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# Order vs. Chaos. Comparing Corinthian and Etrusco-Corinthian Animal Friezes

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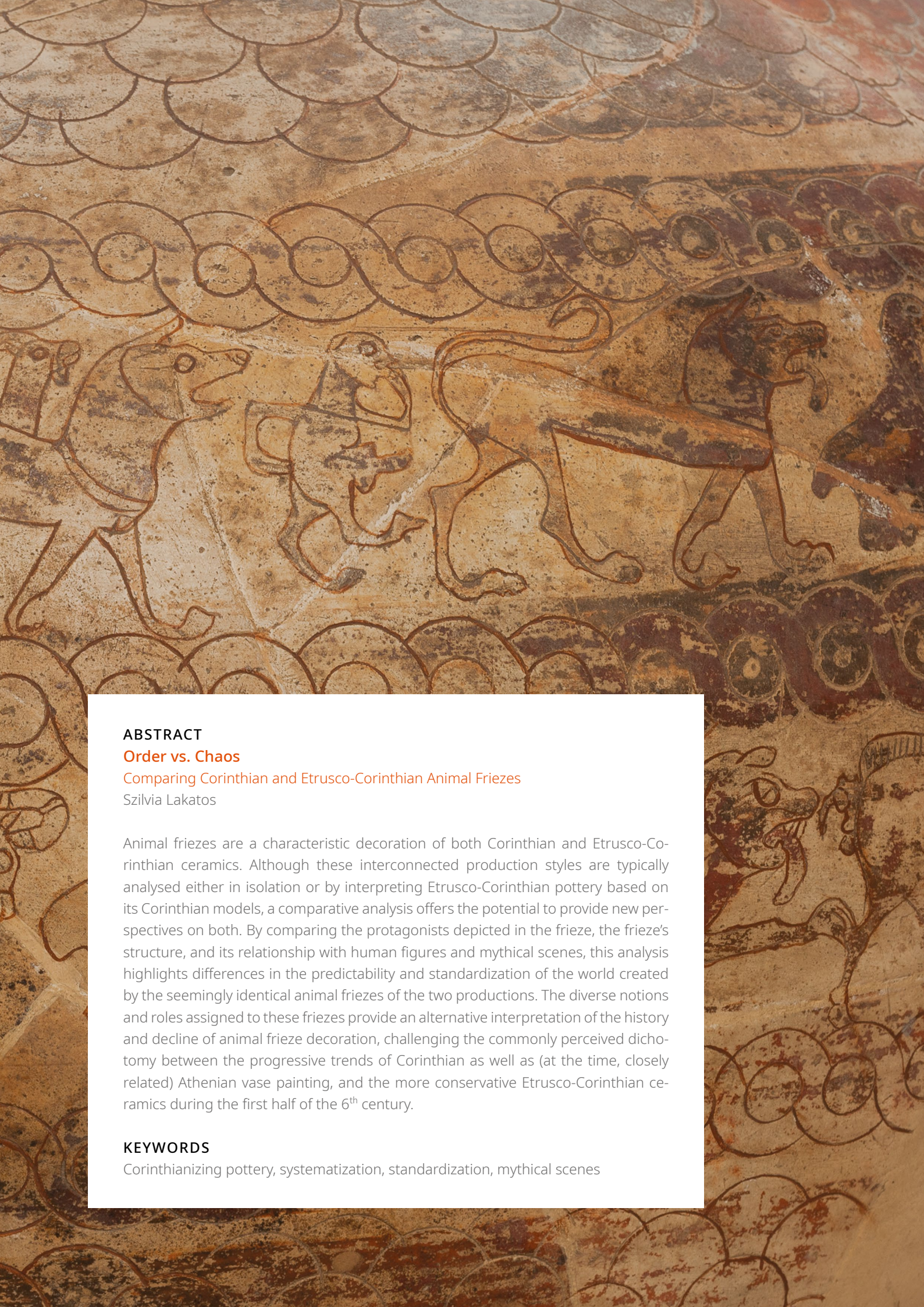


## ABSTRACT

### Order vs. Chaos

Comparing Corinthian and Etrusco-Corinthian Animal Friezes

Szilvia Lakatos

Animal friezes are a characteristic decoration of both Corinthian and Etrusco-Corinthian ceramics. Although these interconnected production styles are typically analysed either in isolation or by interpreting Etrusco-Corinthian pottery based on its Corinthian models, a comparative analysis offers the potential to provide new perspectives on both. By comparing the protagonists depicted in the frieze, the frieze's structure, and its relationship with human figures and mythical scenes, this analysis highlights differences in the predictability and standardization of the world created by the seemingly identical animal friezes of the two productions. The diverse notions and roles assigned to these friezes provide an alternative interpretation of the history and decline of animal frieze decoration, challenging the commonly perceived dichotomy between the progressive trends of Corinthian as well as (at the time, closely related) Athenian vase painting, and the more conservative Etrusco-Corinthian ceramics during the first half of the 6$^{th}$ century.



## KEYWORDS

Corinthianizing pottery, systematization, standardization, mythical scenes

SZILVIA LAKATOS

# Order vs. Chaos

## Comparing Corinthian and Etrusco-Corinthian Animal Friezes

1 In the 7th and the first half of the 6th century B.C., animal friezes were widespread in various Greek ceramic productions. However, Corinthian pottery, produced and exported on the largest scale, had the greatest impact on other regions.[1] Corinthian vases imported in Etruria have been discovered from the earliest periods,[2] but it was the surge in imports of Corinthian pottery to Etruria during the so-called transitional period that led to the emergence of figural Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting around 630 B.C.[3] Etrusco-Corinthian vases, akin to Corinthian pottery crafted for export, remained in production until the middle of the 6th century. The production involved at least three major centres in southern Etruria – Cerveteri, Vulci, and Tarquinia – and possibly other smaller production sites as well. Etrusco-Corinthian ceramics are characterized by a strong sense of ambiguity, as the Etruscan vase painters freely incorporated diverse inspirations alongside Corinthian models, developing their own workshop traditions even within a fundamentally Corinthianizing framework. Thus, Etrusco-Corinthian ceramics created a unique version of Corinthian pottery.[4]

1 This paper is a revised version of the presentation I delivered in 2020 in Innsbruck at the conference of the Austrian Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum research project. I would like to express my gratitude to Claudia Lang-Auinger for her kind invitation. I am also grateful to Árpád M. Nagy and the anonymous reviewers of AA for their constructive comments.
For Corinthian pottery, the works of D. A. Amyx and C. W. Neeft (Amyx 1988; Neeft 1991) offer a starting point. For insights into the animal frieze on East Greek pottery from this period, refer to Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 245–253.

2 Dehl 1984, 131–133. 139, with the addenda in Martelli 1989, 796–803. See also Gilotta 2013, 13–16 on the presence of Protocorinthian vases in the Monte Abatone necropolis of Cerveteri, and Rizzo 2016, 84–100 for the rich collection of Protocorinthian vases from the right-side chamber of Tomb No. 1 of the San Paolo Tumulus in Cerveteri.

3 The corpus of Etrusco-Corinthian figural vases was published by J. Gy. Szilágyi (Szilágyi 1992 and Szilágyi 1998).

4 Lakatos 2021a, 433; Lakatos 2021b, 62 f. The obvious signs of Corinthianising are that the most prevalent forms in the repertoire of vase shapes within this production are of Corinthian origin, and the vases were decorated with animal friezes featuring animals of different kinds surrounded by Corinthian-type filling ornaments, executed predominantly using the black-figure technique.

2 In the 19th century, researchers discerned that Corinthian-style vases often found in excavations of Etruscan sites might belong to two distinct productions.[5] Consequently, the research trajectories of these two productions diverged, becoming markedly separate and isolated. Although D. A. Amyx, in his seminal publication on Corinthian pottery, briefly discussed Etrusco-Corinthian pottery to illustrate the influence of Corinthian pottery in other regions,[6] Etruscan productions typically do not receive any attention in analyses of Greek ceramic productions. While the starting point for studying Etrusco-Corinthian vases has consistently been Corinthian ceramics, the search for Corinthian parallels was primarily motivated by the need to address dating issues. On the other hand, searching for non-Corinthian characteristics of Etrusco-Corinthian vases was crucial in describing the distinctive characteristics of this Etruscan production, thereby justifying its own artistic merits.[7] However, a comparative analysis of Corinthian and Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting, examining their distinctions within the broader context of their fundamental similarities, may offer deeper insights into the characteristics of both productions.

3 In the following sections, the animal frieze, a characteristic and seemingly identical decoration of both Corinthian and Etrusco-Corinthian productions, will be examined from various perspectives. In this analysis, I will draw heavily on the work of L. Winckler-Horaček focusing on the Corinthian animal frieze, and on my previous research, in which I extensively analysed the Etrusco-Corinthian animal frieze.[8] Building on these previous studies, the comparative analysis of the two productions will examine aspects such as the protagonists depicted in the frieze, the frieze's structure, and its relationship with human figures and mythical scenes. This examination will help us to understand the notions and roles assigned to the animal friezes of Corinthian and Etrusco-Corinthian pottery, which will be compared with the differing histories of this type of decoration in the two productions. As we will see, during the first half of the 6th century, the animal frieze in Corinthian ceramics (and in the closely related Athenian ceramics of the time) increasingly became marginalized, with human figures and mythical scenes taking over as the primary decorative elements, whereas in Etrusco-Corinthian ceramics, the animal frieze remained central to the decoration of the vases until the middle of the century. Rather than framing this difference as a dichotomy between the progressive Corinthian (and Athenian) ceramics and the more conservative Etrusco-Corinthian ceramics, which do not follow prevailing trends, we instead consider how differences between the animal friezes of these productions may offer a new framework for interpreting the phenomenon. Thus, we will argue that both Corinthian and Etrusco-Corinthian productions may serve as contemporary viewpoints for understanding each other and provide a clearer interpretation of one another.

## The Protagonists of the Animal Frieze

4 The Corinthian animal frieze features a diverse array of animals coexisting side by side. Among them are menacing predators like lions and panthers, and also ungulates such as bulls, boars, goats, rams, stags, does and horses, as well as dogs, rabbits,

5 See Szilágyi 1992, 23–28 for a brief research history of Etrusco-Corinthian vases, and also Bellelli 2003, 91–95 and Bellelli 2009, 77–79 for additions.

6 Amyx 1988, 685–698.

7 This exploration gained momentum in the latter half of the 20th century thanks to the interest of numerous researchers, focusing primarily on establishing the inner history of the Etrusco-Corinthian production, fully realized in the two-volume monograph of J. Gy. Szilágyi (Szilágyi 1992; Szilágyi 1998).

8 Winkler-Horaček 2015a; Lakatos 2021a, 101–254.

various birds, sea creatures, snakes, and lizards.[9] In addition to the depictions of real animals, the frieze also incorporates fantastical creatures. Among these, the most commonly featured hybrid figure is the so-called sphinx, characterized by a human head atop a lion's body with wings. While a Middle Protocorinthian aryballos depicted the sphinx with hooves, earning it the name ›bull-sphinx‹,[10] the standard representation of the sphinx as a human-headed winged lion was in use from the mid-7th century onwards. Sphinxes exhibit only slight variations in their portrayal, in terms of their gender (indicated by the presence or absence of a beard), as well as in terms of the presence of a helmet, polos, or vegetal ornament on their heads.[11] Similarly, human-headed birds or sirens commonly appear on Corinthian animal friezes, and these figures also exhibit a high degree of standardization, with variations limited to wing position, gender, and occasional adornments like helmets, poloi, or vegetal ornaments.[12] The preference for consistent representation extends further with griffins, which follow a uniform typology, lacking even the minor variations seen in sphinxes and sirens.[13]

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Fig. 1: Drawing of a Middle Protocorinthian aryballos by the Boston Painter featuring a chimaera-like creature with a human protome on its back. From Corinth. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, inv. 95.11

Fig. 2: Drawing of a Middle Protocorinthian aryballos by the Chigi Group featuring a chimaera in its mythological context. From Thebes. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, inv. 95.10

5 The animal friezes on Corinthian pottery also showcase several other hybrid creatures, although they are not utilised as frequently.[14] A notable addition to these is the chimaera figure depicting a lion with a goat's head emerging from its back and, occasionally, with its tail ending in a snake.[15] While the former creatures have relatively fixed compositions, a chimaera-like creature on a Middle Protocorinthian aryballos in Boston distinguishes itself by having a human protome growing out of the back of a lion instead of a goat's head (Fig. 1).[16] Moreover, the chimaera stands out among the hybrid creatures mentioned so far, as it appears relatively early on two vases from the Middle Protocorinthian period – a kotyle by the Aegina Bellerophon Painter and an aryballos of the Chigi Group (Fig. 2) – depicted as part of a mythical story in which it is defeated by Bellerophon.[17]

9 Amyx 1988, 663–672.

10 Oxford, Ashmolean Museum inv. G 146; Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 124 fig. 76.

11 Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 126–140.

12 Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 185.

13 Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 208 f. A less common figure of Corinthian animal friezes is the griffin-bird, where variations may include the bird's head resembling a raptor or waterfowl (Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 226 f.).

14 These include hippocampi, centaurs, the snake-legged man known as Typhon, and the wingless fish-bodied man known as Triton (Payne 1931, 76–78; Amyx 1988, 661 f.; Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 237 f.).

15 Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 238–240.

16 Boston, Museum of Fine Arts inv. 95.11; Amyx 1988, 33 f. no. 1 pl. 11, 2; Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 233 fig. 186 and n. 1003 with further bibliographical references. Furthermore, on one aryballos the front part of the chimaera figure is that of a horse instead of a lion (Amyx 1988, 660 n. 102 and 568 no. 51).

17 The kotyle: Aegina, Museum inv. K 253; Amyx 1988, 28 cat. A-1 pl. 8, 1 a–c. The aryballos: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts inv. 95.10; Amyx 1988, 37 no. 2. – See Ziskowski 2014 on the history of depictions on this mythical story in Archaic Corinth.

3

Fig. 3: Middle Corinthian oinochoe featuring a variety of hybrid creatures (details). From the Potter's Quarter of Corinth. American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Corinth Excavations, inv. Oinochoe, KP – 154

6 Alongside the chimaera figures, centaurs feature in mythological narratives involving Heracles and eventually a woman, likely Deianeira.[18] The Minotaur, a creature with the body of a bull and the head of a human, is depicted on a Middle Corinthian cup within its own mythological context.[19] Additionally, sirens make an appearance on a Late Corinthian aryballos, depicted in a scene illustrating Odysseus tied to the mast of his ship during his encounter with these creatures.[20] Apart from this late example, the sirens and the other frequently depicted hybrid figures do not appear to be associated with specific mythological stories. Fixed representations were not promoted, even by mythical narratives, allowing these figures to appear in almost any form. In light of this, it is remarkable that they display such a high degree of uniformity.[21]

7 In addition to the figures mentioned so far, which appeared only rarely in mythical scenes in Corinthian pottery but later solidified into distinct mythical figures in Greek art, numerous other hybrid creatures are featured on Corinthian vases. The repertoire of these various figures was, however, constructed according to a strict system, utilizing a limited number of body parts. Within this system, Corinthian vase painters employed the bodies of lions, birds, or horses, and the heads of panthers, lions, birds, humans, and eventually the head of a gorgon. These elements could then be freely varied and equipped with wings of various shapes. Another method employed to create hybrid creatures was to duplicate the body of an animal, resulting in double sphinxes, double panthers, etc. An excellent illustration of this construction method using standardized elements is the section title »Make-a-Monster – A Do-It-Yourself Kit« used by Amyx.[22]

8 This closed set of variations has been found to include additional elements only on rare occasions. A Middle Corinthian oinochoe from the Potter's Quarter of Corinth can be cited, which was described by Amyx as one of the most unusual Corinthian vases (Fig. 3).[23] The oinochoe features a double snake ending in a phallos, with one snake-head and one human head on its two snake bodies. Adjacent to this creature, a hedgehog also ending in a phallos can be seen, along with a poorly distinguishable griffin-headed winged creature with a human arm stretched out in front and a dolphin-rabbit hybrid going with its

18 Amyx 1988, 630 f.

19 Brussels, Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire inv. A 1374; Amyx 1988, 203 f. no. 1; LIMC VI, 575 f. no. 17 (s. v. Minotauros).

20 Boston, Museum of Fine Arts inv. 01.8100. See Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 203 f. fig. 154 and n. 859 with further references.

21 Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 126 making this observation in connection to the sphinx figures.

22 Amyx 1988, 661 f.; Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 233 f.

23 American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Corinth Excavations inv. Oinochoe, KP – 154; Stilwell – Benson 1984, 142 no. 721 pl. 33; Amyx 1988, 662.

two parts in opposite directions. The vase also features a human-goat with lion paws. It's no wonder that Amyx described this vase as a »nightmarish jumble of ill-matched parts«, which can only be called a »cauchemar«. The phallos appears on a few other Corinthian vases, often as part of hybrid creatures such as phallos-birds and phallos-humans.[24] However, the limited number of such exceptions highlights the high degree of standardization in the repertoire of hybrid figures in Corinthian vase painting.[25]

9 The animal frieze serves as the primary decoration on Etrusco-Corinthian vases as well, featuring protagonists very similar to those found in Corinthian pottery. A wide range of predators and herbivores are depicted, along with birds, fish, snakes, and, in one instance, even a lizard.[26] Hybrid creatures, such as the sphinx, are also present, with variations primarily limited to gender and the presence of clothing or a vegetal ornament on the head.[27] While sirens also appear in a similarly consistent form,[28] griffins do not conform to their standardized depiction in Corinthian vase painting. They typically lack details such as pointed ears, a forehead knob, and even wings, instead appearing essentially as lions – or, in rare cases, winged lions[29] – with the heads of birds of prey.[30]

10 A remarkable variability can be observed in the case of chimaera figures, surpassing even that of the Corinthian examples.[31] For example, one so-called scale amphora from the early production of Cerveteri shows a goat with a goat's head on its back.[32] On a similar amphora, two different chimaera-like figures emerge next to each other – a lion with three goat's heads and a horse with one goat's head on its back (Fig. 4).[33] A comparable diversity is observed in the case of hippocampi figures on Etrusco-Corinthian vases, to the extent that it is questionable whether these creatures should be referred to as hippocampi at all.[34] For instance, on a dinos from the same workshop as the aforementioned amphorae, a unique creature is portrayed with a front part resembling a quadruped, while the back part does not feature the usual curling fish tail of hippocampi, but rather a long and straight body with spikes.[35] Similarly, on a stamnos from the earliest phase of Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting, the back part of the hippocampus features a series of long spikes.[36]

11 In addition to these figures, which are also known from depictions in later centuries of Greek and Etruscan art and are typically associated with mythical narratives,[37]

24 Amyx 1988, 661.

25 A unique creation on a Middle Protocorinthian aryballos from Syracuse can be cited, featuring a figure with a human body, lion head, and donkey ears (Syracuse, Museo Archeologico Regionale; Amyx 1988, 25 no. 3; Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 233 fig. 226). Additionally, a Late Protocorinthian alabastron from Rhodes shows a goat-bird (Paris, Musée du Louvre inv. A 439; Amyx 1988, 285 no. 1; Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 233 fig. 146). Amyx also mentioned an otherwise unpublished neck-amphora in a private collection, which portrays two dolphins with a boar's snout (Amyx 1988, 662), but without providing further details or images, making the object untraceable.

26 Lakatos 2021a, 103–107.

27 Lakatos 2021a, 120–122.

28 Lakatos 2021a, 122 f.

29 As on several olpai of the Feoli Painter (Szilágyi 1992, 181 no. 12, 17 and 18 pls. 79 a; 81 c; see also Lakatos 2021a, 233 fig. 125).

30 However, they are not identical to the Corinthian lion-bird creatures, which have a lion head and a bird body. For the griffins, as well as the griffin-birds depicted in Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting, see Lakatos 2021a, 125.

31 Lakatos 2021a, 123 f.

32 Cerveteri, Magazzino; Szilágyi 1992, 131 no. 20.

33 Milan, Civico Museo Archeologico inv. A 0.9.7949; Szilágyi 1992, 133 no. 53; Lakatos 2021a, 124 fig. 28.

34 Lakatos 2021a, 126 f.

35 Paris, Musée du Louvre inv. E.421; Szilágyi 1992, 140 no. 136; Lakatos 2021a, 127 fig. 32.

36 Copenhagen, Glyptotek inv. HIN 512; Szilágyi 1992, 46 no. 4; Lakatos 2021a, 126 fig. 30.

37 Etrusco-Corinthian animal friezes also feature centaur figures similar to those found in Corinthian friezes, and in one case, a snake-legged human figure resembling Typhon (Lakatos 2021a, 115–119 and 136). A bull-headed human is depicted on two vases, but unlike the Minotaur from Corinthian vase painting, this creature appears isolated within the animal frieze, with no reference to its mythical story (Lakatos 2021a, 138–140 on the two olpai of the Feoli Painter).

Fig. 4: Etrusco-Corinthian scale amphora featuring two different chimaera-like figures (detail). From Cerveteri, tomb no. 32 of the Monte Abatone necropolis. Milan, Civico Museo Archeologico, inv. A 0.9.7949

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a wide repertoire of hybrid creatures appears in Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting. This repertoire includes figures not represented in Corinthian pottery, such as the goat-bird, deer-bird, boar-bird, sphinx-bird, and snake-bird. There are also instances of bull-boar, stag-boar, and goat-boar figures, as well as an herbivore with a lion's head. Some creatures incorporate fish as part of their body, such as the panther-fish, bull-fish, and goat-fish, along with a lion-headed creature with a bird's body that transitions into a fish tail.[38]

12 The diversity in the composition of hybrid figures is further expanded with the inclusion of wings, reminiscent of the working methods of Corinthian painters.[39] The possibilities for variation are also enhanced by animals whose tails culminate in another creature, such as a bull's tail ending with a stag's head on an oenochoe made by the Vulcian workshops.[40] The richness of these hybrid creatures is further augmented by subtle variations in the depictions of the tails and legs of animal figures. Sphinxes and griffins feature hooves and horses' tails, while goats and horses are depicted with the paws and tails characteristic of felines on a number of scale amphorae.[41] Not only did the painters of scale amphorae in Cerveteri apply the technique of mixing herbivores and felines, but a similar example – featuring a panther with a horse's tail – can also be found on an olpe by the Pescia Romana Painter, who worked slightly later in Vulci during the so-called second generation of Etrusco-Corinthian workshops.[42] The use of a wide range of hybrid creatures is thus characteristic of different workshops and as a matter of fact, also of different periods of Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting, and the repertoire of these figures extends far beyond the conventional range of hybrid creatures in Corinthian ceramics.

13 Besides the variation types in terms of tails and legs introduced above, of which several occurrences are known, there are also some unique cases where the subtle differences regarding other details between real animals and hybrid creatures can sometimes make it difficult to discern whether the painter inadvertently mixed

38 Lakatos 2021a, 128 f.
39 Lakatos 2021a, 129–133.
40 Cambridge MA, Fogg Museum inv. 25.30.1; Szilágyi 1992, 252 no. 3; Lakatos 2021a, 133 fig. 45.
41 See Szilágyi 1992, 136 no. 75 and 139 no. 121; Lakatos 2021a, 117 fig. 23 and 133 fig. 44.
42 Szilágyi 1992, 203 no. 11.

elements from two distinct figures or if the blending was a deliberate choice. For instance, a deer is depicted with a goat's beard and boar's bristles on its back on a plate by the Pescia Romana Painter, despite these animals having well-defined and consistently represented features in the painter's œuvre (Fig. 5).[43] Notably, the Pescia Romana Painter executed his vases with meticulous care, which may support the view that this was a deliberate choice. As an example of a more ambiguous case, we may consider the bull on an alabastron attributed to the Burrell Painter, who worked during the later periods of Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting. The bull's unusually long and straight horn, accurately decorated with red spots, prompts speculation as to whether the figure was conceived as a real or hybrid creature (Fig. 6).[44]

14 In the works of several Etrusco-Corinthian vase painters, a distinct approach is noticeable, even in their rendering of the internal structure of figures, which lacks parallels in Corinthian pottery. Although the lion's mane is often stylized as a net-like pattern on Early and Middle Corinthian vases, this detail primarily adheres to a mimetic conception of representation, using selected features of real animal appearances as a starting point.[45] The Corinthian way of presenting the lion's mane occasionally appears in the works of the Code Annodate Painter, who worked in Vulci in the so-called third generation of Etrusco-Corinthian workshops, roughly contemporary with the Middle Corinthian period.[46] However, Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting often shows a decorative portrayal of different body parts that diverges from the naturalistic anatomy of the animals. This approach can be exemplified by the works of the Castellani Painter from the earliest phase of Etrusco-Corinthian production, whose vases closely resemble Corinthian models in terms of vase forms and the outline of animal figures. Yet the painter chose to segment the bodies into coloured fields, disregarding any anatomical details of the depicted animals and treating the figures as areas for free decoration (Fig. 7).[47]

15 Upon comparing the two productions, it becomes evident that the friezes feature essentially the same protagonists. However, a notable difference emerges in the standardization of the various hybrid figures. In Corinthian ceramics, with few exceptions, the hybrid creatures follow a well-ordered repertoire. While some early examples from the Middle Protocorinthian period, such as the bull-sphinx or the chimaera with a human protome, show a wider range of variations, the depicted figures soon became

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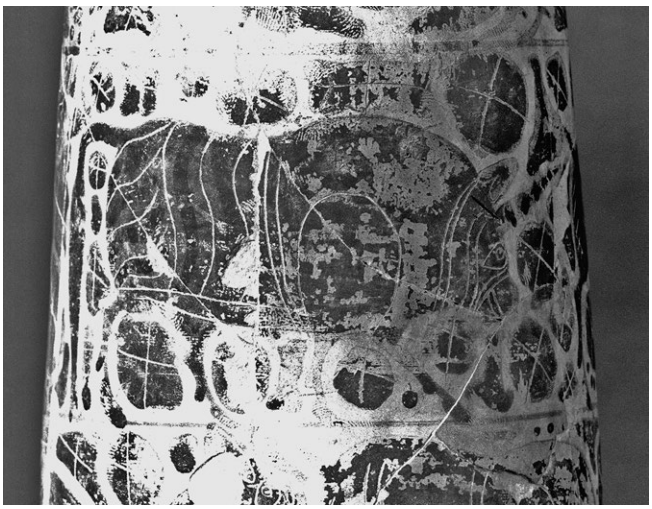

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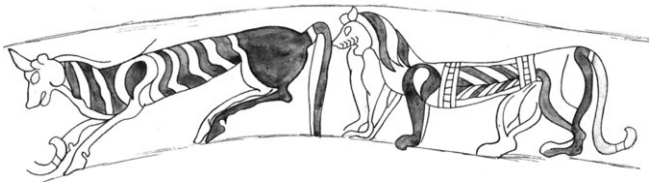

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Fig. 5: Etrusco-Corinthian plate by the Pescia Romana Painter featuring a deer with a goat's beard and boar's bristles (detail). Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, inv. De Ridder.188

Fig. 6: Etrusco-Corinthian alabastron by the Burrell Painter featuring a bull with an extravagant horn (detail). Philadelphia, University Museum, inv. MS 712

Fig. 7: Drawing of an Etrusco-Corinthian aryballos by the Castellani Painter featuring a bull and a lion, the latter having a human leg in its mouth. Budapest, Museum of Fine Arts, inv. 56.135.A

43 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale inv. De Ridder.188; Szilágyi 1992, 203 no. 13. – For similar examples from the œuvre of the Hercle Painter, refer to Szilágyi 1998, 299, where he characterizes these instances as outcomes of the vase painter's negligence.

44 Philadelphia, University Museum inv. MS 712; Szilágyi 1998, 557 no. 7 fig. 115 b.

45 See, for instance, Amyx 1988, 85 f. pl. 35 for the works of the Early Corinthian Columbus Painter.

46 Szilágyi 1998, 377. The net-like pattern also appears – albeit in an abbreviated form resembling a scarf on the neck of the animals – in the works of the Feoli Painter (Lakatos 2021a, 265).

47 Szilágyi 1992, 71. For the aryballos: Budapest, Museum of Fine Arts inv. 56.135.A; Szilágyi 1992, 68 no. 9.

standardized. According to Winkler-Horaček's interpretation, the systematization of these figures also results in a reduction of their strangeness and peculiarity, as their incomprehensibility is mitigated. The distant, frightening beings of the outer world have been, so to speak, domesticated through conventional forms of depiction.[48] In contrast, Etrusco-Corinthian ceramics, partly due to the alteration of only small details on a given animal, feature an almost infinite variety of creatures. This can be observed not only in the early phase of Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting, which is contemporary with the Transitional and Early Corinthian periods of Corinthian pottery, but also in the later phases of production. Furthermore, Etrusco-Corinthian vase painters challenged the naturalistic depiction of animal figures, ultimately blurring the boundaries between real and hybrid creatures. Thus, Etrusco-Corinthian ceramics seem to lack the ambition to systematize the protagonists of the animal friezes entirely, as vase painters frequently experimented with variations of different creatures. The Etrusco-Corinthian friezes, though essentially inspired by Corinthian models, fundamentally reconsider these figures. Rather than rendering them predictable, they reveal the extraordinary richness and variability of the world.

## The Arrangement of the Protagonists

16 After examining the repertoire of the various figures within the animal frieze, it is also worth considering their arrangement. As observed in Corinthian animal friezes, the depicted figures include both ungulates and felines. While some figures engage in attacks, or a possible attack is indicated by details such as a raised paw, the majority of Corinthian animal friezes feature static and seemingly actionless rows of animals. Winkler-Horaček analysed the arrangement of the figures on several hundred friezes and found that while some scenes are rather uneventful, depicting e. g. symmetrically arranged pairs of identical animals on either side of a vegetal ornament, others possess an interactive potential, reflecting implied actions. He demonstrated that groups of two or three animal figures with opposing characteristics are particularly common in Corinthian animal friezes. Even when no direct contact is illustrated, interactions are implied through scenes portraying an antithetical group of two animals representing an unequal balance of power, or of two strong animals overpowering a weaker one in the middle. Each animal thus seems to embody either a dangerous or a peaceful attribute, and the frieze's structure emphasizes these power relations.[49] This hierarchical system incorporates not only real animals but also various hybrid creatures, which assume roles in confrontational compositions that correspond to the animal that forms the larger part of their body. Therefore, the Corinthian animal frieze presents a hierarchy that transcends everyday experience but is grounded in real power relations.[50]

17 With the earlier-discussed distinction in the repertoire of hybrid creatures, the Etrusco-Corinthian animal friezes fundamentally feature the same protagonists as their Corinthian counterparts. Similar to Corinthian friezes, instances of fights between these figures with different power relations are present only in a limited number.[51] In some cases, the raised paws, open mouths, or outstretched tongues of predators are used to indicate a readiness to strike, and centaurs are sometimes shown holding prey hanging from the branches they grasp.[52] Furthermore, unique to Etrusco-Corinthian art

48 Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 234.
49 Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 254–286.
50 Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 287–299.
51 Lakatos 2021a, 229 f.
52 Lakatos 2021a, 116 and 235.

are representations featuring animal body parts, such as a goat's head, antlers, a fawn, or animal legs protruding from feline mouths, suggesting a violent conflict.[53]

18 In examining the portrayal of attacks and potential fights in Corinthian and Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting, further distinctions emerge between the animal friezes of the two productions. In Etrusco-Corinthian friezes, compositions depicting fight scenes sometimes include protagonists whose presence does not reflect the typical power dynamics seen in the animal conflicts of Corinthian vases. For instance, in contrast to the depictions of prey emerging from the mouth of a predator, as mentioned earlier, an alabastron of the Feoli Painter – who worked in Vulci in the so-called second generation of Etrusco-Corinthian workshops – features a small panther hanging from the mouth of a larger panther.[54] In another case, on the aryballos of the Castellani Painter a panther biting a lion from behind is shown (Fig. 8).[55] On another aryballos from the workshop of this vase painter, a double-bodied panther appears, with the animal on the right touching the front leg of the other panther with its paw.[56] There is also an unexpected balance of power between the animals in scenes like the one on the olpe of the Feoli Painter where a tiny griffin, positioned between two symmetrically arranged bulls, places its paws on one of the bulls and seems to be attacking it.[57]

8

Fig. 8: Drawing of an Etrusco-Corinthian aryballos by the Castellani Painter featuring a panther biting a lion from behind, the latter having a male lower body in its mouth. From Vulci. Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Pergamonmuseum, inv. F 1187

19 Apart from the conventional and the aforementioned unconventional fight scenes, the majority of Etrusco-Corinthian friezes, much like their Corinthian counterparts, do not depict any action. However, the two- and three-figure scenes commonly seen in Corinth – portraying two animals facing each other with unequal positions in the hierarchy of power, or two stronger animals framing a weaker one – can also be found in the works of the Painter of the Bearded Sphinxes. This vase painter, who worked in both Vulci and Cerveteri during the early phase of Etrusco-Corinthian production, was strongly influenced by Corinthian models not only in terms of vase forms and the drawing of figures, but also in the structure of his animal friezes.[58] In contrast, most Etrusco-Corinthian vase painters arranged the animals in their friezes to face in one direction (Fig. 4). The only variation lies in the direction of the rows of animals – on the vases of some painters or workshops, the animals face left, while on the vases of others, they face right.[59] On several scale amphorae, when multiple friezes were included in the decoration, the animal rows were sometimes alternated, facing right in one frieze and left in the next.[60]

20 This one-directional row of animals was challenged – apart from the Painter of the Bearded Sphinxes – to some extent also by the Feoli Painter, who frequently employed a symmetrical composition of two identical animals dividing the frieze into two parts.[61] In such cases, the central group often consisted of two sphinxes with a waterfowl between them, two sirens with an owl in the middle, or two sphinxes, lions,

53 Lakatos 2021a, 111 f. figs. 15–18 and 105.

54 Private collection; Szilágyi 1992, 182 no. 31; Lakatos 2021a, 112 f. fig. 20.

55 Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Pergamonmuseum inv. F 1187; Szilágyi 1992, 68 no. 8.

56 Private collection; Szilágyi 1992, 72 no. 5; Lakatos 2021a, 232 fig. 121.

57 Private collection; Szilágyi 1992, 181 no. 18; Lakatos 2021a, 233 fig. 125. For further examples of a grotesque and bizarre animal fight, see Lakatos 2021a, 230–234.

58 Lakatos 2021a, 225 f. fig. 107–109. For further examples, see Szilágyi 1992, pl. 27–40.

59 Lakatos 2021a, 224 f. and 227 f. For instance, two contemporary workshops of the late 7th century show friezes composed in different directions. The friezes of the Monte Abatone Group feature figures moving to the right, whereas the contemporary Castellani Painter's works depict figures moving to the left, as illustrated in Fig. 7. Similarly, painters active in Vulci during the early 6th century exhibit a variety of directional preferences: some favoured the left direction, others the right, while some alternated between the two.

60 Szilágyi 1992, 146; Lakatos 2021a, 225 fig. 105.

61 Szilágyi 1992, 184 and 192 f.

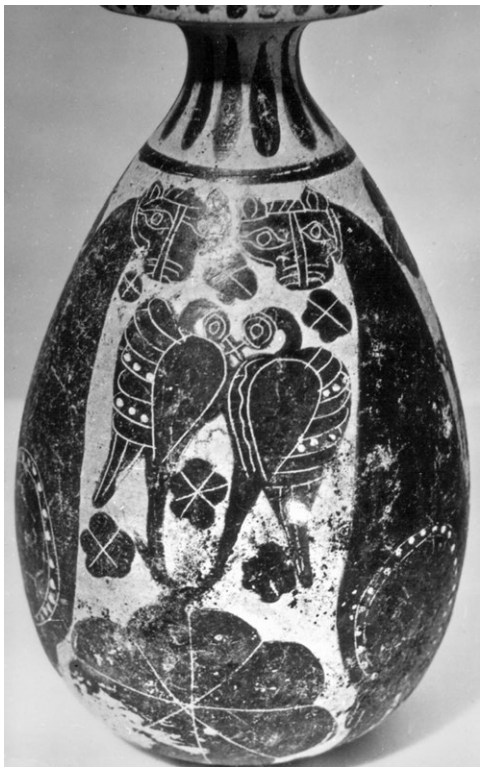

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Fig. 9: Etrusco-Corinthian alabastron by the Pescia Romana Painter featuring two waterfowls between two panthers. Private collection

or bulls with a plant in between,[62] while the other animal figures behind them were arranged to face in a single direction. Despite the potential for interaction offered by some of these central groups, the remaining parts of the friezes avoided the confrontational arrangement of the figures commonly observed in Corinthian vase painting. The differing views of Etrusco-Corinthian vase painters regarding the composition of animal friezes are evident also in the alabastron of the Pescia Romana Painter (Fig. 9).[63] In the case of this vase shape, Etrusco-Corinthian vase painters usually employed figure arrangements typical of Corinthian alabastra, such as antithetical compositions with two identical animals, sometimes with a third animal, a plant, or rosettes interspersed between them.[64] However, the Pescia Romana Painter deviated from this usual three-figure composition on his alabastron, opting instead for a fully symmetrical four-figure scene by positioning two waterfowls between two panthers.

21 Although Corinthian and Etrusco-Corinthian animal friezes basically have the same protagonists, the structure of the friezes is, as we have seen, fundamentally different. Corinthian animal friezes exhibit a strong inclination toward standardization, not only in the repertoire of hybrid figures, as discussed earlier, but also in the arrangement of different figures within the frieze. According to Winkler-Horaček's interpretation, these standardized arrangements of figures, along with the inclusion of hybrid creatures in the hierarchical system of real animals, create order in the world of the animal frieze, reflecting a desire to alleviate the chaos and unsettling insecurity of the universe.[65]

22 In contrast, Etrusco-Corinthian vases do not exhibit a pronounced preference for scenes emphasizing hierarchical power relations among animal figures. Yet, they do not convey a peaceful ambience either, as is often underscored by the presence of attack scenes or details hinting at potential aggression, with the latter having an even broader repertoire on Etrusco-Corinthian compared to Corinthian vases. By juxtaposing animal figures with unequal power relations ready for eventual conflicts, Etrusco-Corinthian animal friezes also portray a world full of dangers, even if the events unfolding in these typically unidirectional friezes are entirely unexpected, as they do not conform to familiar arrangements. Due to the absence of a hierarchical system in the arrangement of animal figures, coupled with the nearly infinite variability of hybrid creatures, no predictable situations seem to arise in the realm of Etrusco-Corinthian animal friezes.

## Humans in the Animal Frieze

23 Corinthian and Etrusco-Corinthian animal friezes can also be compared with regard to their connection to human figures. Various depictions of daily life, such as fights, banquets, athletic and hunting activities, padded dancers, and the so-called *Frauenfest*, appear on Corinthian vases.[66] In the animal friezes of Etrusco-Corinthian vases, human figures are also portrayed in everyday activities, though in a less diverse set of contexts. While, popular themes from Corinthian pottery, such as symposiums,

62 For three-figure compositions, see Szilágyi 1992, pls. 77 b. d; 79 b, while for central groups including two symmetrical figures on either sides of a plant, see Szilágyi 1992, pls. 78 d; 81 b; 83 a.

63 Formerly in private collection; Szilágyi 1992, 206 no. 48 pl. 94 d.

64 Lakatos 2021a, 227 f.

65 Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 368–370.

66 Amyx 1988, 646–660.

10

Fig. 10: Middle Corinthian skyphos featuring a wild boar hunt. Copenhagen, National Museum of Denmark, inv. Chr. VIII 968

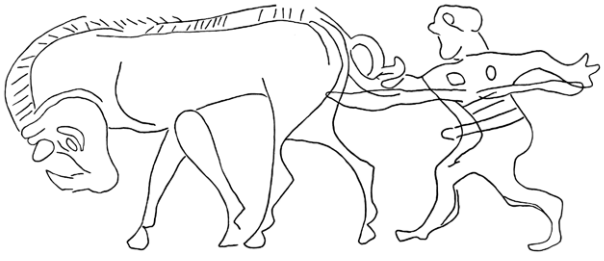
athletic events, or *Frauenfest* depictions, are notably absent on Etrusco-Corinthian vases,[67] other events such as fights, hunting, and dancing scenes are still well represented.

24 Taking the example of how hunts are depicted in either production, it is worth looking more closely at the relationship between the human figures and animal friezes. The most prevalent form of hunting in Corinthian vase painting is the wild boar hunt, in which a group of hunters, aided by hunting dogs, surrounds the target animal from two sides (Fig. 10). Similar scenes, either occupying the entire panel of decoration or appearing as integrated within the animal frieze, can be observed across various periods and on different vase forms, indicating a relatively standardized approach to depicting a boar hunt.[68]

25 In Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting, no hunting scenes are known to show humans acting in an organized group. Nevertheless, a scene of a boar hunt can be identified on a scale amphora, in which a single man with a spear is positioned between two wild boars in front of him and two grazing stags behind him (Fig. 11).[69] Based on how he extends the spear toward the boar, with the animal looking back at him, this scene could be described as a wild boar hunt. However, instead of the group of hunters typically seen in similar scenes on Corinthian vases, in this case a lone man is attempting to overpower the animal.

Fig. 11: Drawing of an Etrusco-Corinthian scale amphora featuring a man with spear and a wild boar (detail). From Cerveteri, Monte dell'Oro. Rome, Villa Giulia, inv. 106737

26 A group of humans is depicted on a dinos from the same workshop, not engaged in a boar hunt but possibly in a scene related to hunting (Fig. 12).[70] Three men are portrayed wearing garments (belts and circles on the chest), likely representing cuirasses, with swords hanging from their waists. Two of them stand together as a small group, while the third man follows behind them, holding a spear raised in his right hand. In the animal frieze, a waterfowl and a feline are visible in front of the men. It



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67 Lakatos 2021a, 171–174.

68 See Payne 1931, 116 for a list of examples, and Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 342 fig. 227 a. b for an additional example. For the skyphos: Copenhagen, National Museum of Denmark inv. Chr. VIII 968; Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 342 fig. 227 a. b and 457 n. 1395 with further bibliographical references.

69 Rome, Villa Giulia inv. 106737; Szilágyi 1992, 134 no. 64bis; Lakatos 2021a, 145 fig. 54.

70 Basel, Antikensammlung inv. Zü 194; Szilágyi 1992, 140 no. 137; Lakatos 2021a, 146 fig. 56.

Fig. 12: Etrusco-Corinthian dinos from the Group of Scale Amphorae featuring a scene possibly related to hunting. Basel, Antikensammlung, inv. Zü 194

12

is unclear whether the three men are attempting to attack one of these animals or if the third man, who stands somewhat apart, is engaged in a conflict with the two men ahead of him. Even if the men are trying to hunt the animals in front of them, the vase painter chose not to depict a coordinated attack by multiple hunters on both sides of the target animal, but rather positioned the figures alongside each other.

27 Apart from the types of boar hunts involving several hunters in the case of Corinthian vases as mentioned above, scenes with a solitary figure trying to capture a stag, or even a lion or a sphinx can also be found in Corinthian vase painting.[71] The solitary nature of the isolated hunter figures also suggests that they face different odds in the realm of wilderness represented by the animal frieze. Scenes with a human being attacked by a lion could be interpreted as such unsuccessful hunts.[72] Similarly, the lone hunter is not only present in boar hunts on Etrusco-Corinthian vases, as we have seen, but also in hunting scenes involving other animals, which could be termed as unrealistic hunting scenes. On an olpe by the Kithara Painter,[73] for instance, a man wielding a lagobolon approaches a seated sphinx and attempts to grasp the animal's tail with his hand.

28 Isolated hunter figures are thus depicted in both Corinthian and Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting, but a notable distinction arises between the two productions in terms of the portrayal of men who are defeated by a wild animal. An actual combat scene featuring a solitary figure being attacked by both a bird and a lion appears only once in Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting. This scene is found on an oenochoe by the Boehlau Painter, who worked in Vulci during the second generation of Etrusco-Corinthian workshops.[74] While similar scenes appear in Corinthian vase painting, the so-called leg-in-mouth motif – where the entire narrative is condensed into a depiction of felines with a human leg in their mouths – is unique to Etrusco-Corinthian vases.[75] The motif can be observed, for example, on the aforementioned Budapest aryballos by the Castellani Painter (Fig. 7). The other aforementioned aryballos by the painter in Berlin features

71 Payne 1931, 116; Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 154–157.

72 Payne 1931, 116; Amyx 1988, 672.

73 Civitavecchia, Museo inv. 81799; Szilágyi 1998, 477 no. 2; Lakatos 2021a, 122 fig. 27. and 150 fig. 63.

74 Viterbo, Chiesa S. Maria della Quercia, Antiquarium; Szilágyi 1992, 223 no. 11; Lakatos 2021a, 160 fig. 74.

75 Lakatos 2021a, 107–112.

a rare variant of the motif (Fig. 8), where instead of a leg, a whole male lower body hangs from the lion's mouth. The ›leg-in-mouth‹ motif was particularly popular in the early phase of Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting. Starting from the early 6th century with the so-called second generation in Vulci, it continued to be used, albeit sporadically. Humans are evidently destined to succumb to felines, yet they are sometimes depicted with the corpse of a weaker animal. For instance, on an amphora from the earliest phase of Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting, a man is portrayed holding a hare in his hand.[76] Consequently, the Etrusco-Corinthian animal frieze represents a wilderness infiltrated by human figures, where conflicts can arise among the protagonists at any moment.

29 While the animal frieze can be regarded as an appropriate backdrop for hunting scenes, the symposium and dance scenes of Corinthian vase painting cannot be directly associated with the animal frieze as a setting. In these instances, it is evident that the animal frieze only symbolically contextualizes the human figures appearing either in multi-figure scenes or in isolation.[77] This is particularly apparent on a Middle Corinthian lekanis[78] on which a figure is depicted reclining on a kline with dancers nearby, seemingly oblivious to the presence of wild animals (Fig. 13). Similarly, in Etrusco-Corinthian ceramics, we also encounter themes where the animal frieze serves solely as a symbolic context for the scene. However, instead of multi-figure groups, rather isolated human figures appear embedded into the animal frieze, as we have just seen in the case of hunting scenes. Examples include dancers, an aulos-player, human figures seated on a small diphros (Fig. 14), as well as ships with passengers amidst the animal figures of the frieze.[79]

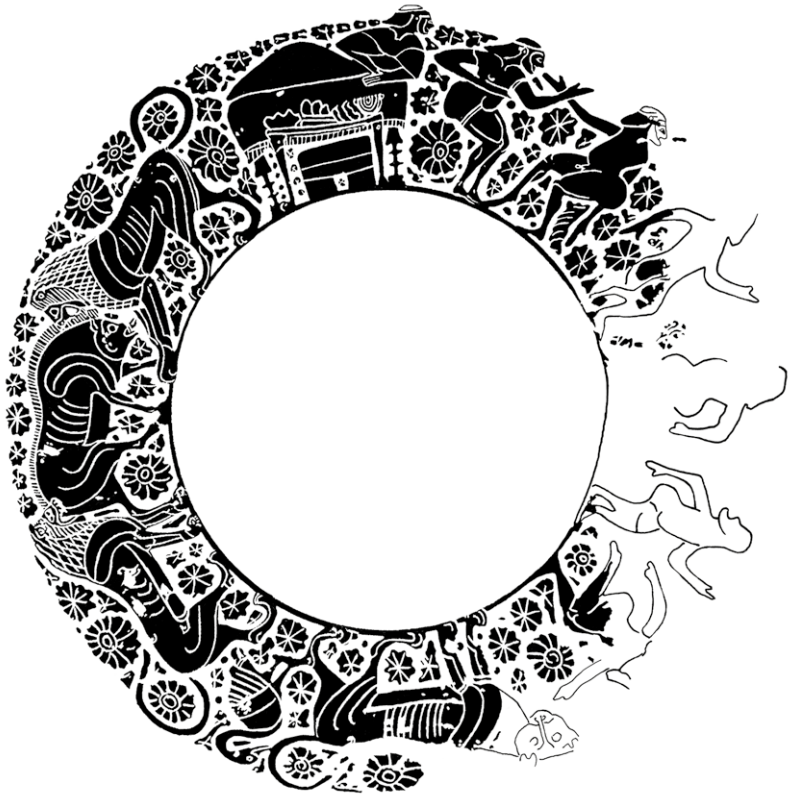

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Fig. 13: Middle Corinthian lekanis by the Medallion Painter featuring a reclining man and dancers among wild animals. From Kamiros, Rhodes. London, British Museum, inv. 1861,0425.45

Fig. 14: Etrusco-Corinthian olpe by the Hercle Painter featuring a sitting man among wild animals (detail). From Vulci. Private collection

30 The animal frieze thus functions in both Corinthian and Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting as a context that integrates scenes with human figures, sometimes in a more realistic manner and at other times in an obviously symbolic way. However, in Corinth, the multi-figural scenes create a secluded realm within the context of the animal frieze. In the hunting and symposium scenes, for instance, the idealized human patterns of action and the central pictorial symbols of an aristocratic way of life are juxtaposed with the wilderness of the animal frieze.[80] A similar confrontation of the civilized ambiance of humanity with the untamed outer world is not characteristic of Etrusco-Corinthian friezes. Instead of multi-figure scenes depicting an organized activity of humans, isolated

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76 Private collection; Szilágyi 1992, 41 no. 8; Lakatos 2021a, 148 fig. 58.

77 Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 343–351.

78 London, British Museum inv. 1861,0425.45; Amyx 1988, 195 no. 6; Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 343–345 fig. 228.

79 Lakatos 2021a, 169. 173. 177 f., and 162–164 respectively for the above-mentioned scenes. For the olpe by the Hercle Painter: private collection; Szilágyi 1998, 298 no. 123.

80 Winkler-Horaček 2015a, 365–370. See also Winkler-Horaček 2015b, 110–113, for the representative example of the centaur regarding the opposites of culture and nature, civilization and wilderness.

figures appear and interact with the animal frieze, thus being completely immersed into the unpredictable world of the wilderness.

31 Etrusco-Corinthian animal friezes follow Corinthian models in their basic appearance, in that animals of different kinds appear side by side among Corinthian-type filling ornaments, executed predominantly in the black-figure technique. At the same time, significant differences can also be observed between the two productions from various aspects. The world visualized by the Corinthian friezes is regulated by limiting the repertoire of hybrid creatures to a manageable number, by establishing predictable relationships among its protagonists, and often by delineating a clear boundary between the realms of humans and animals, thus creating a closed, secure field for human actions.

32 In contrast, Etrusco-Corinthian animal friezes eschew order in favour of chaos. The world depicted in these friezes defies systematic comprehension and description by clear rules. The array of creatures inhabiting the animal frieze is practically endless, lacking organizational structure, and without a discernible hierarchy of arrangement. The possibility of conflict among the protagonists does not arise as a natural consequence of their differing natures, but rather as a phenomenon of unpredictability. In the absence of multi-figure compositions, the animal friezes do not offer a confined area for human activity. Consequently, Etrusco-Corinthian animal friezes reformulate their Corinthian models by challenging the predictability and structured view of the world prevalent in Corinth but apparently not favoured in Etruria.

## Mythical Scenes and the Animal Frieze

33 Among the scenes featuring human figures on Corinthian vases, we find not only the everyday scenes mentioned above but also depictions of mythical stories. While hybrid creatures such as the chimaera and the siren appear in mythical scenes only in exceptional cases, a wide variety of other myths are depicted on Corinthian pottery from the Middle Protocorinthian period onwards.[81] In the later history of Corinthian pottery during the first half of the 6$^{th}$ century, a noticeable shift occurred with animal friezes gradually taking a secondary role to scenes featuring human figures, which often represented mythological narratives. This transformation is particularly striking considering that the animal frieze had served as a prominent decorative element on Corinthian vessels, almost as a trademark, starting from the Transitional Period – a time when both export trade and production increased significantly.[82]

34 The fading prominence of the animal frieze becomes evident when examining the decorations of Early, Middle, and Late Corinthian column kraters. A closer analysis reveals a consistent increase in the portrayal of mythical narratives, culminating in the Late Corinthian period. While it is true that in the Middle Corinthian period, the number of kraters featuring animal friezes remains comparable to that of the Early Corinthian period, the proportion of kraters adorned with animal friezes nevertheless decreased due to the approximately tripled production of kraters during this period. Additionally, there was a remarkable expansion in the variety of motifs, also involving a significant diversification in the range of mythical stories represented. One can also observe how the painter paid special attention to the finely drawn figural scene on the main frieze of the Middle Corinthian krater attributed to the Detroit Painter, compared to the animal frieze below it, which features only a few elongated and magnified figures occupying

81 Amyx 1988, 617–646. For the earliest representations see Benson 1995.

82 Amyx 1988, 372; Ziskowski 2017, 98 f.

15

Fig. 15: Middle Corinthian column krater by the Detroit Painter (detail). From Cerveteri, Banditaccia necropolis, Tumulo della Nave, tomb II. Rome, Villa Giulia, inv. 46197

the space (Fig. 15).[83] By the Late Corinthian period, the significance of kraters adorned with animal friezes became negligible.[84]

35 Not every Corinthian vase form has undergone extensive statistical analysis to the same extent. One can assume that vessels like kotylai, which were produced in mass quantities and with rather limited artistic ingenuity from the Middle Corinthian period onwards, likely wouldn't exhibit a similar prevalence of human figures in their ornamentation.[85] However, the example of column kraters – given that this unique vase form held a prominent role as the focal point of symposiums – clearly illustrates important changes in the decoration of Corinthian pottery.

36 Corinthian ceramics of the first half of the 6th century, particularly in regard to the increasing importance of mythical scenes, cannot be discussed without considering their relationship with contemporary Athenian ceramics, which took over Corinth's leading role in ceramic exports during this period. Corinthian and Athenian ceramic workshops maintained a closely intertwined relationship from the late 7th century to the mid-6th century. Athenian vase painters adopted numerous Corinthian vase forms, such as column kraters,[86] and incorporated Corinthian decorative elements, including

83 Rome, Villa Giulia, inv. 46197; Amyx 1988, 197 no. 6; Cristofani – Martelli 1991, 23 no. 49.

84 Cristofani – Martelli 1991, 11–14 fig. 10 showing a diagram. Bakır 1974, 56–59 describes a similar trend based on a detailed historical analysis of the Corinthian kraters. However, it remains unclear how Cristofani and Martelli's analysis accounts for pieces featuring a main frieze depicting human figures while also including an animal frieze in a secondary position. The use of a lower frieze encircling the entire vase is first attested in the second group of Corinthian kraters identified by Bakır (Bakır 1974, 57).

85 Benson 1985, 17 f.

86 Alexandridou 2011, 32. See also Bakır (Bakır 1981, 49 f.) for a discussion on the various variants of column kraters simultaneously present in Corinth and Athens.

komast dancers, symposium scenes,[87] and floral designs.[88] More importantly, Corinth's influence in the late 7th century led to the emergence of the so-called mixed animal frieze in Athenian art, featuring both predators and herbivores.[89]

37 The animal friezes on Athenian vases, based on a published corpus of Athenian lekanides, show notable similarities to Corinthian friezes not only in the types but also in the arrangement of the animals, featuring confrontational juxtapositions of figures with different positions in the hierarchy of power. Two-figure groups, typically featuring a lion or panther paired with various herbivores such as goats, rams, and boars are common, as are three-figure groups, often with a bull or boar in the centre. In some cases, such as with sirens, an eagle or small owl occupies the central position. However, other compositions also exist, including six-figure groups where two sirens are placed in the middle, flanked by two felines and two herbivores on either side.[90] The exact proportions of these arrangements remain unclear, as no comprehensive analysis similar to Winkler-Horaček's study of Corinthian animal friezes has yet been conducted on the structure of these friezes. Nevertheless, it seems likely that the Corinthian arrangement of animal friezes influenced Athenian vase painters during the Corinthianizing period of Athenian black-figure vase painting.

38 The Corinthian-type animal friezes of Athenian vase painting also incorporated human figures, either isolated among animals or as part of multi-figure compositions, often depicting mythical scenes.[91] Over time, these mythical scenes began to take precedence over the animal friezes. Sophilos, active between circa 590 and 570 B.C. and recognized as the earliest vase painter to sign his work, employed Corinthian-type frieze decorations. However, after his earliest vases, the depiction of animal figures in his works became simpler or cruder, and they assumed a secondary position behind the more prominent mythical scenes.[92] Of the approximately 40 vases attributed to his œuvre, at least nine feature mythical scenes.[93] Mythical scenes also cover nearly the entire surface of the François krater, signed by Ergotimos and Kleitias, from around 570 B.C. This exceptional vase features a Corinthian-type decoration system with superimposed friezes, in which the animal frieze is confined to the lowest figural frieze of the krater's body, and only two further sphinx figures appear on either side of the Calydonian boar hunt scene.[94] Besides these examples, as a general trend one can also observe a pronounced shift towards more anthropomorphic subjects and narrative themes in the second quarter of the 6th century B.C. Vases adorned solely with animal figures became increasingly rare, while the repertoire of everyday scenes and mythological depictions

87 Alexandridou 2011, 74.

88 Marzi 2003. A technical detail points towards Corinthian-Athenian artistic connections as well, notably the application of white paint directly onto the clay surface in the works of Sophilos (Williams 1999, 55). This technique, otherwise infrequently found in Athenian art, is typical of Corinthian craftsmanship (Amyx 1988, 540).

89 The Athenian influence on Corinthian ceramics suggests, on one hand, the arrival of Corinthian craftsmen to Athens, and on the other hand, the incorporation of Corinthian characteristics most likely contributed to the success of Athenian exports (Alexandridou 2012, 15).

90 Lioutas 1987, 123.

91 A notable example is the lekythos painted by the Deianeira Painter in the early 6th century. In this artwork, we see Heracles chasing Nessos, who has abducted Deianeira, with a panther joining the group (London, British Museum inv. 1883,0104.1; Alexandridou 2011, 172 no. Korinthos 1316).

92 Bakır 1981, 25. 60.

93 Brownlee 1995, 363. For further analyses of the narrative art of Sophilos, see Brownlee 1988; Moore 2016. The painter's inclination towards narrative is well-illustrated also by the fact that J. R. Mertens argued for a narrative context even in the depiction of the painter's animal figures, more precisely in the case of the two confronting but asymmetrical boars in the painter's New York volute krater (Mertens 1988, 427; New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art inv. 1977.11.2).

94 Barringer 2013, 159; Lezzi-Hafter 2013, 175 pls. 16–18. 32–40.

expanded dramatically.[95] This trend led to the marginalization of the animal frieze, evident already in the early works of Lydos around 560 B.C.[96]

39 Not only did the depicted scenes change, but the frieze-based system of decoration was also abandoned in the first half of the 6th century B.C. While some early examples of Athenian one-piece amphorae displayed frieze decorations, it was more common to find panels on both sides of this vase form, as exemplified by the popular group of horse-head amphorae and Reiteramphoren.[97] Although these feature rather stereotypical scenes, the Bildfeldamphoren, which appeared before the middle of the century, depict scenes composed of several human figures with new pictorial themes.[98] In the case of certain other vase forms, such as the olpe, the Corinthian version decorated with friezes was never adopted in Athens. Instead, Athenian potters favoured a different variant of the olpe, featuring panel-based decorations inspired by Proto-Attic models from the 7th century.[99] The distinctive decorative system of Corinthian ceramics, characterized by animal friezes, was thus challenged not only by the increasing focus on anthropomorphic subjects but also by the Athenian preference for panel-type decorations.

40 The Corinthian and Athenian vase painting of the first half of the 6th century are worth examining together, as the artistic connections between these centres involved not only the adoption of Corinthian influences in Athens but also the impact of Athenian innovations on Corinthian production. During the Late Corinthian period, in the second quarter of the 6th century, a shift in compositional norms also occurred in Corinthian vase painting. Inspired by Athenian models, panels began to replace friezes in the decoration of various vase forms. Panel amphorae were introduced,[100] and alongside the Corinthian-type olpe, one of the most characteristic and popular forms of Corinthian pottery, the Athenian version of the olpe with panel decorations also emerged during the Late Corinthian period.[101] These panels were sometimes decorated with animal figures, and in some cases, human figures were depicted surrounded by animals, in a manner reminiscent of the animal frieze.[102] However, they also featured depictions of humans alone and, in the case of amphorae, mythological scenes.[103]

41 Corinthian potters thus introduced panel-based decorations as a novelty from Athens, thereby questioning the validity of the traditional animal frieze. In addition, a visual technique of applying orange wash to mimic the colour effects seen on Athenian vases can also be observed on Late Corinthian vases.[104] These endeavours can be understood within the context of Corinthian potters striving to maintain competitiveness amidst the growing prominence of Athenian ceramics.[105] Therefore, in the

95 Shapiro 1990, 136.

96 Tiverios 1976, 156.

97 Moore – Philippides 1986, 5–7; Alexandridou 2011, 20; Scheibler 1987, 78.

98 Scheibler 1987, 83–89.

99 Alexandridou 2011, 14.

100 Amyx 1988, 492–494. For further vase forms borrowed from Athenian pottery, such as the globular oinochoe and the lekythos, see Amyx 1988, 484 f. and 499 f.

101 Amyx 1988, 491.

102 One example is an olpe (Philadelphia, University Museum inv. MS 714), with an almost frieze-like panel showing a figure running with a spear between two sphinxes (Amyx 1988, 260 no. 2; Dohan 1934, pl. 34 a. b).

103 For the amphorae with mythological scenes, see Amyx 1988, 268 no. 4 and 270 no. 10.

104 Amyx 1988, 387 and 539.

105 While Atticizing pieces demonstrated some success, especially noted in their prevalence in Etruria – particularly in Cerveteri and Gravisca (Rizzone 2010, 119 and 121; Galiffa 2019, 170) – they ultimately failed to prevent the collapse of the Corinthian market in the long term (Amyx 1988, 387; Hasaki 2021, 297 f.). – A. Ziskowski's suggestion regarding the Atticizing elements present in the Late Corinthian period is worth mentioning. According to Ziskowski (Ziskowski 2017, 104), these elements may not have arisen from export competition but rather from Corinthian desires stemming from their trade relations with various non-Greek peoples, aiming to establish and connect to a form of Greek identity. However, if true, this intention might have been short-lived, as the post-550 B.C. Corinthian pottery did not primarily attempt to imitate Athenian pottery (Risser 2001).

first half of the 6th century, these two Greek ceramic centres were interrelated to such an extent that the developments in Athenian vase painting, which moved away from the frieze-based system of decoration previously borrowed from Corinth, reinforced the tendency – also visible in Corinthian ceramics – for the animal frieze decoration to recede.

42 After examining Corinthian pottery and the closely related Athenian production of this time, we may now turn our attention to the significance of mythical scenes and animal friezes in Etrusco-Corinthian ceramics. While Corinthian pottery exhibits a wide array of mythical narratives throughout its history, Etrusco-Corinthian pottery contains only a few such scenes – fewer than ten vases are known where the depicted scene is convincingly identifiable.[106] As the distinction between mythical and everyday scenes is not clear-cut in either Corinthian or Athenian ceramics, further depictions emphasizing the fluidity of these categories can also be considered, such as the aforementioned hunting scene, where a sphinx is the intended target. However, in Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting, not only are mythical narratives scarce, but human figures also appear far less frequently in general compared to Corinthian vases.[107]

43 A preference for depicting animal friezes is particularly evident in the design of column kraters. Despite a few exceptions, Etrusco-Corinthian kraters form a cohesive group. Crafted primarily between 580 and 560 B.C. by the Rosoni Painter in Vulci, these pieces were intended for customers in Cerveteri,[108] which also served as a major market for imported Corinthian kraters.[109] In the case of this vase form, it is possible to compare the repertoire of the complete Corinthian production and the imports of column kraters to Etruria with that of locally produced wares. Corinthian kraters depict revellers, banquets, battle scenes, and mythological representations alongside animal friezes. While animal friezes were more common in the early period, they later diminished in prominence, as discussed above. Corinthian kraters found in Etruria reflect a similar trend.[110] However, the iconographic repertoire of Etrusco-Corinthian kraters deviates significantly from that of their Corinthian counterparts. Mythological scenes appear in only two examples, while the rest are decorated exclusively with animal friezes.[111]

44 Greek mythology inspired several Etruscan depictions in the 7th century and had a longstanding tradition in Etruria by the time Corinthian vase painting emerged.[112] Additionally, pieces adorned with mythical scenes were imported from Corinth, as evidenced by the Corinthian import kraters mentioned earlier, indicating an intrinsic interest in mythical narratives in Etruria. However, in Etrusco-Corinthian pottery, we do not

106 The story of Achilles and Troilos is depicted on two amphorae (Lakatos 2021a, 186–191 figs. 90–92), while an Ilioupersis scene appears on an oinochoe (Lakatos 2021a, 192–195 figs. 93–96). Heracles and the Hydra of Lerna are shown on an olpe (Lakatos 2021a, 203–205 fig. 98), and the fight between Heracles and Geryoneus is featured on a column krater. Other depictions on this krater and another cannot be precisely identified, though they also seem to represent mythical scenes (Lakatos 2021a, 205–221 figs. 99–102).

107 Szilágyi 1998, 695; Bellelli 2009, 83.

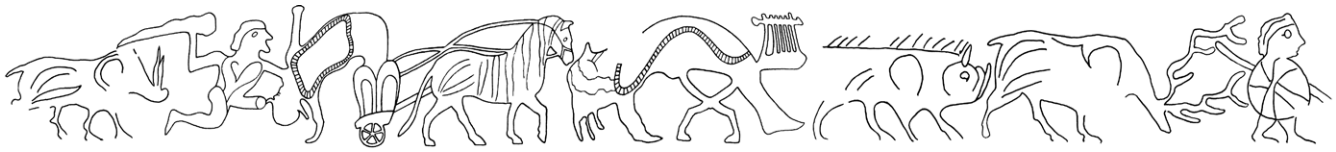
108 Szilágyi 1998, 369 f.; Lakatos 2021a, 45 f.

109 J. de La Genière has suggested that these vases were made specifically for export to Etruria (de La Genière 1988, 85). However, this assumption is not supported by the analyses of M. Cristofani and M. Martelli. Despite this, Corinthian kraters were exported to Cerveteri in relatively large quantities, with around 60 pieces known from there, compared to fewer than 10 examples from other parts of Etruria (Cristofani – Martelli 1991, 10 f. and 22–24).

110 Cristofani – Martelli 1991, 25.

111 Lakatos 2021a, 242. For the two kraters with mythical representations, see n. 106 above.

112 Refer to Bellelli (Bellelli 2010) for a compilation of representations in Etruscan vase painting from the late 8th century to the first quarter of the 6th century, which can be confidently or tentatively identified as depictions of Greek myths. Additionally, recent discoveries of fragments have shed light on a bucchero workshop from the decades following the mid-7th century, with several of its products featuring mythical scenes (Rizzo 1988/1989 and Martelli 1988/1989; for information on the new fragment of the bucchero olpe in Brussels, see Cosentino – Maggiano 2010–2013).



16

Fig. 16: Drawing of the third frieze of an Etrusco-Corinthian olpe by the Kithara Painter. Civitavecchia, Museo Archeologico Nazionale, inv. 81799

observe the relegation of animal friezes to a secondary role in any form during the first half of the 6th century. The repertoire of vase forms in Etrusco-Corinthian pottery encompasses various types of amphorae,[113] yet the panel amphora, although well-known through imports,[114] is notably absent. A similar observation can be made regarding the olpe form, of which Athenian imports from Etruscan findspots are known,[115] but Etrusco-Corinthian pottery features only olpai adorned with Corinthian-type frieze decorations. For instance, the works of the Tarquinian Kithara Painter, active around 570 B.C., frequently portray human figures; on his above mentioned olpe in Civitavecchia, humans appear even in two friezes. However, these figures, whether isolated or part of multi-figure scenes, are integrated within animal friezes. For instance, the third frieze of the olpe (Fig. 16) depicts a cohesive scene – a fighter assaulting a man from behind, causing him to fall from a horse-drawn cart, and a large figure with closed eyes lying on a diphros – flanked by animal figures on both sides. Between the figures of the stag and the deer, an isolated human figure, a warrior holding a shield, also appears, embedded within the animal frieze.

45 This strong adherence to animal friezes in Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting may be attributed to the ability of the characteristic decorations of Corinthian pottery to give Etrusco-Corinthian vases a distinctively Corinthian appearance.[116] The popularity of the animal frieze in Etruria, however, can be observed not only in this production but also in a type of Athenian pottery known as the Tyrrhenian amphorae. These amphorae were produced in the second quarter of the 6th century, and while Etruria cannot be considered as their sole destination, it undeniably held a significant importance and served as the primary market for these vessels.[117] The decoration of Tyrrhenian amphorae is characterized by animal friezes, usually located beneath the primary frieze (sometimes in multiple bands) and less frequently on the neck. Early examples exhibit animals even in the reverse shoulder-frieze, though this feature became increasingly rare in later examples. Despite a rich mythical repertoire often depicted in the main frieze, the prevalent use of animal friezes imbues Tyrrhenian amphorae with a traditional aesthetic within the contemporary context of Athenian vase painting.[118]

46 As mentioned earlier, the popularity of the animal frieze waned in Athenian vase painting in the second quarter of the century. However, it sporadically appeared on later pieces, such as on the Nikosthenic amphorae dating from the last quarter of the 6th century. The special form of these amphorae was borrowed from Etruscan bucchero pottery, reinforcing the hypothesis inferred based on the findspots of these vessels that they were crafted for Etruscan export.[119] The continued presence of animal friezes on

113 Lakatos 2021a, 32–45.

114 Alexandridou 2011, 145 and 147 provides numerous Athenian examples from the first quarter of the 6th century, and as mentioned by Amyx (Amyx 1988, 492) with reference also made by Galiffa (Galiffa 2019, 176), Late Corinthian panel amphorae were also imported into Etruria.

115 According to Alexandridou 2011, 134, two examples of the Group of the Early Olpai are known from Cerveteri.

116 Lakatos 2021a, 252.

117 Tuna-Nörling 1997; Kluiver 2003, 118. 144–146.

118 Kluiver 2003, 38 f. 86–102. 109.

119 See Tosto 1999 as a starting point for the Nikosthenic amphorae.

17

Fig. 17: Pontic amphora by the Paris Painter. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Arts, inv. 55.7

these pieces, albeit in a secondary role, may indicate an interest in such decorative motifs on the part of Etruscan buyers.[120] This observation finds support in the enduring popularity of the animal frieze in Etruscan vase painting, a trend that persisted even after the decline of Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting. This is notably exemplified by the emergence of the so-called Pontic vases around the middle of the century. The ovoid neck amphorae of this Pontic Group, resembling Tyrrhenian amphorae in both decoration and form, also incorporate a frieze-based system of decoration. In contrast to Etrusco-Corinthian pottery, however, narrative scenes held a primary role in the main frieze of these amphorae, while animal friezes still retained a significant presence, albeit in a secondary position (Fig. 17).[121]

47 The examples provided herein demonstrate that the relationship between animal friezes and narrative scenes varies across different centres of the Greek world and Etruria. In Athens and Corinth, as early as during the first half of the 6th century, the traditional role of animal friezes embracing and contextualizing human figures was challenged. In contrast, Etrusco-Corinthian ceramics show no indication of this trend, with animal friezes continuing to play a significant role in Etruscan vase painting even into the latter half of the 6th century. Additionally, in Athenian ceramics, the prominence of the animal frieze was more pronounced in pieces specifically intended for the Etruscan market than in other contemporary products. The disappearance of the animal frieze and the growing emphasis on narrative scenes thus occurred at a different pace in the Greek and Etruscan worlds, and this difference warrants interpretation.

## Conclusions Drawn from the Comparative Analysis

48 In modern analyses of Greek art, the increasing significance of narrative scenes described above is often portrayed as a sign of a new, progressive direction in Athenian black-figure vase painting starting from the first half of the 6th century. Meanwhile, the animal frieze is regarded as a traditional, outdated feature that hinders the unfolding of the painter's artistic talent.[122] In the same vein, Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting has been characterized as failing to keep pace with new artistic developments, gradually becoming outdated over time.[123] However, in the context of Greek sculpture of

120 Kluiver 2003, 120 discusses the partial preservation of the decorative scheme of Tyrrhenian amphorae on these vessels. Bundrick (Bundrick 2019, 39) suggests that the recurring trademarks on Nikosthenic amphorae indicate that the creators of the vases may have been aware of Etruscan preferences through the traders.

121 Hannestad 1974, 28–34. For a more recent evaluation of the artistic inspirations of the Pontic Group, refer to Williams 2005 and Paleothodoros 2023. For the amphora by the Paris Painter: New York, Metropolitan Museum inv. 55.7; De Puma 2013, 121–124 no. 4.102.

122 Williams 1983, 34: »He introduced a series of wonderful narrative scenes with some unusual technical details but was still fettered by the traditional animal friezes.«

123 Szilágyi 1998, 698: »Il vasi (ad eccezione del Cratere dei Gobbi) non mostrano alcuna traccia del fatto che i loro decoratori abbiano preso atto delle nuove prospettive artistiche proposte dalla pittura vascolare attica a figure nere … .«

the Archaic period, for example, attention has since been drawn to the implausibility of the concept of progressivism that has nevertheless been deeply rooted in the discussion of Greek art, especially in discussions on the emergence of Classical art.[124] It is therefore essential to reevaluate the previously described perspective and to make an attempt at interpreting the relationship between Corinthian and Etrusco-Corinthian ceramics, as well as the trends in Archaic Greek vase painting during this period using approaches distinct from progressivism.

49 By conducting a comparative analysis of these productions, we can observe that – aside from unique cases such as the exceptional Corinthian vase described as a »cauchemar« or the strongly Corinthianizing works of the Etrusco-Corinthian Bearded Sphinx Painter – a stark contrast exists between Corinthian and Etrusco-Corinthian animal friezes in terms of the level of standardization and systematization they display. The Corinthian and Corinthianizing animal friezes of Athenian vase painting present a structured world, delineating a distinct sphere of human activities within. Thanks to the focused appearance of these human scenes, the animal frieze – their context, so to speak – could eventually become relegated to a secondary role in the first half of the 6th century.

50 In contrast, Etrusco-Corinthian friezes lack a similar structured order; instead, they represent the unpredictability of the world. This reluctance to adhere to the order and structure of Corinthian vases may have contributed to the continued prominence of animal friezes in Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting, defying trends that point towards their relegation to a secondary position in favour of narrative representations. Thus, while the Corinthian animal frieze, precisely due to its structure, paved the way towards the increasing prominence of scenes of human activity, the Etrusco-Corinthian frieze, which lacked a similarly ordered composition, did not prompt a shift in emphasis between animal and human figures.

51 Through this comparison, it is possible not only to interpret Etrusco-Corinthian ceramics from a Corinthian perspective but also to gain new insights and perspectives on Corinthian art based on Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting. The interpretation of these vase paintings can thus mutually reinforce and enhance our understanding. On the one hand, we observe that the different uses of and a different history of animal friezes in Etrusco-Corinthian vase painting reflects the diverse notions and roles assigned to the seemingly identical friezes in these two closely linked productions. On the other hand, the trend in Corinthian – and the closely related Athenian – vase painting of narrative depictions coming to the fore, which is easy to describe as progressivism, is in fact an unfolding of the focus inherent in the structure of the animal frieze, even at its peak. Such a comparative analysis thus helps us transcend the simplistic dichotomy of progressive narrative scenes versus conservative animal friezes, enabling us to better understand these productions through the lens of other.

124 Neer 2010, 2 stating that »It is simply anachronistic to claim that the early Greeks were, for generations, working toward a sculptural style of which they had no prior knowledge.«

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