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Interpretations of the Chigi Vase

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Abstract

Only in recent years have there been attempts to view the various scenes on the Chigi vase as a unified whole. A major issue of interpretation concerns the scene with Paris, whether it is to be understood allegorically in an otherwise non-mythological programme, or whether it may be part of a broader mythological sequence.

The Chigi *olpe*, discovered in 1882 in an Etruscan tomb near Veii, belongs to a group of Protocorinthian vases of around the middle of the 7th century which Johansen characterised with the phrase 'style magnifique'.[1] Whether tiny flasks for oil and perfume, or larger cups and jugs, they are all painted in a brilliantly executed miniaturist style. The group has been divided among various painters by different scholars, while attributions to the Chigi Painter have also varied in number,[2] the core consisting of three vases including the Macmillan *aryballos* in London and the Berlin *aryballos* from Rhodes.[3] A fourth, which is a fragment of an *olpe* from Aegina, is often also added.[4] The most recent addition to the Chigi Group, a fragmentary *oinochoe* from a votive deposit excavated at a temple to Athena at Erythrai on the Ionian coast, is close to the Chigi Painter but may not be by him (*fig. 5*).[5] The Chigi *olpe* itself[6] marks the pinnacle of achievement of this output, indeed it 'has a claim to be the finest known product of any Corinthian workshop'[7] and is widely regarded as a major landmark of Greek painting. Even the miniaturist figures of the Athenian vase-painter Kleitias of two generations later appear somewhat wooden by comparison.

The imagery of the Chigi vase, has been variously elucidated. According to an interpretation proposed by Hurwit in 2002 and substantially accepted by Torelli a few years later,[8] its three registers with human figures illustrate the progression and training of a Corinthian youth - or youths - from boyhood (hare-hunting on the lowest frieze), to maturity (participation in warfare on the upper). This reading forms the backbone both of a collection of papers edited by E. Mugione that appeared in 2012,[9] the outcome of a conference held in Salerno; and of a monograph by M. D'Acunto published in 2013.[10] In what follows, these two works, which form a notable contribution to the whole subject of early Corinthian painting, will be referred to, in abbreviated form, as *Salerno* and *Mondo*.

Recently I argued, against Hurwit, for a mythological interpretation of the Chigi friezes,[11] in a paper that was written before publication of the two books just mentioned. I do not repeat here all of my previous argument, but - to anticipate the conclusions of the present discussion - it will be proposed that the new material presented and discussed in the two volumes may actually strengthen rather than weaken a non-generic, mythological reading.

Prior to Hurwit no commentator had attempted to analyse all three friezes in terms of a unitary theme. The problem had always been the enigmatic second register. Here is the one undisputed scene of myth, showing the Judgment of Paris (*fig. 2*), and the only one on the vase where figures are captioned. Alongside it are scenes of lion-hunting, four horsemen and a chariot, and a double-bodied sphinx. Humfry Payne saw no connection between these various elements, nor later did Robertson ('a series of disconnected scenes') and Amyx ('a curious medley of subjects').[12] That was also my opinion back in 1991, although I did concede that it was just possible that there might be 'a connecting thread running through all the major scenes'.[13]

Both *Salerno* and *Mondo* throw much new light on various aspects of the *olpe*, as well as (especially the latter) providing brilliant colour illustrations of all three Chigi Painter works.[14] It is possible now, for example, to discern beyond doubt that the very fragmentary object that Aphrodite carries in the Judgment procession must have been a crown or garland, symbolic of her own victory. As well as author of *Mondo* D'Acunto is a major contributor to *Salerno*, and he follows Hurwit in most particulars (as do all the relevant authors of the latter volume) but expands his argument concerning the hunters of the middle frieze: not only do they also take part in the fighting above, they are to be identified with the front rank (*promachoi*) of the army on the left (*Salerno*, 67). (Whether or not the

huntsman who is mauled by the lion recovers to fight with his comrades we are not told; the depiction can accommodate either eventuality as the *promachoi* may number either four or five according to whether you count the heads or legs of the figures.) In a 'continuous' narrative sequence, then, the young men are/have been transported to the hunt (on horses and chariot); they confront the lion; and they fight a battle.

Before going any further some brief comments are needed on the new facts about the *olpe*'s archaeological context which emerge from the discussion by G. Bartoloni and others in *Salerno* concerning the Chigi tumulus at Monte Aguzzo and its contents.[15] Fragmentary skeletal remains from the tomb are still kept in the Palazzo Chigi at Ariccia, and they *may* be of a young adult male. Although any metalwork had been robbed, ceramic material was considerable and among the local products featured a well-known bucchero amphora with inscriptions that include one of gift-giving. A re-reading of them reveals that the amphora was given by 'mother' Anaia to her son Venel. Venel is likely to be the chief occupant of the tomb and final owner of the *olpe*, which *may* have been chosen for him for its visual emphasis on youthful male (and élite) activities. To try to make these narrative links is almost irresistible, but the italics are there to show their hypothetical nature.

The *olpe*, dated to Middle or Late Protocorinthian of ca 650-640, and no later than 630 (D'Acunto), is one of the earliest objects - along with the (slightly later) bucchero amphora - deposited in the tomb (a side chamber of which is rebuilt in the grounds of Florence Archaeological Museum), which makes it an important fixed point in Etruscan 7th century chronology. Its significance can, however, be overstated. A. Snodgrass (*Salerno*, 15), reviewing the evidence for the dating of Protocorinthian pottery, sees the *olpe*'s discovery in a chamber tomb of the later 7th century together with 'much Italic material dating to the same period' as a key context and as giving 'the best chronological *ante quem* for the Protocorinthian style'. But, firstly, this is actually a circular argument as the dating of the 'Italic' material is derived from Greek chronology, not the other way round. Secondly, the assemblage does little to confirm the *olpe*'s date, as it is not quite clear where in the tomb the fragments of it were found. There seem to have been two depositions in the 7th century, in the middle and the last third of the century (and another in the early 6th century).[16]

The date of the *olpe* (given above) has long been accepted (apart from Mingazzini's aberrant downdating)[17] but here has extra historical significance, for D'Acunto is eager to show how the contemporary political situation at Corinth may be reflected in the imagery of the vase. What makes this approach problematic is that no Greek vase of this period can be dated closer than to within ten years, or even longer; while the key political event of this time at Corinth - the overthrow of oligarchic Bacchiad rule by Cypselus - is not easy to pin down with precision.[18] However, let us go with D'Acunto's dates of 655 for the tyrant's coup and 640 for the *olpe*. It would be difficult then to maintain that it is the aristocratic world of the Bacchiad era that is being celebrated in the *olpe*'s friezes, although they might perhaps illustrate, in Snodgrass' words, 'a gesture of resistance in the twilight of Bacchiad supremacy' (*Salerno*, 13).

But D'Acunto goes further. The lion that is being hunted may symbolise Cypselus himself, for he is so described in an oracle concerning his birth recorded by Herodotus (5.92).[19] The beast may then be viewed either in a positive light (bringing in a new and welcome regime to Corinth) or a negative one (the lion/tyrant needs to be destroyed). In the first case, it is a tyrannical value system that the vase is asserting, in the second an oligarchic Bacchiad one. From the written sources the actual differences in constitutional terms between the two regimes are very difficult to discern,[20] and how one might tell the difference in visual terms on a vase such as this is quite unclear, but D'Acunto finally decides in favour of the latter (*viz*. the lion/tyranny as a threat) as most convincing. However, with the chronology so slippery and with opposite interpretations vying with one another so readily, one wonders whether this line of enquiry was ever likely to be a fruitful one. To shore up the argument that Cypselus is signified by the lion one might find support in the presence of Paris, who may be a pointer to him; for just as the Trojan prince was rescued as an infant, taken to Ida, and then returns to his family, so (according to Nicolaus of Damascus) was the tyrant rescued as a baby, taken to Olympia, and returns to Corinth (*Mondo*, 149). But as an intended correlation this seems hardly convincing.

Lion Hunt (*fig. 1*)

Following L. Cerchiai et al. (in *Salerno*) D'Acunto presses for an equation between hunting and *eros*, not in the usual metaphorical terms of pursuit but more in terms of danger and deadliness. Lions can kill, as the *olpe* shows, and as for *eros* - in Paris' case it led to the destruction of his whole

Figs 1-4. Chigi olpe. *Villa Giulia inv. 22679 (photos Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici dell'Etruria Meridionale).*

family. Mythology is not short of other examples too - one thinks of Agamemnon, Tereus, and the like - where lust after women could ruin lives. But where does this fit into Hurwit's scheme of the growing experience of Greek youths: in particular, how many Corinthian males would have viewed Paris' judgment as something that was applicable to their own lives, especially in a society famed for women being readily available as *hetairai* and *pornai*?[21] And if the equation is between hunting and marriage (*eros* and *gamos* are often elided in this argument), then that too seems equally strained. For most Greek men, marriage took place in their maturity[22] well after adolescence - unlike for girls in their mid teens; nor often does desire and lust seem to have played much part in the choice of marriage partner.

To what extent lions were available for hunting in the Greek countryside is aired once again by D'Acunto,[23] for whom the hunt depicted on the *olpe* is to be viewed not as a 'pratica reale' but metaphorically as symbolic of aristocratic *aretē*. (*Mondo*, 59). This contrasts with the hare hunt frieze, which with its shrubby vegetation must be

situated on the outskirts of a real city (*Mondo*, 50). So, looking at the vase as a whole, we move from actual terrain (lowest frieze), to the realm of the heroic past (Paris), to a symbolic arena (lion hunt), and finally to a scene of actual (i.e. contemporary) fighting (on the shoulder). Conceptually it would, however, be more economical if we were able to place all the different scenes on one single level of reality.

It is worth acknowledging here that, whatever narrative flow there may exist between the various parts of the olpe, there are some figural elements that may simply be decorative. It is difficult to explain in any other way an additional band of coursing animals - dogs, deer, goats - painted in white (which has mostly worn off) against a dark background on the narrow horizontal band that is enclosed between the middle and upper registers.[24] Another decorative feature may be the double sphinx in the middle register (*fig. 1*). A single-bodied sphinx is seen in a similar position on the Erythrai *oinochoe*, and it is just possible that the figure is present as a kind of workshop logo or signature. Although the creature has numerous connotations in early Greek art and culture, in plenty of later Corinthian animal friezes it would seem to have no obvious meaning. But we will need to come back to the sphinx later.

Riders and Charioteer (*fig. 3*)

D'Acunto develops further Hurwit's observation that five men may be missing from the scene of the horses and chariot, and may have dismounted from the four riderless horses and from the chariot (which contains only the charioteer without passenger) in order to engage the lion on foot.[25] Moreover, the dress of three of the hunters is identical to that of the riders, while the supposed passenger of the chariot, in itself a high status mode of transport, is marked out as the leader of the hunting group by virtue of the 'halo' around him created by the lion's encircling tail, and by the belt around his waist (another élite symbol).

These details are all well observed, though they need not lead to the conclusion proposed. If the chariot were to be for racing, then only one occupant is needed and the symmetry of five hunters and five 'missing' personnel from the equestrian scene is lost. Moreover, commentators pay little attention to the naked young man leading the chariot horse (*fig. 4*), though D'Acunto is surely right in seeing him as a 'stalliere' - a groom or stable lad and presumably of lesser status. Yet the hunter who is mauled by the lion (*fig. 1*) is shown in similar nudity (and hairstyle), and like his companions should be of high status, so there seems to be no precise equivalence - at least where dress is concerned - between the personnel of the hunting and equestrian scenes. It seems clear, too, that the riders and chariot, rather than standing by and waiting for the hunters to finish their task, are in purposeful motion as if in a parade or ma--noeuvre, led by the walking groom at the front. That the hunt and the 'parade' are separate scenes is made apparent by the sphinx that comes between them.

Another juxtaposition of riders and a lion-hunt is seen on the Erythrai oinochoe (*fig. 5*). Here the horsemen wield spears above their heads,[26] and their hairstyle is the same as the hunters', but they are on a smaller scale and appear to be naked, unlike the latter who have tunics with a tasseled lower hem. As on the olpe the lion's victim is also shown naked. Beyond the sphinx more hunting seems to be taking place: a kneeling archer and, immediately beyond, a quadruped turning round, perhaps a deer or a dog.[27] The frieze above is even more tantalizingly fragmentary, where a bull comes up behind a group of soldiers moving to the left.[28] This does not appear to be a combination of unrelated scenes as the animal's horn actually pierces the raised arm of the hindmost soldier; rather it brings to mind mythological stories of cattle rustling.[29]

Judgment of Paris

Most of the scenes on the *olpe* are to a lesser or greater extent self-explanatory - one can sense what is going on, whether one chooses to view it in generic or heroic terms. But for Paris and the goddesses figure labels are needed, not in order to show that it is the only myth scene on the vase[30] but because the iconography of the Judgment was being worked out now perhaps for the first time.[31] Once formulated it would persist - with Hermes leading the three goddesses - throughout the archaic period both in Greece and Etruria; it would also be included in this form on two famous works long since lost but described by Pausanias: the chest of Cypselus (Paus. 5.19.5) and the Amyklai throne (3.18.12).

A variant composition, in Athenian black-figure of the first half of the 6th century, shows Paris apparently attempting to flee the scene. This version of the story, it has been suggested,[32] may already have been in the *Kypria*, but it is just as likely that it was a twist thought up by vase-painters. For D'Acunto (*Mondo,* 120), who follows Cerchiai et al.

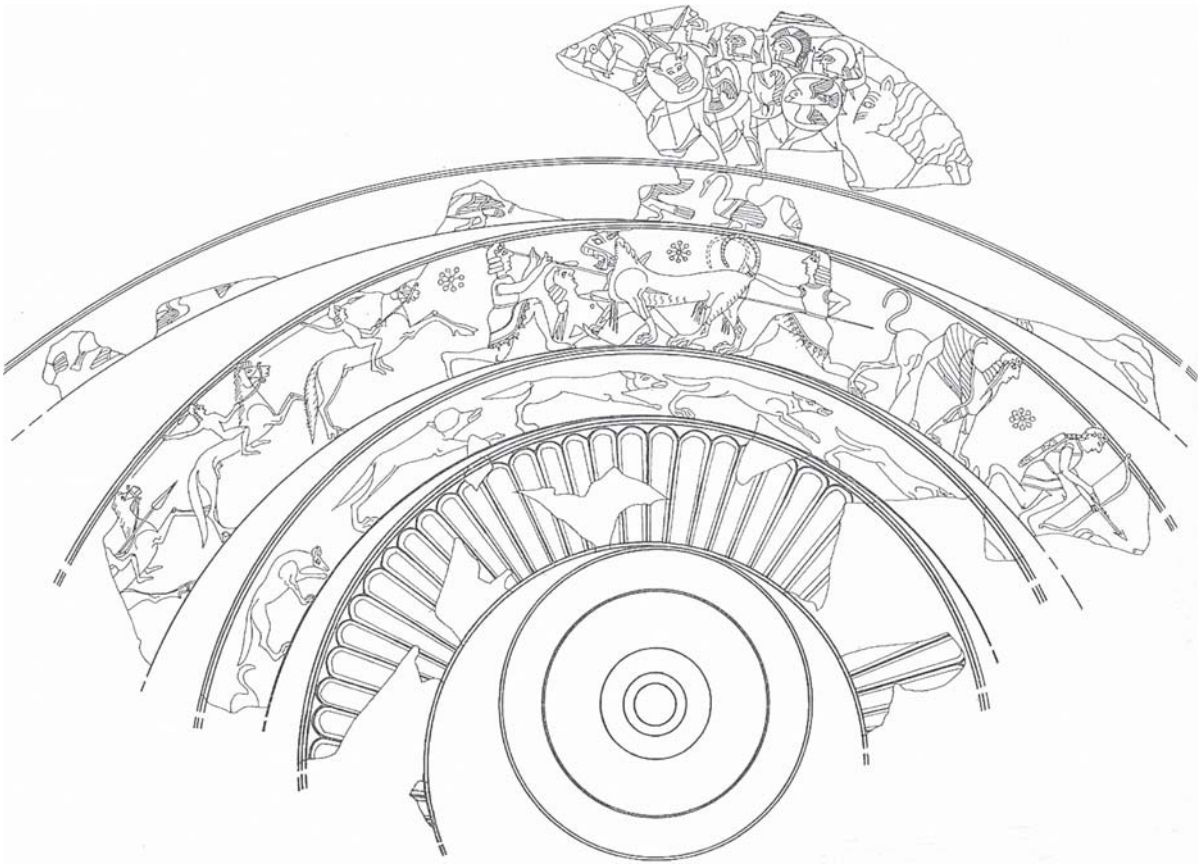

Fig. 5. Oinochoe fragments from Erythrai (drawing, adapted from Akurgal 1992, fig. 1).

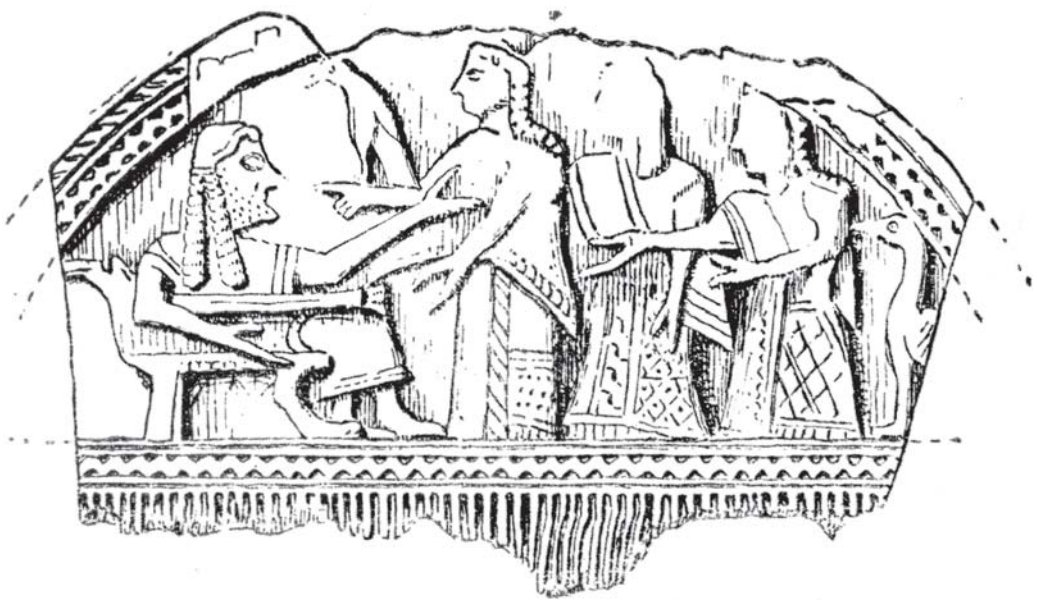

Fig. 6. Ivory comb from Sparta (drawing, after Hampe 1954, pl. 11.1).

(in *Salerno*), it is illustrative of the perils of love and seduction that a young Greek may encounter and may wish to escape from. Judgment scenes of this type, which are only in evidence from two or three generations later than the *olpe*, might also have been intended to be taken humorously, especially where Paris is making huge strides to get away.[33]

In addition to procession scenes there are those where a seated Paris is actually in mid judgment, and Hermes may or may not be present. They are mainly of the classical period and later, but begin shortly after the Chigi olpe with a small-scale relief from Sparta (*fig. 6*).[34] Here the emphasis is on the hero as supreme arbiter of female beauty, an appropriate enough subject for a luxury item of the female toilette such as an ivory comb. It is this aspect of Paris that would be prominent later, especially on engraved bronze Etruscan and Praenestine mirrors, the earliest of them from the mid 5th century.[35] In Italy, Paris (Etruscan: 'Elacsantre', 'Elcsntre') seems to have been viewed entirely positively and seriously, with the exception of a small group of mirrors where, in a seemingly burlesque reversal, it is he who exposes his nakedness to the surrounding goddesses who are themselves clothed.[36]

Paris: Wider Considerations

Homer's characterization of Paris is for the most part negative. Typical are the assessment of his judgment as 'blindness' (*atē*) (*Iliad* 24.28), and Hector's wish that he should never have been born and certainly never married (*Iliad* 3.39-42). Yet when Paris finally closes with Menelaus in combat (in *Iliad*, Book 3) he does so fearlessly, and when Aphrodite whisks him away at the last moment the rescue is unrequested. In similar manner, even the doughty Aeneas has to be rescued in battle twice by the gods.[37] Moreover, one upshot of the scholarship of the last generation is a realization that Homer's versions of stories, and his characterizations, were not necessarily widespread in Greece before the later 6th century, and visual artists more often follow divergent paths.[38] Among writers, even in the 5th century Herodotus at the beginning of his *Histories* (1.4), recording a Persian point of view but giving it the full weight of his characteristic impartiality, can point to the abduction of Helen as a major source of the enmity between Greeks and Persians, without heaping opprobrium on Paris but reserving criticism for Helen and her complicity instead. In Euripides' plays the Trojan War is regarded as a great evil, but Paris is not always singled out as the cause but rather as a victim - he too - of the gods' machinations.[39] Ultimately, of course, it is the gods who are to blame for the war, as Priam knew (*Iliad* 3.164-5).

The Battle Zone

Ever since Payne,[40] the view has been held by many that the battle scene on the shoulder must in some way owe its inspiration to, or even be adapted from, larger-scale painting; perhaps a somewhat careless adaptation, as the numbers of legs, heads, and shields of the soldiers do not match exactly. A recent and important piece of evidence is the finds at Kalapodi in Phokis, from an apsidal temple in the oracular sanctuary of Apollo at ancient Abai. Fragments of painted wall plaster show confronted spear-wielding soldiers (detail: *fig. 7*) so close in style and format that the *olpe* could be used to help

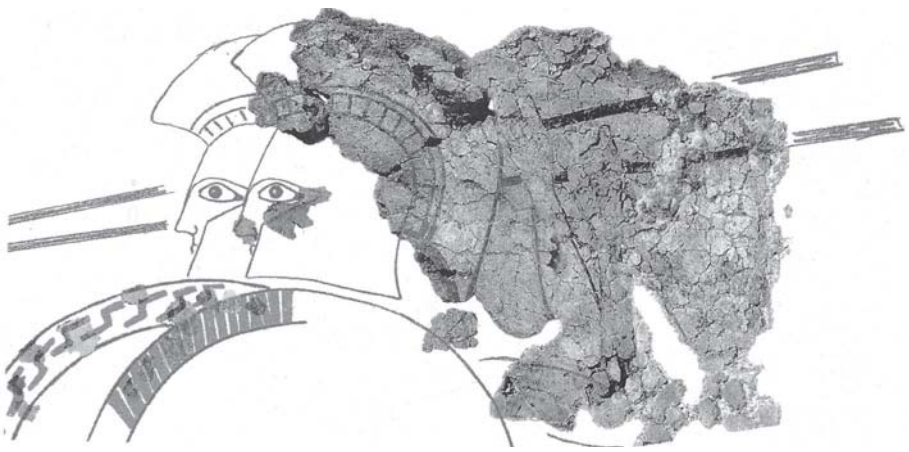

Fig. 7. Wall-painting from Kalapodi (drawing of detail; adapted from Niemeier et al. 2012, pl. 14).

Fig. 8. 'Euphorbos plate' from Rhodes (photo British Museum).

with certain aspects of their reconstruction (Niemeier et al. in *Salerno*, 83-84). Some details too, such as the decorative patterns on shield rims, are so similar that Hurwit (*Salerno*, 108-109) can even suggest that the *olpe* and the Kalapodi mural might be by one and the same artist. If vase-painters of the mid-7th century could also turn their hand to large-scale painting, as now seems very plausible, then an entirely new light is shed on the issue of the inspiration behind the *olpe*'s battle frieze.

The mural fragments, with figures one third lifesize, were from the inner face of the wall of the temple. What sort of battle might this have been? There are three possibilities: it might be either generic, contemporary (commemorating a victory of the recent past), or heroic. For a temple interior it is unlikely to be either of the first two. In sanctuaries of this era, celebration of contemporary battles took the form, most often, of the dedication of armour and weapons, rather than the depiction of the fighting. The representation of a heroic battle, on the other hand, would be a suitable honouring of the god in itself, and it might in addition allude to contemporary military achievements through analogy or through connections of genealogy.

On the whole, archaic Greek artists thought in specific - and heroic - rather than generic terms. Pausanias (5.18.6-8), many centuries later, was aware of this when examining the long, uninscribed frieze of the chest of Cypselus with its marching infantry and chariot teams, which he could construe only in terms of the heroic past (as did his guides, though in different ways to him).

We may draw two tentative conclusions. First, the Kalapodi evidence only strengthens the likelihood that the olpe's war zone is heroic/epic. Secondly, inaccuracies of the battle zone, in terms of

heads, legs, and shields that do not match in number, are something of a red-herring: the Chigi Painter is likely to have been skilled at painting on both large and miniaturist scales, and for the *olpe* was presumably aiming for a pleasing overall effect rather than accuracy in every detail.

The battle zone is the most frequently discussed and illustrated part of the *olpe*. 'The most successful portrayal of hoplite tactics that has survived'[41] it may be, though another view sees the formations represented as reasonably consonant with earlier Homeric military practice.[42] The problem is that a painter may represent a battle that is intended to be contemporary but dress it up with heroic details; conversely, he may paint a heroic battle but modernise it with up-to-date equipment, and it is inevitably difficult, where inscriptions are lacking, to distinguish between the two. An example of the latter is the 'Euphorbos plate' from Rhodes of the late 7th century (*fig. 8*) which shows Hektor dueling with Menelaus over the fallen Euphorbos (in a scene that departs somewhat from the account in the *Iliad*), with the heroes kitted out with greaves, helmet, corslet, and round double-grip shield - all standard hoplite gear. On the *olpe*, the armour is equally modern and the presence of the piper, too, shows an awareness of 7th-century realities - though, as pointed out by van Wees, his role is not necessarily to sound out a marching rhythm. There is no sign of stabbing swords, and D'Acunto sees the two spears carried by each soldier as a retention from the Homeric past and as marking an intermediate stage in the development of hoplite forces (*Mondo*, 99). But as it is, forms of arms and armour have little bearing on whether or not a scene is heroic, and so it is with battle formation: for Greek artists of the period of proper hoplite phalanxes (and it is a matter of dispute that the *olpe* shows them) it would have been easy to think that this was how many heroic battles were also fought, and to represent them accordingly. So too, from an earlier heroic era, the gigantomachy sculpted on the north frieze of the Siphnian Treasury at Delphi is fought by giants with hoplite weaponry and in loose phalanx order.[43]

The Chigi Vase as Mythological Narrative

We may start with the premise that very few Greek painted pots have survived compared with the numbers that were originally made, the survival rate being in the region of a quarter to a half of one percent.[44] However easy it is to slip into thinking that the Chigi *olpe* is a lone masterpiece unmatched in size and complexity by anything else that may have been produced by this painter, it is very probably the case that he painted many dozens of vessels of this kind with complex figurative friezes, perhaps producing his pieces in quick succession. Judging by his surviving output he worked with a limited number of themes: mainly hunting (especially hares), soldiers fighting, horsemen. The *olpe* differs from his London and Berlin *aryballoi* in being more ambitious; whether or not it shows, in D'Acunto's words, 'un vero e proprio programma iconografico' (*Mondo*, 143) the scenes on it (and on any Greek multi-frieze vase) are unlikely to have been chosen at random, at least at the subconscious level.

On the other hand, taken individually, all the scenes (excepting the Judgment) are of a generic kind, and all conform to what L. Giuliani calls 'standard pictorial models' or, in different words, 'descriptive representations of a standard situation',[45] which he contrasts with true narrative scenes showing the actions and stories of nameable people. But here the *olpe* is more than the sum of its parts: these are not particular stories,[46] hence they do not require named protagonists, but they are given added meaning and context in two ways. They are juxtaposed with a specific mythological narrative (the Judgment); secondly, they are the least 'standardized' of the many contemporary and later friezes with similar subjects: the battle is on an especially grand scale, and the hare hunt is given intricate landscape detail with the unusual presence of human participants.

The Judgment scene is key here, not just for its inclusion but for where and how it is included. The episode took place, according to the *Kypria*, on Mount Ida; and that Paris was a herdsman is already implied in *Iliad* 24.25-30 where the goddesses are described as arriving at his *messaulon*, a term often translated as 'courtyard' but more likely from other contexts to mean 'cattle-yard'.[47] This much seems to have been known to the Etruscan Paris Painter, after the middle of the 6th century, who portrays the herdsman with his cattle.[48] A little later, in Attic black figure, Paris is sometimes shown seated against the mountain itself.[49] On the *olpe* the judgment scene is immediately adjacent to the lion hunt, in fact so close up against it that the raised spear of the huntsman furthest to the right overlaps the figure of Paris himself (*fig. 2*). Such a close juxtaposition might suggest that the hunt is also taking place on Ida, which in mythology was known as a haunt of lions. So when, before Paris' time, Aphrodite arrived on the mountain for her seduction of Anchises we

are told that on the hero's bed 'lay skins of bears and deep-throated lions which he had killed on the high peaks himself'.[50] Of Paris' own hunting proclivities we learn from his first love, the nymph Oenone:

> Who revealed for you the woodlands fine for hunting
> and the rocky crags where the wild beast hid her cubs?
> Often I was with you to stretch the wide-meshed hunting net,
> often I led the swift hounds over the long passes.[51]

The Latin for cub here, *catulus*, may refer to the young of various beasts, but most often means lion cub.[52]

Poetic writing of this kind is of course many centuries later than 7th-century Protocorinthian pottery. It is true that Ovid was using sources from centuries earlier than when he wrote, and the traditions behind them extend back further still, but we have to acknowledge that we are often very much in the dark concerning what tales were current in early archaic times.[53] Similarly Nicolaus of Damascus (*floruit*: later 1st century BC) was using earlier sources, but probably no earlier than the 4th century, yet he too is used by some to throw light on what may have been known about historical characters centuries before then (see above). Where mythology is concerned it has to be borne in mind that - in addition to the pictorial evidence - we may have to rely on late poets and mythographers for knowledge of early myths, and often it is impossible to move back beyond the tragedians and poets of the 5th century.

So we learn that Paris, rescued by the herdsman from infanticide, spent his early years on Ida. How he spent his boyhood we don't know, but hunting small animals with his companions is more than likely.[54] He may, then, be among the boys on the *olpe*'s lower register, as well as participating in the lion hunt. It is even possible that he is to be picked out as the left-hand lion hunter with the belt, an élite item of attire and here conceivably a 'proleptic' attribute that points to the future when he will have royal standing (similar in a way to the crown carried by Aphrodite which points forward to her victory in the beauty contest).[55] Later vase-painters at Athens also occasionally allude to his 'hidden' royal status by dressing him in a townsman's draperies and even giving him a sceptre.[56] Where social status is concerned, his clothing in the *olpe*'s Judgment scene is ambiguous, although the seemingly heavy cloak or himation may weigh in favour of a rustic lifestyle.

The first notice we have of Paris at Troy is when he competed in the games in his honour, a part of the story that goes back at least as far as Euripides.[57] What drew him to Troy in the first place was the seizure of his favourite bull to be a prize at the games, but the only mention of the episode is in Hyginus. The games featured a full complement of sports, and according to the surviving fragments of Euripides' *Alexandros* they included running, pentathlon and boxing.[58] Ovid has Paris boast to Helen at Sparta that he won in various contests ('vario certamine')[59] and one would expect horse- and chariot-racing too. This is where the scene on the middle frieze best fits: not as part of a generic games but a parading and manoeuvring before the start of the Trojan games.

How was one physically to view this vase? There are rather few figured Greek pots with multiple continuous encircling friezes and with a single vertical handle that provide no obvious viewpoint (no sides 'A' and 'B'). A somewhat similar problem is thrown up by an Etruscan pot of slightly later date (see below, 'Postscript'). The Chigi *olpe* was probably intended for the male symposium, although the earliest evidence for the reclining symposium comes a generation later; and as most Greek men were right handed (the sword- and spear-wielding hand), so the view with the handle to the right as in *figure 1* might have been the first to present itself. (It could of course be argued that the vessel would have been handled only by a servant, and that the opposite side would have been the first to be observed by a symposiast. But if a glimpse of the pot held by a servant was the only view ever intended, one wonders why anyone would have bothered with such intricate figure decoration.) In the *figure 1* position, at one glance one can see both hunt scenes clearly as well as the combined frontal faces of the sphinx and the gorgoneion shield emblem in the upper frieze. If the middle frieze can start with the lion hunt we can follow the vase round to the right (the direction the lion faces, as well as Paris, and the riders). The whole sequence may end with the sphinx with its 'magical frontality'.[60] Such staring faces have the power to transform, obvious in the case of the Gorgon, but here, coming after the 'parade' scene, perhaps suggestive of a life-changing situation.[61] At the games the victorious Paris was at first attacked by his family, then recognized for who he was, and so was reconciled to them. From

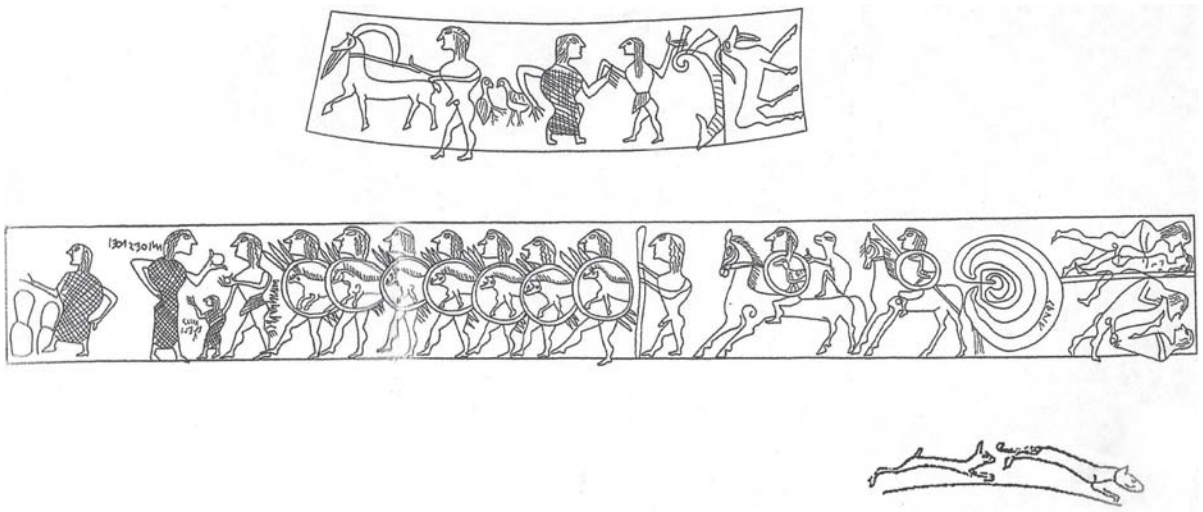

Fig. 9. Oinochoe *from Tragliatella near Cerveteri/Caere (drawing, adapted from Martelli 1987, fig. on pp. 270-271, and van der Meer 1986, fig. 1).*

this turning point he is no longer a private herdsman but part of the royal family of Troy, which he cannot escape his duty to help to protect. So inevitably he will play his part in fighting the Greeks, which is very likely what we see in the upper frieze.

'Interpretation is always provisional';[62] and it may also need to be tackled from different angles. In this case, there is, first of all, what may have been in the vase painter's mind; secondly in the mind of the Greek owner (if it was different and the decoration was not bespoke); thirdly in the mind of the élite Etruscan buried with it outside Veii. Of course there may not have been a Greek owner at all if the vessel was an immediate export (whether or not it was intended as such). All these parties may have viewed the decoration in a different way. The Etruscan may or may not have known much about Paris, but there was plenty enough here for him to identify with, in terms of male activities and heroic encounters. For the knowledgeable viewer, the idea of the possibility that the *olpe* is centred around the life of Paris is one that dawns gradually, and, perhaps surprisingly, that may also have been the case for the vase-painter as he planned out his decoration. It is clear from his *aryballoi* that he was was fond of, and very skilled in depicting, hare hunts, horse and chariot racing, battles and military manoeuvres - all of them youthful and manly pursuits, and most of them, too, with heroic undertones. The larger-scale *olpe* gives him space, within a miniaturist format, to expand on two of these themes in the lowest and upper friezes, making them especially elaborate, and by featuring the Judgment in the middle register he effectively establishes locations for the rest: the hunting of hares and lion on the slopes of Ida, the battle on the plain of Troy.

Postscript: The Tragliatella Oinochoe (*fig. 9*)

This Etruscan oinochoe, excavated from a tomb in the territory of Caere, has been known since 1878. Attempts to explain the human figure scenes on it have been numerous, with none being entirely convincing,[63] but it is generally agreed that the artist of the Etruscocorinthian polychrome vessel must have been very aware of Corinthian works such as the Chigi vase, which was produced only a generation before it.

With Etruscan inscriptions naming three figures which seem to be part of a family group, it has been pointed out that the vase must have been a special commission.[64] On the lowest register is an abbreviated hare hunt, without human participants as on the Erythrai *oinochoe*. The other scenes may include depictions of actual Etruscans in real-life situations. Part of the story may be of an Etruscan couple, on the neck meeting in their youth, shown with their daughter in the middle frieze, and at their deaths (for the funeral for which the vase was perhaps made) it is the daughter who mourns at the tomb-markers of her parents. Both father and mother hold what are probably eggs, which have well known funerary connotations. But many commentators have seen the bulk of

the decoration in terms of myth, with aspects of which the family may have identified. A further inscription (*truia*) has provided considerable food for thought. If it had not been added, the 'maze' which it appears to label would have been assumed almost certainly from the outset to be the labyrinth of Knossos, and the man and woman by the ship in the frieze above to be Theseus and Ariadne. However, given that in the 4th century *truials* means 'Trojan',[65] *truia* here has been thought by some to refer to Troy, either the city itself or the original version of the Troy Game described by Vergil. In *Aeneid* 5.545-603, these intricate circling manœuvres were staged by Aeneas in Sicily in honour of his dead father Anchises and involved horsemen only.[66] Others prefer *truia* to signify 'turning' or indeed, more concretely, a 'maze' itself and see it as a (very rare) kind of descriptive caption referring to the circling formations performed as part of a funeral games for the deceased Etruscan(s) for whom the vessel was made.[67] But such an interpretation in terms of funerary celebrations can hardly be extended to the upper frieze.

Yet it may be that Troy *is* represented here, from above. There being no precedent for the depiction of settlements from the air - except for the aerial views of camps and fortifications on Assyrian reliefs which Etruscan craftsmen are unlikely to have seen at first hand -[68] the artist may have intended his 'maze' as a bird's-eye vision of the fortified city and its interior streets.[69] A line of foot-soldiers (without greaves or helmet) and horsemen emerges to defend it. The large 'ape' riding on the back of the first horse, rather than fulfilling the role of a 'slightly comic space-filler'[70] or an imported pet being taken for the ride,[71] looks more like a monster of ill-omen perhaps signifying here the final Trojan defeat. The upper register may show Paris and Helen about to elope by sea, again with Paris' rustic background emphasized and with the hero in charge of goats rather than cattle. The love-making pairs would then not be Theseus and Ariadne,[72] nor are we seeing erotic scenes from the grandstands at the games[73] but minus the spectators, instead they are more likely again to be Paris and Helen shown twice so as possibly to record the seduction at Sparta as well as their cohabitation at Troy.

It is difficult to know how much awareness there was in 7th century Etruria of the story of Paris, Helen, and Menelaus. The latter two may figure on a painted krater from Caere of the first half of the century, though one cannot be sure;[74] while an Etruscocorinthian oinochoe in Paris of ca 600 BC very likely depicts the city of Troy under siege, but here again certain identification is impossible.[75] Moreover, Etruscan artists were quite capable of retelling Greek myths in new ways and even of utilizing motifs and characters from Greek mythology to illustrate stories of their own, stories of which we otherwise have no inkling.[76] For these reasons one suspects that the chances of the above interpretation of the Tragliatella vase being correct in all details are not great, but a more modest observation worth making is that here is a vessel, dated soon after the Chigi vase, that similarly combines a hunting scene at the bottom with, higher up, a military sequence that may be connected with Troy and the Trojans.

Abbreviations

Mondo see D'Acunto 2013
Salerno see Mugione 2012

Notes

1 Johansen 1923, 98. See Amyx 1988, 31-40 ("Chigi Group").
2 See D'Acunto 2013, Appendix: 248-250.
3 BM 1989-4-18.1 and Berlin 3773 (Amyx 1988, 31-2, nos 1 and 2).
4 Aegina K348: Payne 1931, no 40; Kraiker 1951, pl. 28; Amyx 1988, 32, no 4. Payne regarded it as 'probably' by the Chigi Painter.
5 Akurgal 1992, 84 fig. 1a; Hurwit 2002, fig. 4.
6 Rome, Villa Giulia inv. 22679. *Figs 1-4.*
7 Salmon 1984, 106.
8 Hurwit 2002; Torelli 2007.
9 Mugione 2012.
10 D'Acunto 2013.
11 Rasmussen 2013 (also online: www.mediterra.org → Cedrus → arşiv [archive]).
12 Payne 1933, 15; Robertson 1975, 52; Amyx 1988, 369.
13 Rasmussen 1991, 62.
14 Colour illustrations also in Michetti/van Kampen 2014, pls 1-4.
15 Further elaborated by Michetti/van Kampen 2014.
16 Michetti/van Kampen 2014, 155.
17 Mingazzini 1976.
18 Cornell 1995, 124; cf. Rasmussen 1997, 24.
19 For Cypselus, and oracles associated with him: Salmon 1984, 186-96.
20 Shanks 1999, 52-61.
21 According to Aristotle (Rose 1886, fr. 611.20), secular prostitution was so rife at Corinth that Periander, son of Cypselus, tried to suppress it. For commentary: Salmon 1984, 199, 399-400.
22 Reeder 1995, 27, 31, note 52; Blundell 1995, 119-120.
23 For another recent statement on this topic: Giuliani 2013, 27-29.
24 Johansen 1923, pl. 40.1e.
25 Hurwit 2002, 19.
26 Unlike the horseman approaching a lion-hunt on the Ajax Painter's *aryballos* in Berlin, who simply carries a goad (Amyx 1988, 23; Benson 1989, pl. 15.4).
27 Akurgal 1992, fig. 8, pl. 13.1.

[28] Akurgal 1992, fig. 3, pl. 10.2.
[29] For the importance of this theme in myth: Walcot 1979.
[30] As argued by both Torelli 2007 and D'Acunto 2013.
[31] It has been recently argued that the Judgment scene, with its inscriptions, may be a reproduction of a larger scale painting. See Maras 2014.
[32] Beazley 1986, 40.
[33] Walsh 2009, 137.
[34] Kossatz-Deissman 1994, 109, no 22. The composition, which is without inscriptions, has in the past also been construed as Zeus with the three goddesses prior to their journey to Ida: see Hampe 1954.
[35] Kossatz-Deissman 1994, no. 43.
[36] De Grummond 2006, 91-3, fig. 5.24.
[37] By his mother Aphrodite (*Iliad* 5.314-315) and by Poseidon (*Iliad* 20.321-325). The first episode is shown on the Etruscan black-figure amphora Würzburg 799 of ca 500 BC: Beazley 1947, 17; Brendel 1995, fig. 132.
[38] Cook 1983; Snodgrass 1998.
[39] Stinton 1965, esp. pp. 25-27 for discussion of *Iphigenia in Aulis*, and p. 63 for his summation of Euripides' view of Paris.
[40] Payne 1931, 94-97.
[41] Murray 1993, 130.
[42] van Wees 2000, 139; Viggiano/van Wees 2013, 65-68.
[43] Stewart 1990, 128, pl. 195-196.
[44] Cook 1959; Johnston 1991, 208.
[45] Giuliani 2013, 246, 105.
[46] Only the 'parade', it is being suggested here, is a specific occasion.
[47] Hedreen 2001, 196.
[48] Hannestad 1974, no 1 pl. 1; Martelli 1987, no 102.
[49] Hedreen 2001, 183, fig. 44.
[50] *Homeric Hymn 5 (to Aphrodite)*, lines 158-160.
[51] Ovid, *Heroides* 5.19-22.
[52] The scene brings to mind a Caeretan hydria in Paris: Hemelrijk 1984, no 22, pl. 86a. Various beasts have been suggested for this animal guarding her young, but if it is a lion, as seems very probable, it must be of the hermaphrodite variety discussed by Hurwit 2006, 133-134.
[53] But for the view that the story of Oenone and Paris may go back to the archaic period: Gantz 1993, 639, 875 (note 67); cf. Hedreen 2001, 209.
[54] For an explanation of why Paris' rustic upbringing was always an essential element of the story of the Judgment and its outcome: Hedreen 2001, 208-211.
[55] But such an identification is not needed to argue for the kind of loose continuous narrative that the *olpe* appears to exhibit from the lowest to the upper frieze - looser than the narrative of the huntsman king seen on the outer register of the 7th-century Phoenician silver bowl from the Bernardini Tomb at Praeneste (Markoe 1985, no E2; for discussion of which see Froning 1988, 180-181).
[56] Hedreen 2001, 185.
[57] Karamonou 2013, 416.
[58] Coles 1974.
[59] Ovid, *Heroides* 16.361
[60] Korshak's term for this kind of frontality in the pre-6th century: Korshak 1987, 3.
[61] Should the vase always have been destined for the tomb then it is also possible that these frontal faces (especially the sphinx's) were to serve an apotropaic purpose: Rasmussen 2013, 61.
[62] Shanks 1999, 33.
[63] For recent discussion with bibliography: van der Meer 2011, 71-74.
[64] Szilágyi 1992, 86-87.
[65] Bonfante/Bonfante 2002, 207.
[66] For Aeneas as originator see also Suetonius, *Julius Caesar*, 39.
[67] Small 1986.
[68] But they may not be without significance here. Such encampments may be circular (King 1915, pls 1, 13, 19), oval, or rectangular. In some cases (pls 54, 60) a file of horsemen and soldiers is shown leaving the camp to fight the enemy. Noteworthy too is the depiction, in a typical Assyrian conflation of aerial/profile views, of the Elamite town of Madaktu (Barnett 1975, pl. 159).
[69] For the Tragliatella 'maze' as a representation of Troy, see Colonna 1979, 311-312, Cordano 1980; cf. also Rykwert 1988, 148. The latest treatment of the Tragliatella design, by Berndt (2015, 106-108) in connection with a very similar representation incised on the outside of a (9th century) *megaron* at Gordion, gives full consideration to the Truia/Troy equation but favours a link with the story of Theseus and Ariadne.
[70] McDermott 1938, 31.
[71] Small 1986, 82.
[72] Boardman/La Rocca 1978, 72.
[73] Small 1986, 67-68, arguing from analogy with the painted Tomba delle Bighe at Tarquinia - where spectators are shown: see Steingräber 1984, 297.
[74] Martelli 1987, 261, no 37.
[75] Szilágyi 1992, 122-126, no 102; Childs 1978, 58-59, pl. 28.3-4.
[76] De Grummond 2006, 12; Szilágyi 1992, 187-200. A recent and so far unique find, in a necropolis at the via A. D'Avack south of Veii, of an impasto kantharos of the second half of the 7th century incised with images of horses being transported aboard two ships (Arizza et al. 2013, figs 17-20), might give added weight to the suggestion of Sybille Haynes (2000, 99) that the scene on the neck of the Tragliatella vase could be of a local Etruscan trader in livestock. But it might equally open up a possibility that in the Tragliatella artist's mind the many possessions and goods (*ktemata*, mentioned in the *Kypria* and at *Iliad* 7.350, 363) that Paris removed from Sparta would have included livestock which is here shown being rounded up for transport.

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