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Georges Vallet, Rome 1999, 103-119.

10 Paus., II, 3, 6-9; L. Lerat, *Les Locriens de l'Ouest*, Paris 1952, 72.

11 K. Friis Johansen, *Les vases Sicyoniens: étude archéologique*, Paris 1966 [= 1923], 141.

12 Paus., V, 19, 1-2.

13 L.H. Jeffery, *The local Scripts of Archaic Greece. A Study of the Origin of the Greek Alphabet and its development from the eighth Century to the fifth Century B.C.*, Oxford, 1990, 264-265.

14 Pind., *Ol.*, VI, 120.

15 Paus., V, 18, 6-8.

16 P. Di Fidio, in: *Corinto e l'Occidente* cit. supra n. 5, 81.

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THE GREEK SYMPOSION AND THE NEAR EAST. CHRONOLOGY AND MECHANISMS OF CULTURAL TRANSFER

HARTMUT MATTHÄUS

During the Archaic period the ritual symposium, characterised by participants reclining on couches, consuming wine, listening to music and recitations, was one of the celebrations, perhaps the most important one, which defines the social self-identity of Greek aristocracy.¹ The symposium had private, political and cultural dimensions. It developed as a focus for private luxury - ἀβροσύνη and τρυφή - are the terms used by later authors - and for poetic and artistic creativity devoted to the pleasure of the dining group (Murray 1994, 48-49; cf. Schäfer 1997). It prepared the audience for early Greek poetry, as has recently been stressed by E.L. Bowie (1986) and J. Latacz (1990). In the social sphere the sympotic group separated from communal life of the polis, affirming their own status and life-style (Murray 1983; Stein-Hölkeskamp 1989, 112-116).

The Archaic symposium differs in two respects from older habits of banqueting: first, in the separation between *dei`pvo`* and *sumposion* proper, between meal and prolonged drinking, and second, in the habit of reclining - participants were lying on *kli`nai*/couches - rather than sitting. For later authors reclining was a symptom not only of luxury, but also of degeneration, cf. e.g. Athenaios 10,428b: "When the Greeks began to luxuriate and have degenerate manners, they slid from chairs to couches (*ajpo; tw`n divfrwn ejpi; ta;1 klivvvv/al*), and taking as their ally relaxation and ease, from this time on they indulged in the carouse in lax and disorderly fashion, being seduced into pleasure, I fancy by their rich surroundings."

As is well-known, the habit of reclining during the ritualised banquet is not Greek in origin, but attested first in the Near East. The evidence has been discussed by a fair number of scholars: We need only mention H. Kyrieleis' analysis of furniture types, B. Fehr's pioneer work on Greek and Oriental symposia, J.-M. Dentzer's monumental study *Le motif du banquet couché* and recent contributions by O. Murray, W. Burkert, P. Schmitt-Pantel, A. Rathje

and others. There have even been symposia devoted to the symposium (Spettacoli 1983; Murray 1990; Slater 1991; Aurell/Dumoulin/Thelamon 1992; Murray/Tecusan 1995).

The earliest evidence of the reclining symposium in Greek art is found in Early Corinthian vase-painting at the end of the 7th century B.C. (Fehr 1971, 26-38; Dentzer 1982, 76-87; Schmitt-Pantel 1992, 18-31). In Corinthian art symposia may also have been depicted on the famous chest of Kypselos, which Pausanias (V 19, 7) saw in the opisthodomos of the Heraion at Olympia. At approximately the same period Alcman provides the earliest literary statements of the arrangements of a reclining symposium: *kli`nai me;n ejpta; kai; tovsai travpeddai* - "seven couches and as many tables" (Frgt. 19 Lobel-Page).

Starting from this evidence, it has generally been assumed - by B. Fehr as well as by J.-M. Dentzer - that the symposium arrived in Greece towards the end of the 7th century B.C. Tentatively many scholars suggested that it came via Ionia, where the most important zone of contact with the East was located (Fehr 1971, 26, 128-129; Dentzer 1982, 149-151; Boardman 1990, 129). The purpose of this paper is simply to give an answer to the following questions: Where did the Greeks become acquainted and accustomed to the Oriental style of banqueting, at which period, under which economic, social and cultural circumstances?

The habit of reclining during the banquet was not widespread in the Near East. The regular custom was to sit during feasts, which were connected with eating and drinking (Dentzer 1982, 21-50; Pinnock 1994; Reade 1995, 44-51; Milano 1994). The earliest evidence of the reclining banquet is provided by the famous religious polemics of the prophet Amos in the Old Testament. He accuses the inhabitants of Samaria at the end of the 8th century B.C.: "You that lie upon beds of ivory and sprawl upon your couches, eating young rams from the flock and fattened young cows from the cowshed, you that sing

songs accompanied by the lute like David, and play on musical instruments, you that drink wine out of bowls and anoint yourselves with the best of oils. Therefore they shall now head the procession of the captives, and the *marzea*^h of the sprawling shall come to an end." Amos describes a luxurious style of symposion connected with eating, drinking, the use of aromatic oils, music and poetry - not that different from later Greek habits. It is a banquet celebrated by groups of social élite, who joined in special cultic institutions (Barstad 1984, 127-142). The term *marzea*^h in Amos' text, a term already known in 2nd millennium Ugarit, describes well-defined social organizations; in the Septuaginta it is translated with *qivasoi* (Avigad/Greenfield 1982; King 1989). *ôEtairiva* might have been another Greek equivalent. Samaria was a town, where the élite was very profoundly influenced by Phoenician life-style, as is shown by a rich series of ivory furniture inlays discovered there.

It is indeed Phoenician art, which furnishes the best and earliest representations of reclining symposia. An excellent example is a Phoenician silver bowl from Cyprus, the exact provenance unknown, now in the Cesnola Collection of the Metropolitan Museum (no. 74.51.4555: Matthäus 1985, no. 425; Markoe 1985, 264). Banqueting in the open air, accompanied by music, is practised on *kli`nai* as well as on simple mattresses placed on the ground. This specimen belongs to a group of Phoenician bowls, which illustrate paradigmata of ritualized life-style of social élites, perhaps even of Phoenician courts, not banquets of gods, as sometimes has been maintained, a matter of interpretation, which, by the way, is not relevant to the argument, since divine banquets quite obviously reflect habits of everyday life. The Cesnola bowl, which in earlier publications was dated to the end of the 7th century, has parallels among finds from Italian princely tombs of the early 7th century B.C., as was demonstrated a few years ago by W. Culican (1982). It may easily go back even to the late 8th century B.C.

There are more examples from Cyprus: a silver bowl in the Cesnola Collection, whose iconography as well as style is a continuation of North Syrian prototypes of 9th and 8th centuries B.C. (Metropolitan Museum 74.51.4557: Matthäus 1985, no. 424; Markoe 1985, 252-253). Its chronology remains uncertain. It has often been dated to the 6th century B.C., but regarding the stylistic forerunners it may be as early as late 8th/7th century. Finally a bronze bowl, probably from Salamis in Cyprus, with a symposium displaying a strongly sexual component has to be mentioned (British Museum 1892/5-19/1: Matthäus 1985, no. 426; Markoe 1985, 251). Sexuality also plays a prominent role in Greek sympotic habits - homosexuality as well as heterosexuality. The date of the Salamis bowl should be reexamined very carefully.

There is no good argument for the traditional late 6th century date (Karageorghis 1993).

Further evidence is furnished by the inscription of a grave stele from Kululu - Kaletpe in Southeast Anatolia on the northern periphery of the ancient land of Tabal, inscribed in Luwian hieroglyphic: "I am Panunis (the prince of Kululu) ... on my bed eating and drinking by the grace of (the god) Santas I died" (Hawkins 1980). It may be recalled that Phoenician cultural influence in this area is not improbable, as Phoenician inscriptions have been found in South East Anatolia (Röllig 1992).

In the area of the Assyrian Empire the famous relief with a banquet scene from Assurbanipal's North Palace at Nineveh should be discussed (British Museum, WAA 124920: Barnett 1976, pls. LXIII-LXV; Albenda 1976; Deller 1987; Reade 1995, 51-55; Schmidt-Colinet 1997). The king reclining on a couch and his queen Ashur-sharrat sitting on a throne celebrate under a vine-arbor the Assyrian victory over Te-umman, king of Elam, in the battle at the Ulai river in 653 B.C. - the head of the Elamian king hangs in the tree to the left. The iconography of the relief, which was part of a much larger garden scene, is unique in many respects and has provoked controversial discussion in detail. For our purpose it suffices to state that the couch is a common, although more elaborate version of a type well-known from Assyrian reliefs from the time of Assurnasirpal II (beginning of the 9th century) onwards - either in an Assyrian context or as booty from North Syria or Babylonia. A famous scene is found on the bronze gates of Balawat, where the king of Hama, lying ill on his bed at that time, surrenders to Salmanassar III in 849 B.C. Unfortunately in most cases the specific function of the couches or beds is not clear from the representations (Reade 1995, 44-51; Curtis 1996, 175). In Assurbanipal's relief such a couch is shown in the context of a ritualized banquet for the first time. In this respect it may be of significance that the couch displays a decoration of Phoenician style on the legs: a relief depicting the well-known Phoenician motif of women in the window. Thus in the furniture as well as in the style of banquet some Phoenician element may possibly be detected. R. Barnett (1985) has even speculated that the whole scene might reflect a *marzea*^h ritual ultimately of Phoenician origin. But this remains highly speculative, if not improbable, as otherwise there seems to be no evidence of such a ritual in Assyria.

In passing some rather strange customs of banqueting in peripheral regions may be mentioned, where participants used couches as a platform on which tables and seats were put, e.g. on a bronze situla of 10th - 9th century B.C. date from Luristan (Maléki 1961; Calmeyer 1973, 18 no. A1, 154-160; idem 1996). Similar habits may have been practised

the conclusion that reclining banquets represent a typical Phoenician habit, which may have been adopted - with local variations - in some regions of North Syria, in Cyprus and in Assyria. It may be added that B. Fehr in his pioneer study (1971, 16-18, 24; sceptical: Dentzer 1982, 57-58) has speculated that the habit of reclining might reflect nomadic life-style, nomads being people without elaborate furniture, therefore lying on mattresses on the ground. The archaeological evidence clearly contradicts this hypothesis: Luxurious reclining banquets with eating, drinking, music, poetry and the use of aromatic oils are ceremonies developed in the highly civilized city states of Phoenicia.

Now turning to Greece: Is there any evidence of reclining symposia before the end of the 7th century B.C.? Among the bronze finds from the Idaean Cave of Zeus in Crete there are two bronze fragments, which were already discovered during F. Halbherr's investigations there in 1885.²

The first piece of evidence is the fragment of a bronze votive shield in miniature now in the National Museum at Athens (no. X. 11764, 1a: here Pl. 23c; Kunze 1931, 31, no. 71bis, pl. 44; Markoe 1985, 239 top). It is 12.4 cm in length. In the preserved part a *kline*/couch with two straight legs is recognizable, one end curving upwards, supported by a broad hatched element. It is not certain, whether this is part of the furniture itself or a mattress or cushion. To the left, the broad leg of another piece of furniture can still be seen, to the right there are the lower parts of two persons clad in a long garment, one turning to the left, the other to the right. Belonging to the same shield is another unpublished fragment in the National Museum of Athens (no. X. 11764, 1b), on which the upper body and head of two females are preserved. Heads and coiffures, which fall onto the neck, display a very distinct type with angular profile. Details of coiffures and garments are filled with small punched circles and semicircles; faint hatching enlivens the upper part of the body. The figural frieze is bordered by bands of cable pattern, which are very typically reduced to punched dots and oblique strokes.

Iconography, ornament, figural style, and technical execution find parallels among a rather large series of metalwork from the Idaean Cave itself. A type of closely comparable female figures is represented on miniature shields depicting ritual dances and ceremonial processions - usually a cortège of musicians and women with offerings (Kunze 1931, pls. 48, 70b, 71; Canciani 1970, pls. VIII, IX; Markoe 1985, 238, 239 bottom). The style is also present on fragments of hitherto unpublished bronze bowls (frieze of sphinxes) - and more important - it is found on the large, so-called shield of the sphinxes (hatching, punched dots, angular type of profile of sphinxes:

Kunze 1931, pls. 7-9). They all reflect a Near Eastern iconography (North Syrian and Phoenician) in general, but another form of stylistic and technical execution, which has no good equivalent in original Oriental art. Furthermore, the type of cable ornament described does not occur outside Crete (Kunze 1931, 90-97). Moreover, considering the fact that the miniature shields as well as the larger shields are votives especially produced for the cult in the Idaean Cave, connected with the rites performed there and with the mythology of Cretan Zeus, the conclusion must be drawn that these bronzes can be identified as local Cretan works, imitating and varying upon Near Eastern prototypes, a conclusion, which of course, was already reached by E. Kunze (1931), J. Boardman (1980, 58-60) and others. The shield of the sphinxes can be dated with certainty: the secondary frieze near the rim displays rows of grazing animals, which go back to prototypes in Syro-Phoenician minor arts. The style is very similar to that found among the early groups of Attic gold-bands, which date to LG I-II (Ohly 1953). Thus a date in the first half or middle of the 8th century B.C. is very probable, if not a bit earlier. The friezes of women on the small votive shields also provide a clue to the interpretation of the figures of our fragment: it must be a ritual context, banquet or comparable ceremony, either in every day life or a divine banquet. However, as has already been said, this is a question not relevant for our argument.

The second fragment, part of a miniature votive shield too, is even smaller, 11.9 cm in length (Iraklion Museum, without no.). Its surface is so worn that many details are illegible. It depicts a different type of couch with one end upcurving and legs, which terminate in animals' paws. In front of the couch there is a small flight of stairs to facilitate climbing up. Unfortunately the rest of the frieze is lost. An animal frieze was probably in the lower part of the fragment. Oblique strokes, visible only at the back side, indicate that the friezes were separated by reduced cable patterns, comparable to our first fragment. Thus the date must be approximately the same. Couches with flights of stairs find excellent parallels on one of the Cesnola silver bowls from Cyprus, already mentioned (Metropolitan Museum 74.51.4557). We suggest that the context of the *kline* on our fragment from the Idaean Cave is the same: a ritual banquet.

Thus our hypothesis is that the type of Near Eastern, more precisely Phoenician, reclining symposium was adopted by Greek aristocracy on the island of Crete during the 8th century B.C., probably the earlier part of the 8th century at latest.

Is this hypothesis reasonable, if we regard the economic, social, cultural situation of Crete during the Geometric period? Economically Crete was a flour-

ishing region as evidenced by the richness of grave goods, among them imports of Oriental metalwork and ivories, during the Subminoan, Protogeometric and Geometric periods (Catling/Coldstream 1996, 721 and passim; Stampolides/Karetsou 1998). Early urban nuclei, probably developing from Late Bronze Age structures may be traced back - at least at Knossos, the leading centre on the north coast - to the beginning of the first millennium B.C. (Coldstream 1991). The art of the island during the 9th and 8th centuries B.C. is cosmopolitan in character, displaying a mixture of the overwhelming common Greek Geometric style, of North-Syrian, Phoenician and Cypriot elements plus some heritage of the Minoan civilization (Blome 1982). This is demonstrated by local metalwork from the Idaean Cave, which has been discussed, by gold jewellery from Cretan centres (Idaean Cave and Knossos) of the same period, even by the more traditional branch of vase-painting, which shows a repertoire of Near Eastern motifs as early as Protogeometric B in the second half of the 9th century B.C.

And finally excavations at Kommos on the South coast of Crete have produced evidence of the direct physical presence of Phoenicians on the island during the same period Protogeometric B (Shaw 1989). A shrine with Phoenician *baetyloi* in the cella and Phoenician pottery - storage jars as well as fine wares - in the surroundings make this highly probable. The physical presence of foreigners is, of course, an absolutely necessary prerequisite for the adoption not only of furniture types, but of a ritual, which is the component of a special life style, as the symposion with consumption of wine, music and recitations of poetry indeed was.

We may end with the remark that quite recently O. Murray (1994) in a very stimulating discussion of the famous inscription on Nestor's cup from Pithekoussai, which he regards as sympotic poetry, offered some good reasons for the assumption that the Near Eastern symposium was more widespread in late 8th century Greece and Magna Graecia as well. It is no contradiction that Homer still describes older fashions of banquets (van Wees 1995), given the general archaizing tendency of the Homeric poems as well as their place of origin: the coastal region of Asia Minor, at a distance from those cultural provinces of the Aegean, which were in close contact with Phoenicia at that early period.

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Note

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LE PEINTRE DE PENTHÉSILÉE ET LA TECHNIQUE À FOND BLANC

EFTHYMIA MINTSI

Le peintre de Penthésilée,¹ peintre de vases actif à Athènes entre 470 et 450 av. J.-C. et chef de file d'un grand atelier, a été formé au contact du peintre de Pistoxénos² qui lui a beaucoup appris. Cependant, le goût de celui-ci pour les coupes à fond blanc ne se retrouve pas chez son élève. La tradition ne sera pas perpétuée et le peintre de Pistoxénos est un des derniers spécialistes dans la matière.

En effet, chez le peintre de Penthésilée, il n'y a point de coupe à fond blanc. Dans l'état actuel de nos connaissances, seuls trois vases de lui, une pyxide³ et deux bobines,⁴ sont peints selon cette technique. Il est évident que le peintre connaît et maîtrise parfaitement le fond blanc mais il ne l'utilise que modérément et seulement sur certains supports. Dans ce choix, il nous semble apercevoir un refus délibéré de sa part d'adopter cette technique dans le décor de ses coupes car sur certaines d'entre elles, le peintre cherche à produire les effets du fond blanc tout en se servant de la technique à figures rouges. C'est le cas de cinq de ses coupes dont la surface intérieure est entièrement décorée. La scène figurée est entourée d'une fine couronne florale composée de feuilles de laurier ou de lierre ou encore d'olivier. Avant lui, ce système décoratif était réservé aux coupes à fond blanc.⁵ Prenant exemple sur Onésimos qui a été le premier à l'avoir expérimenté,⁶ le peintre de Penthésilée généralisera ce dispositif dans la technique à figures rouges. Les cinq coupes ainsi décorées sont les suivantes:

- Coupe de Munich, n° 2688. Amazonomachie (Pl. 24a);⁷
- Coupe de Munich, n° 2689. Apollon tuant Tityos;⁸

- Coupe de Ferrare, n° 9351. Zeus poursuivant Ganymède (Pl. 24b);⁹
- Coupe de Ferrare, n° 44886. Poursuite anonyme;¹⁰
- Coupe de Bochum, n° S 1085. Athéna et Héraclès.¹¹

Le cas de la coupe de Munich (Pl. 24a) qui est une coupe éponyme est dans ce sens exemplaire. Le peintre a conçu la scène figurée à la manière du fond blanc mais l'a réalisée selon la technique à figures rouges. En effet, l'emploi des rehauts de couleurs ainsi que de l'argile dorée que le peintre utilise ici pour souligner certains détails, tels que les ornements des armes et les bijoux, reste inhabituel sur les figures rouges. En outre, sur cette composition circulaire, la scène historiée prend énormément de place, alors que le fond noir est réduit au minimum. Tout est fait comme si le peintre cherchait à donner à son œuvre une dimension esthétique comparable à celle d'une coupe à fond blanc et à prouver qu'on peut arriver aux mêmes résultats avec la figure rouge.

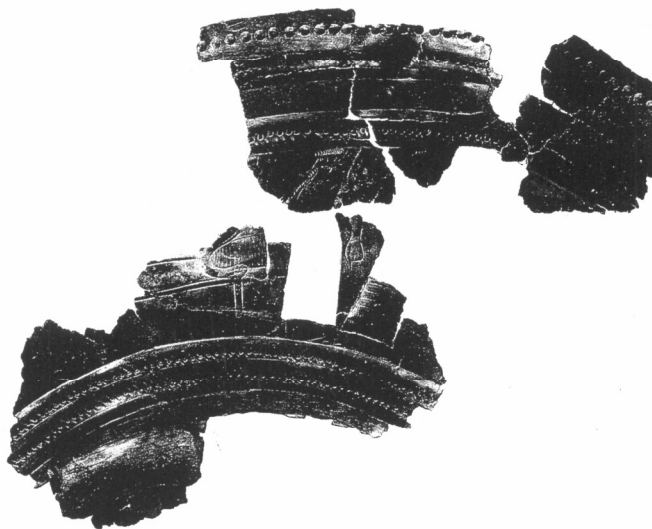
Si le peintre de Penthésilée adopte cette attitude, ce n'est en aucun cas pour contourner une quelconque difficulté technique. Sa pyxide et ses bobines témoignent de sa compétence dans le dessin au trait et la polychromie du fond blanc. Au contraire, il nous semble deviner chez lui la volonté bien déterminée de donner ses lettres de noblesse à la technique des figures rouges qui revient en force dans son œuvre. Le peintre se veut l'héritier des Pioniers. En dotant la figure du Grec, toujours sur la coupe de Munich, d'une torsion compliquée du bras gauche, il rend hommage à la période expérimentale de la figure rouge (520-500). Vers 460, de



a. 'Olpè Chigi', frise médiane: vainqueur au quadriges, Rome, Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia (d'après G. Karo, *Antike Denkmäler II*, pl. 44-45)



b. 'Olpè Chigi', frise médiane: jugement d'Alexandre - les trois déesses, Rome, Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia (cliché Soprintendenza Archeologica dell'Etruria Meridionale)



c. Fragment of bronze votive shield from Idean Cave, Athens, National Museum, greatest length 12.4 cm, inv.no. X. 11764, 1 a-b (photo courtesy National Museum)