



ENBOM WORKSHOP, 5-6 NOVEMBER 2009

- RED-FIGURE ICONOGRAPHY IN ITS ANCIENT SETTING -

ABSTRACTS

SHIFTING CONTEXTS – SHIFTING MEANINGS

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This paper is intended to provide a general introduction to some of the questions and problems that provide the focus of this Workshop. It will introduce some of the contexts that affect Greek pottery, from creation in a city's potters' quarter, through the mechanisms of trade to its final use and ultimate removal from its contemporary cultural setting. It will also examine the factors at play in such processes, including function, quality, imagery and commercial links, as well as cultural connections, misconnections and adoptions.

Although the focus of the Workshop is red-figured pottery, this introductory paper will look rather wider, touching on 6th century fabrics as well as 5th and 4th century ones and various non-Attic centres, including those in East Greece and the rest of Greek mainland, with glances, of course, further east and west, at Italy, Spain and Black Sea, for it is important to keep in mind the totality of ancient Greek pottery production, as different production centres may offer relevant insights.

**GIFTS TO THE IMMORTAL DEAD
ICONOGRAPHY AND USES OF ATTIC WHITE-GROUND CUPS
IN 5TH-CENTURY GRAVES**

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This paper discusses the use of white-ground cups in grave contexts. While the lekythos becomes the common funerary shape in 5th-century Athens, there are also a few known examples of white-ground cups that serve as special offerings for the grave, the most famous of which being those from the "Sotades Tomb". The lecture examines these vessels of exceptional quality, that form a unified group produced by leading Late Archaic and Early Classical workshops, for the light they might shed on distinctive burial customs. In a previous article, I have noted the close association between the exceptional figured decoration of the cups from the Sotades Tomb and libation/oracular practices. Archaeological evidence shows that the Sotades Tomb is not an isolated case. A close look to the known white-ground cups from grave contexts points to specific iconographical subjects that might be associated with distinctive afterlife beliefs. This link further raises the question of vases commissioned for a funerary purpose.

AMAZONS IN ATTIC RED-FIGURE – MEANINGS AND CONTEXTS

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The origins of the Amazon myth are probably to be found in ancient Scythia, present day Ukraine. Does the use of the Amazon motif in Attic red-figure reflect this origin and is there anything in the distribution pattern that suggest an awareness of this connection?

The Amazons turn up in Greek art in the 7th century BC, but they are quite rare before their appearance in Attic black-figure vase-painting. In black-figure the Amazons are nearly always represented as taking part in the various amazonomachies and dressed as Greek hoplites.

In red-figure on the other hand the Amazons tend to be represented as Barbarians or in a combination of Greek and Barbarian dress. They occur both on their own and in more

varied scenes. More than 300 red-figure vases has images of Amazons.

The shapes of the vases with Amazons and the distribution pattern has been analysed to see if this reflects the origin of the Amazon myth – or perhaps has more to do with the perception of the Amazons as one among various Barbarian or even Exotic peoples represented in Attic red-figure.

It seems that the Amazons on Attic red-figure vases are to be understood in an Athenian context no matter where they are found.

THE ATHENIZATION OF THE LATE CLASSICAL IMAGERY

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One may wonder, why the Athenian picture of debating men in cloaks became so important in Late Classical imagery. It is regularly found on backsides of kraters and pelikai and on skyphoi and jugs as well.

Compared to the main picture the execution is frequently sketchy and sluttish. Often it was done by a minor artist and through the centuries it seems that the drawing becomes even worse. In addition they seem to be all the same, meaningless stereotypes without any narrative content and therefore in aspects of quality and matter not worth looking at.

But looking at grave-contexts from the 4th century BC it is clear, that these images are used as a means of concentrating the narrative on one main picture (usually that on side A of a krater) and as a quality feature that ensures the Attic origin.

At the end of the 5th century BC the local red figure productions of Apulia, Lucania, Boeotia, and later that of the Chalcidike and the Bosporan Kingdom react in dependence, partially in even clear imitation to the imported Attic red figure vases. On this occasion, the backs also show the usual decoration type of youths in cloak. Now the local Red-figure took and accepted the Attic way of depicting citizens and therefore the originally Athenian expression of civic identity becomes so general that a specific explanation of the back- side pictures, particularly in places beyond Athens, is difficult. But in comparison to Alto-Adriatic, Campanian and Paestan red figure pottery, where the pictures were actualized, it becomes clear, that it was mostly accepted as a good way of depicting Greeks. And that model conquered the

world like the Attic dramatic stageplay, the tragedy, did or the typical figure style of the Attic relief art. In this sense Athens stayed the "School of Hellas", like Pericles said.

BOEOTIAN RED FIGURED VASES: SPECIAL PIECES FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS? SOME PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS.

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Modern interest in the Boeotian fabric is a recent trend, as scholars tended to focus on more famous centers of production of figured wares and in fact we know more about Attic pottery and its influence overseas, than about its role in neighbouring areas, such as Boeotia. The reasons for this are the small number of figured vases produced by Boeotian workshops, the lack of archaeological contexts, publications and clay analysis, as well as an Athenocentric approach that prevails in research.

The contexts and settings of Boeotian red-figured vases can be examined at various levels. One could focus on their dependence on Attic models and affiliations with the local black-figure production; their role in various social contexts; and the impetus of the few known red-figure painters in selecting, adapting and inventing through pastiche. In what follows I tackle issues of Boeotian red-figure iconography by contextualizing the discussion in the frame of the relationships between Attic and Boeotian red-figure; I also discuss the function of red-figured vases in their cultural setting as this can be deduced on the evidence of shrines and graves. The relative scarcity of graves containing Attic and Boeotian RF, as well as the scarcity of RF vases within grave assemblages may suggest that RF vases in this region must have had some special prestige or value and may have been connected with special social occasions and "special" dead.

THE ICONOGRAPHY OF ELEAN RED-FIGURE POTTERY

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Studying the whole red-figured material from Olympia (attic, elean, north-western greek, corinthian, south italian) for publication I want to present a survey of the local Elean ware. 90% of the material is unpublished and some sherds from the excavations of Ancient Elis can be included. Technique and style are imitated from attic and south italian prototypes but the workshops seem to develop their own iconography suited to the

needs of the sanctuary. Shapes are limited mainly to bell-kraters, kalyx-kraters and a few lekythoi. Most of the images refer to the dionysiac sphere suited to the proposed practical use of the pots during ritual and non-ritual meals in the sanctuary. Some peculiar mythological images deserve a closer look.

VASE-PAINTING AND NARRATIVE LOGIC: THE DEATH OF TROILOS BETWEEN GREECE AND ETRURIA

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Prominent in the interpretation of Etruscan narrative vase-paintings as misunderstandings or “banalizzazioni” of Greek myths is the story of the ambush and murder of Troilos by Achilles. For example, a series of Etruscan representations in which the site of the ambush, the fountain-house, is uniquely adorned by a statue was interpreted by Konrad Schauenburg as the product of a misunderstanding of Athenian vase-painting of the murder of Troilos in which the boy stands atop an altar. Maurizio Harari and others, however, have persuasively argued that the statue on the fountain house represents Apollo Lykeios. The identification is significant because the murder of Troilos, in Greek vase-painting as well as literature, occurs on the altar of Apollo; it suggests that the Etruscan artists understood the site of the ambush to be the place where the boy was killed as well. As Luca Cerchiali has emphasized, Etruscan representations of the story of Troilos often place the emphasis on the sacrificial quality of Achilles’ murder of the boy. The human-sacrificial emphasis has generally been interpreted as Etruscan addition to the iconography. In this paper, I argue that the sacrifice of Troilos on the altar of Apollo was an integral part of the underlying story circulating in Greece as well as Etruria. Etruscan vase-paintings, in which Achilles waits for Troilos at an altar of Apollo Lykeios or carries the boy purposefully toward the altar in order to kill him there, far from being aberrations or misunderstandings of the story, capture the fundamental motive behind the hero’s attack on the boy. This is confirmed by an important Athenian red-figure cup painted by Onesimos and found at Vulci, which depicts Achilles murdering Troilos very deliberately on the altar of Apollo.

Methodologically, the various interpretive approaches to the reception of the story of Troilos in Etruria reflect different models according to which the Etruscans came to understand Greek myths. The interpretation pioneered Erika Simon and Roland Hampe, in which the Etruscans of the Archaic period were presumed to have detailed knowledge of epic texts,

motivated the alternative approach of Schauenburg and Giovannangelo Camporeale, in which the Etruscans had access only to imported Greek vases and frequently misunderstood the narrative figural decoration on them. In this paper, I argue that the determining factor in both Greek and Etruscan iconography of the story of Troilos was not a particular textual or iconographical tradition, but rather an understanding of how the murder of Troilos on the altar of Apollo affected the larger story of the Trojan War. Such an understanding of the narrative logic of the story could only be partially acquired through careful examination of Athenian vases such as Onesimos' cup, or careful listening to a poetic account of Troilos' story. It was fully achieved through a dynamic process of integrating particular images and accounts into a larger narrative framework that is the Trojan War. The variation exhibited within Greek as well as Etruscan iconography of the story of Troilos is what one might expect from an active, engaged, interrogative process of storytelling.

ATHENIAN VASES IN ITALY – SHAPES, IMAGES AND USE

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Visitors of museums worldwide are presented with a range of exquisite Athenian vases which suggests the spread of the Greek symposium culture to many parts of the ancient world. However, a survey of Athenian vases excavated in Southern Italy suggests that symposium “sets” were restricted to the regions of Naples and Ruvo, while Greeks and natives further south and in Sicily purchased mainly funerary shapes, namely lekythoi. There is only a small range of “symptotic” shapes, which are often decorated with images related to death, and vases with pictures of athletes. These are occasionally combined with bronze strigils, and it is therefore possible, that Greek athletics had a stronger influence on the inhabitants of southern Magna Graecia than the symptotic culture of the mainland.

PATTERNS OF USE IN PROTO-LUCANIAN RED-FIGURE – A CASE STUDY OF THE FINDS FROM METAPONTO AND ITS HINTERLAND

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The establishment of a red-figure production in South Italy significantly changed the conditions for the interrelationship between producers and users of the pottery within this region. While Attic red-figure was produced for long distance trade or traded as second-hand vessels – the local South Italian potters and painters were in a much more direct contact with their costumers and the setting in which the pottery was used. How did the establishment of a local production change the patterns of use within the colonies? And how was the attic iconography redefined and adapted into the inter-cultural sphere of Greeks and Italics? These are the main questions touched upon in this paper which presents preliminary analysis and observations of red-figure tomb contexts from Metaponto and its hinterland.

While *lekythoi* were the only Attic red-figure shape used in the tombs - proto-Lucanian red-figure shapes such as the *pelikai*, *hydriai*, *lebes gamikoi* and *skyphoi* are added to the equipment of the tomb assemblages from the initial phase of production. The red-figure pottery seems mainly – though not exclusively – to have been used as grave gifts for tombs of women and children. Within the Italic communities, on the contrary, red-figure pottery has mainly been found in men's tombs and the shapes found are almost exclusively of the *krater* type. These features support the assumption that the early Lucanian painters were from the very beginning aiming their production at two different markets, to a certain degree also supported by the iconographic themes chosen for specific vessel shapes.

HERAKLES AND HIS ATTIC PILLARS : ICONOGRAPHICAL STUDY, RELIGIOUS CONTEXT AND ITALIOTE SIMILARITIES

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Sur plusieurs vases attiques à figures rouges de la fin du Ve siècle et de la première moitié du IVe siècle, Héraclès est représenté assis sous une structure architecturale particulière, constituée d'un socle, de quatre colonnes et d'une toiture plate en matériaux légers. Nous nous interrogerons sur l'interprétation de cet « Héracléion aux quatre colonnes » en nous référant à d'autres représentations contemporaines, à savoir les reliefs votifs. Ceux-ci

permettent de mieux comprendre le contexte général d'une telle construction et de la relier à certains aspects dominants du culte héracléen en Attique, connu notamment par les inscriptions. Enfin, il est intéressant de vérifier l'hypothèse proposée en comparant ce petit *corpus* iconographique avec quelques exemples analogues attestés sur la céramique italote, mais pour d'autres divinités.

THE IMPACT OF THEATER ON APULIAN RED-FIGURE IMAGERY AT RUVO DI PUGLIA

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Unlike Attic vases, Apulian red-figure was not an export commodity, and most of the 10,000+ known vases have been found within 100 kilometers of where they were made. Italic people, rather than Greeks, provided the principal markets for the larger Apulian red-figure vases, and the painters clearly knew well the interests and tastes of their clients. Two vases, both from tombs at Ruvo di Puglia, a rich Italic site north of Bari, demonstrate the impact theater (comedy and tragedy) could have on imagery produced for that market. The complexity of the imagery suggests a high degree of sophistication in the Italic audience.

FROM SEA TO SHINING SEA: THE MOURNING NIOBE MOTIF ACROSS INDIGENOUS SOUTHERN ITALY

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The Mourning Niobe motif, one of the most popular amongst the various indigenous cultures of Southern Italy, has been recognized in nine Apulian vases: five are without context while the other four were found at Canosa (2), Ruvo and Arpi, all dated across the middle and second half of the 4th c. B.C. Another example, of uncertain manufacture, was found in Tomb 24 at Roccagloriosa in western Lucania. Thanks to the extensive necropolis and settlement excavations at the Roccagloriosa site, as well as the complete tomb context, it has been possible to identify the immediate familial status, societal rank and probable community role of the deceased woman, identifying her as a kind

of Lucanian *regina sacrorum*, with a religious function in the community.

Despite a wide geographical and chronological diffusion, all the known representations of the Niobe myth share certain elements: Niobe, queen of Thebes, is shown as she turns to stone, surrounded by other members of the Royal House of Thebes. Given the disparate proveniences and the lengthy chronological popularity of the scene, Marina Mazzei postulated that the use of the myth should speak to common shared values or religious beliefs of the indigenous settlements where the motif was used. In fact, parallels with the other Roccagloriosa Tomb 24 grave goods, in particular those associated with religious activity, are found in several Daunian burials. The use of the myth may also indicate a particular time period or historical situation that gave rise to these common values or religious beliefs and the similarity in the representations across Southern Italy also indicates a common source of inspiration.

This presentation will explore the use of the Mourning Niobe motif on Apulian style vases as a conscious expression of shared values and religious beliefs, a cultural tag of the Italic aristocracies in both Daunia and some Tyrrhenian communities in the complex cultural world of Magna Graecia in the second half of the IV sec. B.C.

LATE APULIAN RED-FIGURE IN CONTEXT: A CASE STUDY

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The paper will address the problem of context and cultural setting of a group of 'Apulian' red-figure vases (a loutrophoros, a volute krater and a very large oinochoe) from a monumental chamber tomb in the Roccagloriosa necropolis pertaining to the second half of the fourth century B.C. A.D. Trendall, on the basis of a preliminary inspection of a number of fragments in the course of excavation (in the 1980's) did not hesitate to attribute the vases to the Darius-Underworld Group (*RVAp* II, 531-532). The recent restoration of the tomb group has, on the one hand, raised some questions on their place of production and, on the other, allowed an in-depth analysis of the complex mythological episodes depicted on the vases within the framework of a specific cultural and social setting, provided by the extensively explored site of Lucanian Roccagloriosa. A closely related problem which will be brought up in the discussion is the possible role of the fast growing 'native' market for late Apulian red-figure vases in the selection and adaptation of such complex iconographies.

THE XENOPHANTOS CHOUS FROM KERTCH WITH CYPRIOT THEMES

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Already found in the 19th century, this chous, today kept at the Hermitage, is not as known as it should be. It will be shown that not only can it be attributed to a specific workshop in Athens, but that one of its figures has a new reading which helps to understand the two loosely connected groups of figure-reliefs that in the place of painted figures are put on the belly of the vase.
