staff, with a hare in his left hand, extends his right hand toward a youth who is running away; the youth bears a leg joint and a platter of bread.

Tyszkiewicz Painter, ca. 480 B.C. (Gebauer).

14 Skyphos

Bari, Museo Archeologico Provinciale 3075. *ARV*² 976, no. 5.

No dimensions available.

A: A running man bearing a leg joint looks back. Dipinto: ΚΑΛΟΣ. B: Draped youth; in the background, a strigil, sponge, and aryballos appear in front of him. A column stands on the right.

Zephyros Painter, ca. 475–425 B.C. (Beazley Archive).

15 Cup

Warsaw, National Museum 142312. *ARV*² 830, no. 3; *Beazley Addenda*² 295; *CVA*, Goluchow [Poland 1], pl. 37 [37]:2a–c; Gebauer 2002, p. 556, no. *Zv*72.

H. 0.095, Diam. 0.24 m (including handles, 0.31 m).

A: Two youths and a man who stands to the right and offers the youths a leg joint. B: Two youths and a man standing to the left. I: Youth covered with a mantle.

Amphitrite Painter, ca. 460 B.C. (Gebauer).

16 Neck amphora

Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 10.184, from Nola. *ARV*² 553, no. 39; *Beazley Addenda*² 258; van Straten 1995, p. 235, no. V220, fig. 160; Gebauer 2002, p. 553, no. *Zv*57; Hermay and Leguilloux 2004, p. 125, no. 547a.

No dimensions available.

A: Zeus with scepter runs to the right in pursuit of Ganymede with hoop.
 B: Draped youth with wreath and leg joint runs to the right, looking back.
 Pan Painter, ca. 480–470 B.C. (Gebauer).

17 Neck amphora

Kassel, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung T820. Koch-Harnack 1983, p. 233, fig. 115:A, B; Yfantidis 1990, p. 200, no. 144; Gebauer 2002, p. 550, no. Zv44 (mistakenly listed as Basel, Kunsthandel 1980).

H. 0.47, Diam. foot 0.28, Diam. rim 0.19 m.

A: Hermes with kerykeion, looking back. B: Naked youth running, looking back; he holds a large round object (a discus?) in his left arm, and holds an animal leg in his right hand.

Ca. 520/510 B.C. (Yfantidis).

A2: MEN AND WOMEN

18 Fragmentary cup

Florence, Museo Archeologico Nazionale 20B63. *CVA*, Florence 1 [Italy 8], III I, pl. 20 [395]:bottom right section; Gebauer 2002, p. 558, no. Zv83.

No dimensions available.

A: Draped youths, one with leg joint, one leaning on staff; woman. B: Draped youth.

Painter of Bologna 417, ca. 450 B.C. (Gebauer).

19 Cup

Fig. 6

Tarquinia, Museo Archeologico Nazionale RC703. *ARV*² 408, no. 32; *CVA*, Tarquinia 1 [Italy 25], III I, pl. 8 [1160]:1–3; Koch-Harnack 1983, p. 134, n. 283; Gebauer 2002, p. 554, no. Zv61.

H. 0.115, Diam. 0.265 m.

A: Two couples. To the left, a youth offers a bag to a seated woman. To the right, a bearded man with a staff converses with a woman. Mirror and fishbone pattern in the background. B: Two couples. To the left, a woman offers a fruit to a bearded man, who offers a leg joint in return. To the right, a woman holds a round object and faces a man leaning on a staff. Fishbone pattern between them. A stool under each handle. Stool and aryballos hanging between the two couples. I: A youth with a staff stands before a youth covered in a himation and seated on a rock.

Briseis Painter, ca. 470 B.C. (Gebauer).

20 Cup

Osaka, Oka Collection 13. *ARV*² 892, no. 8; *Beazley Addenda*² 303; Koch-Harnack 1983, pp. 134, 254, no. 97; *CVA*, Japan 2, III I, pls. 32 [82], 33 [83]:1–3; Gebauer 2002, p. 557, no. Zv76.

H. 0.182, Diam. 0.391 m (including handles, 0.40 m).

A: Three couples. To the left, a woman with a mirror touching a youth. In the middle and right, two couples conversing. B: Three couples. To the left, youth handing woman a pouch. In the middle, youth handing woman a leg joint. To the right, woman and man conversing. In the background: shoe, pipe case, mantle. I: Winged woman grasping naked youth by wrist (Eos and Tithonos?).

Splachnoptes Painter, ca. 460–450 B.C. (Gebauer).

21 Cup

Fig. 7

Erlangen, Friedrich-Alexander-Universität M1291. *ARV*² 925, no. 9; 1674. No dimensions available.

Figure 6 (*opposite, top*). Erotic pursuit: man offering woman a leg joint. Attic red-figure cup (19), ca. 470 B.C., Briseis Painter. Tarquinia, Museo Archeologico Nazionale RC703. *CVA*, Tarquinia 1 [Italy 25], III I, pl. 8 [1160]:2. Reproduced by permission, Italian Ministry of Culture, Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici dell'Etruria Meridionale

Figure 7 (*opposite, bottom*). Woman offering leg joint to youth. Attic red-figure cup (21), ca. 480–450 B.C., Painter of Brussels R330. Erlangen, Friedrich-Alexander-Universität, Antikensammlung M1291. Photo courtesy Friedrich-Alexander-Universität, Antikensammlung, Erlangen



A: Nike between draped youths with staffs. B: Woman with leg joint, between draped youths with staffs; wreath(?) and fillet suspended. I: Youth and woman facing each other; bag suspended.

Painter of Brussels R330, ca. 480–450 B.C. (*ARV*²).

22 Cup fragments

Florence, Museo Archeologico Nazionale 17B28. *ARV*² 927, no. 32; *CVA*, Florence 1 [Italy 8], III I, pl. 18 [393]:330; Gebauer 2002, p. 558, no. Zv82 (mistakenly listed as 18B21).

No dimensions available.

Nike; draped youths, one with staff; women, one with leg joint.

Painter of Brussels R330, ca. 450 B.C. (Gebauer).

23 Kalpis

Rhodes, Archaeological Museum 13261, from Kamiros. *CVA*, Rhodes 2 [Italy 10], III Ic, pl. 5 [502]:3; Gebauer 2002, p. 556, no. Zv69.

H. 0.29, Diam. rim 0.09 m.

Four women working wool. Two men approaching, one on the left and one on the right; the man on the left is holding a leg joint.

Ca. 470–460 B.C. (Gebauer).

24 Cup, fragmentary

Palermo, Museo Archeologico V661, from Chiusi. *CVA*, Palermo 1 [Italy 14], III Ic, pls. 11 [668]:2, 3; 12 [669]; Gebauer 2002, p. 558, no. Zv80.

H. 0.11, Diam. 0.285 m.

A, B: Youths and women conversing and courting in interior space (indicated by columns, stools, and a hanging mirror). One woman offers leg joint to youth. Youth offers young woman a sash. I: Two youths conversing.

Ca. 460 B.C. (Gebauer).

25 Cup

Rome, Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia 50633. Koch-Harnack 1983, p. 134, n. 283; p. 140, n. 288; *ARV*² 912, no. 87; 926, no. 18; *Beazley Addenda*² 305–306; Gebauer 2002, p. 558, no. Zv81.

No dimensions available.

A, B: Men courting women. On side B, a woman holds a leg joint. I: Reclining man and standing woman.

Painter of Bologna 417 (interior), Painter of Brussels 330 (exterior), ca. 450 B.C. (Gebauer).

26 Rhyton

Paris, Petit Palais 374, possibly from Nola. *ARV*² 917, no. 194; Koch-Harnack 1983, p. 134, n. 283; *CVA*, Paris, Petit Palais [France 15], pl. 29 [669]:4–6; Gebauer 2002, p. 558, no. Zv84.

L. 0.165 m.

A woman between two men; the man on the left holds a leg joint.

Painter of Bologna 417, ca. 450 B.C. (Gebauer).

27 Pelike

Rome, art market. Koch-Harnack 1989, p. 82, fig. 66:a, b; Lissarrague 1992, p. 212, fig. 49; Gebauer 2002, p. 551, no. Zv47.

No dimensions available.

A: Draped man with a leg joint. B: Woman with lotus-volute sprig.

Ca. 490 B.C. (Gebauer).

Figure 8. Man holding leg joint. Attic red-figure lekythos (28), ca. 460 B.C., PL Class. London, British Museum 1928.1-17.60. Photo © Trustees of the British Museum



GROUP B: SINGLE FIGURES AND LEG JOINTS

28 Lekythos

Fig. 8

London, British Museum 1928.1-17.60. *ARV*² 660, no. 68; van Straten 1995, p. 236, no. V229; Gebauer 2002, p. 557, no. Zv74.

No dimensions available.

Draped man with wreath, leaning on staff, holding leg joint in extended hand.

PL Class, ca. 460 B.C. (Gebauer).

29 Cup

Bologna, Museo Civico Archeologico 366, from Bologna, the Etruscan cemetery of Certosa, tomb 6. *Paralipomena* 372; *Beazley Addenda*² 233; *CVA*, Bologna 1 [Italy 5], III Ic, pl. 7 [204]:1-3; Koch-Harnack 1983, p. 255, no. 110, fig. 73; van Straten 1995, p. 234, no. V218; Gebauer 2002, p. 553, no. Zv56.

H. 0.094, Diam. 0.225 m.

A: Three bulls (cattle?), leafless trees in background. B: Mules copulating. Man on the left, leafless tree in the background. I: Draped youth with leg joint, deep mortar(?) to the left.

Dokimasia Painter, ca. 470 B.C. (Gebauer).

30 Palmette eye cup

Fig. 9

Providence, Rhode Island School of Design, Museum of Art 25.076. *ARV*² 57, no. 44; 467; *CVA*, Providence [USA 2], pl. 13 [66]; Berthiaume 1982, p. 49, pl. 9:1; van Straten 1995, p. 237, no. V233; Gebauer 2002, p. 303, no. Z6.

H. as restored 0.13, D. of bowl 0.07, Diam. 0.332 m (including handles, 0.41 m).

A: Naked athlete with wreath pouring oil from aryballos (Fig. 9:a). B: Youth in loincloth and wreath carrying a leg joint on his back (Fig. 9:b). I: Warrior with horse (Fig. 9:c).

Oltos, ca. 510–500 B.C. (Gebauer).

31 Cup

Paris, Musée du Louvre Camp. 968 (G17). *ARV*² 62, no. 83; *Paralipomena* 327; *Beazley Addenda*² 165; *CVA*, Paris 10 [France 17], III Ib, pls. 5, 6 [759, 760]; Gebauer 2002, p. 550, no. Zv42.

H. 0.165, Diam. 0.44 m (including handles 0.535 m).

A: Herakles bringing the Erymanthian boar to Eurystheus. B: Hermes before a quadriga. Dipinto: MEM[NOO]NKA[ΛΟΣ]. I: A naked youth running to the right and holding a leg joint and a lyre. Dipinto: MEMNOON.

Oltos, ca. 510 B.C. (Gebauer).

32 Cup

Fig. 10

London, British Museum E8. *ARV*² 63, no. 88; *Beazley Addenda* 81; *Beazley Addenda*² 165; van Straten 1995, p. 236, no. V227; Gebauer 2002, p. 550, no. Zv43.

No dimensions available.

A: Herakles fighting with Kyknos, who is falling. Ares and woman behind Kyknos. Athena and woman behind Herakles. B: Dionysos fighting with a giant in the center; horse and warrior near each handle. I: Naked youth running while holding leg joint and lyre.

Oltos, ca. 510 B.C. (Gebauer).

33 Cup

Bologna, Museo Civico Archeologico 361, from Bologna, the Etruscan cemetery of Fondo de Luca, tomb no. 8. *ARV*² 65, no. 113; *Beazley Addenda*² 166; *CVA*, Bologna 1 [Italy 5], III Ic, pls. 1 [198]:3, 3 [200]; van Straten 1995, p. 234, no. V217; Gebauer 2002, p. 550, no. Zv41.

H. 0.10, Diam. 0.29 m.

A: Herakles fighting with Nemean lion between Iolaus and a youth. B: Peleus and Atalanta fighting between two Pegasoi. I: Naked youth running with lyre and leg joint. Dipinto: ΚΑΛΟΣ.

Oltos, ca. 510 B.C. (Gebauer).

34 Black-figure cup

Salerno, Museo Nazionale 158A. *ABV* 520, no. 34; Berthiaume 1982, p. 49, pl. 9:2; van Straten 1995, p. 234, no. V214; Hermary and Leguilloux 2004, p. 125, no. 545.

No dimensions available.

I: Youth carrying a leg joint over his shoulder.

Theseus Painter, ca. 500 B.C. (van Straten).

35 Cup

Athens, Agora Museum P 32417, from the Athenian Agora; layer 5 of Archaic well J 2:4, 9 m north of the Altar of Aphrodite Ourania, under the Early Roman temple (see Camp 1996, pp. 242–252, figs. 5, 6, for details of the context and pottery from the well). Camp 1996, p. 248, no. 29, fig. 8:29, pl. 74; Gebauer 2002, p. 551, no. Zv46.

H. 0.073, Diam. 0.192 m (including handles, 0.255 m).

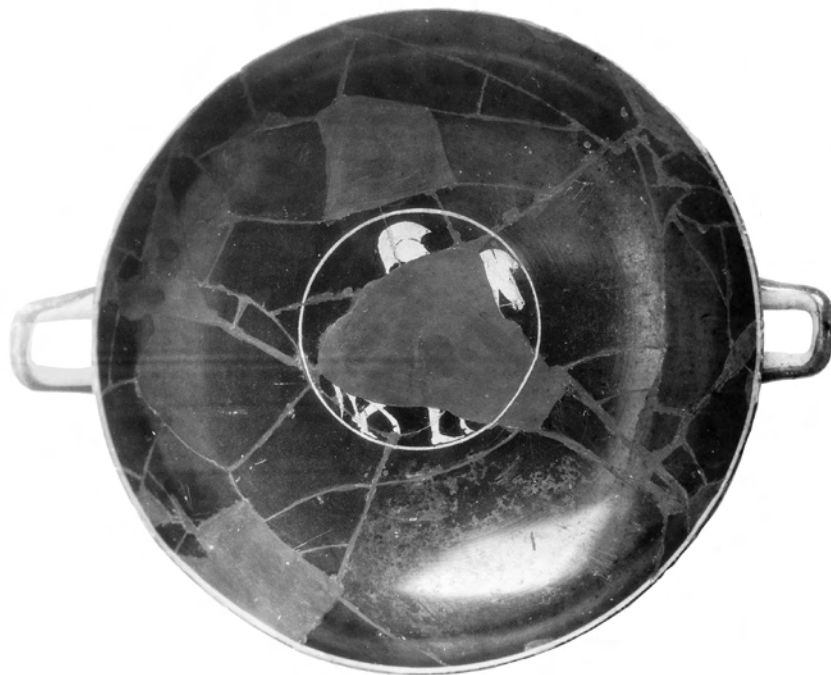
Figure 9 (opposite). (a) Side A: athlete oiling himself; (b) side B: youth carrying leg joint; (c) tondo: warrior with horse. Attic red-figure cup (30), ca. 510–500 B.C., Oltos. Providence, Rhode Island School of Design, Museum of Art 25.076. Photos courtesy Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Museum Appropriation Fund



a



b



c



Figure 10. Youth holding leg joint and lyre. Attic red-figure cup (32), ca. 510 B.C., Oltos. London, British Museum E8. Photo © Trustees of the British Museum

I: Youth with perizoma running to the right, bearing a leg joint in each hand.

Close to Skythes, ca. 500–480 B.C. (Camp; Gebauer).

36 Lekythos

Agrigento, Museo Archeologico Regionale 715. *ARV*² 521, no. 49; Berthiaume 1982, p. 112, pl. 17; van Straten 1995, p. 234, no. V215; Gebauer 2002, p. 552, no. Zv54; Hermary and Leguilloux 2004, p. 125, no. 548.

No dimensions available.

Youth running while holding leg joint.

Syracuse Painter, ca. 475–450 B.C. (van Straten).

37 Cup

Munich, Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek 2674. *ARV*² 479, no. 326; *Beazley Addenda*² 247; Kunisch 1997, p. 186, no. 244, pl. 81:244; van Straten 1995, p. 236, no. V231, fig. 161; Gebauer 2002, p. 552, no. Zv53; Hermary and Leguilloux 2004, p. 125, no. 546a.

Diam. 0.195 m (including handles, 0.252 m).

I: Boy running with leg joint and hoop; dog. Exterior plain.

Makron, ca. 480 B.C. (Gebauer).

38 Pelike

Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale M1425. *ARV*² 778.

No dimensions available.

A: Two women. B: Woman with leg joint.

Painter of London E356, Early Classical period (*ARV*²).

Non vidi.



Figure 11. Leg joint suspended between seated man with staff and youth with pipe case (not visible). Attic red-figure oinochoe (41), ca. 470 B.C., Manner of the Brygos Painter. Hamburg, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe 1960.91. Photo courtesy Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg

GROUP C: SUSPENDED LEG JOINTS

39 Cup

Florence, Museo Archeologico Nazionale PD54, from Populonia. *ARV*² 819, no. 36; *Beazley Addenda*² 293; *Paralipomena* 421; *CVA*, Florence 4 [Italy 38], pl. 128 [1700]:1–3; Schettino Nobile 1969, p. 19, no. 17, pls. 19, 20; Gebauer 2002, p. 555, no. Zv66.

Diam. 0.23 m.

A: Man between two youths covered in their himations. Strigil, sponge, and aryballos are hanging in the background. B: Woman between man and youth. Column to her right, leg joint suspended to her left. I: Woman toward the right, with hand on top of what appears to be a basin; handkerchief in the background. Dipinto: ΚΑΛΟΣ.

Telephos Painter, ca. 470–460 B.C. (Gebauer).

40 Cup fragment (tondo)

Hamburg, private collection. Koch-Harnack 1983, p. 255, no. 109, fig. 72; *JdI* 103, 1988, p. 116, fig. 31 (M. Meyer); Gebauer 2002, p. 555, no. Zv68.

No dimensions available.

I: Young boy with a stick and a pouch; there is a stool in front of him. Leg joint hanging in the background.

Ca. 470–460 B.C. (Gebauer).

41 Oinochoe

Fig. 11

Hamburg, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe 1960.91. *ARV*² 1650, no. 48; *Beazley Addenda*² 229; Koch-Harnack 1983, p. 138, fig. 71; Gebauer 2002, p. 554, no. Zv62.

No dimensions available.



Figure 12. Woman placing meat on a spit. Attic red-figure cup (42), ca. 500–490 B.C., Douris. St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum B4509. Photo courtesy State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg

Band: Two men, each wearing a himation and holding a staff, are seated at the left and right ends of the scene. Between them, a youth wearing a himation and holding a pipe case faces the man seated on the left. A leg joint is suspended between the man on the left and the youth. A column separates the man on the right from the other figures; a writing tablet is suspended in front of him.

Manner of the Brygos Painter, ca. 470 B.C. (Gebauer).

42 Cup, fragmentary

Fig. 12

St. Petersburg, State Hermitage Museum B4509. Peredolskaja 1964; Koch-Harnack 1983, pp. 134, 256, no. 99; Gebauer 2002, pp. 312–313, no. Z17, fig. 179.

No dimensions available.

Woman wearing a chiton and a *sakkos*, holding an ὀβελός in her left hand and what is most likely a piece of meat in her right hand; she is presumably placing the meat on the spit. In front of her, to the right, is a lekane; a leg joint is suspended in the background above it. Part of a graffito (possibly a ΚΑΑΗ).

Douris, ca. 500–490 B.C. (Gebauer).

GROUP D: EROS FIGURES AND LEG JOINTS

D1: SINGLE EROS

43 Lekythos

Palermo, private collection. Bérard et al. 1989, p. 49, fig. 46; Gebauer 2002, p. 557, no. Zv79.

No dimensions available.

Eros with leg joint.

Ca. 460 B.C. (Gebauer).

44 Lekythos

Glasgow, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum 1903.70. *ARV*² 660, no. 67; *CVA*, Glasgow [Great Britain 18], pl. 29 [888]:9–12.

H. ca. 0.17, Diam. rim 0.034, Diam. body 0.07 m.

Flying Eros with leg joint and hoop.

Painter of the Yale Lekythos, ca. 460–450 B.C. (*CVA*).

45 Lekythos

Palermo, private collection. *ARV*² 1666, no. 127.

No dimensions available.

Eros with leg joint.

Bowdoin Painter, ca. 475–425 B.C. (Beazley Archive).

46 Askos

Ferrara, Museo Archeologico Nazionale 44892 (T 65 D VP). *ARV*² 814, no. 99; *Beazley Addenda*² 292; Alfieri 1979, p. 49, nos. 109, 110; Gebauer 2002, p. 557, no. Zv75.

H. 0.065 (including handle), Diam. 0.065 m.

A: Flying Eros with lyre and auloi. B: Flying Eros with bread and leg joint in outstretched arms.

Clinic Painter, ca. 460 B.C. (Gebauer).

47 Chous

Copenhagen, National Museum VIII 342. *CVA*, Copenhagen 4 [Denmark 4], III I, pl. 157 [159]:5; Gebauer 2002, p. 558, no. Zv85.

H. 0.125, Diam. 0.104 m.

Flying Eros with bread and leg joint.

Ca. 430 B.C. (Gebauer).

D2: MULTIFIGURAL SCENES

48 Cup

Munich, Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek 2669, from Vulci. *ARV*² 818, no. 26; *Beazley Addenda*² 292; Schettino Nobile 1969, p. 20, no. 18, pls. 21, 22; Koch-Harnack 1983, p. 255, no. 111, fig. 75; Shapiro 1989, pl. 56:A–C; Gebauer 2002, p. 555, no. Zv65, fig. 209; Hermary and Leguilloux 2004, p. 125, no. 549.

H. 0.098, Diam. 0.232 m (including handles, 0.303 m).

A: In the center, a boy stands before a seated flutist and sings; to the right, Eros crowns a boy. A lyre and a flute case are in the background. B: Eros carries a leg joint while walking between a seated bearded man on the left and a standing male figure on the right. Doric column. I: Eros walking with a wreath toward an altar. Dipinto: ΚΑΛΟΣ.

Telephos Painter, ca. 470 B.C. (Gebauer).

49 Amphora

Agrigento, Museo Archeologico Regionale AG22215. Gebauer 2002, p. 554, no. Zv59.

No dimensions available.

A: Two flying Erotes. The left one holds auloi, the right holds a leg joint. B: Youth covered in himation.

Ca. 480–470 B.C. (Gebauer).

GROUP E: FRAGMENTARY VASES

50 Black-figure fragmentary cup

Athens, Agora Museum P 1384. *Paralipomena* 100; Gebauer 2002, p. 551, no. Zv45, fig. 204.

No dimensions available.

Youth with leg joint.

Painter of Nicosia C 975, late 6th century B.C. (Gebauer).

51 Cup fragment

Adria, Museo Civico B84. *CVA*, Adria 1 [Italy 28], III I, pl. 25 [1273]:1; Gebauer 2002, p. 559, no. Zv86.

No dimensions available.

On the left, hand holding stick; on the right, arm holding leg joint.

Ca. 470–450 B.C. (Gebauer).

GROUP F: UNCERTAIN

52 Cup

Vatican, Museo Gregoriano Etrusco 17906, from Vulci, excavations of 1837. Schettino Nobile 1969, pp. 11–12, no. 2, pl. III (only sides A and B are illustrated).

Diam. 0.27 m.

A: A seated draped man and a draped youth, both with staffs; women with basket and spindle, one seated. Tablets and cross suspended; column. B: Draped man, seated, and draped youths, some with staffs; tablets and bag suspended; column. I: Bearded old man with staff, woman with flower; leg joint(?) suspended (*non vidi*).

Telephos painter, ca. 460 B.C. (Schettino Nobile).

53 Cup

Tarquinia, Museo Archeologico Nazionale RC 1915, from Tarquinia. *ARV*² 818, no. 27; *Beazley Addenda*² 292; Schettino Nobile 1969, p. 14, no. 6, pls. 7, 8; Gebauer 2002, p. 555, no. Zv64.

H. 0.09, Diam. 0.228 m.

A: Man, youth, and third male figure (another youth?) partially preserved to the right. Stele with *kalos* dipinto on it. Leg joint(?), aryballos, sponge, and strigil in the background. B: Bearded man and youths conversing. Writing tablet and sponge in the background. Column with *kalos* dipinto on it. I: Youth holding unfolded himation in extended hand. Stele behind him.

Telephos Painter, ca. 470 B.C. (Gebauer).

54 Cup

Paris, Musée du Louvre G331. *ARV*² 819, no. 42; *Paralipomena* 421; *Beazley Addenda*² 293; Schettino Nobile 1969, p. 18, no. 14, pls. 16, 17; Gebauer 2002, p. 554, no. Zv67.

H. 0.102, Diam. 0.215 m (including handles, 0.292 m).

A: Youth offering woman a *kalathos* while another youth watches. Basket in background; Doric column between woman and youths. B: Seated woman juggling, two youths watching. Doric column between woman and youths. Leg joint(?), aryballos, strigil, and sponge in background. I: Seated woman juggling in front of *kalathos*.

Telephos Painter, ca. 470–465 B.C. (Gebauer).

Figure 13. Symposium, meat steaks on top of table. Attic black-figure Siana cup, ca. 550 B.C., Heidelberg Painter. Taranto, Museo Nazionale Archeologico 110339. Conte 1994, p. 51, fig. 51. Reproduced by permission, Italian Ministry of Culture, Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici della Puglia



LEG JOINTS AS VISUAL SIGNS OF HONORARY SACRIFICIAL SHARES

The representation of meat as leg joints in the catalogued vases above reflects a deliberate choice on the part of the painters. A review of the iconography of black- and red-figure vase paintings indicates that Attic painters had several other conventions for depicting meat. At least as early as the middle of the 6th century B.C., pieces of meat appear on tables laden with food and placed in front of reclining banqueters. They are rendered as flat objects with a raised edge painted in red, and they are likely to have indicated steaks, or perhaps pieces of ribs (Fig. 13).⁸¹ Around the middle of the 6th century, black-figure vase painters began to represent the meat served during feasts as a long strip hanging from the table situated in front of the reclining banqueters (Fig. 14:a). These strips were probably intended to represent the best meat, which comes from the back of the animal.⁸² It is probably not accidental that this convention was first used to represent meat consumption in the mythical-heroic sphere.⁸³ The best meat was most appropriate for gods and heroes.

This convention of depicting meat as long strips was transferred to the world of mortals; it is common in representations of festive contexts until approximately the second decade of the 5th century B.C., appearing mostly

81. Feasting was a favorite subject in Corinthian and Attic iconography of the mid-6th century B.C. The motif of reclining banqueters had been introduced to Greece from the Near East in the beginning of the 6th century. The topic has been extensively treated by Dentzer (1982); see also Schmitt Pantel 1992, esp. pp. 17–31; Schäfer 1997. Painters of Siana cups often represented chunks of meat atop

the banqueters' loaded tables; see, e.g., (1) Taranto, Museo Nazionale Archeologico 4339: *ABV* 52, no. 28; *Beazley Addenda*² 13; Conte 1994, p. 73, fig. 52 (Painter C); (2) Taranto, Museo Nazionale Archeologico 110339 (here Fig. 13): Conte 1994, pp. 50–51, figs. 50, 51 (Heidelberg Painter; with added red paint); (3) Marseilles, Musée Borély 3000: *ABV* 51, no. 3; Schmitt Pantel 1992, Annex 5; for a good

example, see fig. 15 (Painter C).

82. See the discussion of these cuts of meat in Ekroth 2008a, pp. 266–267, with references to the ancient sources, e.g., *Il.* 7.321–322 and *Od.* 14.437–438, where the back meat is given to the heroes Ajax and Odysseus, respectively.

83. It appears first in depictions of feasts of Herakles and Achilles, as early as 570/560 B.C.; see Wolf 1993, p. 93.



a



b

Figure 14. Symposium scene with reclining Herakles, strips of meat hanging from table, and chunks of meat on top of table. Attic bilingual amphora, ca. 520–510 B.C., Andokides Painter. (a) Black-figure side; (b) red-figure side. Munich, Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek 2301. Photos courtesy Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek, Munich

on black-figure but also on red-figure vases.⁸⁴ The convention was, therefore, contemporary with many of the representations of leg joints discussed here. The famous bilingual amphora by the Andokides Painter in Munich is the only vase that depicts strips of meat using both black-figure and red-figure techniques (Fig. 14:a, b).⁸⁵ Additionally, the small pieces next to the strips of meat that appear on both sides of the vase are probably representations of steaks or ribs or other small cuts of meat. Thus, two different kinds of meat were shown side by side on the table on this amphora. Finally, when

84. A black-figure example is a volute krater by the Golvol Group, Taranto, Museo Nazionale Archeologico 20334: *ABV* 195, no. 3; Conte 1994, p. 294, no. 81.37. There are only a few red-figure representations of strips of meat hanging from tables; see, e.g., a column krater by the Pig Painter, Lipari, Museo Archeologico Eoliano,

from tomb 2073; Bernabò Brea, Cavalier, and Spigo 1994, p. 73, figs. 50, 51.

85. Munich, Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek 2301: *ABV* 255, no. 4; *ARV* 4, no. 9; 1617; *Beazley Addenda*² 66, no. 149; *CVA*, Munich 4 [Germany 12], pls. 155–158 [533–536].



Figure 15. Herakles as a *splachnopt*. Attic black-figure eye cup, ca. 520–510 B.C., Nikosthenes Potter. Paris, Musée du Louvre F121. *CVA*, Paris 10 [France 17], III H e, pl. 106 [741]:4. Reproduced by permission, Musée du Louvre

painters wanted to represent the *splachna* or the placing of meat on spits, they depicted the portions of meat as fleshy and irregular, and sometimes as long, pieces (Fig. 15).⁸⁶

Given this range of options for depicting meat, it is clear that the painters of the vases catalogued above deliberately chose to employ the image of a leg joint in their scenes. The hoof of the animal, the part that unequivocally identified a leg joint as such visually, is usually represented in detail, while the characteristics of the fleshy parts vary. In some instances, the leg joint appears to contain all its bones intact (21; Fig. 7), while in most cases the joint is rendered as a soft mass more or less in the shape of an animal leg (7; Fig. 5). In other examples, the painters do not appear to be interested in accurately reproducing the fleshy part of the leg at all. The cup fragment in Parma (5; Fig. 4) is typical in this regard: the hoof is rendered schematically but much more accurately than the meat, which is sketched as a thick wavy line; red paint depicts blood, perhaps indicating that the meat is raw. The emphasis on the hoof shows the painters' interest in identifying the part of the animal that is depicted.

What, then, might the choice of the leg joint as a visual representation of meat signify? I suggest that in this corpus of images, leg joints represented honorary or award shares of sacrificial meat, as distinct from the equal shares that the general public obtained during meat distributions. The leg joint derived its symbolic value from its significance as an honorary share in actual sacrificial practice. Consequently, a leg joint appearing in a nonsacrificial scene may symbolize a reward in kind earned by an individual for active participation or achievement in the festivals of the city of Athens. The leg joint would represent the honor and distinction the city bestowed on its recipient, and it would also allude to participation in civic activities, where one might obtain an honorary share.

Significantly, the function of leg joints in the vase paintings does not, for the most part, correspond to the function of leg joints within the sacrificial ritual. In actual practice, leg joints were largely priestly prerogatives and awards for athletes. The focus of the painters of this corpus of vases, however, was apparently not on priests and their role in the ritual, but on individuals who participated in the cult in a capacity other than that of a priest or priestess. Indeed, almost none of the figures in the catalogue who are associated with a leg joint can be identified as a priest or a priestess on the basis of other attributes.⁸⁷ On the other hand, it appears that some vases were decorated with images of leg joints given as awards to athletes, thus reflecting the actual use of this animal part.

Examination of the epigraphic record demonstrates that, apart from priests, state officials and distinguished participants in the sacrificial process received honorary shares in exchange for their service. Various activities or achievements might earn honorary or award shares, such as participating in processions and other sacrificial functions, holding a public office of significance, or winning athletic or musical contests. These honorary shares were not usually leg joints. Rather, they were multiple shares of the equal portions distributed to the people at large. But by representing their subjects holding leg joints, the honorary share *par excellence*, vase painters could visually communicate the honor and distinction that accrued to a person who received such a share.

86. Vase painters also depicted other animal parts, such as the head, in scenes of butchering during a sacrifice (e.g., Fig. 1, above).

87. On identifying priests and priestesses, see above, n. 41.

With this interpretation in mind, I turn to the contexts in which the images of leg joints appear and examine their possible meanings. The iconography of the vases clearly indicates that painters were interested in representing leg joints in social contexts. They appear most frequently as gifts in scenes of social interaction between men or men and women (group A: 1–27). Studies of ancient Greek gift-giving practices and representations leave no doubt that the choice of gift, not to mention its size and cost, was laden with meaning, and that it furnished information about the giver as well as the recipient.⁸⁸ The decision to represent the gift as a leg joint was not accidental; it was deliberate and therefore meaningful, as is the case with the representation of other gifts, erotic or not. The gift of an apple, for example, was a common expression of love or desire in Attic red-figure painting, and it signified the nature of the relationship between giver and recipient.⁸⁹ The gift of a hunted animal such as a hare or a fox denoted the giver's ability as a hunter and his identity as a member of a group of Athenian youths characterized by their combative spirit, virility, and acumen.⁹⁰ What, then, does the leg joint indicate about the person who bestows it as a gift?

I suggest that in these scenes, the presence of the leg joint, which represents an honorary portion of sacrificial meat, is a clue to the status of the giver of the gift. In other words, the person who is bestowing the leg joint has previously received it, or the honorary share it symbolizes, as an award for excellence, or as a reward for participating in a sacrifice or in the life of the polis more generally. In the gift-giving scenes, the individual who received an honorary share is now offering it to another, in an effort to secure that person's friendship or affection. We might therefore assume that ancient Athenians perceived these images of leg joints as depictions of competitive gifts offered in the effort to secure someone's friendship or affection. It is within such a context of gift exchange that we should also understand the numerous scenes of an Eros holding a leg joint (group D: 43–49), or elliptical scenes of single figures holding a leg joint as if offering it to someone (28; Fig. 8) or as if just having accepted it from someone (16, 17).

In other vase paintings, the leg joint itself was charged with significance and represented honor and distinction (groups B and C: 28–42). These painted leg joints are not shown in the context of gift exchange; they are simply held in the hand, or they appear in the background.⁹¹ In the majority of these scenes, leg joints are depicted in a gymnasium, in a context associated with learning and athletics (30–36, 40, 41). Thus, they probably represented the honorary share that one might receive for an achievement in letters, or in an athletic (30 [Fig. 9], 34–36) or musical competition (31, 32 [Fig. 10], 33, 41 [Fig. 11]). The inscriptions and sources examined earlier in this article illuminate the role of meat and leg joints in gymnasium life. Meat is seen in the gymnasium because it is a food appropriate for athletes who aspire to physical power, and because victorious athletes or musicians were rewarded with meat from sacrifices taking place during festivals or in the gymnasium itself.⁹²

Many images in this category belong to the end of the 6th and the beginning of the 5th century (28–33). The most interesting images are

88. Mauss [1990] 2002 remains the basic anthropological study on gift exchange and reciprocity. See also Schwartz 1967 for a sociological and psychological approach to the topic; and van Wees 1998, pp. 29–30. On the meaning of gifts on Attic vases, see Koch-Harnack 1983, esp. p. 26; for hunted animals as erotic gifts, see Schnapp 1997, pp. 247–257 (black-figure vases), 318–354 (red-figure vases); also Barringer 2001, p. 89.

89. On the perceived magical and erotic powers of the apple, a common erotic gift in Attic red-figure painting, see n. 76, above.

90. On the gift as a sign of the giver's identity, see Schnapp 1997, pp. 247–257, esp. pp. 247, 255. Most scholars agree that the hunted animals also symbolized the relationship of the pursuer to the pursued. Furthermore, the symbolism of the animal might vary according to its species: for example, the hare, a frequent erotic gift, was perceived as a “difficult to catch, highly sexual, and cunning” animal (Barringer 2001, p. 95, with references to the ancient sources).

91. An exception to this is 39, where a large leg joint hanging in the background between a man and a woman should be interpreted as an erotic gift.

92. See n. 9, above; also pp. 10–11.

those painted by Oltos. His solitary youths carrying leg joints and a lyre are often represented in association with images of physical and athletic prowess (e.g., 31–33). For example, a youth carrying a lyre and a leg joint in the tondo of a cup (32; Fig. 10) is coupled with images of a gigantomachy on the exterior. The lyre and the leg joint allude to an award won at a musical event, while the gigantomachy alludes to the physical and mental prowess of the gods who defeated the giants. This combination of images may have functioned as a form of didactic encouragement addressed to Athenian youth, who might emulate these divine features in order to excel in athletic events, and in life in general.

One of Oltos's palmette eye cups eloquently illustrates the spirit of excellence of an Athenian warrior and athlete at the end of the 6th century (30; Fig. 9). The vase is decorated in a minimalist style with a single figure on each exterior side and the tondo, a decorative scheme the painter often adopted.⁹³ On one side, a youth carrying a leg joint alludes to a victory at some athletic competition; on the other side, an athlete with an aryballos alludes to the life of the gymnasium; and on the tondo, a warrior with a horse alludes to participation in the Athenian army. The ancient viewer probably perceived the youth carrying the meat as coming from a city festival, where he would have earned the leg joint. The size of the leg suggests that it belonged to a large animal, most likely “the fat leg of a stout bull, a rich prize,” according to Xenophanes of Kolophon (Ath. 368f).

A few of the vases listed in the catalogue depict women holding leg joints (21 [Fig. 7], 22, 24, 25, 38). As discussed above, women received honorary shares for serving as priestesses and for contributing to the sacrificial ritual in other capacities, for example, as *kanephoroi*. They probably received equal shares of meat on various occasions in public meat distributions.⁹⁴ The vase paintings of women holding honorary shares of meat offer additional evidence that women were recipients of honorary shares during sacrifices. Most of the vase paintings are scenes of social interaction, significantly between men and women (21, 22, 24, 25). It is significant that women are shown not only receiving but also offering leg joints, symbolizing the honorary shares that they had obtained by participating in polis sacrifices.

Of particular interest is 42 (Fig. 12), in which a woman in work clothes, wearing a chiton and a fillet on her hair, appears to place a piece of meat on a spit, while a leg joint, painted blood-red to indicate that it is raw, hangs in the background. Such a representation is unique in vase painting. Butchering and meat preparation in sanctuary settings were generally tasks for men, according to both textual and visual sources.⁹⁵ Thus, scholars have been hesitant to identify the woman's task as the processing of meat in a ritual context.⁹⁶ In light of the interpretation offered here, however, along with the ample literary evidence for women's activities in sanctuaries, I propose that this may well be how the scene should be read: a woman is preparing the meat for roasting, while the honorary share she would receive for this service is shown in the background. In other words, this image may display both the honor achieved, symbolized by the leg joint, and the task that merited the honor, namely, placing the meat on the spit.

93. On Oltos's palmette eye cups and other cups decorated in a similar scheme with a single figure on each side, see Harnecker 1991, pp. 225–227, nos. 44–56.

94. See pp. 9, 13–14, above.

95. On vase paintings that depict butchering, see n. 39, above; on the *mageiros*, the culinary specialist normally charged with the sacrifice and butchering of the animals, see pp. 5–6, above.

96. For example, Gebauer (2002, pp. 485–486) recognized that the woman was performing a service (“in dienender Funktion”), but he did not indicate whether he thought that she might be processing meat at a sanctuary.

CONCLUSION

I have attempted to recover some of the meanings communicated by the images of leg joints that appear on a series of Attic vase paintings from the late 6th and 5th centuries B.C. While leg joints appear in a number of painted scenes depicting the sacrificial process, including the butchering of slaughtered animals, the vases collected in the catalogue above are distinguished by the fact that they portray leg joints in nonsacrificial contexts. Indeed, many of the vases depict scenes of social interaction in which leg joints are presented or accepted as gifts.

Proceeding on the assumption that the images of leg joints within these scenes are meaningful visual signs on the basis of their consistent recurrence, I hypothesized that for Athenian painters and their local audiences, the painted images represented honorary portions of sacrificial meat. An examination of the extensive epigraphic record from 5th- and 4th-century Athens indicates that leg joints had a particular cultural significance as priestly prerogatives, and that they could thus serve as symbols of honorary portions of meat in general. Furthermore, the thematic associations of the images of leg joints on Attic vases with scenes of sacrificial butchering indicate that they signify sacrificial meat. Consequently, vase painters used the image of the leg joint to represent honorary shares or special awards of sacrificial meat, as distinct from the equal shares of meat that the general population obtained during meat distributions. Honorary shares were granted to those who served as priests or priestesses, but also to individuals who served as city officials, or participated in city festivals, or performed important tasks in the sacrificial ritual. Special awards of sacrificial meat were given to individuals who distinguished themselves in athletic or musical competitions.

Thus, on the evidence of the vase paintings included in the catalogue, it appears that Attic vase painters who depicted leg joints in their scenes were frequently using the well-known priestly prerogative as a symbol of honorary shares of meat accorded to nonpriestly individuals. Painters integrated these symbols into social contexts drawn from daily life, frequently as gifts exchanged among lovers, friends, and relatives. Sometimes, however, the leg joint may accurately represent the cut of meat awarded to a successful competitor at a festival. More generally, the artistic representation of an individual with a leg joint highlighted his or her participation in the festivals of the polis, where he or she could potentially earn an honorary share of sacrificial meat. By extension, therefore, these images of leg joints can be viewed as visual expressions of civic identity.

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