BAD HORSES:
HERAKLES AND THE MARES OF DIOMEDES IN GREEK ART OF THE SIXTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES BCE

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ABSTRACT

The often-fluid boundaries between human and animal is a common subject in Greek myth, with the hero frequently acting as a representative of humanity against some kind of animalistic force, though the hero can simultaneously embody the animal. Throughout the corpus of myth, animals can act as terrifying adversaries as well as helpers and even friends to heroic counterparts; and of all the heroes, there is none more associated with animals than Herakles. Most, if not all, of his labors, involve non-humanoid creatures in some way, and the hero himself can be identified by his lion skin, enabling him to pass in and out of the "civilized" Greek world and the "wild" world of animals and monsters. Herakles is one of the most, if not the most-depicted figures in Greek art, his exploits recognizable and famous for viewers across the realm of the Greeks and beyond. He is a suitably Panhellenic hero, with deeds to speak of ranging across Greece and the known world. While Herakles is perhaps the most popular human figure in Greek art, the horse is the most popular animal. One might expect the meeting of these two subjects in the Eighth Labor of Herakles, the capture of the man-eating Mares of Diomedes, to be equally ubiquitous. However, this is not the case. It is argued here that the rarity of depictions of Herakles with the Mares of Diomedes is due to the transgressive nature of the horses themselves, who invert established ideals of Greek horsemanship. As a result, the scene was largely avoided by creators as well as consumers of art. This unpopularity in the ancient past has likely contributed to the dearth of scholarship on the subject. I explore how these rare and transgressive images portray the complicated and diverse relationship between the Greeks and the animals that lived alongside them, a relationship that can itself be used to gain insight into how art, myth, and society are inextricably connected, with each equally affecting the other.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

A current master's student at Cornell University, Doug Braun's academic interests lie in the role of animals in the ancient Greek world, particularly their appearance in art and myth. He is particularly invested in how artistic depictions of animals reflect their real-life treatment by humans in the ancient world. He is also interested in state-level art and architecture, public spectacle, and the perception of the "Other" in Greco-Roman art and society. He is working on publishing his paper "*Elephantarchoi*: Elephants and Numismatics in the Early Hellenistic Period."

Before entering Cornell, Doug graduated *summa cum laude* from Binghamton University in 2020 with a triple major in Classical Civilizations, Anthropology, and History. While attending Binghamton Doug curated two exhibitions for the Binghamton University Art Museum. The first, *Revisiting the Past: Neoclassicism in Western Art*, focused on the relationship between Classical and Neoclassical art by comparing and contrasting those respective objects in the museum's collection. The second, *Marvels of Materials: Trade and Materiality in Ancient Egypt*, which won the Dory Knoll Student Curator Internship Award, focused on the use and trade of materials in ancient Egypt, with each object being used as a visual reference to the materials it was made with.

He has also held internships at the Museum of Fine Arts Boston in their Art of the Ancient World Department. A great lover of museums, he hopes to pursue a career in museum curation after completion of his master's degree.

When not researching he enjoys DMing his Dungeons and Dragons campaign, running, reading manga, and visiting museums.

DEDICATION

To my friends and family. Χάριν οἶδα.

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I would also like to thank my parents for once again opening up their home to me while I write this thesis, and I am sure they are happy that there will be less piles of books around the house once it is completed.

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INTRODUCTION[1]

Within the anthropocentric imagination of the Greeks, the "demonic" nature of the animal was of prime interest and often emphasized in myths related to the conflict between heroes, gods, animals, and monsters.[2] The hero of Greek tradition, like his predecessors from the Near East,[3] must defeat these beasts in order to make the world more habitable for Greek (i.e., civilized) society. No figure encapsulates the idea of the hunter-hero better than Herakles,[4] the archetype for all other Greek heroes.[5] Herakles' most famous exploits almost always involve violent interaction with animals. In art, he wields a club, a primary weapon of hunters.[6] Indeed, hunting was considered the sport of choice for the hero of myth and the elite warrior alike;[7] and Herakles' lion skin indicates that he hunts for more dangerous game than the average hunter.[8] The hero's lion skin also makes him part-animal; by killing the Nemean Lion he has appropriated its power and incorporates the animal into his own person.[9] There is a dependence between the hero and the animal or monster. The hero needs them to make his name in the world. Animals may also mediate between the world of humans and gods with sacrifice, and even be a companion to the hero. This dependence combined with the qualities of animals that heroes share indicates that the relationship between the two is not always combative. Regardless of the role they play, animals are a constant presence in the Herakles myth, making the relationship between Herakles and the natural world one of the most intricate in all of Greek myth.

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[1] All dates BCE unless otherwise stated
[2] Lonsdale 1979, 157.up
[3] The relationship between animal killing and "order" in the Mediterranean and Near East is not only limited to myth as shown in the abundance of hunting scenes in Assyrian and Egyptian art, especially the lion hunt reliefs from the palace of Ashurbanipal at Nineveh (ca. mid-7th c. BCE) see Albenda 1972; Lewis and Llewellyn-Jones 2018, 326-327; Wagner-Durand 2019; Wantanabe 1997 (abstract in English).
[4] Burkert 1983, 43. According to Burkert, hunting ritual and animal sacrifice were established as an outlet for the aggression of men. If so, then this not the case then for Herakles, perhaps the most accomplished hunter in Greek myth. Despite his proficiency in the killing of beasts, Herakles often channels his rage in the killing of innocent humans.
[5] Nagy 2013, 33.
[6] Cohen 1994, 698.
[7] Lonsdale 1979, 153.
[8] Cohen 1994, 698.
[9] Morgan 1995.

Not all myths received the same attention in visual representation. The Mares of Diomedes, the chief obstacle and prize in the Eighth of Herakles' labors, stand out for their almost complete absence in the visual record, despite the fact that Herakles and horses were among the most popular figures in Greek art. The Mares themselves bring up a host of complex questions that transcend the bounds of inquiries around a simple artistic oddity. The obscurity of the scene in Attic vase painting lies, I argue, in the transgressive nature of the Mares. By inverting the sexual and natural order of the Greek world, they represent the opposite of the ideal Greek horse and horseman. In breaking the custom of *xenia*, guest friendship, the Mares also show themselves to be monstrous individuals, who are not ideal for display on sympotic ware. Additionally, to see Herakles, a favorite hero of the elites, in combat with their favorite animal posed an ideological quandary, which made such scenes unpopular among the elite, or aspiring elite,[10] consumers of Attic pottery,[11] seemingly endorsing the abuse of horses, as one might treat a wild animal. An examination of the myth and depictions, or lack thereof, of the Mares, can shed light on questions surrounding how the Greeks themselves interacted with and considered animals in their own lives, as well as how animals, and depictions of animals in art, relate to social realities of the ancient Greek world.

Of all the animals who appear in Greek art, there is perhaps none more contradictory than the horse. Horses are simultaneously the noble conveyors of heroes and often described in myth as aggressive and even monstrous, they are indicators of the wealth and high status of masculine heroes and non-mythological owners alike, but also consistently associated with the feminine, being subservient, in Greek thought, to their male masters.[12] The complexities embodied by horses show that it is impossible to

[10] Barringer 2022. Barringer claims that depictions of cavalry were actually democratized during the early-mid democracy of Athens, allowing those who did not have the means to purchase or care for a horse, to express their aristocratic ambitions.
[11] Here, I use the consumption pattern of Attic pottery theorized by Filser 2017, which posits that painted pottery was meant for both elites and aspiring elites due to the predominance of aristocratic pastimes on the vases such as symposia, and horse rearing. For a justification of using Attic pottery as a lens into Athenian culture, despite the Etruscan context of many of the surviving vases see Osborne 2018, especially pgs. 36-50. For a further explanation of the Etruscan consumption of Attic pottery see Bundrick 2019.
[12] Gregory 2007.

ascribe one solid viewpoint or trait to any animal in Greek thought, as they may represent different and even contradictory things depending upon the context.

This text is, at its core, concerned with two questions: why did the Mares of Diomedes receive such little artistic attention? And what can this lack of attention tell us about the realities of animal-human relations in the Greek world? In setting out to answer these questions, I rely on visual and textual depictions of the Mares of Diomedes from across the Greek world of the sixth and fifth centuries. The period in question was chosen as this is not only the time when most Greek depictions of the Mares were created, but also because of the importance of the symposion and sympotic pottery to Greek and, more specifically, Attic art during this period. My focus is on the sexual and natural boundaries the Mares transgress, and what that might have meant for viewers, especially consumers of Attic pottery. This paper is itself inspired by structuralist readings of Greek myth, particularly those of Jean-Pierre Vernant, Walter Burkert, and François Lissarrague,[13] as well as the work of scholars such as Judith Barringer, Mark Griffith, Robin Osborne, whose research on the relationship between animals, art, myth, and society have been a great influence. In addition to structuralist and art historical readings, this paper has also been helped greatly by works of historical anthropology such as Cristiana Franco's *Shameless: The Dog and the Feminine in Ancient Greece*. This work is also firmly placed within the idea of the "animal turn" in the humanities, as described by Harriet Ritvo, for which animal perspectives and the effect animals have on humans is central.[14]

A few caveats regarding the evidence I draw on must be pointed out: Due to the number of textual and visual sources available as well as the prominence of the *hippeis*, the cavalry class,[15] in

[13] While structuralist readings had their fair share of criticisms in recent years for being too dualistic, focusing too much on comparisons and contrasts, structuralist analyses work particularly well for examining ancient Greek culture because Greek ontologies were shaped by dualisms. Such readings are also useful to examine interstices in which some ideas do not fit. For a critique of structuralist thought in the context Greek art history see Stansbury-O'Donnell 2011, 57-109.
[14] Ritvo 2007.
[15] The term *hippeis* merely refers to the class of people who were financially able to own a horse. This definition, as outlined by Spence 1993, shall be the one I use: not an active military unit, but a class of people whose identity was built around wealth and, for many, horses. It is important to note that this definition is not exactly the same as the Solonian *hippeis*, who were made up of only those who owned horses.

Athenian life, my analysis is skewed heavily towards Athens. While I may reference later texts such as Pseudo-Apollodoros' *Bibliotheka* and Diodoros of Sicily's *Bibliotheka*, it is generally agreed that these authors relied on earlier sources in compiling their works. Lastly, though the Thracian background of the Mares and Diomedes himself are important within the context of the myth and its depictions, I will only discuss this aspect for a limited amount of time. Though important, the topic is well-covered in Pamela Lawson's 1993 Harvard Ph.D. dissertation *The iconography of Herakles and the 'other' in archaic Greek vase painting*.[16]

A term that will make a frequent appearance in this work is "popularity." I use it to refer to the frequency of visual representations of a certain theme. I am adapting here the idea of popularity-by-replication as outlined by Ian Hodder in his 2011 article "Human-thing entanglement: towards an integrated archaeological perspective," in which he describes how certain pottery styles at Çatalhöyük became more widespread than others. Using a "one-off" pot decorated with human features of unique design, Hodder explains that it did not fit within the established thought of how a "pot" should look, as well as how a pot should be used.[17] Simply put, the object did not fit within the ontology of those at the site, so it was never replicated. This example can be used as a model for other objects of "rare" or "unpopular" status, including scenes depicting the Mares of Diomedes. The Mares did not fit within the established language of sympotic vessels, so they were not widely replicated. This explanation does not account for the objects depicting the Mares that *were* created. For sympotic vessels at least, they were failed experiments, with little similarities between them aside from the pose of Herakles and the horse. Additionally, most of the existing examples of depictions of the Mares come from kylixes, which, according to John Boardman, were intensely personal possessions,[18] and likely a matter of personal choice or preference by the buyer in terms of the scenes depicted on said vessel.[19]

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[16] Lawson 1993, 68-76.
[17] Hodder, 171.
[18] Boardman 2001, 247. Boardman equates the Greek kylix to "a favourite pipe" for the modern consumer.
[19] These pieces could have been special commissions or unique purchases for buyers, not artistically in line with what the rest of the Greek world, and its neighbors, were buying.

Central to my study is the combined approach of examining the horse in both myth and social reality of the Greek world. Though the two are often seen as separate entities I maintain that both work in tandem with and influence each other. Firstly, to the Greeks, myth was not an imagined realm of make-believe, but a physical, tangible reality.[20] They were surrounded by what they understood to be the physical remains of their mythic past. Individuals and royal families also claimed descent from gods and epic heroes. Art itself is also affected by the melding of this dichotomy, as seemingly "everyday" scenes may instead reference the world of myth, with the work deriving its meaning from the familiarity of the past.[21] While myth had the potential to influence society, society just as well influenced myth, with new myths developing out of societal change.[22]

This text is divided into four larger sections before concluding. The first explains the rarity of this scene within the context of Greek art as well as the history of scholarly focus on the topic. The second section deals largely with the myth as it appears in the art and text of the Greek world, what depictions survive, and the general composition of scenes. The third section discusses the reasons *why* the Mares proved so unpopular, with subchapters explaining the Mares' roles as inversions of sexual and natural norms, before finally concluding with the realities of horse-ownership in the Greek world as a final, and more human, explanation as to why the Mares proved to be such a rare artistic motif.

1. THE MARES OF DIOMEDES WITHIN THE CORPUS OF HERAKLES IMAGERY

Given the combined popularity of horses and Herakles in Greek art, one might expect that the depiction of the Mares of Diomedes would be extremely popular; this is not the case. It is one of the least depicted of the Twelve Labors, alongside Herakles' cleaning of the Augeian Stables and slaying of the Stymphalian Birds, both of which were local myths that proved unpopular because of their relative obscurity as well as the challenges they posed to the scene composition involving multiple small figures,

[20] This topic is much too large to cover in full here, see Veyne 1988 for more. For a later exploration of Greek engagement with myth and religion in the landscape see Alcock 1994.
[21] Junker 2012, 50-52.
[22] A good example of the reciprocal relationship between myth and society in the Greek world comes in the form of the early fifth century development of the myth of Amazon invasion of Attika as a response to the Persian Wars. See Castriota 2005; Miller 2006.

such as birds, to contrast against the much larger Herakles.[23] The Mare episode has no such problems, yet it remains almost absent from the corpus of Attic (Athenian) pottery. The dataset of scenes from the period that depict the Mares is extremely small; there are nine surviving depictions of the myth, one scarab gem, five vases (three of which are extremely fragmentary), and three fragmentary pieces of metopal sculpture.

At first, the myth of the Mares of Diomedes seems nothing out of the ordinary; like in almost all other Herakles myths, the hero is given a nigh-impossible task (usually involving some sort of beast or monster), which he completes through some combination of brains and sheer brawn. Where this myth differs, is its odd pattern of visual representation, especially in view of its subject matter. Herakles is likely the most-depicted figure in Attic, if not Greek art. Nearly half of all Attic black-figure vases, which experienced their heyday in the sixth century, represent Herakles in some way.[24] Like Herakles, horses are a persistent feature in Greek art, from the earliest figural depictions on Geometric pots to the heights of the cavalry frieze of the Parthenon.[25] They reflect the infatuation of the elites with all things equine: horse breeding, horse racing, horseback hunting, horseback fighting, horse training, and horse grooming.[26] Like the horse, Herakles was a popular figure among the elites of Greece, and more specifically, Athenian society, especially in the Archaic period.[27]

While one might see the absence of the Mares in art as an oddity, and an exception, there is value in this exception, as it tells us why certain scenes proved to be unpopular, as well as how animals affected what was depicted in art. Such value has gone unrecognized by many scholars; few engage with discussion of the Eighth Labor outside of a passing mention. More fully dedicated to the Mares of Diomedes are general overviews such as Donna C. Kurtz's 1975 article "The Man-Eating Horses of

[23] Stafford 2012, 36-38; Schefold 1992, 109; Brommer 1985, 26-30.
[24] Boardman 1975, 1; Schefold 1992, 93; Stafford 2012, 18. Boardman's 1975 claims that vase painters painted more scenes with Herakles on them, influenced by the Peisistratid tyrants of Athens, who associated themselves with Herakles. See Boardman 1972 for his full. For more on the topic see Shapiro, 1995.
[25] Camp 1998.
[26] Moore 2004; Spence, 1993; Bugh 1988; Griffith 2006; Camp 1998; Willekes 2016.
[27] Stafford 2012, 167.

Diomedes in Poetry and Painting,"[28] and Daniel Ogden's chapter "Labor VIII: The Mares of Diomede (and Alcestis)" in his edited volume *The Oxford Handbook of Heracles*.[29] James Harle's 1983 article "Herakles Subduing the Horse(s) of Diomedes and Kṛṣṇa Slaying the Demon-horse Kreśin: a Common Iconographic Formula,"[30] uses Kurtz's analysis to examine similarities between later depictions of the labor and a specific scene which appears throughout the history of Indian art. François Bader's chapter "Héraclès et le cheval" from the 1998 edited volume *Le Bestiaire d'Héraclès* is more concerned with the Amazons and hippic names (names with the root *hippos* or "horse") in the Herakles myth.[31] Lawson's dissertation is extremely useful, as mentioned earlier, but her analysis focuses mainly on the flesh-eating nature of the Mares and not their inherent equine nature. Undiscussed by previous authors are the blurred boundary between human and animal in the Greek world, as well as connections to the real-life experiences of the Greeks, which I aim to emphasize.

2. THE MARES OF DIOMEDES IN THE WORDS AND IMAGES OF THE GREEK WORLD

Four ancient texts describe the encounter between Herakles and Diomedes. In chronological order these are a fragmental poem by the lyric poet Pindar (ca. 518-438); Euripides' tragedy *Alkestis* (ca. 438); Book IV of Diodoros of Sicily's *Bibliotheka,* (ca. mid-1st century); and Pseudo-Apollodoros' *Bibliotheka* (ca. 2nd century CE). These stories all follow the same formula with some slight differences between retellings. Eurystheus, the king of Tiryns and master of Herakles' Labors, ordered the hero to bring back the Mares of Diomedes, son of Ares and King of the Bistones (in Pindar's fragment he is referred to as "sole ruler (*monarkhon*) of the Kikones"),[32] a barbarous and warlike Thracian people. Herakles travels to Thrace, by sea in Pseudo-Apollodoros' version, and overland in Euripides' telling. In the *Alkestis,* Herakles learns the true nature of the Mares from the chorus leader, who reveals that "with their swift jaws they cut (*artamousi*) men apart."[33] Herakles, in disbelief, exclaims back: "This is feed (*khorton*) for

[28] Kurtz 1975.
[29] Ogden 2021, 113-122.
[30] Harle 1983.
[31] Bader 1998.
[32] Pindar. Frag. 169a.5
[33] Eurip. *Alk*. 494.

mountain beasts (*therōn oreiōn*), not horses,"[34] such is the strangeness of the Mares that even Herakles does not believe their true nature. Herakles upon reaching Diomedes' kingdom either feeds a groom or Diomedes to the Mares to satiate their bloodlust just enough for him to bring them back to Eurystheus. According to Diodoros, Eurystheus consecrated the Mares to Hera, and thereafter their line continued until the reign of Alexander the Great.[35] In Pseudo-Apollodoros' *Bibliotheka,* they are instead released by Eurystheus to the foothills of Olympos where they are, ironically, "slain by wild beasts."[36]

Despite their differences, all sources make specific references to the savage nature of the horses. In Diodoros' version, the Mares are fettered by iron chains "due to their strength (*iskhun*)" and eat out of bronze troughs "due to their wildness (*agriotēra*)."[37] As mentioned previously, the diet of the Mares shocks even Herakles in *Alkestis*, who compares them to wild animals, and similarly, Pseudo-Apollodoros equates the Mares to wild animals when alluding to their ironic death. In the Pindaric fragment, the Mares eat out of stone troughs and are restrained by bronze chains, similar to the brazen troughs and chains of Diodoros' version, again. Pindar also highlights the brutal nature of the horses, describing in graphic detail the thrashing, the cracking of bones, and the loose limbs of the hapless groom fed to the horses.

While Pindar's version of the myth is the oldest written account, the earliest visual representation might have been on the Throne of Apollo at Amyklai, which has not survived. According to Pausanias, the throne was sculpted by Bathykles of Magnesia in the mid-sixth century with reliefs of dozens of myths shown on it. Many of Herakles' labors are represented including the hero "exacting his vengeance (*timōroumenos*) on the Thracian Diomedes;"[38] the Mares themselves are not mentioned.

The oldest surviving depiction of the myth comes from a ca. 520 black-figure kylix painted by Psiax, the "Mare" Kylix (See Appendix 3) and is the best-preserved portrayal of the myth. The tondo of the cup depicts Herakles grappling with a horse, with the half-eaten body of a small person, probably the

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[34] Ibid. 495.
[35] Diod. *Bib*. IV.15.4. (trans. Oldfather).
[36] Pseud.-Ap. *Bib*. II.5.8.
[37] Diod. *Bib*. IV.15.3.
[38] Paus. 3.18.12.

groom, sticking out of the horse's mouth. Most other examples are fragmentary, so it is impossible to tell how much their iconographies have in common. All existing pieces show Herakles grabbing some element of the horse's forepart, with most showing the hero raising his club over his head. Though they may echo Psiax's work in general composition, there is a fair amount of variety in the details of the scenes. For example, a black-figure lekythos by the Marathon Painter from the late sixth-early fifth centuries shows Herakles behind the horses in the same position as on the Psiax cup (See Appendix 4). Instead of grappling with a lone horse, he contends with four, all depicted as winged, alluding to their other-worldly nature. Wings were often used in Greek art to convey aggression, especially in monsters and *daimones*,[39] and it is impossible to tell if other, more fragmentary pieces featured wings as well.

Portrayals of Herakles and the Mares of Diomedes are relatively more common in the realm of architectural sculpture than on painted pottery (Appendix 8-10). The more frequent depiction of the Mares on temples likely has to do with the number of temples that depict most of, or all Twelve Labors of Herakles, in which the Mares have earned a place. Metopes were also well-suited for non-frontal depictions of mythological scenes, especially interactions between two individuals, which most portrayals of the myth are.[40]The three primary examples are metopes of the Athenian Treasury at Delphi (ca. 490), the Temple of Zeus at Olympia (ca. 460), and the Hephaisteion at Athens (ca. mid-late fifth c.). All of these, like the Throne of Apollo at Amyklai, depict various mythical scenes as part of the sculptural program. The oldest of the three, the Athenian Treasury, was erected shortly before or after the Battle of Marathon and signaled the ascension of Athens in the Greek world after the expulsion of her tyrants in 510.[41] Metopes of the trials of Herakles and Theseus sculpted in late-Archaic style crowned the Treasury. According to most reconstructions, portrayals of Herakles' various labors made up between nine and fifteen of the Treasury's twenty-eight metopes.[42] A horse and figure from Metope 17 survive in a fragmentary state, perhaps indicating the presence of Herakles' combat with the Mares, though this claim

[39] Aston 2011, 134-135.
[40] Osborne 2009.
[41] von den Hoff 2009.
[42] Gensheimer 2017.

has been debated.[43] Closely related iconographically to the Treasury is the Hephaisteion of the Athenian Agora, whose metopes also show the labors of Herakles and Theseus (See Appendix 10), with nine of Herakles' and eight of Theseus' on the east and north and south facades respectively, with both heroes serving as virtuous examples to the male citizen body of Athens.[44] Among the labors represented are Herakles and the Mares, which have been reconstructed to show Herakles in a very similar position to those scenes of Athenian pottery discussed above.[45] Based on the preserved fragments, Herakles adopts a similar pose in reconstructions of the metope of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia (see Appendix 9). The temple has the best-preserved architectural depictions of the labors of Herakles and is also the first to portray the canonical Twelve Labors.[46]

All metopes portray the encounter between Herakles and the Mares as combat, not the "peaceful" cooperative interactions otherwise shown between human and horse in Greek art. The hero grabs onto the horse and brandishes his club at the animal. It also should be said that architectural sculpture of the Eighth Labor exists within the wider context of a sculptural program that shows all or most of the canonical Labors of Herakles; so, these architectural portrayals of the Mares and Herakles do not stand alone. Additionally, these examples of architectural sculpture are largely found on public, state-financed buildings, and the desired artistic message of the State may be different from that of the individual, private purchaser of painted pottery. The audience for a piece of metopal sculpture on temples such as the Temple of Zeus at Olympia or any other religious structure that depicts the Eighth Labor is much wider than the audience for sympotic vessels, which may be limited to those able to participate in the symposion or those visiting a sanctuary in which they were dedicated. The viewing experience for a piece of metopal sculpture is also much less intimate than that of Attic pottery, with the viewer distant from the art, having to crane their neck towards the heavens to admire it.[47] Contrast this experience, with the more personal

[43] Ibid., 10.
[44] Barringer 2009, 112-113.
[45] Reconstruction of the Olympia metopes by Kühnert and of the Hephaisteion metopes by Boardman.
[46] Barringer 2008, 22; Stafford 2012, 24.
[47] For more on the sensory experience of viewing the architectural sculptures of temples see Marconi 2009.

interaction with a sympotic vessel, drinking from it, gazing at it, and discussing with your fellow symposiasts about its potential meanings. For these reasons, as well as the fragmentary nature of the architectural sculpture, my discussion will focus on works of painted pottery, which can be considered more "personal" possessions. Connected to the concept of choice for the art the object's user/owner, is the scarab gem (Appendix 2). It was closely connected to the object's owner, standing in for their signature, meaning they likely chose such an object to represent them. The object has little in common ichnographically with the sympotic vessels we have remaining, as fragmentary as they are. The scarab is also unique among such gems in that it is the only such object to depict the Eighth Labor of Herakles. Due to the singularity of the scarab as well as its intimate connection to the owner, the gem can be viewed along similar lines as the pieces of Attic pottery, which this paper will mainly focus on.

Since pottery was (mostly) made for a more individualized crowd than the large public temples and monuments of Archaic and Classical Greece, there is more potential for the taste of the individual, whoever they may be, to come through in the finished artistic product. The largest difference between scenes of Herakles in combat with the Mares and more popular ones showing Herakles fighting other beasts such as the Nemean Lion lies in the animal and way Herakles is engaging with it, a topic which I will examine further in a later chapter.

3. THE HUMANITY OF HORSES AND THE MARES AS INVERSIONS OF GREEK WORLDVIEW

Throughout antiquity, the horse was considered the elite animal *par excellence*, and due to its close connection to the elites and tastemakers of the Greek world, they were imbued with a great deal of humanity, more than any other animal in Greek thought. At Olympia, horses, along with their owners, were honored with lyric poems, such as the ones by Pindar which laud the champion racehorse of Hieron of Syracuse, Pherenikos.[48] It was also not uncommon for victorious owners to set up hippic dedications in honor of their horses in the form of sculptures and inscriptions. Among the most famous horses honored at Olympia was Aura, the horse of Pheidolas of Corinth, who threw her rider at the start of the race and

[48] Charles 2007, 101.

still finished first; [49] the judges crowned her the winner and Pheidolas was able to dedicate a statue of her. As seen in the case of Aura, athletic competition was perhaps the realm in which humanity was most afforded to horses.[50] This humanity was also on display in democratic Athens; just as any Athenian citizen who won athletic crowns at any of the four major Panhellenic festivals (Olympia, Delphi, Isthmia, and Nemea) could eat at public expense for the rest of their lives, so could victorious horses.[51]

Horse and human also featured prominently within the realm of public art and spectacle. In Aristophanes' *Knights*, the chorus of cavalrymen claim that they and their horses are so close that even the horses take part in the duties reserved for their human masters.[52] In Aristophanes' *Clouds* the main character's son, Pheidippides, who has a hippic, name is obsessed with horses and chariot racing which has left his father deeply indebted. Horse and human were inseparable within the realm of art, whether the animals were the subjects of lone statue dedications by their owners or were depicted as mounts for youthful warriors or athletes.[53] The Ionic frieze of the Parthenon has over 150 horses and riders represented, directly tying the cavalry class to the ascendant Athenian Empire.[54]

3.1. Mares as Inversions of Gender

As much as horses were beloved and imbued with humanity, there were complications in this relationship between horse and human that affected the perception of the horse within myth. Horses, and especially the Mares of Diomedes, invert the norms of the Greek world, which made such topics difficult to address directly in art, especially if elites were the ones dictating what was and what was not depicted.

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[49] Paus. 6.13.9.
[50] This sense of humanity amongst racehorses did not change during later periods and seemed to have been widespread, especially during the Roman period, as curse tablets were written specifically to affect a rival horse. See Faraone 2019 for more.
[51] Pevnick 2017, 72.
[52] Arist. *Knights*. 595-610. O'Neill Jr. translation.
"We will sing likewise the exploits of our steeds! they are worthy of our praises; in what invasions, what fights have I not seen them helping us! But especially admirable were they, when they bravely leapt upon the galleys, taking nothing with them but a coarse wine, some cloves of garlic and onions; despite this, they nevertheless seized the sweeps just like men, curved their backs over the thwarts and shouted… They rushed down upon the coast of Corinth, and the youngest hollowed out beds in the sand with their hoofs or went to fetch coverings; instead of luzern, they had no food but crabs, which they caught on the strand and even in the sea"
[53] Eaverly 2022. Eaverly posits that the archaic equestrian statues of the Acropolis were participants in the Panathenaia.
[54] Griffith 2006 b, 320-322.

The first of the Greek norms which the Mares of Diomedes invert are the perceptions of gender. While a discussion of women and gender in the Greek world is too large a topic to cover here, I shall focus on the connection between gender and horsemanship and how the Mares fit into or do not fit into that paradigm. Put simply, the relationship between Greeks and horses mirrored the one between Athenian men and Athenian women, at least in theory. Women, in traditional Athenian thought, should be subordinate to their male counterparts, obedient to them, and silent. The highest ideal a woman should aspire to is not having any fame at all, for to be noticed was to be infamous.[55] Whether women adhered to the strict social boundaries outlined in texts written by aristocratic males during the Classical period is a matter of debate.[56]

3.1.1. Women and Horses, Beauty and Sexuality

The relationship between men and horses in the Greek world was also one of intense bonding, and even partnership. The relationship between humans and horses for the Greeks possibly had metaphorical sexual undertones as well. It is the sexual disparity between man and horse that ultimately makes this relationship unequal, as the human is firmly placed in a dominant position, the horse subservient.[57] While the cavalry frieze of the Parthenon is meant to reify male associations with horsemanship, as well as strengthen the position of the *hippeis* in Athenian life, these were not the only relationships that can be gleaned from the work. The frieze is also sexually charged, with the beauty of the male horseman on full display, complemented by the beauty of the horse, who are feminized by their perfectly groomed hair, as well-kept hair was seen as one of the preeminent signs of beauty among women and horses.[58] The horses' subservient position under the rider also effeminized them, making them the "inferior" sexual partner.[59] This analysis comes from standard thought on homoerotic

[55] Franco 2014, 186-187
[56] Katz 1992; Nevett 1994; Trümper 2010; Trümper 2012.
[57] Griffith 2006 b, 322.
[58] Ibid., 310.
[59] Ibid., 321.

relationships in the Greek world; the "passive" receiver of penetration was always associated with the feminine, regardless of gender. The penetrator was always masculine.[60]

It is this physical subservience of horse to rider that leads to further associations with the feminine and equine. The horseback riding itself resembled sexual intercourse in a way, with the "rider's legs wrapped around the animal's body, his hands touching its neck and sometimes holding on to its hair (mane), while also tugging intermittently on a hard bar inserted into its mouth."[61] This close association between sex and horses is perhaps why the same terms used for yoking, harnessing, and "breaking" animals were also used for women.[62] The poet Semonides, categorizes different kinds of women in animal terms. The elite wife, according to him, is like a horse, beautiful, but expensive to maintain.[63] The poem becomes even more pertinent to this paper when one considers that it was likely performed as a part of symposia,[64] the all-male drinking parties for which much of Attic pottery was designed.[65]

Horses, despite being reserved for the conveyance of aristocratic men,[66] have a complicated relationship with sex and gender. They could be either male or female, and the two sexes were often used for different purposes. Mares were bred for racing purposes, being calmer and easier to control than stallions.[67] However, in vase painting chariot teams are constantly represented as male (Fig. 1),[68] The depiction of Greek horses as male by artists was likely an "implicit assertion of the animals' nobility and

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[60] Karras 2000, 1256. There is a large amount of debate surrounding this subject, though the statement I put forward in the text is and has been the established way of thought on penetration and Greek homosexuality. See Part II of Davidson 2007; Sapsford 2022 for an alternate view.
[61] Griffith 2006 b, 324.
[62] Ibid., 324-325; Castriota 2005, 96.
[63] Semonides 7: "Another a dainty, long-maned mare engendered. She pushes servile tasks and trouble onto others, and she wouldn't touch a millstone, lift a sieve, throw dung out of the house, or sit by the oven since she avoids soot. And she forces a man to be her lover. Twice every day, sometimes three times, she washes the dirt off her and anoints herself with scents, and she always wears her hair combed out and long, shaded with flowers. Such a woman is a beautiful sight to others, but for the man who has her as wife she is a plague, unless he is some tyrant or sceptre bearer whose heart delights in such things" (Gerber translation). For more on Semonides 7 see Walker 2016, 309-310; Loraux 1984, 72-110.
[64] Morgan 2005, 72; Osborne 2001, 53.
[65] Osborne 2001, 53. The invited guests of symposia were usually male, but female entertainers such as hetairai, dancers, and musicians could have also been present as well.
[66] Gregory 2007, 197.
[67] Griffith 2006 a, 197.
[68] Ibid.

power."[69] To the Greek, and especially Athenian, aristocracy who bred horses, the animals served as reflections of the self, and to be depicted as associating with or owning a female horse, or even a gelding, would perhaps serve to distance the horse from the owner.[70] The connection between masculinity and horses in art was reinforced through the equestrian frieze of the Parthenon (Figs. 2a-c), in which the youthful *hippeis* and their horses mirror each other not only in their movements but also in terms of their sex, as the horses are sculpted with visible male genitalia.[71] In addition to their role in reifying masculinity through art, horses also took part in some of the most iconic "masculine" activities in the Greek world, warfare, hunting, and athletic competition.

3.1.2. Women and Untamedness

Women, though human, were often thought of in terms of animals as they were considered unruly and wild. The only way to control women was through physical domination and "taming," and it is here that the relationship between women and equids becomes evident. According to Hesiod, a supposedly non-elite writer,[72] the race of women was created as a "*kalon kakon*," a beautiful evil, to punish mankind for Prometheus' theft of fire. It is from Pandora that the faults of all women arise, as females were continually associated with deceitfulness, and could never fully be trusted. For this reason, they must be fully supervised by men, as one may watch over horses and other domesticated animals. Though women and horses were ultimately "bred" by men, they exist independently from them and must be "tamed" by men. Women were also considered to have little to no self-control, sexual or otherwise, and were thus incapable of turning off their alluring charms.[73] The maenads, the mythical female followers of Dionysos, are perfect encapsulations of "wild" women, they act on impulse, and are prone to violence, as seen in

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[69] Ibid. b, 327.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid., 321.
[72] Griffith 2006 b, 311; Millett 1986, 86-93. Millet characterizes Hesiod as a "peasant" and the agrarian society in which he lives as a "peasant society," peasant here referring to farmers that exist outside the walls of the *polis*. While Hesiod may have been wealthier than the average Boiotian farmer, he was still a farmer, disconnected from the elites of his day. This disconnect is evident in the animosity that Hesiod has for the "gift-devouring kings" (*WD* 38-40) of *Works and Days*.
[73] Walcot 1984, 39; Vernant 2011.

Euripides' *Bacchae* in which they tear Pentheus apart, alive, with their bare hands.[74] Much like their equally wild patron, they wear animal skins over more traditional garments. Though they do not eat their victims, the maenads act in a similar way to the Mares, they are wild females, associated with the violence of untamed beasts and dwell outside the bounds of "civilized" society, not domesticity and obedience, the ideal for women in the Greek world.

The association between the "breaking" of women and horses makes even more sense given that young unmarried women were often seen as wild and in need of "taming". That being said, the horse is also associated heavily with hypermasculinity. Equine beasts such as centaurs and satyrs[75] are unable to control their sexual urges. Far from being incompatible, these two gendered sides of horses factored into one another. The unbroken mare embodied by young women and the sexually aggressive stallion both involve a loss of control among females and males. The Greeks even had their own word for the aggression occasionally exhibited by their horses, *hippomania*, horse madness.[76] This aggression combined with their flighty and unpredictable attitude was also perhaps a reason why the Greeks grew to fear the horse as much as they respected it, leading to the creation of equine beasts such as the centaurs and, of course, the Mares of Diomedes.[77] The horse was not always seen as a force of good. In fact, in myth horses were often aggressive and wild, [78] separate from the horse as it would have appeared to an Athenian and in most artistic depictions. Wild, unbridled horses often brought destruction along with them,[79] much like unmarried or deviant women unbound to the will of their husband.

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[74] See Fort Worh AP 2000.02 (LIMC ID 9189); Myonopoulos 2013.
[75] Satyrs were more associated with mules or donkeys rather than horses.
[76] Papakostas et al. 2011. Related to *hippomania* is *hippomanes*, an ingredient in certain spells and potions, especially love potions, found in antiquity. Also translating to "horse madness," *hippomanes* could refer to an herb, a gland on the head of a foal, discharge by a mare, or stallion's semen, all of which were directly associated with sex and magic relating to sex, showing, once again, the power of the horse as a wild or "unbridled," especially relating to sexual appetites. For more see Ogden 2002, 242-243.
[77] Ibid., 470.
[78] Aston 2011, 95-96.
[79] Ibid.

3.1.3. Horses, Women, and Myth

Horses were considered chthonic beasts,[80] born from the earth, a common aspect in the various myths concerning their origins. In one of the most famous versions of the myth, Poseidon ejaculated on a rock, from which the first horse sprung.[81] This rock was reputed to have been on the Kolonos Hippios of Athens.[82] Being the father of horses, Poseidon was a god frequently associated with the animals, and his aspect, Poseidon Hippios, was worshipped throughout Greece. Poseidon, while popularly thought of as a sea god, also had chthonic aspects as the god of earthquakes. His relation to the violence, wildness, and unpredictability of nature present in earthquakes and the storms of the sea made him an apt god of horses. Unlike Poseidon, Athena is associated with the taming of horses. She is credited with the invention of the bridle and chariot, which bind the otherwise wild creature to the will of humanity.[83]

Wild horses also embody the wild women of myth. The most famous of these transgressive females of Greek myth were the Amazons, the warrior women of the lands east of the Greek world. While human, the Amazons embody the wild femininity of the horse, in addition to being the inverse of everything the ideal Greek woman "should" be. The Amazons can often be seen in art riding horses in combat with Greek foot soldiers (Fig. 3). Their names in many cases are "horsy,"[84] the most famous case being Hippolyta, the queen of the Amazons, whose name literally means "loose horse." Artistic representations of the *Amazonomachy*, were commonplace in Greek art, especially in Athens after the Persian Wars,[85] in which the Amazons stood in for the Persians, another Eastern, feminized, and horsy enemy in the Greek imagination. The Amazons are rare among women in their riding of horses, and not only that, but they also ride them as a man would. Greek women almost never rode the animals and were rarely depicted doing so, and if they were shown in this way, they rode side-saddle or on chariots, such as

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[80] Burkert 1985, 138.
[81] Horses and humans share some chthonic characteristics, especially in the context of the Athenian creation myth, in which the founder king of Athens, Erechtheus, sprung from the ground in Attika, giving the Athenians an ancestral claim to the land. Rosivach 1987.
[82] Burkert 1985, 138.
[83] Ibid., 141; Bremmer 2019, 22.
[84] Johnson 2005, 197.
[85] Castriota 2005, 101

portrayals of Athena driving the deified Herakles to Olympos.[86] This co-option of a stereotypical male activity by not just females, but violent females who exist outside the geographic and social boundaries of the Greek world, presented an existential threat to the ancient Greek viewer.[87] Like all women in Greek thought, the Amazons were incapable of exercising restraint,[88] but with their fierce military background, weapons, and aversion to marriage, they presented a real danger, able to act on those base impulses, which could be animalistic in many cases.[89] For example, in Aischylos' *Suppliants,* the Amazons are described as "fed on flesh (*kreoborous*)."[90] The flesh-eating character of the Amazons relates to their general lack of control as well as their "barbarian" origins, a topic which I will address later.

The centaur, as a counterpart to the Amazon, is extremely masculine. The wild and sexual nature of the horse controls the centaurs. Both involve the total loss of control to wild and animalistic instincts. With these connections between the two artistic motifs, it is no wonder why the two are often paired in works of art (Fig. 4). Horses, though they make up the animal parts of centaurs and satyrs,[91] are not usually the animal associated with transgressive drunkenness, that honor would go to the donkey. Donkeys often occupy the same artistic and comedic archetype as satyrs, and like satyrs, were associated with Dionysos, and were portrayed as ithyphallic (Fig. 5). All of the transgressive figures mentioned, Amazons, centaurs, satyrs, maenads, and donkeys exist within the carefully curated world of the art of the Greek symposion, where a specific kind of transgression was tolerated and even encouraged.

The shared trait of wildness as well as the general equine nature of the satyrs and centaurs and the Mares of Diomedes, as well as the "flesh-eating" nature of the Amazons, connect the four groups. And yet, while Amazons, satyrs, and centaurs are popular, the Mares of Diomedes are not. Why is this? This unpopularity can be explained, once again, by Hodder's idea of "fittingness." Amazons, satyrs, and centaurs were popular because they "fit" within the established set of images seen in both sympotic

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[86] Griffith 2006 a, 202.
[87] Walcot 1984, 42.
[88] Johnson 2005, 197.
[89] duBois 1991, 34, 40.
[90] Aisch. *Supp*. 287; Walcot 1984, 41.
[91] For more on satyrs and wildness see Lissarrague 1993.

vessels and sculptural architecture. This idea of strict societally encouraged transgression is common across cultures and is explored in-depth by Victor Turner, who states that religious and secular festivals that encouraged misbehavior and status reversal actually upheld societal laws and hierarchy.[92] The ideas represented by the humans and creatures depicted on sympotic vessels uphold societal values and hierarchical structures precisely by showing specific *kinds* of transgressive figures and actions. The Mares are, unlike the Amazons, satyrs and centaurs, true horses, and do not fit within the corpus of transgressive figures as monstrous horses are rarely ever depicted in art, presenting a bit of a quandary for the elite looking to purchase a service of symposion pottery. Additionally, elites, or aspiring elites likely did not want to purchase artistic pieces in which the horses were so "badly behaved," and strikingly feminine. Psiax's Kylix offers a possible solution to the connection of the Mares and femininity; he makes the horse male in his depiction of the myth, perhaps due to artistic convention which dictated that most horses were to be male. While this cup is certainly the finest existing ancient artistic rendering of the myth, it is not completely accurate to the story as the gender of the horse is completely changed. The gender change of the horse did not seem to make the scene any more popular.

3.2. Mares as Inversions of Natural Law

Perhaps the most iconic trait the Mares of Diomedes possess is their taste for humans; it is this proclivity for flesh that separates them from "normal" horses. Had the horses themselves simply been unruly and wild they would not present a challenge to Herakles, nor a meaningful existential threat for the hero to subdue. Instead, it is the bestial aspect of the Mares that presents the biggest inversion of Greek customs. While the unbridled femininity of the Mares certainly posed an ideological problem in the Greek imagination, it is their diet that poses the largest issue. Their flesh-eating is so subversive that the Mares

[92] Turner 1969, 176.

cease to be horses, but are instead monsters, who embody the traits of other species, most notably dogs,[93] another animal with which Greeks have a complicated relationship.

3.2.1. Cannibalism and Flesh-Eating

To understand how repugnant the idea of horses eating human flesh was to the Greeks, we must first understand the general Greek attitude towards cannibalism and the consumption of humans by animals. In broad terms, the practice of cannibalism of any kind was an abhorrent crime to the Greeks, similar to incest, xenocide,[94] and parricide, and was most often associated with foreigners in art and text.[95] In Herodotos' *Histories*, some Skythian tribes were described as engaging in cannibalism.[96] The Androphagoi, literally the "Man-eaters," is another, non-Skythian, tribe mentioned by Herodotos.[97] While the historian does not offer any words of judgment for their practice, there is no doubt that the Greek reader of the *Histories*, would have had no such impartiality.

Skythians and their neighbors, however, were not the only foreigners accused of cannibalism, especially when looking at myth. The Amazons were considered "flesh-eaters" by some;[98] and even the Egyptians were accused of the practice in the myth of Herakles and Bousiris. Bousiris, an Egyptian pharaoh who was accustomed to sacrificing guests, attempted to slaughter the hero as part of a *thysia*-sacrifice, which implies the consumption of the victim.[99] The story actually mirrors the Eighth Labor in many ways, with Herakles arriving at a strange land, encountering the local ruler who inverts established Greek norms relating to the killing of guests and consumption of human flesh, only for the inversion to be quashed by the hero and order restored to the world, resulting in the ironic death for the local ruler. In the case of Diomedes, he is fed to his own horses in some versions of the myth, while Bousiris is killed on the

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[93] For the bestial aspects of dogs as they relate to the Mares see chapter 3 of Franco 2014 and Aston 2011.
[94] Meaning the killing of guests.
[95] Miller 2000, 426.
[96] Herod. *Hist*. 4.26.
[97] Herod. *Hist*. 4.18.
[98] It is also worth noting that the Amazons were residents of Skythia and were perhaps inspired by actual women warriors present in Skythia, whose evidence has been validated by evidence from grave goods in Southern Russia. See Guliaev 2003.
[99] Miller 2000, 426.

very altar he intended to sacrifice Herakles on, the subject of a fair few scenes on Attic pottery (Fig. 6). In the written sources, cannibalism appears as something practiced by "others" and it is never used to vilify one's own people or population.[100] In the case of the Mares, the barbarism and foreign nature of Diomedes, as a Thracian king, is represented by the flesh-eating nature of his horses.[101] The connection between these myths perhaps represents a greater pattern in the way in which foreigners of all kinds were thought of within the realm of Greek art and myth, inherently different from the Greeks, and therefore, the opposite of everything the Greeks thought of as "correct."

While "Barbarians" were certainly the group most frequently associated with cannibalism, some mythic Greeks engaged in the consumption of flesh, often only to be swiftly and brutally punished for their transgression. Such was the fate of King Lykaon of Arkadia, who sacrificed a child to Lykaian Zeus on Mt. Lykaion, and devoured the flesh, and in some cases, fed the "meat" to Zeus himself.[102] Zeus, enraged at this blatant act of cannibalism and trickery, punished Lykaon, most commonly turning the king into a wolf. The choice was fitting for a myriad of reasons; the wolf was often seen as a "savage killer" who stalked the wilds outside of the civilized world, and of course, fed on flesh.[103] The transformation of Lykaon emphasizes his true nature, a beast, and the antithesis of the "civilized" Greek ruler. That wolves feature so prominently in the myth is fitting for a story set in Arkadia, a region known for its remote forests and wild animals. Even though Arkadia made up a large portion of the central Peloponnese it was still imagined to be an odd outlier in the Greek world, an almost primeval place where conventional Greek norms may be ignored or inverted. Cannibalism was still associated with the foreign, remote, and animalistic, even if it occurred in the Greek homeland.

But why was cannibalism, and the consumption of human flesh at large, such a taboo in Greek culture? According to Hesiod, birds, fish, and beasts, consume the flesh of one another because they know no better, but humans were gifted a sense of *dikē* (justice) by Zeus so that they may not eat other

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[100] Lawson 1993, 69-70.
[101] Ibid., 73.
[102] Eidinow 2019, 71.
[103] Ibid. 75.

humans.[104] For humans, cannibalism can be seen as a degradation of one's own humanity, bringing one down to the level of a beast.[105] Such is the case with Lykaon.[106] The heroes of the *Iliad* are often likened to animals in battle, and for good reason. Not only do these warriors embody the physical prowess of a ramping bull or lion, but their slaughter of other humans and subsequent desecration of their opponent's corpses acts as a symbolic form of cannibalism, in which the corpse is so thoroughly degraded it ceases to be human, as does the killer.[107] An excellent example of this metaphorical cannibalism comes from Franco's analysis of the degradation of Hektor by Achilles before and after he is killed. Achilles, in a fit of almost animalistic rage, exclaims that he will consume Hektor raw, showing how far the hero has been affected by his anger, and his own lack of restraint (*aidōs*).[108] This lack of *aidōs* is a trait shared by many Homeric heroes,[109] who exist outside the realm of the city and all of its civilizing attributes, and instead live in a world where to be an animal is to attain everlasting glory (*kleos*).[110] To be a hero in the Greek world often means to live outside the social laws that bind most mortals.[111] This living outside the social norms is one of Herakles' defining characteristics, a man so thoroughly disassociated from the city that he

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[104] Hes. *WD* 276-280.
[105] Lawson 1993, 71-76.
[106] Burkert 1983, 84-93. Related to this myth is the Lykaia festival, held at Mt. Lykaios in honor of Zeus Lykaios It was rumored by both Pliny and Pausanias that men engaged in human sacrifice and cannibalism, with some men even turning in to wolves themselves. While Pausanias and Pliny regard these stories as wholly untrue, Burkert chooses to view the sacrificial rites of the Lykaia with cautious veracity. According to Burkert, the sacrifice of the Lykaia possibly included human organs mixed with those of animals, with the worshippers becoming "wolf-men," embodying the characteristics of the animal once the flesh was consumed. While Arkadian ritual and religious tradition was certainly different than the rest of the Greek world, there is still a high likelihood that the festival was a morbid rumor or akin to a ghost story, which would make sense when one considers the number of myths surrounding human-animal transformation and wildness that take place in Arkadia.
[107] Franco 2014, 78.
[108] Ibid.
[109] Indeed, many heroes and mythic figures that exist outside of Homer have little restraint when it comes to the consumption of human flesh. Tydeus, the father of Diomedes, eats the brains of his enemy Melanippos in the Cycle of the Seven Against Thebes (Apollod. III.6.8). Atreus kills his nephews and serves them to their father, Thyestes to eat (Apollod. Epit.2.13).
[110] Franco 2014, 82.
[111] Vidal-Naquet 1968. The youthful soldier of Athens was inextricably linked to the wild, not only serving at the borders of Attika, but also in the activities which defined him, namely hunting. By hunting, the ephebi of Athens "emulated" the heroes of the mythic past and were associated with heroes in return. Paraphrasing Forth, Vidal-Naquet claims "all heroes are hunters, and all hunters are heroes." The krypteia of Sparta also exemplify this idea of the youthful, lone, hunter, forced to live off the land and fend for themselves. The idea of the wild youth living on the fringes of society, disregarding the social order, culminates in the archetype Vidal-Naquet calls the "Black Hunter." The "Black Hunter," alone and existing outside of the orderly phalanx of the *polis*, is himself reflective of the warriors and heroes of Greek myth. For a response to and reflection of Burkert's ideas, see Ma 2008.

flouts even the most sacred and established conventions of the Greek world. In fact, when Herakles enters the city, tragedy often follows.[112] He kills guests and friends, he drinks and has sex to excess, and wears the skin of an animal, yet he is still so widely worshipped and admired by many throughout the Greek world, in spite of his glaring faults.

Not only does cannibalism degrade the soul of the killer, but in Greek thought, it entirely erases the soul of the one eaten.[113] One of the greatest fears for the Greeks was to die without the proper funeral rites in a strange land, which would prevent the deceased from entering the afterlife, occupying a horrifying middle-ground between life and death.[114] This fear is compounded by the distress of being consumed by animals, who by eating the corpse can facilitate its destruction and cast the soul into an oblivion between life and death. This existential fear of being eaten, and thus denied a place in the afterlife is why the Greek heroes of the *Iliad* place such a heavy emphasis on the corpse. Enemies threaten to feed each other to animals and comrades rescue the corpses of the fallen so that the enemy cannot violate them in such a way. Through the decay and consumption of the body, all personhood attached to the corpse becomes lost to the ravages of time and beasts.[115]

3.2.2. The Dog and Flesh-Eating in the Greek Imagination

Of the beasts who practice the consumption of human flesh, the dog is perhaps the most prominent. There are multiple passages in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in which dogs are described as corpse-eaters and vicious beasts.[116] Dogs, like horses, occupy a liminal space in myth and reality. They are companions to elites and heroes,[117] though they are just as easily associated with violence and subversive behavior.[118] They are the animals most frequently associated with flesh-eating and violence towards

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[112] Stafford 2012, 103.
[113] Franco 2014, 76-77.
[114] Ibid.
[115] Ibid., 78.
[116] Hom. *Il*. 1.4; Hom. *Od*. 21.362-365, 22.474-477. According to Franco 2014, there are "thirty-nine instances of necrophagy there are 39 instances of necrophagy" in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Thirty-one of which involve dogs (277).
[117] Franco 2014, 98.
[118] Aston 2011, 95.

guests,[119] traits shared with the Mares of Diomedes. It is for this reason that I will talk at length about the dog in Greece, using the ideas set forth by Franco. Dogs were another animal close to humans in the Greek world, and the second-most common animal in art;[120] like horses, they were thought of as wild animals brought into the world of men for the benefit of men, yet there was the ever-present fear that the wild beast within the domesticated animal could come out at any time.[121] In the *Iliad*, Priam's love for his dogs and his insistence that they belong in the palace, the domestic space, set into the listener or reader's mind the horror at what happens when Troy falls. Now that the world of violence that exists outside the city has entered its interior, all laws, be they natural or religious, become inverted. The dogs may cease to recognize Priam, "turn wolf," and feast on the flesh of their own master.[122] A similar thing occurs in some tellings of Herakles' Eighth Labor, in which the Mares, so incensed by their own bloodlust, eat Diomedes without a second thought.

While horses and dogs were considered similar due to their inherent wild nature, one aspect that horses and dogs do not share is their behavior around guests. Dogs were the animal most frequently associated with breaches of *xenia*, guest friendship. The dog was intimately connected with the interior of the house and the sharing of meals. Due to its position as the table companion of humans, the dog may transcend the boundary between animal and mankind. It is the highest of the animals in that it is able to eat among people, but the lowest of the human, in that it must sit below the table eating scraps.[123] Relating to the dog's behavior at the dinner table is the criticism of the dog for its ignorance of the laws of *xenia*. To host strangers in one's home and treat them kindly was an unshunnable duty for any person, lest they incur the wrath of Zeus Xenios (of Guests).[124]

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[119] However, of all the animals the Greeks kept dogs likely had the closest relationship to humans. As evidenced by Odysseus touching and heartbreaking reunion with his dog Argos in the Odyssey (17.290-327).
[120] Kitchell 2020, 2. Horses being then most common.
[121] Aston 2011, 95; Franco 2014, 39.
[122] Franco 2014, 82.
[123] Ibid., 32, 65.
[124] Ibid., 42.

The most wretched villains in Greek myth were those who abused *xenia* on both sides. In the *Odyssey*, Polyphemos the Cyclops eats the men of Odysseus and traps them in his cave instead of welcoming them, whereas in the same text the suitors abuse the kindness of Penelope, overstaying their welcome and drinking her (and Odysseus') wine and eating their food. Since a dog cannot differentiate between the intents of a stranger and an enemy, it treats all strangers as enemies, and at best will bark at a stranger, and at worst attack them.[125] So, by not adhering to the laws of *xenia*, the dog shows its animalistic, and often brutal nature, similar to the barbarians on the outskirts of the Greek world who do not practice such traditions.[126] While most horses may not be connected to the laws of *xenia*, the Mares are, in that they eat strangers and guests of King Diomedes. They exhibit the same traits as dogs to the most extreme degree. The Mares do not just attack guests and strangers, they *eat* them. In exhibiting the traits of both horse and dog, the Mares become a hybrid creature, a monster, that must be tamed or killed by the hero.

4. THE ARTISTIC COMPOSITION OF HERAKLES AND THE MARES

The idea of the Mares as monsters and not animals is best examined through an analysis of artistic depictions of Herakles and the Mares. The portrayal of the encounter between Herakles and the Mares of Diomedes is unlike any other depiction of humans and horses in Greek art. For this reason, I end my text with a discussion of how the artistic structure of works showing the Mares of Diomedes breaks with any established formulae of horse-human art and "real" interaction in the Greek world. Most scenes with horses are quite tame,[127] in terms of both subject matter and the demeanor of the horses, featuring men riding horses or chariots, departing on horseback, horses being groomed or trained, and combat on horseback. However, in no other set of images do we see humans in combat *against* horses specifically. In scenes that do show men fighting in association with horses, the object of violence is usually human, whether it be the combatant mounted atop the horse or the human half of a hybrid being such as a

[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid.
[127] Both in a sense of tranquility of the overall as well as the demeanor of the horse.

centaur.[128] The implicit threat of violence to the horse alone still marks this scene, in addition to all other depictions of Herakles with the Mares, as strange.[129]

The scene is not only strange for its subject matter but also its composition, as it skews from the established narrative patterns in Greek pottery, best examined through the "Mare" Kylix by Psiax mentioned earlier. Though Carlo Pavese interprets similar scenes of Herakles and the Mares as him merely threatening the horses with his club,[130] the scene still depicts combat, as both figures approach each other aggressively. In Greek pottery, the approach of two figures almost always coincides with some sort of physical attack.[131] According to Claudia Beier in her thorough examination of scenes by the Edinburgh Painter, combat scenes, especially those involving animals, have a strict pattern they follow. Though the Edinburgh Painter flourished a few years after Psiax's last piece, he can still be used as a good indicator for the artistic conventions of the period during the transition period from black to red-figure pottery at the end of the sixth century. Broadly speaking, the subject depicted on the left side of the vase is taken as the victor while the subject on the right is almost always the vanquished.[132] In the corpus of the Edinburgh Painter, Herakles is always depicted on the left side of combat scenes.[133] On the "Mare" Kylix, he approaches from the right and only turns left to face the same direction as the horse, with the two being at about eye level. The position of both Herakles and the horse with neither shrinking back from the fight perhaps puts the two on equal footing, which would make sense given the Greek reverence for horses. This idea is intriguing, but ultimately misleading, as it is clear that Herakles is meant to be taken as the victor in the fight as he is making bodily contact with the horse by wrapping his hand around

[128] Some well-known exceptions to this pattern include an early-fifth c. red figure kylix (ARV 402 22, LIMC 2821), featuring a battle between centaurs and Lapiths as well as a small bronze geometric figurine group which shows a centaur fighting a man, with a point sticking out of the centaur's flank (New York, 17.190.2072).
[129] For other scenes of Herakles involving horses see scenes of Herakles' apotheosis, in which the hero enters or drives a chariot alongside Athena. New York, 58.32.
[130] Pavese 1968, 78.
[131] Beier 2017, 288. This is also the case with sexual pursuits/violence in Greek art, with the aggressor always approaching the victim of the attack.
[132] Ibid., 285.
[133] Ibid., 288.

its neck. According to Beier, combat scenes that include depictions of bodily contact are not fights between equal opponents.[134]

While strange, and somewhat more evenly matched than other depictions of Herakles in combat, the scene on the "Mare" Kylix still shows Herakles' victory over the forces which seek to upend the established order of the Greek world. Though Beier's argument mainly focuses on painted pottery, the same logic can be applied to all other known depictions of Herakles and the Mares from the period in question. The more fragmentary metopes from the Athenian Treasury at Delphi, the Temple of Zeus at Olympia, and the Hephaistion in Athens all depict Herakles and one of the Mares in a similar way, with the hero approaching the unruly horse and brandishing his club, locking his arm around the neck, or both.

4.1. The Actual Treatment of Horses in the Greek World

There is a consensus among both written and artistic sources that the Mares were more monster than horse, and such monstrousness, within the context of sympotic art, likely proved unattractive to a wealthy, or aspirationally wealthy, Athenian buyer. The elite attachment to and fascination with horses has been touched on before, though I have yet to mention how (elite) Greeks may have actually treated their equine "friends." This final argument is perhaps most grounded in the "real" world of the ancient Greeks and is the most personal reason as to why these scenes proved so unpopular during the sixth and fifth centuries. The Greek treatment of the horse was largely kind, or at least kindness was emphasized in what written and visual sources we have, though this kindness was not without its limits. As Joy Barrie correctly points out in her dissertation, most horses depicted in Greek art have a look of "chronic discomfort," with laid back ears, rolling eyes, and open jaws, likely from the use of uncomfortable riding bits (Fig. 7-8), which created a good amount of anxiety and pain for the horse.[135] These bits were not

[134] Ibid., 293. The only exception to this rule is wrestling scenes, which this depiction is not.
[135] Barrie 1993, 11.

unique to the Greek world; across the Mediterranean and the Near East one will find all manner of spiked and studded horse bits (Figs. 9-10).

Despite the discomfort imposed by their tack, the horse was still a well-cared-for animal, for the most part. The best example we have of horse care in the Greek world comes from Xenophon's *On Horsemanship*, which dates to the 4th century. Although it lies beyond the time frame chosen for this paper, the text provides relevant insight as Xenophon drew from earlier authors whose work does not survive, namely Simon of Athens.[136] Xenophon advocates for a kind, gentle treatment of the horse when handling it: "If you would have a horse learn to perform his duty, your best plan will be, whenever he does as you wish, to show him some kindness in return (*antikharisēi*), and when he is disobedient to chastise (*kolazēis*) him."[137] When Xenophon advocates for "chastising" the horse, he makes clear that this should not be done in anger, as "The one best precept–the golden rule–in dealing with a horse is never to approach him angrily (*orgēi*). Anger is so devoid of forethought (*apronotēton*) that it will often drive a man to do things which in a calmer mood he will regret (*metamelein*)."[138] The crux of Xenophon's work is to make the horse do what the rider wishes, not by coercion, but by positive reinforcement. This advocacy for tolerance and kindness is part of the reason why Xenophon's work is among the few ancient treatises still in use today.[139] Modern scholars who work with horses, such as Paul Patton, reify this attitude, showing the relationship of mutual trust that must exist between humans and horses.[140] Patton rightly states that the horse is much more physically powerful than its human rider, and a horse will only act on the commands of the rider if it has been trained to respond to those commands.[141] This training, of course, is not coercive but involves the use of a "nonverbal 'language'" between horse and rider.[142]

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[136] Xen. *On Horsemanship*. 1.1. We do not know much about Simon. According to Pliny the Elder, he was the first to write on horsemanship (xxxiv.19). A sculptor by the name of Demetrios also produced a bronze statue of him (ibid.).
[137] Xen. *On Horsemanship*. 8.13. Dakyns Translation.
[138] Ibid. 6.13.
[139] Charles 2007, 97.
[140] Patton 2003.
[141] Ibid, 89.
[142] Ibid, 90.

This more kind and cooperative approach to training is reflected in the art of the Greek world which depicts horse care, specifically grooming scenes (Fig. 11). Most scenes portray tender moments between horse and groom, usually in the context of the stable. These gentle scenes reflect the elite ideal of horse care with the groom just as invested in the horse as the owner. Xenophon advocates for such a process when he says, "It is the duty of a horseman, as we think, to have his groom (*hippokomon*) trained thoroughly in all that concerns the treatment of the horse."[143] In literary works such as Aesop's *Fables*, in which stories of cruelty and overworking of animals abound, horses rarely receive any mistreatment.[144] Even in the *Iliad*, a work that is brimming with blood and violence, the harsh treatment of horses is shocking to the listener or reader. When Achilles' companion Patroklos falls in battle, his horses Xanthos and Balios weep for the fallen warrior and refuse to move. The chariot driver Automedon beats and whips them, yet they do not budge. The beating of Xanthos and Balios is not a normal occurrence; it both highlights the pathos of the horses and casts Automedon in a negative light. This scene portrays the harshest treatment of animals in all of the *Iliad*, and the fact that horses are on the receiving end of it would have been alarming to a Greek audience.[145] So, the scenes of Herakles, a favorite hero of the elites, attacking their most treasured animal must have struck a nerve, given how rare scenes of violence towards horses are. While the horses may embody monstrous qualities, which may prove unattractive to a buyer for reasons mentioned above, the core of the scene is still Herakles committing an act of violence toward a horse, a shocking act that goes against all elite notions of respect and care for the animal.

CONCLUSION

The relationship between horses and humans lies at the heart of the issue surrounding the popularity of the art depicting the Mares of Diomedes. Horses were the closest animal companions to the elites and the tastemakers of the Greek world. The elite obsession with all things equine explains the great amount of horse-centered art one finds, not just in Attika, but across Greece. The vases, architectural

[143] Xen. *On Horsemanship*. 5.1.
[144] Calder 2011, 56.
[145] Charles 2007, 19.

sculpture, and public sculptural dedications, which any resident of a *polis*, but especially Athens, may have interacted with as part of their daily lives baked horses into the everyday experience of the Greek world. In fifth-century Athens, it must have been a common sight to see the youthful horsemen atop their beautiful steeds trooping through the Agora to the Hipparcheion, the cavalry school perhaps located in the northeast corner of the Agora.[146] They might have seen the plays produced by Aristophanes which poke fun at the arrogant youths obsessed with their horses. There can be little doubt that everyone, even those outside of the privileged cavalry classes, had some kind of interaction with horses, be that in the form of riding, grooming, spectating, or artistic viewing.

Given the attachment to horses, one might find it curious that the only labor of Herakles that directly relates to the animal was unpopular in art.[147] The scene was not widely replicated at all during the late-Archaic and Classical periods, the heyday of figured vase painting. However, upon closer examination, this unpopularity, or lack of replication, makes sense given the truly subversive nature of the Mares. The Mares of Diomedes did not fit into any existing artistic paradigm of transgression. While the idea of transgression and transgressive creatures were extremely popular in Greek art, the Mares themselves did not belong to any category of the creature, and as a result, proved unpopular. The Mares did not "fit" into these paradigms for three reasons, the first being their unbridled and unavoidable femininity. Horses that were likely female in life, such as chariot horses, were transformed into males in artistic depictions. Since the Mares were always described as females their femininity was unavoidable. This did not stop some artists from trying, as seen in the case of Psiax's "Mare" Kylix, the best surviving artistic portrayal of the myth. The Mares themselves fit within the much wider Greek discourse of horses and unmarried women, which were often thought of in the same terms, with both being described as wild or "untamed." This wildness factors into the second reason for their unpopularity, their cannibalistic tendencies. Cannibalism and the consumption of human flesh as a whole was an abhorrent crime to the

[146] Spence 1993, 186.
[147] Here, I speak only about labors that involve full-bodied horses, such as the Mares, not horse-hybrid creatures such as the centaurs, as there are numerous artistic depictions of Herakles fighting centaurs.

Greeks which, not only turned the flesh-eater into a beast but also erased the soul of the deceased. The human-eating Mares act as representatives of their master, Diomedes of Thrace, who on top of committing cannibalism by proxy of his horses, also commits the severe crime of xenocide. By eating human flesh, the Mares further degrade themselves into monsters, "hybrid" creatures who eat flesh like dogs. So, by being female, barbarian, and monstrous, inverting all gendered, social, and natural laws of the Greek world, the Mares act as the ultimate "bad" horses, which proved to be unpopular for the elite or aspiring elite purchasers of Greek pottery, especially in Athens.

There is another issue that the Mares bring up, that being their treatment by Herakles and its relation to the real treatment of horses according to Xenophon and Simon. The Mares, as they are most frequently depicted, are being attacked by Herakles, as the hero approaches the horse and wraps his arm around the neck or grabs onto the hair of the horse, all while raising his club above his head. These gestures should be read as an emphatic portrayal of combat and violence toward the horse. This violence is perhaps another reason why the scene proved to be so unpopular, as the treatment and training of horses, if we are to believe Xenophon, was humane, emphasizing positive reinforcement over physical harm to teach the animal. Elite Greeks and those that wanted to emulate them did not want art depicting the abuse of their favorite animal, even if the animal in that piece of art was a monster.

APPENDIX:

Known Depictions of the Eighth Labor of Herakles ca. Sixth-Fifth c. BCE[148]

1. The Throne of Apollo at Amyklai

Date: ca. 550 BCE
Material: Unknown, likely marble.
Artist: Bathykles of Magnesia
Findspot/Provenance: Amyklai, near Sparta. Most of the throne is no longer extant and only its foundation survives.

According to Pausanias, the sculptor Bathykles of Magnesia (c. 550 BCE) made the throne upon which a colossal bronze statue of Apollo sat. The throne itself features numerous scenes from myth carved upon its surface, one of which is listed as such by Pausanias:[149]

" Διομήδην τε Ἡρακλῆς τὸν Θρᾷκα καὶ ἐπ' Εὐήνῳ τῷ ποταμῷ Νέσσον τιμωρούμενος,"
"And Herakles avenging himself upon Diomedes the Thracian and Nessos at the Eunos River."

The sanctuary of Apollo Amyklaios was itself located near Sparta, though little of the sanctuary survives today, including the throne. Angelos Delivorrias proposes that the scenes which Pausanias describes were painted on wooden panels attached to the throne, as some kid of evidence of paint, marble, terracotta, or bronze, would have left some kind of archaeological evidence.[150]

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[148] Pieces dated chronologically.
[149] Paus. 3.18.12.
[150] Delivorrias 2009, 134.

2. Greek Scarab with Herakles Leading a Mare of Diomedes

Date: ca. 550-500 BCE
Material: Carnelian
Findspot/Provenance: Unknown. Purchased by Edward Perry Warren from the Bruschi Collection at Corneto and loaned to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in 1926. Purchased from Warren by the MFA in 1927.[151]
Accession Number: 27.60

This detailed gem shows Herakles leading a Mare of Diomedes by the reins. Unlike in other depictions, Herakles' club is not raised and his quiver has been hung up in the upper left register. The Mare can be evidenced by her sharp teeth protruding from her lips.

[151] MFA, Boston, "Scarab with Herakles leading the horse of Diomedes."

3. The "Mare" Kylix

Date: ca. 520s BCE
Material: Terra cotta
Fabric: Attic
Artist: Psiax
Technique: Black figure
Sub-technique: coral red
Findspot/Provenance: Unknown. Now held in the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg after entering their collections in 1979, before which it was held in the Museum of Eastern and Western Art in Odessa.
Accession Number: ΓP-28190
BAPD Number: 320368

Perhaps the finest and best-preserved representation of the myth, Psiax's cup shows the most common way the myth of Herakles' Eighth Labor is portrayed. Herakles steps forward, grabbing onto the horse by the neck and raising his club above his head.

A Visual Analysis of the "Mare" Kylix

Herakles himself is instantly recognizable, with his club raised over his head and lion skin draped around his body. The horse, approaching from the left, rears up, giving it a much more wild and intimidating appearance than many other horses in the corpus of Attic pottery. The hero approaches the horse from the right, grabbing onto the mare's neck with his right arm, and raising his club over his head with his left. His upper body is turned back, to face in the same direction as the horse. Though the pose is awkward (especially when one tries to replicate it) it imbues the scene with a sense of movement and urgency and violence, as Herakles has to turn his entire body around to subdue the horse. The use of the right arm to hold down the mare makes this the hero's most important action in the scene, with the raising of his club acting as a threat to the horse.[152] As is typical of Psiax, he has rendered Herakles' musculature in fine detail, an important feature for a hero known for his immense strength.

The facial expression of Herakles in the piece is hard to read, though his single-minded stare and slight scowl both intimate an idea of determination. He stands face to face with the mangled corpse of the groom, but retains his composure, showing little to no visible emotion. Oftentimes in Greek art, the idea

[152] Pavese 1968, 78.

of the "other" is communicated through this contrast of gestures, as the representative of "Greek civilization" often adopts a composed posture, while their opponent or the representative of some kind of "other" adopts a posture of wild gesticulations.[153] The overall composition of Herakles, his calm expression, and the carefully planned movements of his limbs, are perfect assertions of *sophrosyne*, or self-control, especially when compared to the wild posture of the horse, who rears up devouring the groom,[154] showing a decided lack of *sophrosyne*.

However, the horse appears to be quite small: once envisioned standing on the ground, it would only reach Herakles' waist. The horse's small size is not only echoed in other pieces of Attic pottery but in the actual size of horses in the ancient Greek world.[155] While there were certainly regional differences in the kinds of horses bred, especially when looking outside the Greek world,[156] the average Greek horse was about 13-14 hands high at the withers.[157] The horse's ears are laid back, indicating that the horse fears Herakles brandishing his club.[158] In spite of, or perhaps because of the horse's fear it still rears up defiantly trying to break free of the hero's grasp. The color of the horse itself is black, with no presence of a slip. In Attic black-figure pottery horses were certainly colored with different slips other than the standard black, giving horses varied sets of color. The pieces with horses attributed to Psiax on the BAPD, are all the same black color, perhaps indicating that Psiax did not use the additional slip technique.

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[153] McNiven 2000.

[154] The rearing posture of the horse may be read as wild within this specific context as it resists Herakles' grasp, however, a rearing horse in Greek art did not necessarily indicate wildness, as seen with the later depictions of horses on the Parthenon's cavalry friezes.

[155] Willekes 2022. Despite the modern assumptions that a larger horse may be more powerful, and thus more desirable, the Greeks preferred their horses to be smaller. Willekes states that the Greeks preferred smaller, "pony-sized," horses due to their easier maneuverability, tolerance to the Mediterranean rocky landscape, as well as ease of mounting, as stirrups and saddles did not exist at the time.

[156] Willekes 2016.

[157] Griffith 2006 a, 196.

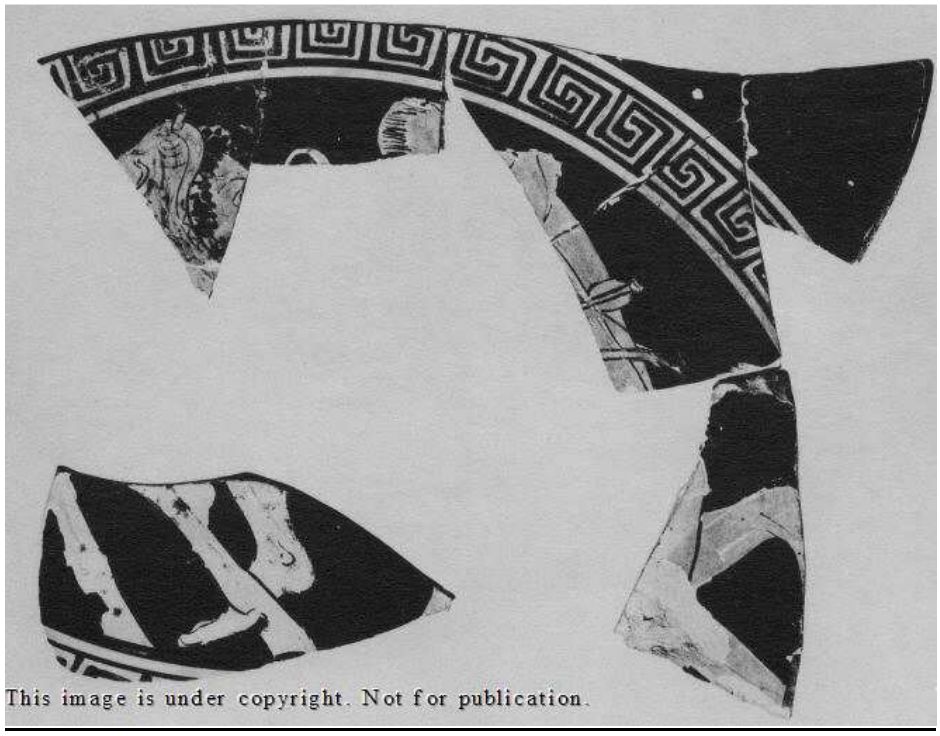
[158] Barrie 1993, 15.

4. Lekythos with Herakles and The Winged Mares of Diomedes

Date: ca. 525-475 BCE
Material: Terra cotta
Fabric: Attic
Artist: Attributed to the Marathon Painter
Technique: Black figure
Sub-technique: white ground
Findspot/provenance: Unknown, likely Sicilian. Now held in The Museo Archeologico Regionale Paolo Orsi in Syracuse, Sicily.
Accession Number: 14569
BAPD Number: 303502

Herakles is located behind the horses, rather than in front or to the side of them. All four horses are represented as well. Herakles steps forward and grabs onto the neck of the horse and with his club over his head.

5. Fragments of a Kylix



Date: ca. 525-475 BCE
Material: Terra-cotta
Fabric: Attic
Artist: Unknown
Technique: Red figure
Findspot/Provenance: Unknown. Now held in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna.
Accession Number: IV 4404
BAPD Number: 11177

The interior of this vessel shows Herakles contending with a Mare of Diomedes. Herakles presumably grabs onto the horse. The hooves and foot in the image are likely part of another scene, perhaps the Cretan Bull and Herakles respectively. The arrows that appear near the horse's neck are likely extending from Herakles' quiver, and not sticking into the neck.

6. Two Fragments of a Kylix

Date: 525-475 BCE
Material: Terra-cotta
Fabric: Attic
Artist: Attributed to Oltos
Technique: Red figure
Findspot/Provenance: Etruria. Now held in the Museo Archeologico Etrusco in Florence.
Accession Number: 1 B 32
BAPD Number: 200382

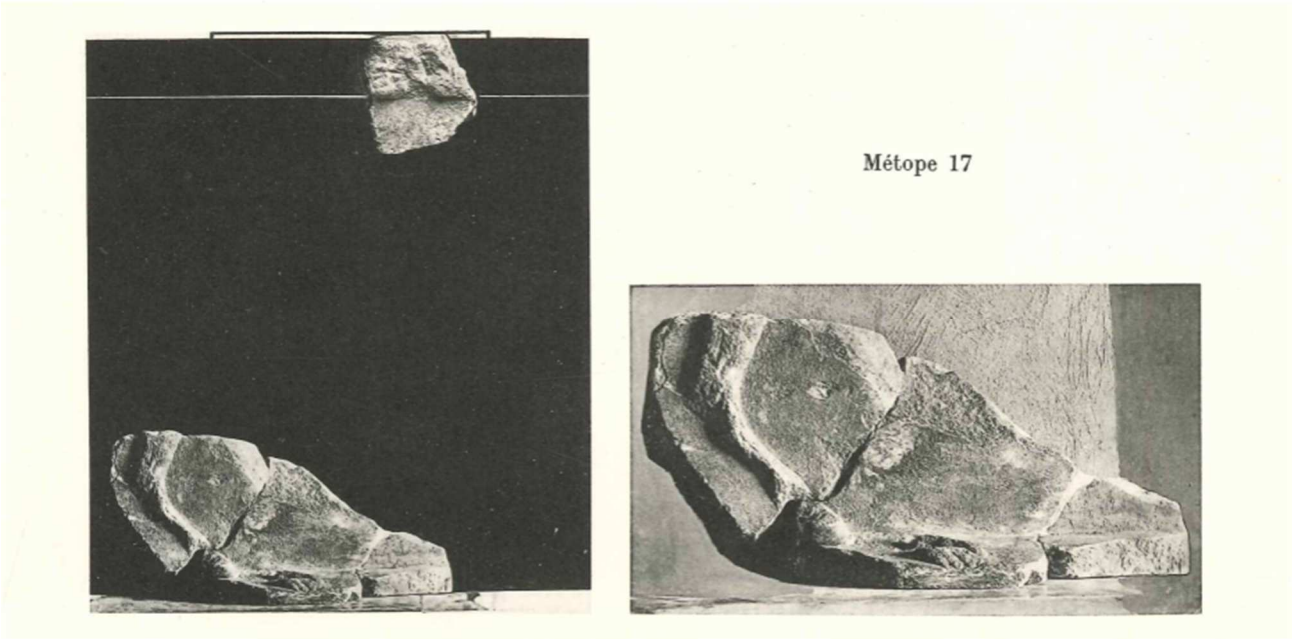
Herakles grabs onto the Mare's muzzle with one hand and raising his club in the other. The bloodied arm of a groom, or possibly Diomedes, protrudes from the horse's mouth. Unlike other depictions, Herakles is shown without his lion skin.

7. Fragments of a Skyphos

Date: ca. 450-400 BCE
Material: Terra-cotta
Fabric: Attic
Artist: Unknown
Technique: Red figure
Findspot/Provenance: Unknown. Formerly held in the private collection of Herbert A. Cahn in Basel.
Accession Number: HC 484
BAPD Number: 16027

This fragment shows the hero raising his club over his head while grabbing onto the horse's mane. The markings of a beard are just visible on Herakles' upper lip. The facial features of the Mare are rendered in much more detail than other depictions.

8. Metope from the Treasury of the Athenians at Delphi

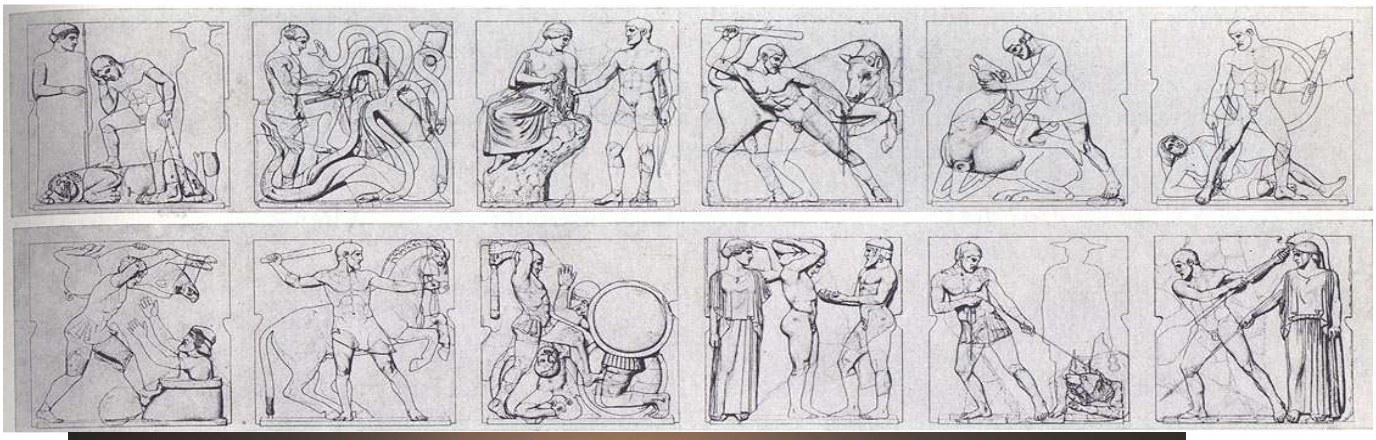


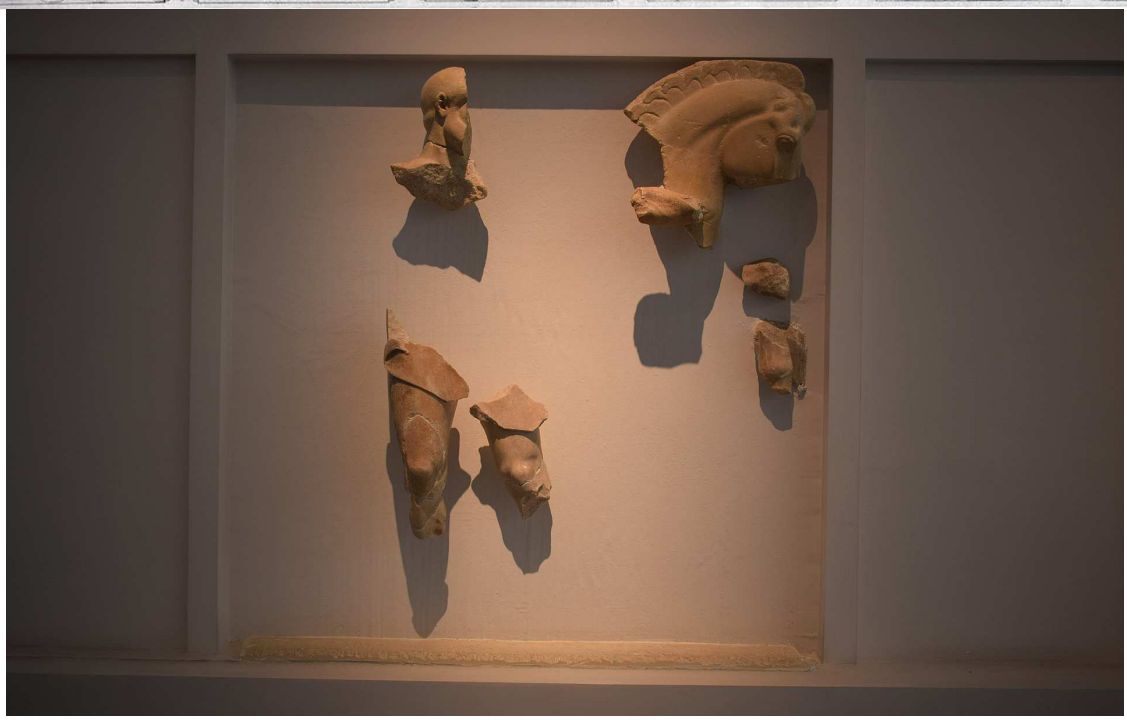
Date: ca. 490 BCE
Material: Marble
Findspot/Provenance: Delphi, Greece. Now housed in the Delphi Archaeological Museum. Photograph found in de la Coste-Messelière, 1931 pl. 17.

The metope in question shows the back leg of a horse and the foot of a figure. The scene could either portray Herakles and the Mares, as argued by Pierre de la Coste-Messelière,[159] or part of an *Amazonomachy* composition and instead features an Amazon on horseback, an argument formulated by Klaus Hoffelner.[160]

[159] de la Coste-Messelière 1931, 113.
[160] Gensheimer 2017, 10.

9. The Metope from Temple of Zeus at Olympia

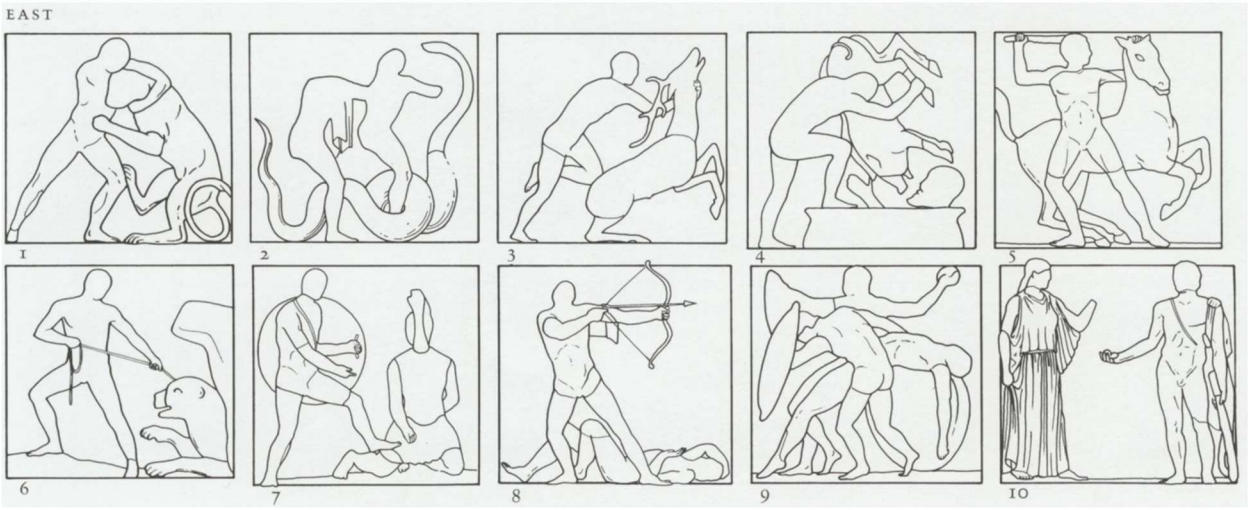




Date: ca. 460 BCE
Material: Marble
Findspot/Provenance: Eastern porch of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia, Greece. Now held in the Archaeological Museum of Olympia. Modern reconstruction drawings by M. Kühnert

Previous depictions along with what fragments of the piece are left, support the reconstruction's interpretation of the scene. Herakles raises his club over his head, threatening the rearing horse. Unlike in other depictions, the horse in the reconstruction is bridled.

10. Metopes from the Hephaisteion (No. 5)



Date: ca. 449-419 BCE
Material: Marble
Findspot/Provenance: The east frieze of the Hephaisteion. Athens, Greece. Reconstructions found in Boardman, 1985.

Using what fragments of Herakles' torso remain from the Hephaisteion's metopes, Boardman has reconstructed the most likely pose for the hero and his encounter with the Mares. Herakles grabs onto the mare with his left hand and raises his club in his right. This is also the latest known depiction of Herakles and the Mares from the sixth-fifth centuries BCE.

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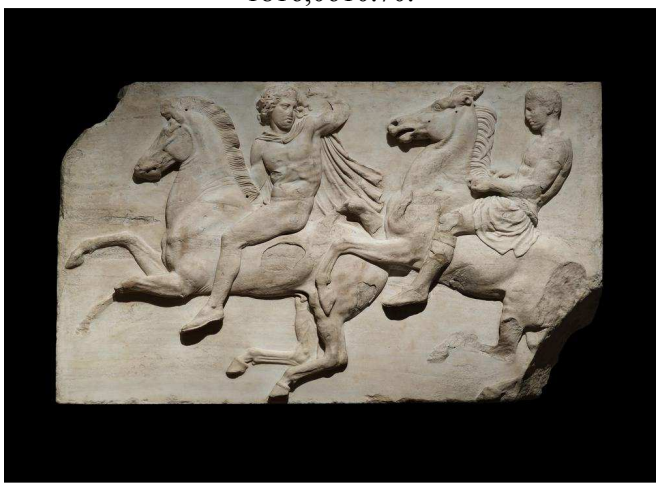

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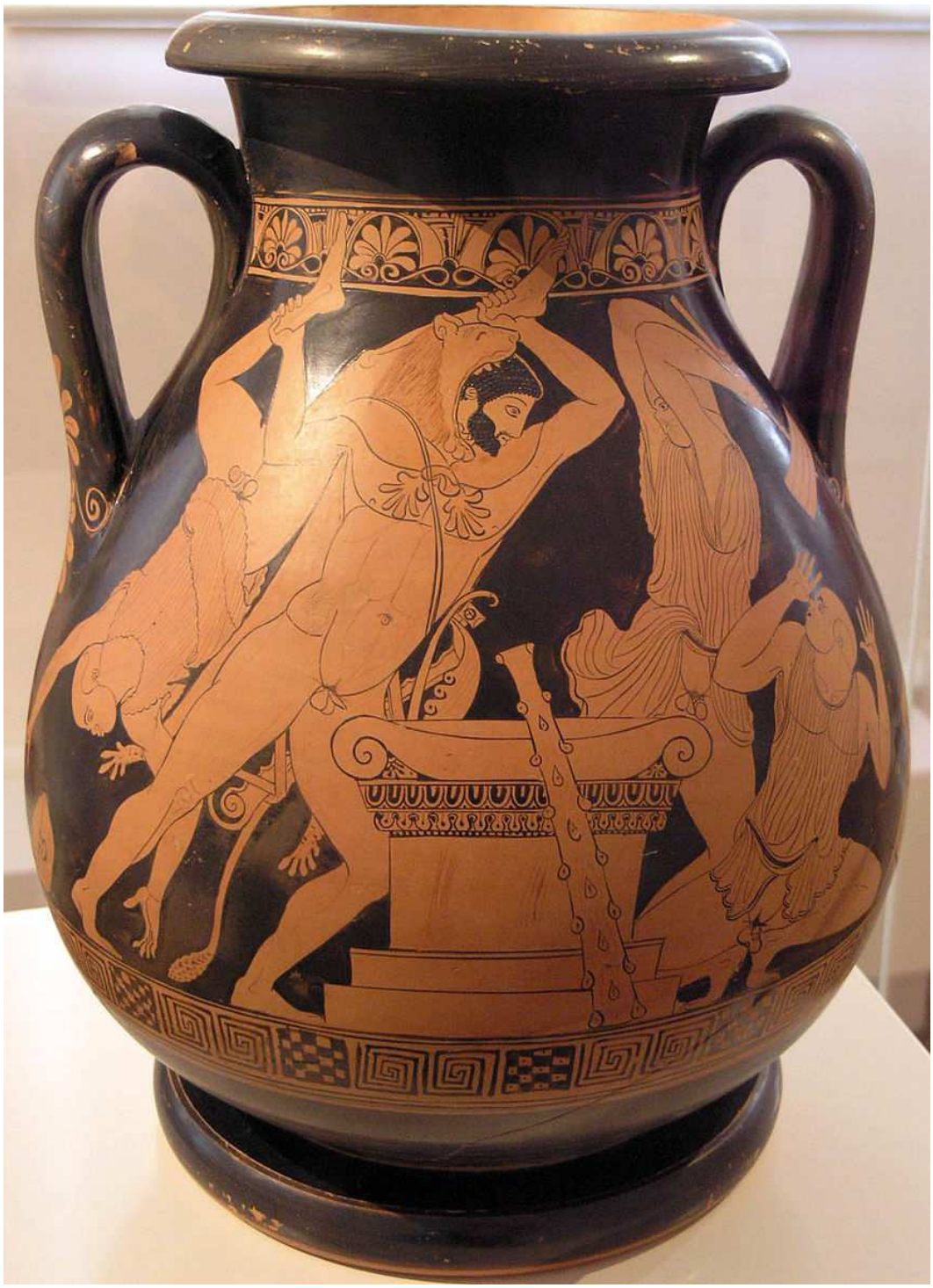

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Appendix

Appendix 2. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. https://collections.mfa.org/objects/242477/scarab-with-herakles-leading-the-horse-of-diomedes?ctx=0647c817-2b2e-4ecc-a099-c29b31ad1dc4&idx=0.

Appendix 3. Hermitage Museum. https://www.hermitagemuseum.org/wps/portal/hermitage/digital-collection/25.+Archaeological+Artifacts/1049254/?lng=.

Appendix 4. Beazley. https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?id={184BD1FA-4DA8-4AC9-90FC-. 8A834810CC61}&noResults=1&recordCount=1&databaseID={12FC52A7-0E32-4A81-9FFA-C8C6CF430677}&search=%20{AND}%20303502.

Appendix 5. Beazley.
https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetailsLarge.asp?recordCount=2&id={E9238D3C-0E48-412D-AD0E-.B9A202A158BB}&fileName=IMAGES200%2FAUS02%2FCVA%2EAUS02%2E99%2E1%2F&returnPage=&start=.

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https://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/XDB/ASP/recordDetails.asp?id={77633A9E-8CCF-4171-95FB-AFC6342167ED}&noResults=1&recordCount=1&databaseID={12FC52A7-0E32-4A81-9FFA-C8C6CF430677}&search={AND}%20200382.

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