

A pais kitharistēs on a Fifth-Century Krater: Innovation in Musical Contest Iconography and the ‘Thracian’ *Kithara*

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IN THE COLLECTION of the Budapest Museum of Fine Arts is an Attic red-figure calyx-krater (height 31.1 cm), which was given to the Department of Antiquities in 1951 by Elemér Kund.¹ The vase, dating to 450–425 B.C., is unpublished.² Apart from some chipping of the painted surface, the vessel is intact. Three figures are visible on each side. On side A (*fig. 1*), a youth on a *bēma* wearing only a himation (which leaves his right arm free) holds a stringed instrument between flying Nikai—one with fillets (left), one with an untied wreath (right). On the reverse (side B, *fig. 2*), three youths are conversing. Winners of a *mousikos agōn* are common on Attic pottery.³ However, the young musician on the Budapest vase

¹ Elemér Kund (1885–1951), a learned art collector, having survived Mauthausen, became a victim of political trials under communism. Before his death, he donated a part of his collection to the Museum of Fine Arts.

² Inv. no. 51.836, unattributed, without known provenance. It appears as a list entry in the guide to the 1947 exhibition of the Collection of Classical Antiquities, Z. Oroszlán and A. Dobrovits, *Antik kiállítás: Vezető* (Budapest 1947) 49–50, no. XXV. Cf. the database of the Collection, at <http://hyperion.szepmuveszeti.hu/en/targy/507>.

³ On musical contests see J. Herington, *Poetry into Drama: Early Tragedy and the Greek Poetic Tradition* (Berkeley 1985) 3–40, 161–166, 177–180; M. F. Vos, “Aulodic and Auletic Contests,” in H. A. G. Briijder (ed.), *Enthousiasmos: Essays on Greek and Related Pottery presented to J. M. Hemelrijk* (Amsterdam 1986) 121–130; H. Kotsidu, *Die musischen Agone der Panathenäen in archaischer und*

merits close scrutiny because the painter depicted him with a so-called ‘hybrid’ *kithara*,⁴ the iconographic role of which in contest scenes is still not quite clear.⁵ Within a main group of 23 vases representing hybrid *kitharas*, we are now able to define a subgroup of eleven as ‘musical contest scenes with hybrid *kithara*’ (see Table 1). In this paper I argue that the hybrid *kithara* was used in iconography for assigning social role and status to young contestants.

Even in their differences, musical contests share a number of similarities with sacrifices, processions, and funeral games.⁶ The characteristics of musicians performing, on the one hand, at a *prosodion*, a *pompē*, or a *thysia* and, on the other, at a *mousikos agōn* could have influenced each other, not only in iconography and literature but also in real life. As an early example of the similarity in depicting musicians in different contexts (sacrifice vis-à-vis contest), we have on a black-figure amphora (ca. 540 B.C.) a procession offering a sacrifice to Athena, most likely at

klassischer Zeit (Munich 1991); H. A. Shapiro, “Mousikoi Agones: Music and Poetry at the Panathenaia,” in J. Neils (ed.), *Goddess and Polis: The Panathenaic Festival in Ancient Athens* (Princeton 1992) 53–75; N. Almazova, “On the Meaning of ΑΥΛΩΙΔΙΑ, ΑΥΛΩΙΔΟΣ,” *Hyperboreus* 14 (2008) 5–34; T. Power, *The Culture of Kitharōidia* (Cambridge [Mass.] 2010) 425–554; A. Rotstein, “*Mousikoi Agones* and the Conceptualization of Genre in Ancient Greece,” *CLAnt* 31 (2012) 91–127; A. Goulaki-Voutira, “Musische Wettkämpfe,” *ThesCRA* II (2006) 378–381; A. Chaniotis, “Contests: Definition, Terminology, and General Characteristics,” *ThesCRA* VII (2011) 21–27; I. Krauskopf, “Bilder griechischer Feste: Musische Agone,” *ThesCRA* VII (2011) 85–86. On sacrificial processions see F. T. van Straten, *Hiera kalá: Images of Animal Sacrifice in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Leiden 1995); M. True, J. Daehner, J. B. Grossman, and K. D. D. Lapatin, “Greek Processions,” *ThesCRA* I (2004) 1–20.

⁴ The hybrid *kithara* is also known as ‘Thracian’ or ‘Thamyras’ *kithara* (see below).

⁵ For earlier lists of depictions with hybrid *kitharas* see the references in Table 1.

⁶ Cf. Rotstein, *CLAnt* 31 (2012) 93–94.

the Panathenaia, with two *kitharistai* and two *aulētai* dressed in ornate mantles (*skeuē*) and standing in a ceremonial posture not unlike that of contemporary musical competitors in depictions of *mousikoi agōnes*.⁷ Apparently, it was unnecessary to mark visually the difference between sacrificial and competing musicians because the context could be easily identified. Similarly, we do not know for sure whether the musicians of the Panathenaic procession on the Parthenon frieze are processional musicians or winners in the Panathenaic musical contests, as are the *apobatai* shown on the north frieze, where the emphasis shifts from the race to the victory.⁸ Another example of the overlapping use of musicians in depictions of sacrificial processions and contests, although from a slightly different angle, is a well-known sacrificial scene by Polygnotos painted shortly after the Parthenon frieze.⁹ A certain Archenautēs (identified by a name inscription) and two youths stand near an altar. On the right is

⁷ Berlin F1686 (name vase of the painter, BAPD [= Beazley Archive Pottery Database] 320383). Further examples of black-figure vases (dated to ca. 540) showing Panathenaic musical contestants: amphora of Panathenaic shape ('pseudo-Panathenaic') New York 1989.281.89, BAPD 42104 (Princeton Painter); Panathenaic prize amphora London B139, BAPD 310344 (near Group E); amphora Philadelphia, Univ. of Pennsylvania 4841, BAPD 310421 (near Exekias).

⁸ See J. Neils and P. Schultz: "Erechtheus and the *Apobates* Race on the Parthenon Frieze (North XI–XIII)," *AJA* 116 (2012) 195–207. Cf. Shapiro, in *Goddess and Polis* 55.

⁹ Red-figure *stamnos*, London E455, BAPD 213390 (twin vase: E456, BAPD 213648). As to Nike's presence, I am closer to Shapiro, in *Goddess and Polis* 56 ("the painter has added a hovering Nike, deliberately mixing the worlds of the everyday and the divine") and to S. Bundrick, "Selling Sacrifice on Classical Athenian Vases," *Hesperia* 83 (2014) 653–708, at 662 ("The success of the ritual is further indicated by Nike") than to S. B. Matheson, *Polygnotos and Vase Painting in Classical Athens* (Wisconsin 1995) 279 ("Nike is present to show that the sacrifice honors a victory"), van Straten, *Hiera kalá* 135 ("sacrifices were offered on the occasion of some victory"), and C. Thöne, *Ikongraphische Studien zu Nike im 5. Jahrhundert v. Chr.* (Heidelberg 1999) 44 ("in Zusammenhang mit einem musischen agonalen Ereignis").

an *aulētēs* named Sōsiphos, wearing a long mantle and playing his instrument. A winged Nikē is flying toward the altar, holding something in her hands that could be a wreath or a vessel. This Nikē is similar to other Nikai in contemporary contest scenes, including the Budapest krater, where they fly toward the young contestant holding a ribbon in their hands.¹⁰

The examples above show that there was no need to distinguish musicians by their public roles. As regards iconographic conventions, for the ancient viewer contexts were either clear enough from *other* clues (altar, *bēma*, Nike, etc.), from the kind of music or competitive category, or else it was obvious from the type of musical instrument (*aulos* or *kithara*). With the growing culture of musical contests, however, painters were faced with new demands.

Musical competitions as a subject on Attic vases appeared in the middle of the sixth century and lasted for about 150 years, disappearing by the fourth century.¹¹ Textual and iconographic evidence makes clear that musical competitions (both Panhellenic and local) were held throughout Greece from the middle of the sixth century.¹²

In Athens, the main contests were those of the Panathenaia.

¹⁰ Cf. the well-known Eretrian inscription regulating contestants' duties: συμπομπευόντων δὲ καὶ οἱ τῆς μουσικῆς ἀγωνιστὰὶ πάντες, ὅπως ἂν ὡς καλλίσστη ἢ πομπῇ καὶ ἡ θυσίῃ γένηται (*IG XII.9* 189.39–40).

¹¹ See n.3 above.

¹² An excellent overview of the festivals is J. Davies, "The Origins of the Festivals, especially Delphi and the Pythia," in S. Hornblower et al. (eds.), *Pindar's Poetry, Patrons & Festivals* (Oxford 2007) 47–69. On panhellenism: C. Morgan, "The Origins of Pan-Hellenism," in N. Marinatos et al. (eds.), *Greek Sanctuaries. New Approaches* (London 1993) 14–33; E. R. Gebhard, "The Evolution of a Pan-Hellenic Sanctuary: from Archaeology towards History at Isthmia," in *Greek Sanctuaries* 123–141. Sources for festivals with musical contests: Herington, *Poetry* 161–180; Kotsidu, *Die musischen Agone* 15–26, 242–292; D. H. J. Larmour, *Stage and Stadium: Drama and Athletics in Ancient Greece* (Hildesheim 1999) 171–186.

Although Attic red-figure pottery only rarely has unambiguous allusions to the Panathenaic contest,¹³ the scene on the Budapest vase, along with a number of red-figure musical contest scenes from the second half of the fifth century, may well have been inspired by one of the *kithara* contests (*kitharōidia* or *kitharistikē*) at the Panathenaia. As Shapiro notes, “when we compare *IG II²* 2311 to representations on red-figure vases of the second half of the fifth century, the correspondence is very close.”¹⁴

The artist (or beholder) decides whether the vase depicts the general idea of being a contestant, or an anticipated victory. It should be noted, however, that early depictions offered more concrete settings and strongly emphasized that these events took place in public spaces.¹⁵ It was only at the beginning of the fifth century that depictions grew more abstract and shifted their focus to the notion of victory itself.¹⁶ The Budapest calyx-krater displays this tendency, as does its close counterpart in Bologna, a calyx-krater by the Dinos Painter that was in all likelihood made only a few years later.¹⁷ Each vase depicts two Nikai. This could either represent a double victory, or it could

¹³ Shape: pseudo-Panathenaic amphora (V104, 125, 131); loose connection of the obverse scene to Athena or Athens (V33, 39, 47, 62); columns (V91); for the references see Kotsidu, *Die musischen Agone* 301 ff.

¹⁴ According to Shapiro (in *Goddess and Polis* 64) a surge in depictions of musical contests and victors ca. 440 suggests that these contests were more visible and more popular than in the past. Cf. R. R. Holloway, “Music at the Panathenaic Festival,” *Archaeology* 19 (1966) 112–119.

¹⁵ On the setting of musical contests (Perikles’ Odeion? Agora?) see Davison, *JHS* 78 (1958) 33–36; Kotsidu, *Die musischen Agone* 130–170; Shapiro, in *Goddess and Polis* 70; E. Csapo and P. Wilson, “Timotheus the New Musician,” in F. Budelmann (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Lyric* (Cambridge 2009) 277–294, at 292.

¹⁶ This shift in emphasis was perhaps influenced by the Berlin Painter’s fascination with the instrument and with the psychology of the performer. Cf. Shapiro, in *Goddess and Polis* 69.

¹⁷ Attic red-figure calyx-krater, ca. 430 B.C., Bologna, Museo Civico Archeologico PU286, BAPD 215331.

be a variation of the symmetrical compositions inherited from the past and adjusted to fit the current taste, at a time when contest scenes emphasized memory and remembrance rather than other circumstances (e.g. audience or judges).¹⁸

From the middle of the sixth century to the middle of the fifth, depictions of string *mousikoi agōnes* used the standard concert *kithara* exclusively.¹⁹ This is the instrument that Aristotle provides professional musicians with (*Pol.* 1341a), and he deems the *kithara* (together with the *aulos*) *technikon*.²⁰ Even the modern term ‘concert *kithara*’ comes from its typical context, the professional contest. However, after the mid-fifth century a new type of *kithara* appears in *kithara* contests, considerably different from the concert *kithara* in both structure and appearance. This is the so-called ‘hybrid *kithara*’, also known as ‘Thracian *kithara*’, ‘Thamyras *kithara*’, and ‘*kithara*-lyre’.²¹ We can see this type of

¹⁸ Another remarkable parallel appears on a *pelikē* in Plovdiv (Bulgaria) by the Epimedēs Painter, dated ca. 430 (Plovdiv, Regional Archaeological Museum 1812, BAPD 213559; see Table 1 no. 5): a youth holds a hybrid *kithara* in the presence of four Nikai identified as Nemea, Marathon, Isthmos, and Panathenaia. If these were all musical contests, the vase provides evidence for musical contests in Marathon in the fifth century—perhaps the Herakleia, as corroborated by an allusion in Aristophanes (*Ran.* 1296) and by a fragment of a red-figure amphora in Bucharest (National Museum 03207, BAPD 14445) dated ca. 430 (so Power, *The Culture of Kitharōidia* 489, cf. 237 n.119). This vase depicts a youth with a concert *kithara* before an *aediculum* with Doric columns; a *pinax* of Herakles hangs on the wall. Cf. R. Parker, *Polytheism and Society at Athens* (Oxford 2005) 473. As to musical contests at the Isthmian and the Nemean games, the Plovdiv vase provides the only known evidence from the classical period.

¹⁹ See Kotsidou, *Die musischen Agone* 105, 109–110.

²⁰ Musical knowledge should not make the free man vulgar, he says, and this “could be achieved where lessons in music are concerned if the students do not exert themselves to learn either what is needed for professional competition (πρὸς τοὺς ἀγῶνας τοὺς τεχνικούς, 1341a10) or the astonishing or out-of-the-ordinary works which have now made their way into competitions and from there into education” (transl. C. D. C. Reeve)

instrument on the Budapest vase.

That is why the sub-group entitled ‘Musical contest scenes with hybrid *kithara*’ is peculiar: on these vases the hybrid (not the concert) *kithara* is played in real-life (i.e. in non-mythological) musical contest scenes. This new type does not displace the concert *kithara*, which continues to be featured in vases with scenes of the *mousikoi agōnes*.²²

We may classify the instrument as a hybrid by its features. The concert *kithara* is characterized by a wooden sound box that extends to form the arms holding the crossbar (*fig. 3*). Furthermore, the lower edge of this sound box is always straight, and the upper part forms a bay together with the arms. Manufacturing the body of the concert *kithara* must have required precise craftsmanship.²³ In contrast, the *chelys*-lyre or *lyra* (*fig. 3*) was usually made with a tortoise-shell: its sound box is always oval, curved at both top and bottom. The arms were fixed separately (they were not one with the body)—perhaps a cheaper design. Its structure was more fragile and difficult to handle; it made tuning the strings harder and placed more of a strain on the arms, as the strings would require more frequent tuning. The *chelys*-lyre is the characteristic string instrument in mythological and school scenes.²⁴

²¹ None of the names are of ancient origin; written sources do not mention this specific musical instrument.

²² Scenes with concert *kithara* from the second half of the fifth century appear, for example, on bell-kraters by the Munich 2335 Painter in Bologna (Museo Civico Archeologico 314, BAPD 215379) and Ferrara (Museo Nazionale di Spina T784, BAPD 215380), and on the fragment of the amphora in Bucharest (see n.18 above). For other instances see P. Cillo, “La ‘cetra di Tamiri’: mito e realtà musicale,” *AION(archeol)* 15 (1993) 205–243, at 237 n.131.

²³ Detailed description of the concert *kithara* in D. Paquette, *L’instrument de musique dans la céramique de la Grèce antique* (Paris 1984) 80–102.

²⁴ See M. Maas and J. McIntosh Snyder, *Stringed Instruments of Ancient Greece* (New Haven 1989) 87–89; S. Buxton, *Music and Image in Classical*

The hybrid *kithara* (fig. 3) is a mixture of the two types.²⁵ It is not a *chelys*-lyre, since the sound box is bigger and made of wood, as in a concert *kithara*, but it recalls the *chelys*-lyre in that its arms are attached separately and not built as one piece with the body. The lower edge of its sound box is straight, like the concert *kithara*'s, but the top edge is a convex arc (with an occasional indentation on the lower edge). As for the secondary features of the hybrid *kithara*, in a number of depictions the arms are possibly made of horn and trace a curve that follows neither the *chelys*-lyre's slight bend nor the *kithara*'s dynamic arch, but turns back abruptly at the top. The body of the hybrid *kithara* is usually ornamented. Note that the secondary features do not appear in all depictions. The convoluted horn arms, for instance, are present only in eight of the twenty-three hybrid *kitharas* known to date (see Table 1).

Therefore, there may be subcategories within the 'hybrid *kitharas*', but given the small number of surviving depictions we cannot be sure. Thus, while the common denominator of known hybrid *kitharas* is the hybrid structure of the instrument, the details are hardly homogenous. Even the same painter may vary them (e.g. the Meidias Painter, see Table 1 nos. 9 and 11).

At present, we know of twenty-three images from the years between 440 and 390 that feature the hybrid *kithara*; three of these (the Budapest vase and two others) have not been included in earlier lists. Eleven, nearly half of the images, depict musical contests (see Table 1). Of these, four (nos. 1–3, 5) feature young men as competitors with the hybrid *kitharas* in their hands, while six (nos. 6–11) feature boys. The latter are dated to between 425 and 390; the former (five vases, including the fragment by the Kleophon Painter (no. 4), where not the contestant but only his instrument and a Nikē approaching him

Athens (Cambridge 2005 14–15, 61–66.

²⁵ The most detailed description of the hybrid *kithara* is in Cillo, *AION(archeol)* 15 (1993) 225–230.

can be seen) can be dated to the preceding 10–15 years.

Consequently, the role that the hybrid *kithara* plays in contest scenes is at least as significant as the role it plays *qua* non-Greek instrument in the hands of Thamyras, Musaios, and Orpheus, the famous Thracian musicians. It is reasonable to think, moreover, that each iconographic context is aware of the other. Furthermore, the eleven contest scenes with hybrid *kitharas* constitute approximately 30% of *mousikoi agōnes* depictions from the second half of the fifth century, a proportion that shows (as mentioned above) that the new instrument does not displace the concert *kithara* in the iconography.

Why did this new instrument appear in depictions of musical contests during this period? To answer this question, we must examine other elements of these scenes. All contestants with hybrid *kitharas* are youths or boys: either *neaniskoi*, *ageneioi* (“unbearded”), or even younger *paides*. Lucy Talcott and Barbara Philippaki, without mentioning their competitive context, listed thirteen depictions with hybrid *kitharas*, and declared the convoluted arm of horn as their distinctive attribute, although not all of the listed instruments feature it. Haratini Kotsidu, in her catalogue of *mousikos agōn* depictions, did not differentiate between the concert and the hybrid *kithara*. Daniel Paquette, in his monograph on instruments in Greek vase-paintings, calls this type of instrument “cithare-lyre” without further explanation. In their monograph on string instruments, Martha Maas and Jane McIntosh Snyder placed the instrument in a separate category and found it in a total of eighteen vases with depictions of Thracian singers and musical contests. Of the latter, six in number, four show competitors who look like children and their costumes are not specifically Thracian.²⁶ For interpre-

²⁶ L. Talcott and B. Philippaki, “Figured Pottery: Small Objects from the Pnyx II, Part I,” *Hesperia* Suppl. 10 (1956) 1–223, at 49–50, no. 213; Kotsidu, *Die musischen Agone* 301 ff.; Paquette, *L'instrument de musique*, 84, 93, 108–110, 168; Maas and McIntosh Snyder, *Stringed Instruments* 145–147, cf.

tation, they tersely note: “some unknown part of the story of Thamyris”; to which they add a more attractive proposal: “any young victor in a musical contest might be flattered to receive a vase with a painting that suggests that he is the heir of the legendary musicians.” However, nothing proves that these vessels served as contest prize vases, since none have the shape of the Panathenaic amphora.²⁷ Annie Bélis, in a paper on the hybrid *kithara* and the interpretation of the myth of Thamyras, listed nineteen depictions, but only six vases are mentioned in a footnote that concerns the hybrid variant in musical contest scenes.²⁸ In her monograph discussing musical iconography in fifth-century Athens, Sheramy Bundrick also touches upon the subject of this instrument of unusual shape (noting also six contest scenes only), but she does not take a position on why this instrument appears in contest scenes.

Paola Cillo provided the broadest explanation for the hybrid *kithara*.²⁹ After a thorough review of the myth of Thamyras and an examination of the instrument type and its depictions (222–233), she divided representations of musical contests with hybrid *kitharas* in the last decades of the fifth century into two groups. In the earlier period, competitors with the instrument are unbearded. Their adult posture makes them seem more like young men than children. These figures are always accompanied by two Nikai (four in the case of the Plovdiv *pelikē*, see Table 1 no. 5). According to Cillo, the doubling of Nikai in

82 on the interchangeability of *chelys*-lyre and ‘Thracian’ *kithara*; Bundrick, *Music and Image* 26–29.

²⁷ Cf. S. Bundrick, “Recovering Rhapsodes: A New Vase by the Pan-toxena Painter,” *CLAnt* 34 (2015) 1–32, at 7 n.26.

²⁸ A. Bélis, “La cithare de Thamyras,” in F. Decroizette et al. (eds.), *La naissance de l’Opéra, Euridice 1600–2000* (Paris 2001) 27–56, at 40–44; cf. S. Sarti, “Un esempio di competizione musicale nel mito in Grecia: Tamiri,” *Rudiae* 22–23 (2010–2011) 219–240; cf. n.33 below.

²⁹ Cillo, *AION(archeol)* 15 (1993) 205–243.

these pictures conveys that the young man has also won an earlier musical contest.³⁰ Besides the Plovdiv vase, she lists the vase in Florence and another in the Vatican as belonging to this group (Table 1 nos. 2 and 3). If we agree with her classification, the Budapest krater could also belong to the same category. Cillo's other group consists of competitors who are definitely depicted as boys (they have youthful facial features and long hair), accompanied by only one Nikē that refers to their first expected victory. Cillo incorporated into her thesis the age categories of the competitors recorded by the well-known Panathenaic inscription (*IG II² 2311*) of the early fourth century. Accordingly, she says that in the last decades of the fifth century adult contestants were *always* represented with concert *kitharas*, whereas adolescents (*ageneioi*, 17–20 years old) and children (*paides*, 14–17 years old) were *always* associated with the hybrid instrument.³¹ The reasons for the choice are the instrument's size and the fact that Thamyras, the young and beautiful Thracian musician, embodied the young *agōnistēs* in contemporary Athens. He was the contestants' archetype and at the same time a warning: “un paradigma ammonitorio a non valicare il limite anzitempo.” We are in partial agreement with Cillo and would like to develop her proposal further.

Most scholars assume that the missing section of fragment A col. I of the Panathenaic inscription listed two more categories of *mousikoi agōnes*: *paides aulōidoi* and *paides kitharistai*.³² If so, the

³⁰ *Contra*: Kotsidu, *Die musischen Agone* 121, “Wir möchten jedoch bezweifeln, daß ... die Zweizahl der Niken auf einem Vasenbild mehr als ein formales Motiv des Malers darstellt, solange keine besondere Deutung aus der Darstellung wie durch die Beischriften für den viermaligen Sieg auf der Pelike in Plovdiv zu entnehmen ist.”

³¹ Cillo, *AION(archeol)* 15 (1993) 236–238. For hairstyles of boys see M. M. Lee, *Body, Dress, and Identity in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge 2015) 71–72. For the garments of the young contestants see Table 1 col. 9, and n.34 below.

³² Julia Shear's thorough arguments for supplementing the text with *παισὶ ἀὐλωιδοῖς* and *παισὶ κιθαρισταῖς* are convincing: “Prizes from Athens: The

inscription suggests that we are dealing here with the converse of our argument in an earlier paper.³³ Not only did the mythical Thamyras appear in Greek costume as an Athenian young man in the ‘Thamyras and the Muses’ scenes, which transformed the mythical contest into an informal meeting of musicians in an idyllic natural setting; but the *paides agōnistai* of Athens also ‘borrowed’ the particular instrument of the ‘Athenized’ Thamyras. The viewer in turn would have been struck as much by the unusual nature of the instrument in the hands of the boy *kitharōidos* as by the absence of the standard concert *kithara*. We may infer that this eloquent absence applies to the eleven depictions of musical contests with hybrid *kitharas* and that it is the very element stressed by this new variant of contest iconography. Thus, we need to consider not only the relationship between the mythical Thracian singers and the young competitors with hybrid *kitharas* but, in particular, why the usual concert *kithara* is replaced by the hybrid type.

List of Panathenaic Prizes and the Sacred Oil,” *ZPE* 142 (2003) 87–108, at 91–94, with earlier literature in nn.4 and 15). Rotstein, *CLAnt* 31 (2012) 102–106, rejected this reconstruction. Her starting point was Hamilton’s objection to a similar reconstruction by Kotsidu: “K[otsidu]’s reconstruction of the Panathenaic musical contests is quite reasonable. One might object that the mention of men aulodes and kitharists does not necessarily imply boy aulodes and kitharists given the ... list of musical contests at the Artemisia ... (IG xii 9 189), which has only rhapsodes, men kitharists, kitharodes, and parodes, but that does not make her reconstruction unlikely” (R. Hamilton, review of Kotsidu in *BMCR* 1993.03.29). I would suggest that the failure to list boys’ contests in Eretria while listing the men’s does not make the supplement *paisi* in Athens any less likely precisely because prize inscriptions must be read in the wider context of Greek competitive culture. Eretrian readers would certainly have known that there were different categories for men and boys. Moreover, boy aulodes and kitharists may have competed at different festivals.

³³ A. Kárpáti, “Thamyras’ Song Contest and the Muse Figures,” in L. Bravi et al. (eds.), *Tra lyra e aulos. Tradizioni musicali e generi poetici* (Pisa 2016) 167–198 (with further references).

The usual method for determining age (height, hair style, dress) is not sufficient here,³⁴ because one must tell a young adult, an unbearded *ephēbos*, from an adolescent (*neaniskos*, *meirakion*) or a child (*ageneios*, *pais*). Competing as a *kitharistēs* in the *paidēs* category at the Panathenaia would have been an honorable, ‘official’ public role. Depictions with either of the two other types of stringed instrument would have visually downplayed the solemnity of the honor. The weight and size of the concert *kithara* (ca. 75 cm high) would have seemed unsuitable for a *pais*;³⁵ a boy would have been too weak to wind the strings and tune the instrument. (A modern parallel might be the pillows used to raise an infant prodigy sitting at a concert grand piano.) The *chelys*-lyre, in turn, might seem unworthy of

³⁴ On the visual presentation of children in Attic vase-painting see M. Seifert, “Norm und Funktion. Kinder auf attischen Bilddarstellungen,” in S. Schmidt et al. (eds.), *Hermeneutik der Bilder: Beiträge zur Ikonographie und Interpretation griechischer Vasenmalerei* (Munich 2009) 93–102; Lee, *Body, Dress* 40. Garments worn by adolescents/boys depicted as musical contestants cover all the variations worn by adult musical contestants: (1) *himation* over long (*podērēs*) chiton (unbelted); (2) *himation* alone (right arm free); (3) *ependytēs* (patterned?) over a long chiton; (4) *himation* fastened with fibula over a richly decorated chiton (belted, short sleeved); (5) long (*podērēs*) chiton (unbelted). See Table 1 col. 9; cf. F. V. Cerqueira, “As representações dos Agônes musicais na pintura dos vasos áticos: os atributos iconográficos, os instrumentos musicais, as vestimentas, a idade, o gênero e o corpo dos músico,” in N. Theml et al. (eds.), *Olhares do corpo* (Rio de Janeiro 2003) 56–71, at 64–65. On the variety in the arrangement of the man’s *himation* see Lee 113–116. Carderaro and Cerqueira connect contestants’ *himatia* to school contests: L. C. Carderaro and F. V. Cerqueira, “A imagem do músico jovem em *agones* musicais através da iconografia de vasos áticos,” *Cadernos do LEPARQ* 14/27 (2017) 158–182, at 163–166. For the garments of musical contestants see Vos, in *Enthousiasmos* 126–127; Kotsidu, *Die musischen Agone* 126–129; M. Ercoles, “Dressing the Citharode: A Chapter in Greek Musical and Cultic Imagery,” in M. Harlow et al. (eds.), *Greek and Roman Textiles and Dress* (Oxford 2014) 95–110; Lee 122, 224.

³⁵ Cf. Cillo, *AION(archeol)* 15 (1993) 237 with n.133; Kotsidu, *Die musischen Agone* 110.

the solemn Panathenaic competitive context and more at home in the school scenes of musical instruction.³⁶

School children playing or imitating musical contests is a subject that had been in use for some time. On side B of the famous Antaios Krater by Euphronios,³⁷ boys practice for an *aulos* competition in a school setting. Such practice could serve as preparation for public performance. Max Wegner suggested that on the Antaios krater children are imitating adults for fun, adding that written sources also provide information about school *mousikoi agōnes*.³⁸ Euphronios' vase was made around 510 B.C., at about the same time as another school musical contest scene on a black-figure Nikosthenic *pyxis* in Vienna, where school contestants are standing on a *bēma* as well, but their friends also hold instruments. In public contest scenes (i.e. not in school settings) it does not happen that the listener or the judge also holds an instrument.³⁹ Where the victor of a public contest is depicted, there is no place for the defeated rivals. Already as early as the end of the sixth century, the painter who decorated both sides of the Nikosthenic *pyxis* carefully

³⁶ In fifth-century Athens there may have been discussions about the appropriate musical instrument (and tune) for a player; see e.g. Ar. *Thesm.* 136–138.

³⁷ Red-figure calyx-krater, Louvre G103, BAPD 200064. Bundrick, *Music and Image* 164, interprets the scene as a real (i.e. not school) aulodic contest before an aristocratic audience, members of the elite.

³⁸ “Der Agon der berufsmäßigen Kitharoden und Auleten wird auch von Knaben nachgeahmt ... die literarische Überlieferung weiß auch von Schüler-Agonen zu berichten”: M. Wegner, *Musikgeschichte im Bildern II.4 Griechenland* (Leipzig 1963) 68, without specifying any particular textual *locus*. The name inscription near to the boy *auletēs* (POLYKLES) recurs in a somewhat earlier musical contest scene with a bearded kitharode mounting a *bēma*: black-figure *oinochoē*, Rome, Villa Giulia 20839, BAPD 306460.

³⁹ There is a variation of *mousikos agōn* scenes not held at school in which the contestant does not hold the instrument himself but receives it from a winged Nikē: see e.g. Kotsidu, *Die musischen Agone* 308, nos. 69–71.

distinguished school from public contests through his choice of instrument type: his boys are holding *chelys*-lyres, not concert *kitharas*. Almost a hundred years later, a need was felt for a new iconographic sign suitable for *paidēs kitharistai* where neither the concert *kithara* nor the *chelys*-lyre would do.⁴⁰

Another contest scene appears to confirm this need: it shows a very young boy with a *chelys*-lyre of unusual size in his hand (fig. 4, ca. 420 B.C.). This scene, on the bell-krater by the Phialē Painter in Geneva,⁴¹ is a public contest, with a Nikē and a bearded man holding a long stick in his right hand. The *chelys*-lyre is remarkably strange and atypical (only the upper edge of the sound box shows). From his other vases we know that the Phialē Painter drew with precision and was fond of painting superb musical instruments elaborated with subtlety.⁴² Therefore, it is neither by chance nor by negligence that he provides the Geneva youth with an unusually large and roughly drawn *chelys*-lyre. This atypical *chelys*-lyre, whether it existed or not, seems to serve the same function that I have suggested for the hybrid *kithara*: it is neither a concert *kithara* unsuitable for the young boy nor a common ‘school’ *chelys*-lyre—rather, it is a larger, more prestigious instrument.

⁴⁰ The *pyxis* in Vienna (Kunsthistorisches Museum 318, BAPD 306451) offers the sole musical contest scene in which *kithara* player and singer are standing on the *bēma* together. While this kind of exercise may have been allowed in school, in the iconography of public musical contests the contestant—either *kitharōidos* or *kitharistēs*—stands alone on the *bēma*. Furthermore, *kithara* contest and *aulos* contest are never depicted together except in school contest scenes (as on the Vienna *pyxis*). That the *pyxis* portrays a school context is made clear by a draped man who beats a boy with a sandal.

⁴¹ Attic red-figure bell-krater, Phialē Painter, Geneva, Musée d’Art et d’Histoire 14987, BAPD 214258.

⁴² Stringed instruments by the Phialē Painter, accurately painted: *chelys*-lyre on a red-figure hydria, Vatican 16549, BAPD 214272; *barbitos* on a red-figure, white-ground calyx-krater, Vatican 16586, BAPD 214232; cradle *kithara* on a red-figure hydria, London E185, BAPD 214266.

In order to carve out a distinct representation for the musical contests of *paides kitharistai* (with all their peculiarities) against the conservative nature of the established iconography, a special instrument was needed that would contrast with the concert *kithara* and the *chelys*-lyre. The instrument type associated with Thracian singers, whether for historical or iconographic reasons (or both), offered a perfect alternative in the musico-political intellectual atmosphere of the fifth century: while strikingly different in its ‘original’ context from the Greek *kithara*, it was strange and unusual in a familiar way. This iconographical device served to lift young contestants out of the school context and the childish world of the Anthesteria *choes*, and place them in the domain of Athenian adult public festivals—just as prizes for *paides* were inscribed on the very same lists as those for *andres*. All this was done in a way that did not invite the viewer’s ridicule.

It is possible that the hybrid *kithara* did not in fact exist and was invented by vase-painters towards the middle of the fifth century⁴³ to distinguish the mythical Thracian singers.⁴⁴ Painters re-used this already-existing iconographic sign one or two decades later to depict young male victors in public musical contests, a development that parallels and interacts with changes in the myth of Thamyras. It seems unlikely that the by then highly developed manufacturing of musical instruments could not devise smaller *kitharas* for children. In iconography, however, avoiding ambiguity is important and, given that size

⁴³ Cf. the well-known Thamyris scene on an Attic red-figure hydria, Group of Polygnotos, Oxford, Ashmolean Museum G291, BAPD 213783.

⁴⁴ “The hybrid semiotics of the instrument well suit the dramatic liminality of Thamyris *kitharōidos*, a charismatic figure intriguingly poised between Thrace and Greece, mythic past and the contemporary culture of agonistic music” (Power, *The Culture of Kitharōidia* 50). On the Anthesteria *choes* see R. Hamilton, *Choes and Anthesteria: Athenian Iconography and Ritual* (Ann Arbor 1992).

is not always clear, artists resort to other available devices to mark distinctions.

This interpretation of the hybrid *kitahra* may be confirmed by a fragment of a less-known Anthesteria *chous* in Basel⁴⁵ decorated with a scene of boys participating in a contest in *kitharōidia* or *kitharistikē* among themselves (fig. 5; Table 1 no. 11).⁴⁶ One of the boys, with a wreath and ornately dressed, holds a conventional *chelys*-lyre. Another, with a *chelys*-lyre in his hand, is naked. The boy *Kōmos*⁴⁷ stands in the center of the image on a *bēma* with a hybrid *kithara*. Opposite him we can see a *Nikē* sitting on a hydria, just as on a *chous* in Munich (fig. 6; Table 1 no. 9) and another in Rome (fig. 7; Table 1 no. 7).⁴⁸ Like *Kōmos* on the Basel *chous*, the boys on the Munich and the Rome vases hold a hybrid *kithara*.

Timothy Power interprets the Basel scene literally: in his opinion, it recalls the musical contests of the Anthesteria, which remained a field for young amateur aristocratic competitors throughout the fifth century.⁴⁹ It is nonetheless worth comparing it with representations of boys who are simulating par-

⁴⁵ Basel, Coll. H. Cahn 649, BAPD 9029561 (*LIMC* Suppl. I “*Komos*” Add.1), manner of the Meidias Painter.

⁴⁶ Plato’s *Kritias* recounts (Pl. *Ti.* 21B) that when he was ten years old (i.e. ca. 450) their fathers set up *mupsōidia* contests for their sons (*tois paisi*) during the Apatouria. This means that the boys played the roles of the ‘official’ musicians at the Panathenaia.

⁴⁷ On the boy *Kōmos* see A. Smith, “*Komos* Growing up among Satyrs and Children,” in A. Cohen et al. (eds.), *Constructions of Childhood in Ancient Greece and Italy* (Princeton 2007) 153–171 (*Kōmos* on Anthesteria *choes* at 155; discussion of the Basel *chous* at 162, with comparanda in nn.26–27).

⁴⁸ Red-figure *chous*, manner of the Meidias Painter, Munich 2471, BAPD 220592; red-figure *oinochoē*, manner of the Alexandre Painter, Rome, Villa Giulia 5250, BAPD 216550.

⁴⁹ Power, *The Culture of Kitharōidia* 489; cf. P. Wilson, “Athenian Strings,” in P. Murray et al. (eds.), *Music and the Muses. The Culture of ‘Mousikē’ in the Classical Athenian City* (Oxford 2004) 269–306, at 281 n.30.

ticipation at public festivals.⁵⁰ Such are the scene of a festive procession on a famous *chous* in New York⁵¹ and the depiction on an Anthesteria *chous* in Munich of a winged Nikē flying towards a boy who rides a white horse (fig. 8).⁵² As is clear from the picture-in-picture motif—the Panathenaic amphora on the white column left of the central figure—the depiction is connected to the javelin-throwing contests at the Panathenaia. The vase shape, however, as well as the white ribbon across the boy's brow suggest that the *chous* was given to a child as a present at the Anthesteria.⁵³ When compared to its few parallels, sharp differences of detail make clear that the Munich *chous*⁵⁴ portrays a young boy in the role of a Panathenaic contestant.

The iconographic function of the hybrid *kithara* on the Basel *chous* (fig. 5) is similar to that of the chariot on the New York *chous*, and the white horse and Panathenaic amphora on the

⁵⁰ Cf. Smith, in *Constructions of Childhood* 171.

⁵¹ New York, 24.97.34 (= *ThesCRA* VI.I.b, no. 116, BAPD 4091), ca. 450. The boys take Dionysos in a ship-car to the Boukoleion for the *hieros gamos* with the Basilinna (cf. *Pl. Leg.* 637B). For the New York *chous* see J. Neils et al. (eds.), *Coming of Age in Ancient Greece: Images of Childhood from the Classical Past* (London 2003) 287, no. 100. On the ship-car scenes see G. Hedreen, "The Return of Hephaistos, Dionysiac Processional Ritual and the Creation of a Visual Narrative," *JHS* 124 (2004) 38–64, at 45–46, and "Bild, Mythos, and Ritual: Choral Dance in Theseus's Cretan Adventure on the François Vase," *Hesperia* 80 (2011) 491–510, at 501–502 (with earlier literature).

⁵² Munich, Antikensammlungen Sch 72, BAPD 260014, ca. 400 (manner of the Erbach Painter); cf. J. Shear, "Atarbos' Base and the Panathenaia," *JHS* 123 (2003) 164–180, at 170. For a detailed description see B. A. Sparkes, "Quintain and the Talcott Class," *AntK* 20 (1977) 8–25, at 10.

⁵³ For vases given to children at the Anthesteria see Hamilton, *Choes and Anthesteria* 121; J. Neils, "Children and Greek Religion," in *Coming of Age* 145; S. D. Bundrick, "Inside/Outside: Revisiting a Chous in the Metropolitan Museum of Art," in J. H. Oakley et al. (eds.), *Athenian Potters and Painters II* (Oxford 2009) 27–35, at 28.

⁵⁴ See Sparkes, *AntK* 20 (1977) 9–12.

Munich *chous*. All three depict children role-playing as participants at public events (processions and competitions). Therefore, if in fact children who won actual contests were depicted with hybrid *kitharas* at this time, a hybrid *kithara* would precisely suit the boy Kōmos role-playing as contestant on the Basel *chous*. On an *oinochoē* in the National Archaeological Museum of Athens (*fig. 9*), a boy is standing next to a large tripod with a *chelys*-lyre in hand.⁵⁵ He is either role-playing, as on the Anthesteria *choes*, or (perhaps more likely) the image evokes a future, hoped-for victory in a *mousikos agōn*. The *chelys*-lyre in his hand makes clear that the public boys' contest—the *agōn* for *paidēs* whose iconographic marker is the hybrid *kithara*—still lies for him in the future.

Conclusion

The hybrid *kithara* is both different from the standard concert variant and similar to it. Whether the actual instrument existed or not, this combination of sameness and otherness served as the iconographical equivalent of the noun *paidēs* written to qualify *kitharistai* in the Panathenaic inscription.⁵⁶ With it, they marked youths of 14 to 20 (*paidēs* and *ageneioi*) as public participants on a par with (yet different from) adults, elevating them vis-à-vis scenes that included toys or school instruments. Had they been depicted with ordinary concert *kitharas*, the size of the instrument would have struck a comic note, not unlike the effect of adult weapons in the hands of warring boys. On the other hand, a smaller replica of a concert *kithara* would have

⁵⁵ Attic red-figure *oinochoē*, recalling the Marlay Painter, 430–425, Athens, NM 12961 (= *ThesCRA* VI.i.b, no. 130, BAPD 216269).

⁵⁶ See however Cillo, *AION(archeol)* 15 (1993) 205–243. Following Cillo (237–238), P. Wilson suggested that the hybrid *kithara* in musical contest scenes was a special instrument of the *kitharistikē* that was held in lower esteem than the *kitharōidia*: “Thamyris the Thracian: the Archetypal Wandering Poet?” in R. Hunter et al. (eds.), *Wandering Poets in Ancient Greek Culture: Travel, Locality and Panhellenism* (Cambridge 2009) 46–79, at 77; cf. Power, *The Culture of Kitharōidia* 487–488.

left the youths in the fictional world of childish play, just as children with small shields do not take part in real fights.

Images “may draw on and select elements from the world round about—for that is how they are ‘recognisable’. But the very process of selection and juxtaposition within the restricted frame of the pot necessarily converts the reality of everyday life into something very different: an *image*, a *representation*, an *intellectual construction*.”⁵⁷ It is safe to conclude that in the iconography of the *mousikos agōn* the hybrid *kithara* secured recognition of a public contestant of young age, communicating this essential fact without the help of further motifs that might introduce ambiguity.⁵⁸

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⁵⁷ M. Beard, “Introduction II. Adopting an Approach,” in T. Rasmussen et al. (eds.), *Looking at Greek Vases* (Cambridge 1991) 12–35, at 20 (emphasis hers).

⁵⁸ I am grateful to the anonymous readers and to the editors of *GRBS*, whose suggestions were extremely helpful in improving this paper. An earlier version was presented at the 45th Conference of the Israel Society for the Promotion of Classical Studies held at Bar Ilan University, Tel Aviv. For photographs and permissions I would like to thank: Dr. Árpád Miklós Nagy (Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest), Dr. Astrid Fendt and Dr. Jörg Gebauer (Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek, Munich), Dr. Lillian Bartlett Stoner (Galerie Cahn, Basel), Susana Garcia (Musées d’art et d’histoire, Geneva), Alessia Argento (Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia). The research was supported in part by a grant (OTKA K-125518) from the Hungarian National Scientific Research Foundation.



Figure 1: Attic red-figure calyx-krater (side A), unattributed, Budapest, Museum of Fine Arts 51.836, BAPD 9038180.

Photo courtesy: © Szépművészeti Múzeum, Budapest.

Photograph by László Mátyus.



Figure 2: Attic red-figure calyx-krater (side B), unattributed, Budapest, Museum of Fine Arts 51.836, BAPD 9038180. Photo courtesy: © Szépművészeti Múzeum, Budapest. Photograph by László Mátyus.

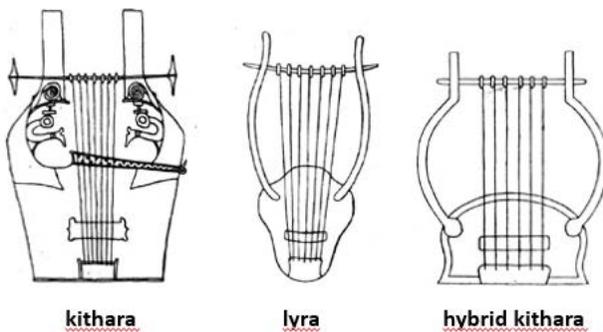


Figure 3: Drawing, *kithara*, *chelys-lyre*, *hybrid kithara*.



Figure 4. Attic red-figure bell-krater, Phialē Painter, Geneva, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire 14987, BAPD 214258. Photo courtesy: © Musées d'art et d'histoire, Ville de Genève. Photograph by Bettina Jacot-Descombes.



Figure 5. Attic red-figure chous, manner of the Meidias Painter, Basel, Coll. Herbert A. Cahn 649, BAPD 9029561. Photo courtesy: © Herbert A. Cahn collection, Basel.



Figure 6: Attic red-figure chous, Meidias Painter, Munich, Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek 2471, BAPD 220592. Photo: © Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek München. Photograph by Renate Kühling.



Figure 7: Attic red-figure *chous*, manner of the Alexandre Painter, Rome, Museo Etrusco di Villa Giulia 5250, BAPD 216550. Photo courtesy: © Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia.



*Figure 8: Attic red-figure chous, manner of the Erbach Painter, Munich, Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek Sch 72, BAPD 260014.
Photo: © Staatliche Antikensammlungen und Glyptothek München.
Photograph by Renate Kühling.*

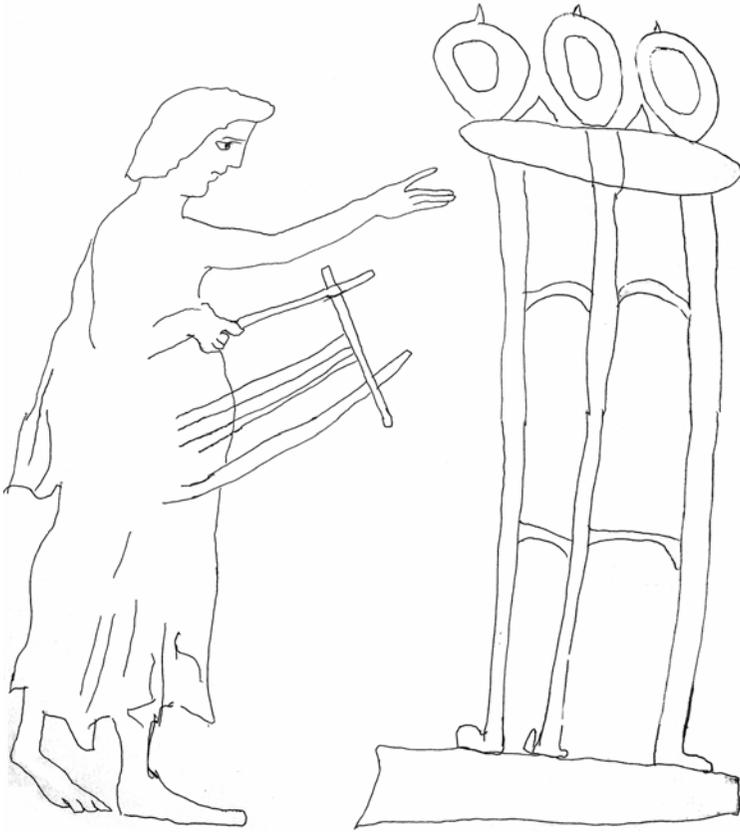


Figure 9: Drawing, Attic red-figure *oinochoē*, recalling the Marlay Painter, Athens, National Museum 12961, BAPD 21626.

TABLE 1: Non-mythological musical contest scenes with *paides kitharistai* holding hybrid *kitharas*

	Shape	Painter	Collection, number, ref.	Concordances	Age	Arms of the instrument	<i>Bēma</i>	Garment style	Nikē	Other
1 (fig. 1)	calyx-krater	Unattributed	Budapest 51.836, BAPD 9038180		<i>ageneios</i>	twisted	+	2	2	fillet, wreath
2	<i>stamnos</i>	Polygnotos Group	Florence 4006, ARV2 1062.1, BAPD 213800	TPh.5, MM.14, C.III, B.9, Th.Cc.41	<i>ageneios</i>	twisted	+	3	2	phialē, wreath
3	<i>stamnos</i>	Polygnotos Group	Vatican 16556, ARV2 1039.7, 1679, BAPD 213505	TPh.4, MM.17, C.V, Th.Cc.42, K.84	<i>ageneios</i>		+	2	2	fillet, wreath, man seated
4	calyx-krater fr.	<i>Kleophon Painter</i>	<i>Olympia 215157, ARV2 1144.17, BAPD 215157</i>	<i>K.93</i>	<i>cannot be seen</i>	<i>twisted</i>	+	?	1?	<i>wreath?</i>
5	<i>pelikē</i>	Epimedes Painter	Plovdiv 1812, ARV2 1044.9, 1562, BAPD 213559	C.IV, B.21, Th.Cc.47	<i>ageneios</i>	twisted	+	1	4	wreath, phialē, sprig, name inscriptions
6	<i>pelikē</i>	Athens 1183 Painter	Athens NM 1183, ARV2 1123.1, BAPD 214854	TPh.3, MM.13, C.VIII, B.4, Th.Cc.50, K.91	<i>pais</i>	twisted	+	1	2	hydria, <i>oinochoē</i> , sash, man leaning on staff
7 (fig. 7)	<i>oinochoē</i>	manner of the Alexandre Painter	Rome, Villa Giulia 5250, ARV2 1212.1, BAPD 216550	TPh.6, MM.16, C.XV, B.26, K.100	<i>pais</i>	twisted	+	2		women, one seated on hydria, phialē
8	<i>pelikē</i>	Kassel Painter	Athens NM 1469, ARV2 1084.17, BAPD 214558	MM.2, C.VII, B.3, Th.Cc.32, K.82	<i>pais</i>		+	3	1	fillet, man seated with staff
9 (fig. 6)	<i>chous</i>	manner of the Meidias Painter	Munich 2471, ARV2 1324.39, BAPD 220592	TPh.10, MM.15, C.XVI, B.13, Th.Cc.52, K.101	<i>pais</i>	twisted	+	4	1	Nikē seated on hydria with sceptre, other <i>pais</i> with wreath
10	<i>chous</i> fr.	unattributed	Athens, Agora P16910, BAPD 22439	K.102	<i>pais</i>		+	5	2	phialē, other <i>pais</i>
11 (fig. 5)	<i>chous</i>	manner of the Meidias Painter	Basel, Coll. H. Cahn 649, BAPD 9029561	Th.Cc.53	<i>pais</i>			4? (fragmentary)		seated on hydria with sprig, an other <i>pais</i> with <i>kithara</i> , name inscriptions

References to earlier lists containing musical contest scenes with hybrid *kitharas*:

TPh = Talcott and Philppaki, *Hesperia* Suppl. 10 (1956) 49–50; MM = Maas and McIntosh Snyder, *Stringed Instruments* 145–147 (number = order of mention); C = Cillo, *AION(archeol)* 15 (1993) 227–229; B = Bélis, in *La naissance* 49–52; T = Thöne, *Ikongraphische Studien* 144–146; K = Kotsidu, *Die musischen Agone* 301–315.

Garment styles: 1 = himation over a long chiton; 2 = himation alone; 3 = *ependytes* (patterned) over a long chiton; 4 = himation fastened with fibula over a richly decorated chiton (belted, short sleeved); 5 = long chiton (belted).

On vase no. 4 see 505–506 above.