

Sitos/opson + ?

Puls/pulmentum + ?

Liquid Refreshment

**Water (with
additives)**

Beer (barley)

(more Egypt, Near East)



Arch0770

**Food & Drink
in Classical
Antiquity**



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Pharaoh Ale: Brewing a Replica of an Ancient Egyptian Beer

PRINT SHARE

By Horst Dornbusch

It all started in mid-August 2011 with an email from the Hood Museum of Art at Dartmouth College in Hanover, N.H., asking me if I would give a presentation about ancient Egyptian beer-making in April 2012. The museum had an Egyptian exhibit called Egyptian Antiquities at Dartmouth: Highlights from the Hood Museum of Art, curated by Dr. Christine Lilyquist, a former curator of Egyptian art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The event was organized to highlight an unusual piece in the museum's collection, a fully intact, alleged "beer jar" dating from 2300 B.C., the time of the Old Kingdom (roughly 2575-2100 BC). I had been reading and writing a bit about brewing in antiquity, so I accepted the offer and suggested that, as an added touch, perhaps I should replicate a Pharaonic brew and serve it at the event. Happily, I was able to find two collaborators for such a project: Peter Egelston, owner of the Portsmouth Brewery, and Tod Mott, that brewpub's then-head brewer. None of us, however, had a complete picture of what we were getting ourselves into!



Egyptologists have found many jars shaped like the one in the Hood Museum, and they have always called them "beer jars." However, the jar at Dartmouth had an inexplicable hole in the bottom, which the ancient potter had apparently put there deliberately. This obviously put the jar's suitability as a drinking vessel into question. My inquiry about the function of the hole, therefore, led curator Lilyquist to embark on a quest for an answer among her



Wine

***oinos* (Greek)**

oinology

***vinum* (Latin)**

Viticulture

**pruning, grafting,
harvesting,
crushing,
fermenting
storage**

Vitis vinifera



amphora



Resin/retsina



Varieties/qualities of vintage

Local plonk:
trikotylos

Fine imports:
Thasos, Chios,
Lesbos (all Greek)
Falernian (Rome)

Wine of Corinth:
‘good for nothing but
making criminals
confess’



**Chios
coinage:
Sphinx,
amphora**



**Thasos
coinage:
satyr,
krater**

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From Mende: ‘with Mendaeon wine, the gods themselves wet their soft beds. And then there is Magnesian, generous, sweet and smooth, and Thasian upon whose surface skates the perfume of apples; this is judged the best of all the wines, except for blameless, painless Chian...’



Thasos
coinage:
satyr,
krater

Rule # 1

**Never drunk neat
(*akratos*)**

**2 parts wine to
3 parts water**

**Cuts 15-16% alcohol
to 12.5%**

***pharmakon* (poison, medicine)
barbarian drinking habits**

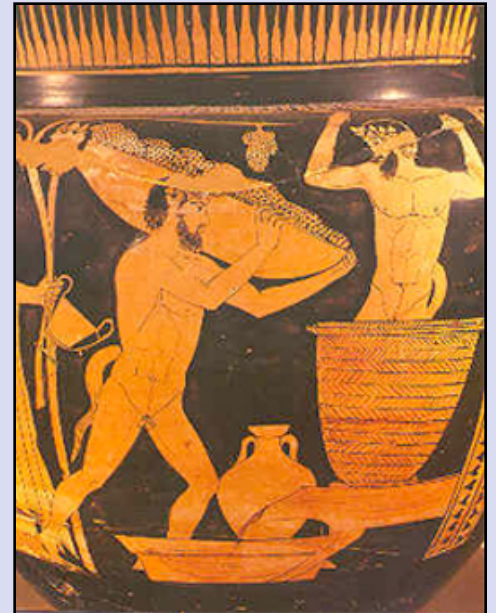


**Herakles and Dionysos;
gods can handle it...
mortals can't**

Dionysos

God of wine,
ecstasy, vegetation,
virility, theater

Travels with:
maenads/bacchantes
satyrs



Why did the ancients drink?

- An anodyne; an aphrodisiac
‘Without Bacchus, Venus is cold’

Does absinthe make the heart grow fonder?

**Aphrodite (Venus)
attacked by Pan/satyr**



Why did the ancients drink?

Early Greek
(Geometric)
grave marker

- An anodyne; an aphrodisiac
‘Without Bacchus, Venus is co
- Celebration of rites of passage:
weddings and funerals



Why did the ancients drink?

- **An anodyne; an aphrodisiac**
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- **Celebration of rites of passage:**
weddings and funerals
- **Social bonding; sociability**



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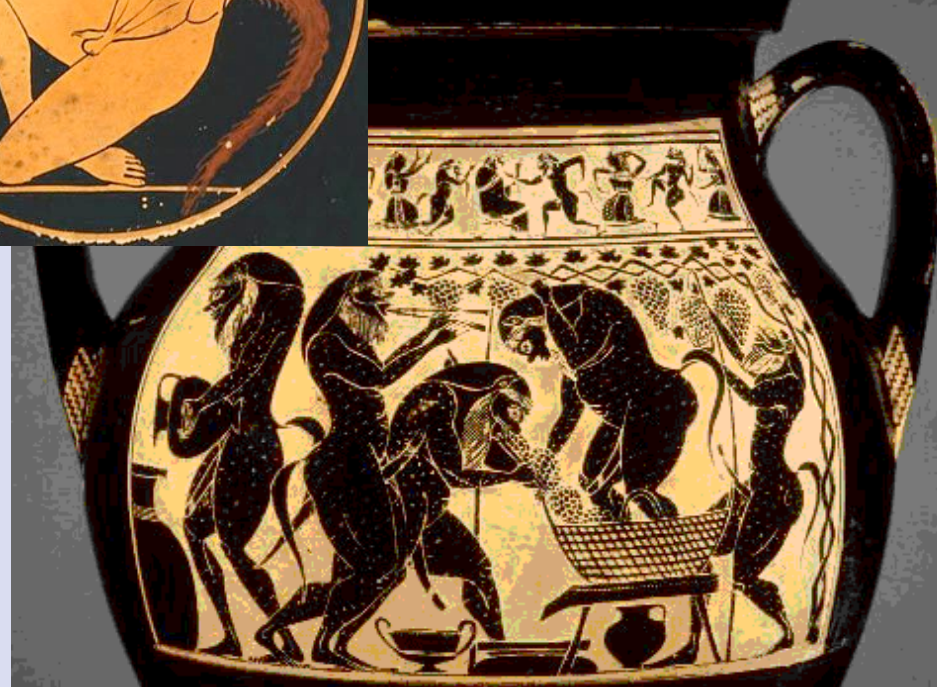
In vino veritas (in wine, truth)

- ‘It is in fire that experts test gold and silver; it is wine that discloses the soul of man’ (Theognis, Archaic Greek poet)
- ‘Bronze reflects the appearance; wine is the mirror of the soul’ (Aeschylus, Athenian dramatist, in Athenaeus)



Why did the ancients drink?

- Liberation and release: chance to explore the 'Other' gender bending; satyrs





Giulia Cimarosa

- Sacred connection:
enthousiasmos;
ritual intoxication;
divine possession

ambiguity of Dionysos
(myth of Ikarios; Euripides,
The Bacchae)



Who can drink?

MEN



Who not supposed to?

**Women (except for
Dionysos/Bacchus)**

The young



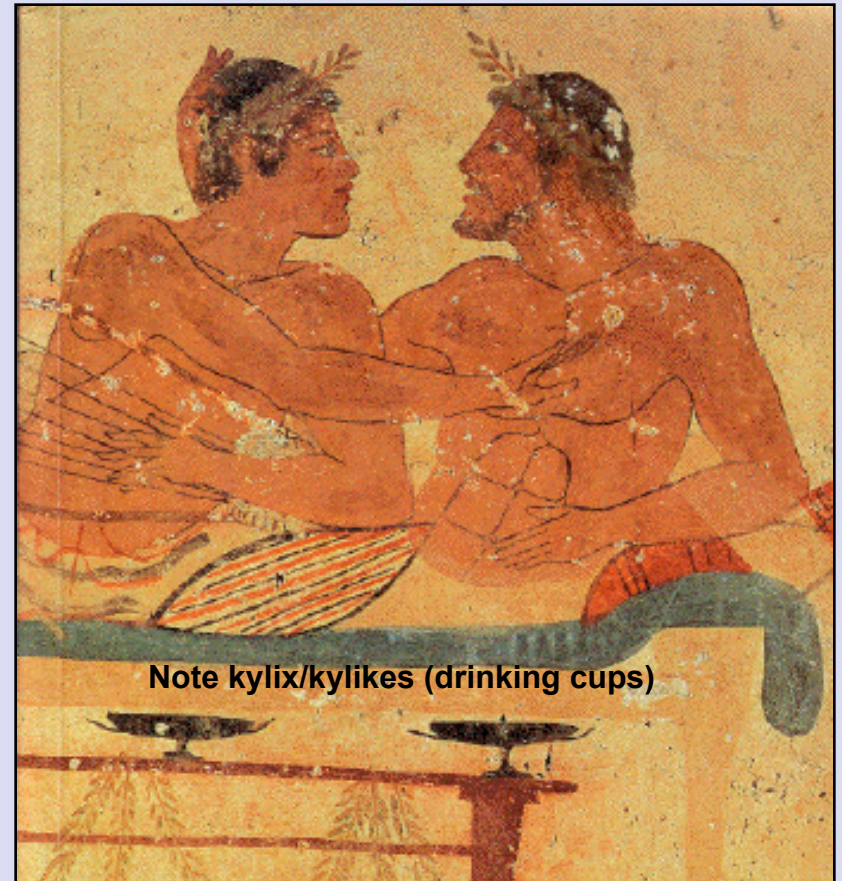
[Cato (Roman moralist):
'should you find your wife drinking
wine, kill her]



Drinking good or bad...? depends

Make fellowship

Break fellowship



Need balance, moderation
Above all, follow *rules*

Symposium

‘drinking together’
Plato, *Symposium*

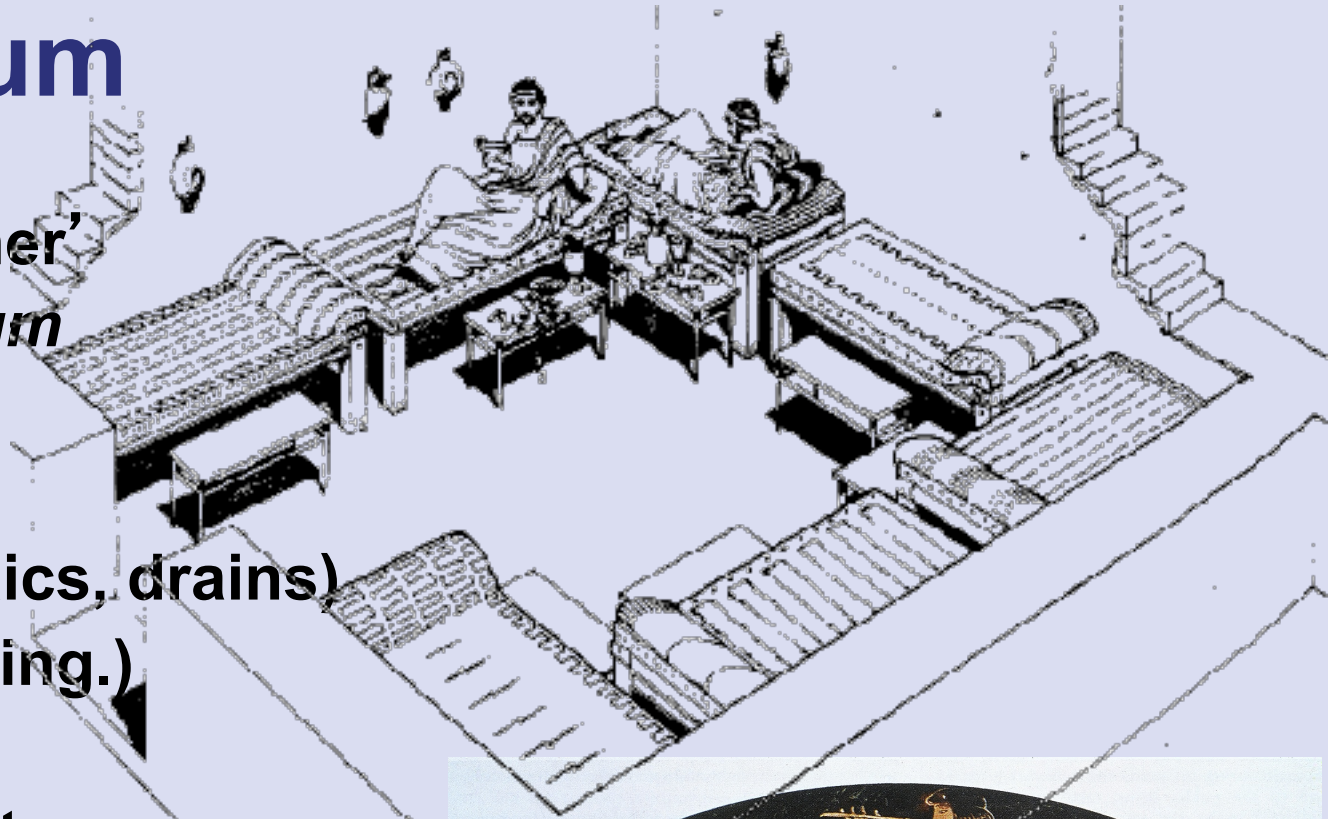
oikos

andron (mosaics, drains)

klinai (kline, sing.)

Male symposiasts;

Female entertainers/slaves
(music, dancing, service,
sex)



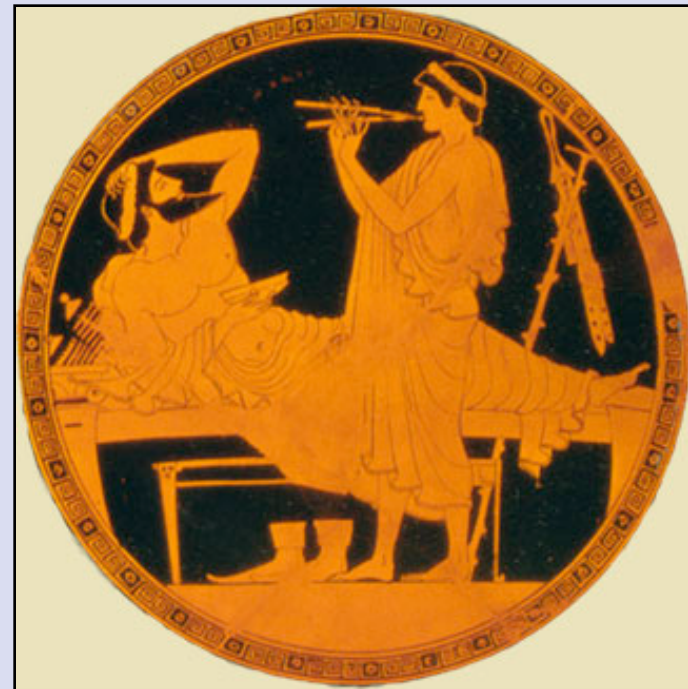


Symposium

- 1) Deipnon (meal)
- 2) Cleansing/wreathing, libation/hymn
- 3) Symposium proper

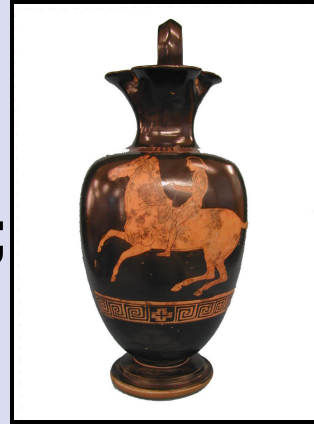
‘What sort of night shall we make of it?’

politics, philosophy,
friendship, ‘entertainment’
degree of wildness = wine/
water ratio



Sympotic set; sympotic assemblage

- Krater, dinos, psykter (for wine/water mixing)
- Oinochoe (jug for pouring);
ladles
- Kantharos, skyphos, kylix (types of drinking vessels)



‘To those who mix and drink wine moderately, it gives good cheer. Mix it half and half, and you get madness; unmixed, bodily collapse.’



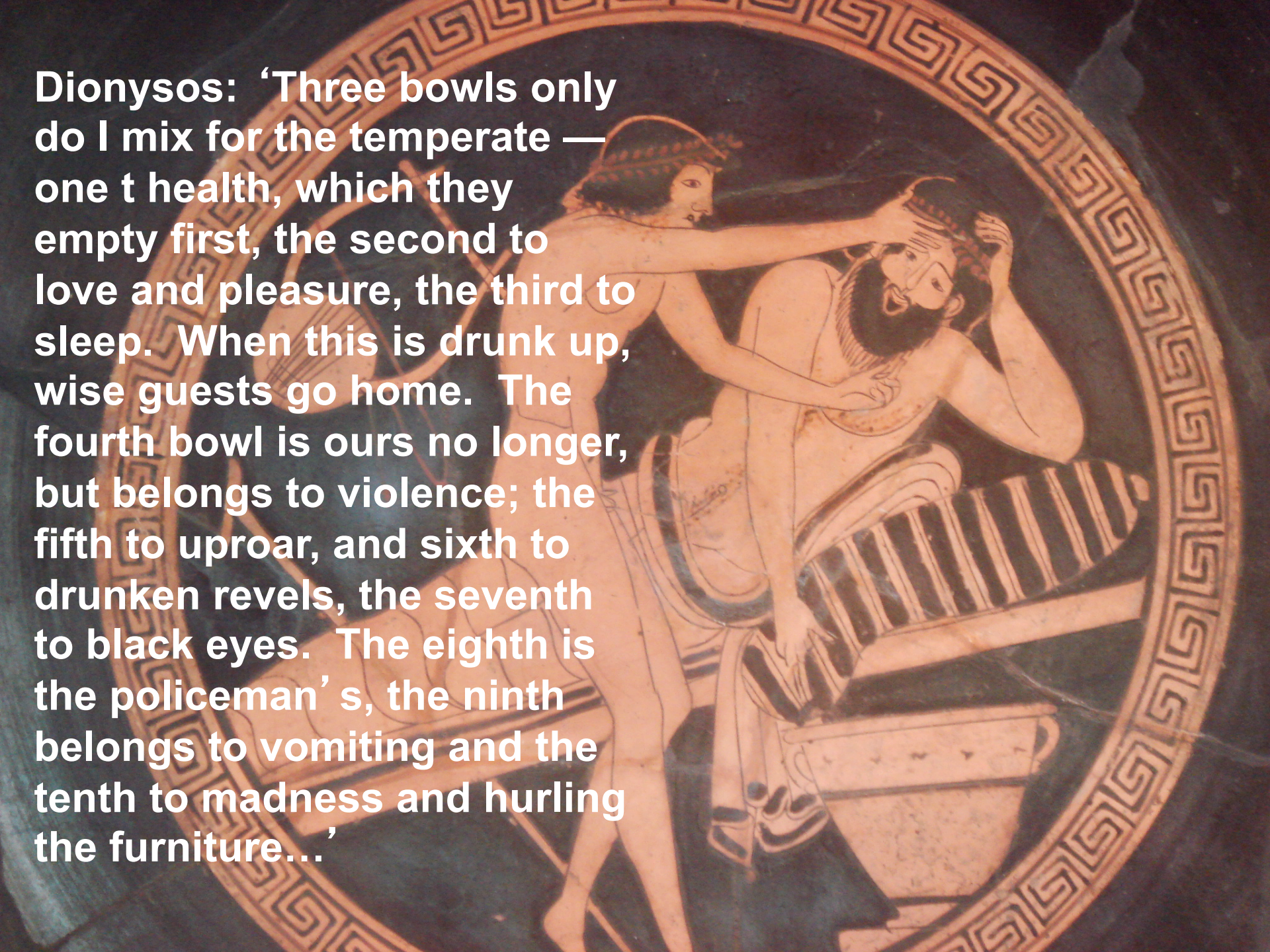
maenad



The inevitable



Dionysos: 'Three bowls only do I mix for the temperate — one to health, which they empty first, the second to love and pleasure, the third to sleep. When this is drunk up, wise guests go home. The fourth bowl is ours no longer, but belongs to violence; the fifth to uproar, and sixth to drunken revels, the seventh to black eyes. The eighth is the policeman's, the ninth belongs to vomiting and the tenth to madness and hurling the furniture...'



Satyrs as anti-role models

What not to do...



Drinking games



Kottabos
Balancing acts

Why?

