

Cockfights, Contradictions, and the Mythopoetics of Ancient Greek Culture

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I want to start by giving thanks to the Arts Association for its invitation, to the School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry for bringing me from a very cold country (Canada) to a very warm and welcoming one, and to my colleagues for their devotion, industry and brilliance which have made Classics and Ancient History at the University of Sydney one of the strongest Classics departments in the world, with an impressive tradition and an even more promising future. I especially thank their generosity in accepting me as part of it.

My topic will not allow me to dwell however on matters so agreeable as my new country, my new university or my new colleagues. On the contrary, my topic is the disagreeable: disagreeableness of a sort rarely encountered in the refined atmosphere of the University of Sydney. Disagreement of all sorts: from non-sequiturs to contradictions, to squabbles, combats, and the eternal strife between genders and classes. But I want to give special attention to the notion of 'contradiction' because it played a large though generally unrecognised role in the creation of my discipline. 'Classics' was until recently 'Classical philology'. The philological method was an Enlightenment reaction to Patristic exegesis. 'Enlightened', that is to say 'anti-clerical', thinkers perceived the Patristic approach to biblical exegesis as intellectually dishonest. Patristics said if you find two passages in the Bible in flagrant contradiction (or any one passage in contradiction to official Church dogma) then find a way of reinterpreting the offending

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passage so that it agrees. Philology was more rational. It said, if two passages in a text contradict each other, find parallels in the author or genre that will help you determine which passage looks most like a cliché, then declare the other a corruption or interpolation. It is easier to adjust the text to the interpretation than vice versa.

What the two methods have in common is the belief that gods and great authors adhere to the fundamental rule of (small 'c') classical logic, the rule of non-contradiction, and to the idea that the strictness of their adherence is commensurate with the importance of the sentiments expressed. Take, for example, the great philologist, Denys Page. In *Homeric Odyssey*, published 1955, he argued against the authenticity of the latter part of *Odyssey*, Book 11. Page was troubled by the contradiction between two conceptions of the afterlife: one depicted shades as mindless batlike entities, the other as articulate, intelligent, and all but human. 'It seems indeed very improbable', he writes, 'that one person should declare two contrary opinions about so important a matter as his own destiny after death'.¹ Page 'explains Homer from Homer' through the convenient ruse of inventing the UnHomer to whom he can attribute all unco-operative parts of the epic. But the same reasoning which allows Page to condemn the end of Book 11 as not issuing from the putative pen of the putative Homer later allows him to go one further and claim that the inconsistent eschatology could not have been conceived by a single culture. We are all familiar of course with the 'late interpolator', a bogey employed by philology to liquidate and dispose of unwanted bodies of text. (Another route, of which Versnel complains in *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion*, is to blame the corrupting influence of foreign, in principle always Eastern, myths, as if it was the Easterner's fault that Greeks came to contradict themselves.)²

But of course you immediately recognise that Page was dreadfully wrong. Individuals and groups are most inconsistent where they feel a thing important. To suppose otherwise indicates that you are suffering from an Enlightenment hangover (nothing that cannot be cured by a brief exposure to nearly half a century of sociological, anthropological, Marxist and poststructuralist theory). In *Theories of Mythology* I explored the path that led critical theory to the view that

images, narratives, symbols, social rituals, even critical and scientific theories, embody contradictions, and that these contradictions can be shaped by real social divisions. I went so far as to suggest that the power and fascination of images, narratives, symbols, and so on, was directly related to their capacity to give simultaneous expression to the values and aspirations of competing social groups.³

To demonstrate that this claim is at least sometimes true I would like to explore Greek ideas about one of the most passionate spectator sports of all time, the cockfight. To make the demonstration a little more exciting I ask you to please oblige me by observing the paradox that chickens are rather remote from the mechanisms of real power in Greece or anywhere else. And yet, I will show that chickens are transformed by the cultural imagination into a kind of blueprint of the social power structure. Culture 'cooks' chickens, to use the structuralist term, so that they may be consumed by the mind. In Greece, especially in Athens, they were consumed with relish: they were 'good to think', precisely because they addressed the important topic of relations of power between the classes and the sexes.

Of Agons and Paragons

In art, myth, or literature, in the relics of the Greek cultural imagination, chickens are never just chickens. On the Athenian calyx krater reproduced in Figure 1 they are, as almost always in Greek art, fighting cocks. The anthropomorphism of the chickens here has a special motive. These fighting cocks are men in comic costume. The presence of the piper indicates that we have a theatre scene. The vase was painted not long after the production of Aristophanes' *Clouds* in 423 BC. The formal debate of that play pits the representative of the Old Education against the New, or the Greater against the Lesser Argument, as they are called in the play. The Hellenistic scholar Aristophanes of Byzantium tells us that in the production of *Clouds* the Greater and Lesser Arguments were dressed as fighting cocks.⁴ I believe that this vase shows us the scene of that debate. The Greek word for debate is *agon*. But the word significantly also means 'competition' or 'struggle' and in this *agon* we see the comic refraction



Figure 1: Attic calyx krater, ca 420 BC, J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu 82.AE.83, Side A.

of a real social struggle: a clash between residual and emergent values in the age of Athens' new radical democracy.

The Greater Argument, presumably the taller figure on the right, is the champion of the old-fashioned self-control and discipline which defeated the Persians at Marathon. Repeatedly he stresses the need to teach Athenian boys to resist the advances of their adult male admirers. The Lesser Argument, by contrast, the wriggling twisting figure on the left, is imbued with the new amorality of the sophistic age. He urges self-indulgence and is called names that imply that he is a passive homosexual. He encourages the adolescent son of the hero Strepsiades to challenge authority, to gratify his appetites, to rationalise and justify, and to enjoy intercourse with his adult male lovers.

Given the degree of unavoidable anthropomorphism in dramatic costuming, you might have expected the costume to avoid *unnecessary* anthropomorphism. But you can hardly avoid noticing the very non-avian feature of both costumes, the erect phalloi, which might

be explained as a concession to comic costume, which, for actors, normally included a phallus, but the normal actors' phallus is limp and these are erect. Moreover, there are erect phalloi tied on where the spurs should be. The word 'spur' is in fact used to designate the virile member in Attic comedy. It seems reasonable that the Lesser argument, the champion of sexual licence, should be portrayed this way. But it might strike you as odd that the phallic conception of the chicken should extend to the Greater Argument, champion of modesty, self-control, and old-fashioned martial virtues.

If so, it would not take much comparative anthropology to convince you that there is a very widespread confusion of sexual and martial aggression in most human cultures, whether because it is unavoidable or simply convenient. But the male chicken has qualities which permit it to cross these categories, mediate between them, and even symbolise their conjuncture. There is now a small body of literature on the symbolism of cocks and cockfighting. Some authors treat the cock as a transcultural archetype for virile aggression. This may be so. But the symbolism of the cock is nevertheless not 'the same' in ancient Greek culture as in others. In Greece the cock does not just conflate these two distinct realms of experience. It does so after a structural pattern that is unique to the social configuration of the Greek polis.

The great nineteenth-century historian Jacob Burckhardt once characterised Greek society as 'agonistic'.⁵ In his view relations between persons or states in Greece generally took the form of a contest. Burckhardt hit upon something truly distinctive in ancient Greek society, though he was thinking primarily of the ethos of the prestige competition of the 'free aristocracy' of Archaic Greece. His own bitterly anti-democratic bias caused him to underestimate and denigrate the agonistic spirit that led the Classical democracies to give the form of an *agon* to each of the great institutions they created for negotiating power and social relations: the legislative assembly, the lawcourt, and the theatre, though these were all verbal, not physical *agones*. In considering how pervasive the *agon* is in Greek drama, for example, you must recall not only that every drama of the Classical period, as far as we know, was performed in the context of a prize competition, but also that each drama is physically centred

on an *agon* or debate. In comedy, the most overtly political of the dramatic genres, the *agon* became a highly formalised structure, sometimes taking up nearly half of the play. It is perhaps not so surprising, therefore, that dramatic competition in Athens came to be symbolised as a cockfight. It is drama that is symbolised by the only two representations of cockfighting in Athenian sculpture. The so called calendar frieze (Figure 2), a Hellenistic sculpture, still visible on the Little Metropolitan Church in Athens, represents



Figure 2: Calendar Frieze, Little Metropolitan Church, Athens.

the month of Poseideion (our December) by showing a scene from the Rural Dionysia: namely the judges' table and beside them the victorious tragedian leading off his prize goat. But in front of the judges, representing the dramatic competition they are vetting, is a cockfight. The other sculpture, probably late Classical, is on the throne of the priest of Dionysus in the theatre of Dionysus (Figure 3). It was shaved down and refitted to a later throne, but each side originally showed two winged boys prodding their cocks on to the fight. The boys are supposed by some to be divine personifications of Agon, which is why they have wings, like their cocks, for victory is fleeting and elusive. In fact Eros is the most likely candidate.

I wonder if Jacob Burckhardt was influenced by Jean-Léon Gérôme, whose *Combat de Coqs* created a sensation in 1847 (Figure 4). Gérôme's



Figure 3: Priest's Throne, Theatre of Dionysus, Athens.



Figure 4: Jean-Léon Gérôme, *Combat de Coqs*, 1847, Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

Grecian idyll includes a cockfight, but more interestingly for us it draws an implicit parallel between the combative cocks and an erotic seduction.



Figure 5: Attic red-figure lekythos, ca 470 BC, Anikensammlung Kiel 553.

There are some insightful touches. One is the cemetery background and particularly the grave marker with the mysterious Sphinx-like woman at the top centre of the painting. Real sphinxes, with the wings of a bird and the haunches of a lion, are mythical killers, who swoop down upon young men in earliest manhood and tear them apart even as they make love to them (Figure 5). Sphinxes served as grave markers, especially for those who died young or in battle. Perhaps G r me saw some analogy between the mystery of the Spahinx and the mystery of the cockfight. As the imagery related to theatrical competitions suggests, the cockfight might serve in Greece as an archetype for all *agones*, all debates, competitions or struggles. Here G r me links it with the ultimate struggle, the life-and-death struggle of the mortal condition, another particular obsession of ancient Greek culture. For G r me, in linking the cockfight with erotic play on the one hand, and the Sphinx on the other, alludes to the two *agones* most concerned with death and life, the contest of battle and the contest of sexual seduction.

In antiquity the cock, like the sphinx, was a liminal creature. Its habit of crowing at dawn made it a symbol of transition from night to day and darkness to light. As a marker of time and transitions, it is associated with birth, death and rebirth, and thus gains a close association with liminal deities such as Leto, Hermes, Demeter/Persephone and Asclepius. Adolescence was also closely connected to death and rebirth: Artemidorus, the ancient dream interpreter, claims that dreams about adolescence signify marriage for the bachelor and death for the aged.⁶ In this vein let us note another insightful aspect of G r me's painting.

Its focal point is an adolescent male, just as, on the throne of the Priest of Dionysus, it is an adolescent boy who urges the cock to combat. The relationship between the fighting cock and the adolescent male at the transition of boyhood to manhood is vital to the cultural symbolism of the cock in Greece. It is alluded to by the scene on the reverse of the Athenian calyx-krater with the comic cockfight (Figure 6). This scene is not quite the typical warrior's departure found so often in Attic vasepainting. The beardlessness of the central figure, the fact that he is shorter even than his mother, on the left, and his aged father on the right, show that he is an adolescent. But as in a typical warrior's departure he holds his arms and says his farewell to his family. The focus on the boy's youth, and the absence of a wife or child, strongly suggest that he is about to go to war for the first time.

In myth, the cock is closely connected with the war-god, Ares. Originally the cock was a human companion of Ares named Alektryon, which is simply the Greek word for 'cock'. At first, however, there was nothing martial about Alektryon. Before becoming a cock, Alektryon



Figure 6: Attic calyx krater, ca 420 BC, J. Paul Getty Museum, Malibu 82.AE.83.

is said by Lucian to have been 'an adolescent boy, beloved of Ares, who kept company with the god at drinking parties, caroused with him, and was his companion in lovemaking'.⁷ His only soldierly duty was to keep watch while Ares made adulterous love to Aphrodite, so as to prevent the rising sun from seeing them and from reporting the affair to Aphrodite's husband Hephaestus. Alectryon failed to keep his post even in this lightest of all soldierly duties. He fell asleep and as a result Hephaestus learned of the affair and set the trap, so memorably described in *Odyssey*, book 8, that led to the public exhibition and humiliation of Ares and Aphrodite caught by invisible bonds in the love embrace. As punishment Ares turned Alectryon into a cock, adding as penance an ineluctable impulse to crow at the approach of the sun, in eternal compensation for his failure on that fateful night. The features of this new beast were said to demonstrate his affinity to the war god. The bird's crest resembles a hoplite's helmet; the same word, *lophos*, is in fact used of the cock's crest and the helmet's crest.⁸ The cock's wattles are like cheek-pieces on helmets of the Corinthian variety. Its spurs, as the poet Nicander noticed, are like spears.⁹ (In ancient cockfights bronze points are said to have been fixed to the tips of the bird's spurs to make them more lethal.)¹⁰ In the myth, then, the epicene youth turns hoplite. In losing his humanity, Alectryon, paradoxically, gained 'manhood'. It may seem odd that a story with the typical format of an initiation myth should be attached to a cautionary tale about illicit love. But there are two strains in the Greek cultural discourse on cocks: one promotes the cock as the ideal model of hoplite virtue. The other is about sexual transgression and loss of self.

In this Corner the Greater Argument

Somehow the Greek cultural imagination was never fired up by those aspects of the chicken we find paramount: not the sweet savour of its roasted flesh, not its capacity to conjure up blissful images of rural life. 'The Greeks', as Kretschmer says, 'were primarily interested in the fighting-cock and not the laying hen'; the fighting-cock at any rate is the only form of chicken one encounters with any

regularity in Greek art and poetry.¹¹ Indeed the cock most regularly symbolises the supreme *agon* and most enduring theme of Greek art and poetry, namely war. Aeschylus could make ‘the hearts of cocks’ stand metaphorically for the spirit of violent confrontation.¹² Cocks are a favourite motif on shield blazons. Programmatic decoration on Attic vase-painting frequently draws similes between fighting cocks and mythological combatants or hoplites (see e.g. Figure 7). The great Pheidias sculpted a statue of Athena with a cock on her helmet, because, says Pausanias, ‘cocks are most ready for battle’.¹³ On the amphoras given as prizes for athletic competitions at the Athenian festival of the Panathenaia the goddess Athena regularly appears in a warlike attitude between two columns surmounted by cocks, which Beazley read as ‘symbols of the fighting spirit’ (Figure 8).¹⁴ Indeed the very name for cock, ‘Alectryon’, stresses its martial prowess. It means ‘the Defender’. Hence the cock’s association with Athena Polias, the Defender of the City. In Aristophanes’ *Birds* the cock is even chosen in preference to Athena to serve as tutelary deity of Cloudcuckooland, because the cock ‘is reputed everywhere



Figure 7: Attic black-figure neck amphora by Exekias, ca 540 BC, Munich 1470 WAF. Predella: Cockfight; Body: Ajax and Achilles.

to be the most terrible chick of Ares'.¹⁵ And indeed, as these last examples suggest, the martial aspect of the bird is also recognised in cult. Cocks were kept at sanctuaries of Heracles and Ares and the

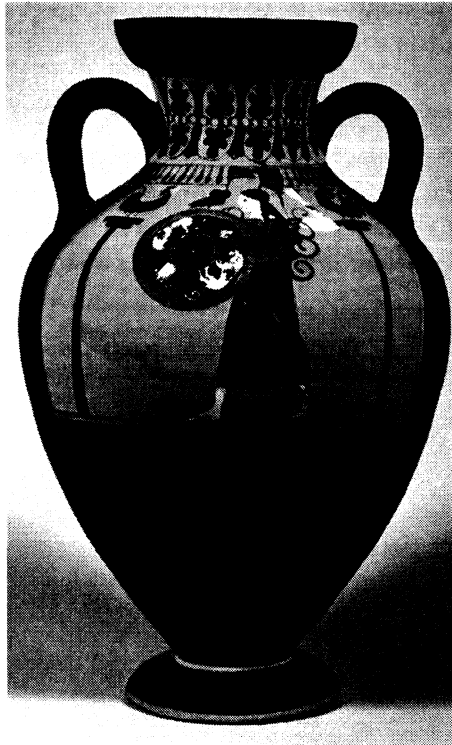


Figure 8: Attic black-figure Panathenaic amphora, ca 540 BC. attributed to Princeton Painter (von Bothmer), New York MoMA 1989 281.89.

Spartans sacrificed cocks as thanks-offerings for victory in battle.

To what then does the bird owe its glorious reputation? A dominant discourse held that cocks never yield to their opponents but fight to the death.¹⁶ During the Persian Wars Themistocles and Miltiades are said to have roused the ardour of the troops with the spectacle of a cockfight, and later instituted an annual cockfight as an object lesson in military valour.¹⁷ Socrates roused the flagging spirits of the general Iphicrates by pointing to a pair of fighting cocks.¹⁸ Even the philosopher Chrysippus remarked on the utility of cocks 'in inciting soldiers to war and instilling an appetite

for valour'.¹⁹ And in Lucian's *Anacharsis* the Athenian legislator Solon asks the Scythian sage:

What would you say, if you saw our quail- and cockfights and the not inconsiderable zeal we devote to them? Or is it likely you would laugh, and especially if you learned that we do it by law and that all men of military age are instructed to attend and watch the birds flail at one another until their very last fall? But it is not ridiculous, for an appetite for danger steals gradually into their spirits so that they might not appear less noble and daring than cocks and give in while they still have life under distress of wounds and exhaustion or some other hardship.²⁰

The mandatory cockfight in Athens is perhaps not pure fiction, it is mentioned by a number of authors and, Pliny tells us, inspirational cockfights were regular in Pergamon.²¹

The cock, as we noted, belongs not only to the realm of Ares, but is also close to Aphrodite. The epigrammatist Meleager took the cock on a grave stele to signal the dead man's devotion to Aphrodite.²² Aristotle declares that chickens are 'most given to Aphrodite'.²³ Oppian thinks them sex-crazed beyond all known birds.²⁴ This is partly justified by observation: Aristotle notes that chickens are the only animals, besides humans, whose mating habits are not seasonal or limited. Indeed they have no concept of the right time (of *kairos*). They copulate 24/7, anywhere, any time of day, any time of year. They also have no concept of propriety: the hens will chase the cocks and throw themselves underneath them, even when the cocks are not in the mood. And no restraint. Their excessive activity leads to multiple conception, frequently causing monstrous births, or causes the hens to die exhausted, laying as many as two or three times a day.²⁵

Now it is true that birds generally were known for their sexual prowess (the pitch for an ancient aphrodisiac promises orgasm 'like a bird').²⁶ This has to do, says Aristotle, with the amount of moisture decocted by the body. The more decoction, the less moist, the hotter you are. The Aristotelian *Problems* points out that birds and hairy men are lecherous for the same reason. Much moisture is decocted in the production of feathers and hair. But cocks, quails, and a few others, which Aristotle classes as 'heavy birds', as opposed to 'taloned' or 'feathery' birds, are especially salacious. This is because the so-called 'residue' left over from the production of flesh and organs, which in other birds is directed to the creation of feathers and talons, in 'heavy' birds is diverted to the surplus production of the sperm and menstrual fluids responsible for fertility.²⁷ Indeed the birds most closely connected with Aphrodite and Eros belong to the class of heavy birds: in art one often sees Aphrodite and Eros, or their human analogues, sexy women and beautiful boys, riding or playing with swans, ducks, geese, and cocks. But it is not just the lack of talons or deep plumage. The stumpy legs too play a part, because less residue is diverted to them. The same insight permits Aristotelian science

to explain the lechery of lame men, dwarfs and pygmies, and the well-known fact (consistently noted by artists long before Aristotle) that dwarfs and pygmies have oversized genitals.²⁸ Indeed ancient agricultural treatises recommend cocks with 'shaggy' and short legs as particularly good for breeding.²⁹

In art avian lechery is abundantly represented by the motifs of winged phalloi and phallos-birds (Figure 9).³⁰ Though the species



Figure 9: Attic red-figure chous, ca 370 BC, Athens, Kanellopoulos Museum 401.

of these phallos-birds is often indistinct, they are generally birds of Aristotle's 'heavy' variety, and amongst recognisable species the cock has pride of place. There are unique physical and behavioral characteristics which account for the cock's particular privilege, and, oddly, the physical characteristics which make it a hoplite are precisely those which mark it as phallic. Crests and wattles distinguish the male gallinaceae, even prove, for reasons which are self-evident to Aelian, that nature prefers the male.³¹ Though analogous to the crests of other species, the cock's crest is unique: no mere feathery

tuft, says Aristotle, 'in substance it is not flesh, but it is not very different from flesh either'.³² It is in fact most like erectile tissue: according to ancient agricultural handbooks, the flaccidity or rigidity of the cock's comb varies in proportion to the cock's salaciousness.³³ The phallic conception of the cock is still more systematic in Aristophanes' explanation of its nickname 'Persian bird': the cock is the only bird which 'wears its tiara erect' as the Persian king allegedly did.³⁴ Aristotle and the later agricultural writers advise that the crest of a salacious cock is not only erect but ruddy-coloured, and note that castration causes the crest to fall and lose its colour.³⁵ The

spurs of the cock show the same tendency to be considered more than merely secondary sex characteristics. The homology between the spur and the genitals, obvious already on the vase showing the Agon from *Clouds* (Figure 1), became sufficiently systematic for Pliny to allow removal of the spurs as an alternative to castration, while the agricultural handbooks of Varro and Columella warn that this is the only means of performing castration.³⁶ In the feathers too we find a symbolic homology between sex and war. Two long tail feathers were stereotypically associated with the cock. Columella makes the two long tailfeathers an attribute of the most salacious cocks.³⁷ Two plumes also typically decorated a hoplite helmet (Greek literature repeatedly likens the helmet's plumes to the cock's).³⁸

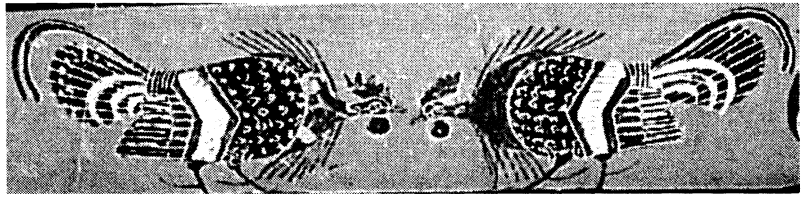


Figure 10: Attic black-figure band cup by Tleson, ca 550 BC, Oxford AN 1964.621.

But it is in battle that the cock's phallic propensities are most evident. Ancient writers note that the crests are particularly red and erect when the bird fights.³⁹ In addition cocks have feather erections. In a fight the two long tailfeathers are said to curve upwards in a semicircle, and the feathers around the neck (which cockers call the 'mane') begin to bristle, providing a convenient archetype for descriptions of warriors shaking their plumes in Greek poetry (Figure 10).⁴⁰ The reverse is also true: Aelian speaks of the cock as 'shaking his crest like a macho hoplite'.⁴¹

The cock's crow is yet another distinctive attribute of male gallinaceae, and its frequency serves as a measure of a cock's sexual prowess.⁴² So closely linked are the voice and the sexual identity of heavy birds that Aristotle and the agricultural tradition claim that, on the one hand, the sound of the male crowing is sufficient to make the females conceive, and that, on the other hand, a castrated cock is no longer capable of crowing.⁴³ Not only does the cock crow

when sexually excited, but it crows to proclaim its victory in battle. Conceived as another of its military habits, the cock's crow serves Greek poetry as a ready metaphor for trumpet calls.⁴⁴ And against the interloper the cock's phallic attributes, like the phallus itself, are magically apotropaic: its crowing, like its crest, was said to strike terror into lions, panthers, and basilisks.⁴⁵ Indeed everything distinctive about the cock seems to serve as a simultaneous index of its remarkable accomplishments in both love and war.

If we were to stop our inquiry here, we would have the impression that the cock is nothing less than a 'real man' as defined by ancient Greek society. An ideal warrior, an assiduous lover, the cock simply emanates virility. So much so that into imperial times magicians, doctors and scholars valued its testicles as an aphrodisiac, a cure for impotence, and a talisman for the production of male children.⁴⁶ Its fat, smeared liberally about the body, sufficed to repel fierce panthers and lions.⁴⁷ 'Cock's milk' was proverbial for something so unthinkable that whoever lacked it emphatically lacked nothing: for a product so mammalian and female could hardly be expected from this most macho of all birds.⁴⁸

In the Other Corner, the Lesser Argument

Given the cock's association with both sex and masculinity, it is not surprising that it was the preferred love gift given by mature men to beautiful youths (Figure 11).⁴⁹ In Margaret Visser's words 'the cock expressed the sheer maleness of the couple, their virile aggressivity and energy'.⁵⁰ Yet the cocks, without doubt fighting cocks, are an odd gift in the context of Greek pederasty. Cocks fight against equals, full grown male against full grown male, for the sexual domination of females. Yet the pederastic situation seems to shift male on male aggression from the realm of Ares to the realm of Aphrodite. Moreover, pederasty, Greek love, is normally represented in ancient literature and art as an asymmetrical bond between a dominant older male and a much younger adolescent. Indeed both heterosexual and homosexual relations in Classical antiquity might be said to contain an element of domination, but it

is the uneven nature of pederastic relationships that ancient writers most problematise. The cock in Lucian's *Cock* protests that 'you will never see a cock that is a *kinaidos*'.⁵¹ *Kinaidos* is a derogatory term used to designate a male who prefers the passive role in intercourse. In the Greek ethical firmament the *kinaidos* inhabits



Figure 11: Attic red-figure alabastron by Pasiades, ca 510 BC. Munich 8154.

the lowest rung and is the anti-thesis of the hoplite. The dominant discourse, the Greater Argument, on cockfighting would compel you to agree with Lucian's assesment. Pathic homosexuality seems remote from this paradigm of martial valour and masculine fertility. Frequently, however, the cock can be caught off guard, permitting a glimpse of Ares and Aphrodite in awkward and embarrassing combination.

In the cock's habit of crowing in triumph over the prostrate body of its defeated rival, its erotic and martial qualities are most inseparable. The victorious cock was perceived as 'phallicity' itself. Ancient writers lovingly describe the way it swells up, flutters its wings, lifts its entire body, rises on tiptoes, stretches head and neck skywards and crows while gathering its wings into a ball.⁵² Greek art leaves no doubt that the cock, at its climactic moment, became a winged phallus (Figure 12).

The homology is most explicit in the depiction of crowing phallos-birds. Visible on the skyphos from which the drawing of this crowing phallos-cock was copied are streaks of added red paint to show that he ejaculates as he crows. The other side of the same vase gives the reason for the bird's triumphant outburst. In the 'before' picture, the phallus-bird positions itself to attack a satyr, who obligingly leans forward and braces himself with his arms. The bird crows for its

conquest of another male animal.

If the cockfight is itself a common symbol of competition, the crowing cock became a common symbol of victory. The sound of a cock's crow was thought to augur victory for armies marching to battle.⁵³ The crowing phallos-bird was a still more potent symbol of victory. We see one triumphantly crowing atop a kottabos stand on a red-figured cup (Figure 13). Kottabos was a game played at

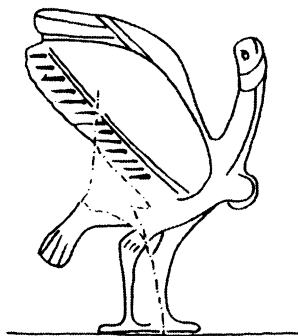


Figure 12: Attic red-figure skyphos, *ca* 470 BC, Side B, Boston MFA 08.31C.
Drawing by F. Lissarrague.

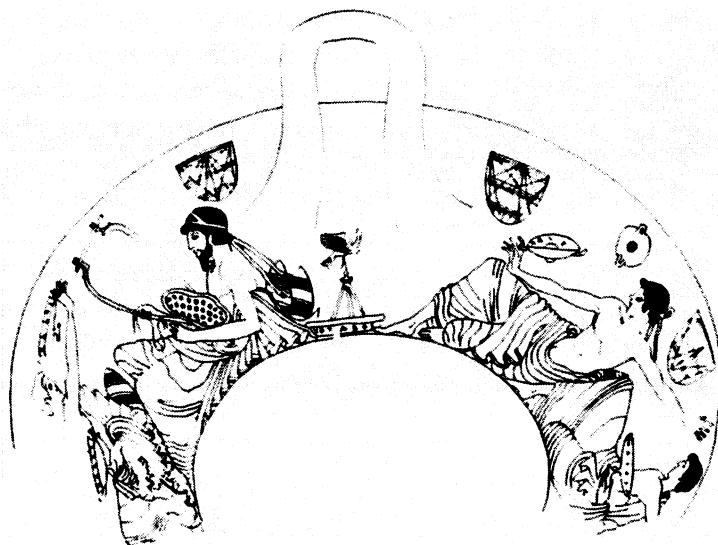


Figure 13: Attic red-figure cup by Apollodoros, *ca* 490 BC, private collection.
Drawing by F. Lissarrague.

drinking parties for real or imaginary erotic prizes. The competitors tossed wine-lees from their drinking cups to knock down a target set atop the stand, here the phallos-bird. The victory symbolism of the crowing phallos-bird extends also to non-erotic contests. A crowing phallos-cock on the base of a monument at the entrance to the shrine of Dionysus at Delos commemorates victory in a musical competition (Figure 14).

How then do we explain the use of a crowing cock as a symbol for both an erotic conquest and a triumph in combat or competition? It is not just that cocks fight for sexual domination, though this fact is well known, and it was common practice to hold hens as if a prize to provoke the cock's ardor in combat (Figure 7). But for the



Figure 14: Choregic victory monument of Karystios, late fourth to early third century BC, Delos.

ancient Greek mind the conflation of the erotic and the competitive is more specifically determined: the cock's victory over his rival *is* both a military and a sexual conquest. Victorious cocks habitually mount the prostrate bodies of their defeated rivals and as they crow—not to put too fine a point upon it—they bugger them.⁵⁴ This little eccentricity of the cock made a very deep impression upon the fiercely competitive Greek mind. The *hybris* of the triumphant cock was proverbial: 'the cock treads upon his victim' was a proverb meaning something like 'rubbing it in'.⁵⁵ The Greek word for 'tread upon' (*epipedan*) conveniently has the same ambiguity as English: used both of violent assault and of cocks mounting hens.

But the cock's behaviour generated more than proverbs. It opened up a whole new field for symbolic discourse, a new stereotype of the cock, a negative paradigm, which we might call 'the Lesser Argument'. In this version of events the cock is diametrically opposed to its former expression of untrammelled virility. The focus of attention shifts from victor to vanquished.

Aristotle notes a peculiar habit of the partridge and quail, but one which is sometimes true, he later says, of the cock. Partridges and quails are the closest equivalents to the domesticated chicken; they resemble it in their lust and mating habits, but because of their savagery, they are unusually vicious. They destroy the eggs of their own hens out of pure lust to prevent the hens from brooding, because brooding distracts them from copulation. This drives the hens into hiding. The males, now called 'widowers', begin to fight among themselves 'and the defeated male follows the victor about, and allows himself to be mounted by the latter alone'. 'Sometimes, however, this behaviour is to be found even among cocks. In sanctuaries, for example, where they are dedicated without females, all the males mount the most recently dedicated cock, as is only reasonable'.⁵⁶ So says Aristotle. One might infer from Aristotle's words that this behaviour was rather exceptional, but to the popular imagination the obsequiousness of the defeated cock was also proverbial. In ancient cockers' jargon the loser was called a 'slave'.⁵⁷ In Aristophanes' *Birds*, when the heroes call at the palace in Birdland, the doorkeeper appears describing himself as a 'slave bird'.

'Were you beaten by some cock?', jibes Pisthetairos. The scholiast points out that it is 'natural in cockfights that those which are beaten follow the victors about', an observation abundantly confirmed by modern agro-science.

So the dominant myth of the cock is a lie: the cock, which was supposed to fight to the death, appears here in total surrender, a slave obsequiously following the victor, and, moreover, you *will* see a cock that is a *kinaidos*, since it willingly offers itself for penetration. Like the myth of Alectryon this is a myth of transformation, but in the opposite direction: male is turned to female, free citizen to slave, hoplite to *kinaidos*.

The Fight

It is the cock's conflation of social and sexual domination which makes its behaviour particularly meaningful. Ancients, particularly the Classical Greeks, frequently represented the social division of power between classes and genders as a form of sexual domination. The distinction between slave and citizen was most clearly expressed in terms of the violability and inviolability of their respective bodies. Seneca, for example, described sexual submission as 'a disgrace for the free, a necessity for the slave, and a duty for the freedman'.⁵⁸

Classical Athenian rhetoric frequently represented the struggle within the citizen class between rich and poor, or oligarch and democrat, in terms of the attempt by the former to convert economic into sexual domination. Hence the sexual and social dimensions of the crime of *hybris*, which can mean both 'moral outrage', and 'sexual assault', and which David Halperin rightly called 'the anti-democratic crime *par excellence*'.⁵⁹ It was as a form of sexual violence, symbolic buggery, that the Athenian democracy imagined the oligarchic program to disenfranchise the lower classes and reduce them to servile status. The habits of the cock served as an archetypal expression of this fear. In mid-fourth-century BC Athens, when Ariston prosecuted Konon for *hybris* after being beaten, stripped naked and trampled in the mud by the defendant's sons, he needed to show, in accordance with the law, that he was not

only beaten, but beaten with an intent to dishonour the status of a free male citizen of Athens. He did so by adducing, as 'a sign of the defendant's *hybris* and proof that the whole affair was orchestrated by him', the fact that Konon stood over his prostrate body and 'crowed in imitation of victorious cocks, and the others thought it alright for him to flap his elbows against his sides in imitation of wings'.⁶⁰ Konon's behaviour was readily perceived as a symbolic thrust at Ariston's masculinity and his freedom, but it is far more than this: the speaker is careful to give maximum plausibility to his argument by associating the violent behaviour of Konon and his sons with aristocratic youth gangs, the self-styled 'Hard-ons' (*Ithyphalloi*) and 'Bigdicks' (*Triballoi*) and making the political teleology of Konon's chicken impersonation explicit by characterising his associates as 'supercilious and Lakonising' oligarchs.

Despite its contradictory nature, the myth of the cock as slave and *kinaidos* could be read as a supplement to the virility myth, a warning that defeat in battle leads to loss of manhood. Both myths might then appear to express a unified injunction to the citizen soldier to resist to the bitter end. But like the cock's distinctive features which may be read either as military or sexual characteristics, the total ambiguity of this complex of myths invites an inverse reading taking the military metaphors merely as an allegorical supplement to the threat of sexual invasion and enslavement.

In most parts of the world cockfighting is a sport practised exclusively by adult males, but in Greece the sport was ideally represented as a pastime for adolescent boys, and particularly young aristocrats. As we have seen, in Greek art the human figures associated with fighting cocks are boys, and mostly adolescent boys. Language also encouraged a close identification between the adolescent and the cock. Cocks were, like their owners, 'aristocrats'; fighting cocks were termed 'noble', those unfit for sport 'ignoble' or 'vulgar'.⁶¹ The harsh sounds made by an adolescent whose voice is breaking are referred to as crowing, *kokkusmos* (*gallulare* in Latin).⁶² And while words for 'cock' and 'penis' are homonymous in the vernacular of a great many languages, the Greek equivalent, *koko*, is only ever used as a 'pet name' for the puerile member.⁶³ The close

almost exclusive identification of fighting cocks with élite adolescents is hard to square with a tale about martial valour, an express concern of all Greek males. Rather, it reflects the particular configuration of male homosexuality in Classical Greece with its emphasis on pederasty and its predominantly aristocratic milieu.

The evidence suggests that culture conspired to make the chief focus of identification less the bird's strengths than its weakness, its uncertain, even volatile, sexual identity. From the fourth century BC onwards young boys depicted in scenes of cockfighting have distinctly hermaphroditic qualities. From ca. 420 BC some achieve still closer identification by sprouting wings and becoming Erotes (Figures 3, 15). The moralising symbolism of the cock seems less directed towards the military than towards impressionable adolescent males. It is the very ambivalence of the cock that makes it an effective tool for simultaneously promoting and mediating anxieties about sexual roles and their sociopolitical analogues, the hypermasculine role of leader of men, and the subfeminine role of the slave. The ambivalence of the symbol is rooted in Greek social ambivalence about homosexuality, an ambivalence, I would claim, which was most felt in the Classical democracies. The symbolic dynamism of the cock derives not from



Figure 15: Attic red-figure krater by Dancing Pan Painter, ca 400 BC, Athens NM 12597.

its association with war, or with love, but from the contiguity of the realms of Ares and Aphrodite: it suggested that homosexuality was like love in uniting two bodies in an erotic embrace, but it was also like war in that from two males of equal status it could produce a winner and a loser, a triumph and an enslavement.

Greek sexuality, whether hetero- or homo-, was asymmetrical. It involved relations not between partners of equal status but between social superior and social inferior. The ideal marriage, as described by Xenophon, for example, united a man of thirty-five with a girl of fourteen.⁶⁴ But women were agreed to be inferior by nature. This made homosexual relations still more asymmetrical. Textual and iconographic evidence indicates a belief that women enjoyed sexual relations with men, but that normal, healthy passive male partners felt none.⁶⁵ Agression and pleasure in the act of love were entirely on the side of the dominant older male; the passive younger male, on the contrary, knew no natural urge to submit and gained no pleasure by it. For this reason the stakes of victory and defeat are represented as praeternaturally great. Women were by nature submissive to men, so the cultural logic ran, but the male who conquers a male has more of what it takes and gains thereby a hypermasculine aura. For the passive object of erotic attention, however, submission to penetration was projected as something decisive and final, like death or enslavement. Nothing less than one's nature was at stake: the cost of submission was prefigured as a descent in social and sexual status to the level of the slave and the subfeminine. When voicing his opinion on the matter, Plutarch employs the language of the cockfight:

Intercourse of male with male [he writes] is rather a loss of control and a treading upon one's victim. On reflection one would say 'this is *hybris* and not Love'. For this reason we place those who enjoy being penetrated into the lowest category of the base and do not attribute the smallest portion of faith, shame or friendship to them.⁶⁶

In this sense too, love is like war, which, according to Aristotle, Providence designed to separate natural masters from natural slaves.⁶⁷

Much that is projected on the behaviour of the cock can be explained as a representation of 'losing one's nature'. In the first

instance, male castration fear (for 'nature', *physis*, in Greek slang, also means 'genitals'): the Greeks were keenly conscious of the fact that the symbolic phalloi were the prime targets of rival cocks. The crest, in particular, when torn or bitten off, is said to bleed profusely, blinding and weakening the animal and usually bringing the contest to an early conclusion. Surgical removal of the crest and wattles before placing the cock in the ring is a universal modern practice among cockers. In antiquity, however, the fight began with whole males: perhaps they sacrificed sport to preserve the cockfight's cultural meaning. '[The cocks] strike at each other,' says Polybius, 'until one grabs hold of a vital part and defeats the other'.⁶⁸ For this reason, before the *agon* in Aristophanes' *Knights*, Demos advises the Sausage-Seller to chew off his rival's crests and bite off his wattles.⁶⁹ A Boeotian kantharos commemorates the victory of a cock belonging to a boy named Kriton: it depicts the decisive moment when Kriton's cock took its rival's crest firmly in his beak; the inscription above the cock reads *nika*, 'he wins' (Figure 16). The verb *koptein*, 'to chop', is ancient cocker's jargon for one cock defeating another; it is also Greek slang for 'bugger'.⁷⁰ The mythic logic which projects defeat as symbolic

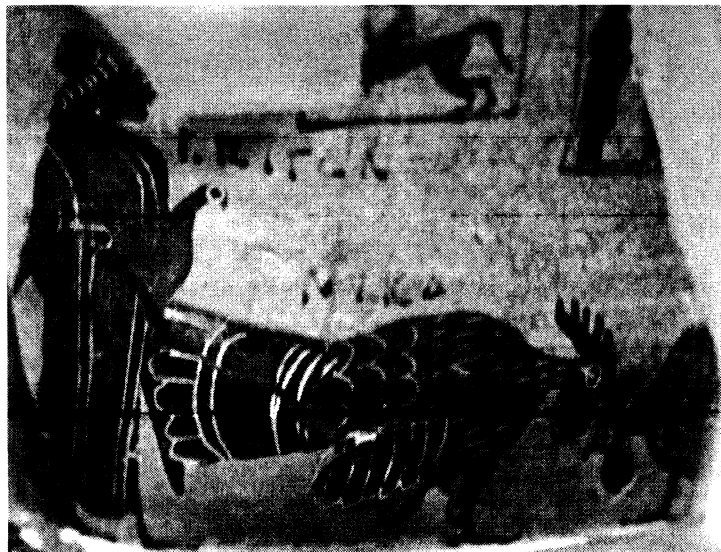


Figure 16: Boeotian kantharos, ca 500 BC, Würzburg H 4886.

castration was no doubt confirmed by the loser's subsequent behaviour: its submission, its crestfallen state, and the fact that the loser was said never to crow again.⁷¹

The zoological literature contains frequent reference to chickens not merely losing their sexual identity, but crossing biological boundaries and adopting the role of the opposite sex. Some cocks are effeminate from birth, 'so much so', notes Aristotle, 'that they endure being mounted by others'.⁷² Other cocks willingly succumb through acculturation. Should the hen die, the cock will take over the task of brooding over the nest and raising the chicks. This is tantamount to castration since the housework makes the cock cease to crow and mount the hens.⁷³ Aelian claims that the cock does not sing while brooding over the nest because 'he appears to realise that he is doing women's not men's work'.⁷⁴ By contrast many hens are born naturally butch, even have small spurs on their legs. Unlike their ambivalent male counterparts, notes Columella, 'these hens rebel against coitus, scorn to admit the male' and remain infertile or destroy their own eggs by breaking them with their spurs.⁷⁵ To make the threat complete we are told that such hens frequently fight with males and defeat them. Aristotle reports that 'whenever hens defeat males in battle, they crow and attempt to mount them like males. Their crests and tailfeathers grow erect, so that you could not easily tell that they are female'. Aelian adds: 'when the female defeats a male in battle, she swells up with joy and grows wattles, not as long as those of a cock, but grows them nevertheless, and she becomes pompous and takes longer steps'.⁷⁶

Winners and Losers

The homology between the defeated cock, the slave, the castrato and the *kinaidos* is something specific to Greek culture. By tracing the deep structure of the cockfight we begin to see how the Greeks conceived of social relations as a form of zero-sum *agon*. In Jack Winkler's words: 'the cultural understanding of competition was not simply that winners gained rewards and honour, but that losers were stigmatised with shame and penalties in proportionate

amounts, or to put it another way, winners won at the direct expense of losers'.⁷⁷ In Greece sex was a form of status competition due to the common conception of sexual penetration as the ultimate expression of social dominance. Thus the construction of sexual identity reveals a particularly paranoid configuration. In Winkler's words again:

This odd belief in the reversibility of the male person, always in peril of slipping into the servile or the feminine, has been noted by Stephen Greenblatt, who observes that for the ancient world the two sexes are not simply opposite but stand at poles of a continuum which can be traversed. Thus 'woman' is not only the opposite of man; she is also a potentially threatening 'internal émigré' of masculine identity. The contrast between the hoplite and *kinaidos* is a contrast between manly male and womanly male, and therefore rests on a more fundamental polarity between men and women. The cultural polarity between the genders is made internal to one gender, creating a set of infra-masculine polarities between the hoplite and the *kinaidos*.⁷⁸

Greek chicken thus has its own distinctive recipe, totally steeped in cultural meaning. Yet the construct of the Greek chicken is not for that reason divorced from 'reality' whether zoological or social. There is something of the real cock here, but it is selected and distorted for what it has to say about social relations: particularly the unequal distribution of power between free and slave, male and female, old and young. Moreover, cockfighting contains ethical contents particularly directed at the Greek youth. The contradiction in the modes of perceiving and representing the cock, the two Arguments, is in part determined by the Greek youth's own ambivalent and contradictory status: he stands in a state of transition from a subordinate to a superordinate status, passing specifically from the quality of one who is both socially slavish as a *pais* (both 'boy' and 'slave' in Greek) and sexually effeminised as the object of male desire, to the quality of one who is a full member of the dominant caste, a free citizen and soldier.

Nonetheless, the contradiction represents even narrower divisions of power: cockfighting, like pederasty, had pragmatic and symbolic connections with the leisure class. Practical considerations excluded the lower class from full active participation, since

cockfighting, like pederasty, was an expensive and time-consuming enterprise. Moreover, raising fighting cocks was a matter of breeding and genetically engineering birds with a superior 'nature' to be tested and guaranteed in competitive action. Cocks served, together with dogs and horses, as a primary mechanism for inscribing aristocratic privilege upon the order of nature. Only 'noble' cocks fought and won. For self-styled elites the law of the cockfight imbued the chickenyard with utopic glours. They admired its rigid hierarchy, the brilliant pomp of its suzerain and the obsequiousness of his subjects. Here was a pellucid and conspicuous natural order in which inferiors knew (or quickly learned) their place and never questioned the right of the good and beautiful to rise to theirs. The symbolic content of the aristocratic and oligarchic discourse on cocks was well enough known that Ariston needed but mention Konon's indiscrete little chicken-mime to excite some of his democratic jury's deepest anxieties. In their eyes cockfights dramatised the conversion of free competition between equals into vivid demonstrations of domination and enslavement.

But chickens furnished rich food for democrats as well. Already in the sophistic discourse of the early fifth century BC, the cock emblemized the moral unscrupulousness of individualistic ambition. 'Of all beasts this belligerent bird will not spare its own kin out of piety'. In Pindar it is a symbol of nasty 'in-fighting', and of civil war in Aeschylus.⁷⁹ The cock's internecine aggression was not to be emulated in civilised society – still less within the family, a social sphere where even the most power-hungry aristocrat must feel the bond of piety: Plutarch warns that siblings who indulge in cockfighting in childhood will grow up to wrangle as adults; and indeed Herodian blames childhood disputes over cockfighting for the murderous relationship of the imperial brothers Caracalla and Geta.⁸⁰ Diogenes the Cynic (in a style of argument that goes back to the sophist Antiphon) is portrayed as ridiculing the 'drama' Oedipus makes of his strained family relations by pointing to the blithe indifference with which cocks have sex with their mothers and beat (even bugger) their fathers.⁸¹ It is in travesty of this discourse that Aristophanes has Pheidippides, after he has learned sophistry from the Lesser Argument, rationalise the beating he gives his father with

the words 'consider how cocks, and other beasts of this sort, attack their fathers – and yet is there any difference between them and us?' 'To strangle and bite one's father'. declares the 'father-beater' in *Birds*, 'is considered noble among the birds'.⁸² It was perhaps Democritus (the first 'democratic' theorist among the Greeks) who ultimately singled out the cock, along with bulls and boars, as a paradigm of the kind of savage *Faustrecht* whose extirpation was prerequisite to humanity's passage from the primeval slime to civilisation.⁸³

A different tack stressed not the savage amorality of the cock, but its capacity to demonstrate nature's mutability and volatility, despite the pretensions of the elites (and with the reassuring corollary that no position was quite as slippery and uninsurable as the top of any dunghill). Aristophanes portrays Callias, a great breeder of birds, and the richest aristocrat in Athens, as a 'noble cock' felled and plucked by sycophants 'and even the females pluck out his feathers'.⁸⁴ Indeed the lesson that even females could dominate a cock offered rich comic possibilities: in Anaxandrides' *Tereus*, the noble, brutal (and incidentally incestuous) Thracian king is told that he will be called a cock 'because you, a male, will be cut up/buggered by females'.⁸⁵ The lessons that comedy applied to gender relations, popular anecdotes applied to class. Iphicrates, the only Classical Athenian ever to boast that he rose from humble origins to high office, is a fitting subject for an anecdote about fighting cocks who teach precisely how little breeding really matters. Iphicrates was, so the story goes, crippled by self-doubt until Socrates (another of the glorious low) showed him how the barber's cocks flapped defiantly at Callias' purebreds.⁸⁶

I have tried to show that social symbols, however humble and remote from the sources of power, nevertheless reflect infrastructural relations of power, in their composition and in their inner dynamics. Cultural symbols are interesting because they cannot be grasped logically; their meaning-structure defies the rule of non-contradiction. But symbols are also contradictory *because* they are interesting, because they serve as tools for a variety of political and social agendas and become loci of struggle between competing social groups. In this sense it is not cocks that fight in the ring, but men, and not just men, but

the entire order of Greek society: male and female, old and young, rich and poor, free and slave. They use the cockfight to express their relations to one another and their feelings about those relations. If Greece made the cock the supreme symbol of the *agon*, it was in part because the cock gave eloquent expression to some of its most basic social struggles.

Notes

- 1 D. Page, *Homeric Odyssey*, Oxford, 1955, p.25.
- 2 H. S. Versnel, *Inconsistencies in Greek and Roman Religion*, vol. 2, *Transition and Reversal in Myth and Ritual*, Leiden, 1993, p.111.
- 3 E. Csapo, *Theories of Mythology*, Oxford, 2005, pp.293–315, esp. p.298.
- 4 Scholiast to Aristophanes *Clouds* 889.
- 5 Relevant passages conveniently collected by O. Murray, ed., in J. Burckhardt, *The Greeks and Greek Civilization*, trans. S. Stern, New York, 1998.
- 6 Artemidorus, 1.54.
- 7 Lucian, *Cock* 3. For the myth, see also: scholiast to Aristophanes, *Birds* 835; Eustathius, *Odyssey* 1.300; Ausonius, 26.2.27; Libanius, *Progymnasmata* 2.26.
- 8 Lucian, *Cock* 3, Eustathius, *Odyssey* 1.142.15; cf. Aristophanes, *Birds* 290.
- 9 Nicander *Alexipharmaca* 294; cf. Lucian *Cock* 3; Pliny *Natural History* 10.47; Columella 8.2.11; Eustathius *Odyssey* 1.300; Libanius *Progymnasmata* 2.26.
- 10 Scholiast to Aristophanes, *Birds* 759; Suda, s.v. *plektron*.
- 11 P. Kretschmer, *Glotta* 27 (1939): 36; P. Bruneau, 'Le motif des coqs affrontés dans l'imagerie antique', *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 89 (1965): 90–121; H. Hoffmann, 'Hahnenkampf in Athen', *Revue archéologique* 1974: 195–220.
- 12 Aeschylus, *Eumenides* 861.
- 13 Pausanias 6.26.3.
- 14 J. D. Beazley, *The Development of Attic Black-Figure*, 2nd edn, Berkeley, 1986, pp.81,84.
- 15 Aristophanes, *Birds* 834–35.
- 16 Ion, 19 *TrGF* 53; Polybius, 1.58.8; Philo, *Quod omnis probus liber sit* 133; Pliny, *Natural History* 10.47; Musonius, *Diatriba* 7; Plutarch, *Lycurgus* 20.6, *Moralia* 191e, 224b–c; Epictetus, 2.2.13; Sextus Empiricus, *Ad mathematicos* 11.99, 11.101, 11.103.
- 17 Aelian, *Varia historia* 2.28; Eustathius, *Iliad* 2.675.5; Philo, *Quod omnis probus liber sit* 132–33.

- 18 Diogenes Laertius, 2.30.
- 19 Plutarch, *Moralia* 1049a.
- 20 Lucian, *Anacharsis* 37.
- 21 Aelian, *Variae historiae* 2.28; Eustathius, *Iliad* 2.675.5; Philo, *Quod omnis probus liber sit* 132–33; Pliny, *Natural History* 10.50.
- 22 *Palatine Anthology* 7.428.16–17.
- 23 Aristotle, *History of Animals* 488b4.
- 24 Oppian in Dionysius, *On Birds* 1.26; cf. *Scriptores physiognomonici* 2.142–43; Martial, 13.63.
- 25 Aristotle, *History of Animals* 488b4, 544a31 ff., 558b passim, 564b12, 588b22, 637b30 ff., *Generation of Animals* 750b27 ff., 769b30 ff., 770a13, *De mirabilibus auscultationibus* 842b31–32. Cf. Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 1.4.12; Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus* 2.10.96.2; Plutarch, *Moralia* 654f; Pliny, *Natural History* 10.146.
- 26 Athenaeus, 18e.
- 27 Aristotle, *Generation of Animals* 749b, *Problems* 880a-b, *Physiognomonica* 812b.
- 28 Aristotle, *History of Animals* 577b27; H. A. Shapiro, 'Notes on Greek Dwarfs', *American Journal of Archaeology* 88 (1984): 391–92; T. McNiven, 'The Unheroic Penis: Otherness Exposed', *Source* 15.1 (1995): 10–16.
- 29 Varro, *De re rustica* 3.9.5; Columella, 8.2.10; *Geoponica* 14.16.
- 30 J. Boardman, 'The Phallos-Bird in Archaic and Classical Greek Art', *Revue archéologique* (1992): 228–42.
- 31 Aelian, *Nature of Animals* 11.26.
- 32 Aristotle, *History of Animals* 504b11f. Cf. Pliny, *Natural History* 11.122.
- 33 Columella, 8.2.9. Cf. Pliny, *Natural History* 10.156; Juvenal, 4.70.
- 34 Aristophanes, *Birds* 487.
- 35 Aristotle, *History of Animals* 631b28, *On Colours* 799b14; Columella, 8.2.9; Varro, *De re rustica* 3.9.5; *Geoponica* 14.16.
- 36 Pliny, *Natural History* 10.50; Varro, *De re rustica* 3.9.1; Columella, 8.2.3.
- 37 Lucian, *Cock* 28; Columella, 8.2.10; cf. Varro, *De re rustica* 3.9.5.
- 38 Aristophanes, *Acharnians* 1103, 1105, *Peace* 1214, *Birds* 279, 1366–67; Heraclides Comicus, PCG F1; Plutarch, *Artaxerxes* 10; Polyaeus, 7.3.
- 39 Aristotle, *History of Animals* 631b10–11; Theocritus, 22.72; Augustine, *De ordine* 1.8.25.
- 40 Aristotle, *History of Animals* 631b11 (cf. *Physiognomonica* 806b11–14); Pliny, *Natural History* 10.47; Columella, 8.2.9; Augustine, *De ordine* 1.8.25.
- 41 Aelian, fr. 19.
- 42 Aristotle, *History of Animals* 536a20–33; Pliny, *Natural History* 11.168; Terence, *Phormio* 708; Alexander of Aphrodisias, *Problems* 4.168. Cf. Aristotle, *Generation of Animals* 788a; Theophrastus in Aelian, *Nature of*

- Animals* 3.38; Varro, *De re rustica* 3.9.5.
- 43 Female partridges (closest to chickens: Aristotle, *Generation of Animals* 738b27 ff., 746a29–b2) conceive at the sound of male's voice: Aristotle, *History of Animals* 541a 27 ff., *Generation of Animals* 751a15; Pliny, *Natural History* 10.102; Varro, *De re rustica* 3.11.4. Cock's song ceases with castration: Aristotle, *History of Animals* 631b28; Pliny, *Natural History* 10.50; Alciphron, *Epistles* 3.48 with E. K. Borthwick, 'Two Emendations in Alciphron', *Classical Review* 15 (1965): 261–62; Isidore, *Origines* 12.7.50.
- 44 Aristophanes, *Frogs* 1380, 1384; Demades, fr. 4; cf. Lucian, *Ocypus* 114.
- 45 Lucretius, 4.7.10; Pliny, *Natural History* 8.52; Aelian, *Nature of Animals* 3.31, 5.50, 6.22, 8.28, 14.9; Sextus Empiricus, *Pyrrhonian Sketches* 1.58.4, 3.1.93; Plutarch, *Moralia* 537a11, 537c2, 981e; *Corpus Fabularum Aesopiarum* 292; Solinus, 27.20; Alexander of Aphrodisias, *de Mixtione* 1.1; *et al.*
- 46 Pliny, *Natural History* 30.123, 30.141–42; Aetius, 11.35; *Kyranides* 3.3.3, 3.3.17–18. Cf. Athenaeus, 18e.
- 47 Pliny, *Natural History* 29.78.
- 48 Petronius, *Satyricon* 38.
- 49 G. Koch-Harnack, *Knabenliebe und Tiergeschenke*, Berlin, 1983, pp.63, 97–105.
- 50 M. Visser, *Much Depends on Dinner*, New York, 1986, p.125.
- 51 Lucian, *Cock* 27. Cf. Plato, *Laws* 836c; Plutarch, *Moralia* 990d.
- 52 Cratinus, *PCG* 279 (with Hesychius s.v. *holophonos*); Aristophanes, *Wealth* 575; Demosthenes, 54.79; Theocritus, 18.57; Heraclides Comicus, *PCG* 1; Lucilius, fr. 328–29; Aelian, *On Animals* 4.29; Babrius 5.6; scholiast to Aristophanes, *Knights* 1344; scholiast to Aristophanes, *Birds* 1344; Augustine, *De ordine* 1.8.25; Phile, *De animalium proprietate* 340–41.
- 53 Cicero, *On Divination* 1.34.74, 2.26.56; Pliny, *Natural History* 10.49.
- 54 Aristotle, *History of Animals* 536a27, 631b9–10; Pliny, *Natural History* 10.47; *Corpus Fabularum Aesopiarum* 266.
- 55 Apostolius, *Paroemiographi Graeci* 2.13.
- 56 Aristotle, *History of Animals* 614a. Cf. Philo, *On Animals* 66; Pliny, *Natural History* 10.100–01; Aelian, *History of Animals* 3.16, 4.16; *Geoponica*, 14.20; Solinus, 7.30; Plutarch, *Moralia* 990e; Antigonus Carystius, *Mirabilia* 39; Origen, *Homilies in Jeremiah* 17.1.
- 57 Aristophanes, *Birds* 70; Phrynichus, 3 *TrGF*17; Adespota, 2 *TrGF* 408a; Theocritus, 22.72; Pliny, *Natural History* 10.47.
- 58 Seneca, *Controversiae* 4 *praef.*10; cf. Horace, *Satires* 1.2.116–19.
- 59 D. M. Halperin, *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality*, London, 1990, p.96.
- 60 Demosthenes, 54.7–9.
- 61 Plato, *Theaetetus* 164c; Aristotle, *History of Animals* 558b15, *Generation of Animals* 749b31; Heraclides Comicus, *PCG* 1; Menander, *Theoporumene*

- fr. 1.12–13; Athenaeus, 655c; Epictetus, 2.2.13; Lucian, *Anacharsis* 37; Aelian, frs. 69, 98; Suda, s.v. *Alectryona athleten Tanagraion* and *Tanagraioi alektoriskoi*.
- 62 Quintilian, 11.3.51; Novius 21 in Nonius Marcellus, *De compendiosa doctrina* 116 M.
- 63 *Palatine Anthology* 12.7 (Straton). Cf. L. Robert, *Noms indigènes dans l'Asie-mineure gréco-romaine*, Paris, 1963, pp.312–20.
- 64 Xenophon, *Oeconomicus* 7.5.
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