

THE SIEGE SCENE ON THE GOLD AMPHORA OF THE PANAGJURISCHE TREASURE

THE remarkable Treasure,¹ found on December 8, 1949, near the railway station of Panagjurishte, about 40 km north-west of Plovdiv (Bulgaria) on the fringe of a site where traces of earlier settlements had been observed, has attracted less attention in Western periodicals than its interest and importance deserve.² I have had two opportunities of viewing the Treasure (in 1968 and 1972) in the Museum at Plovdiv. It is well displayed, but security arrangements are (very properly) such that it would be unreasonable to ask to handle the objects. Fortunately photographs are available giving accurate information on details, though these inevitably fail to reflect the overwhelming impression produced on the spectator by the find as a whole (PLATE Ia).

DATE AND PLACE OF MANUFACTURE

Metrological and epigraphical considerations conspire to date the find to the closing years of the fourth century B.C. (or possibly soon after the turn of the century) and suggest North-West Asia Minor as the place of origin. The total weight of the nine pieces is 6.172 kg of high-quality gold. Except for minor damage to two rhytons, all is excellently preserved; some small jewels which served for details such as eyeballs have been lost, but hardly anything is dented. Considered as bullion, this amount of gold is equivalent within 4 g to 730 darics (at 8.45 g) or to 1430 Attic drachmas (at 4.31 g), within 9 g. Since the phiale (PLATE III*d*) scales 845.7 g, the figures neatly inscribed on the outside below the rim in small acrophonic numerals between 3—4 mm high (PLATE I*b*) advertise its weight in terms of both these standards: these are H (=100, *sc.* darics) and ΗΓΔΔΔΔΠΙ, plus an indeterminate fraction, i.e. something over 196 Attic drachmas.³ So interpreted these figures are remarkably accurate, the first to within 1 gram, and the second, allowing for the fraction, is probably as close: they are, incidentally, the earliest weight measurements known for an object of this kind.⁴ The amphora (PLATE IV*a*) weighs a little over twice as much as the phiale, 1.695 kg, and has letters looking like ΜΨ or ΣΩ inscribed on the inside of the rim. Capital *sigma* and capital *mu* were easily confused, especially in graffiti: one

¹ I dislike the word 'Treasure' in connexion with an archaeological find, for obvious reasons. It is however firmly established in popular usage, so one must acquiesce in it under protest.

² In preparing this study I have relied principally on the following:

D. Conçev in Svoboda—Conçev, *Neue Denkmäler antiker Toreutik*, II, Prague, 1956, pp. 118–64.

Id. (=D. Tsontschev), *Der Goldschatz von Panagjurishte*, Berlin, 1959.

H. Hoffmann, *Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts (röm. Abteilung)* LXV (1958), 121 f.

E. Simon, *Antike Kunst* III (1960) pp. 1 f., and H. A. Kahn's note, *ibid.* p. 27 f. (See too *Antike Kunst* VII (1964) pp. 30–40.)

I. Venedikov, *The Panagjurishte Gold Treasure*, Sofia, 1961.

A number of the illustrations to this article are taken from one or another of these works, and I am grateful to the publishers who have given permission

for their reproduction.

I had delayed publishing my interpretation of the scene pictured on the amphora, because I could not be sure that I had not been anticipated in literature inaccessible or incomprehensible to me. When however the opportunity occurred of delivering this essay in a shortened form as a communication to the First International Congress of Thracology held at Sofia in July 1972, the response of those present was such as to dispel diffidence, and I was asked to allow this contribution to be translated into Bulgarian, on the understanding that it would also appear in an English version.

³ See H. A. Kahn's note to Miss Simon's article (1960, p. 27). According to him the fraction after the numeral on the phiale may mean $2\frac{1}{2}$ obols, if a small *delta* can be made out after what may be a *tau*.

⁴ See D. E. Strong, *Greek and Roman Gold and Silver Plate*, 1966, p. 20, n. 1.

remembers that the schoolboy in Herodas' Third Mime (lines 25–6) misread Maron as Simon. The first of these letters is almost certainly a *sigma*, giving the weight of the amphora as 200 darics (or 1·69 kg) plus an indeterminate fraction denoted by the sign which looks like a *psi*.⁵ Kahn⁶ noticed that the weights of the other seven pieces, none of which carry weight-inscriptions, are all equal, to within a very few grams, to round numbers of either Attic didrachms (Alexander-staters) or darics: the figures are 45, 50 and 80 Alexander-staters, or 55 darics (two pieces), 60 or 80 darics. These metrological considerations indicate a date and an area where both these standards were in use simultaneously, that is around 300 B.C. or just after the turn of the century⁷, and make one think of North-West Asia Minor (perhaps Lampsacus)⁸ as the part of the world where the objects were weighed and presumably made. This uniformity of weight-standard, as shown by the quantities of metal allowed for each piece, is consistent with the impression of stylistic homogeneity of the whole, whether traces of Persian or Asiatic influence can be properly detected or not.

Apart from the weight-inscriptions on the phiale and amphora, three of the four animal-rhytons carry dot-punched names identifying the mythological figures represented. The letter-forms point to a date in the Hellenistic period, or at latest the Greco-Roman age. The only one of these four which leaves the viewer to guess the subject shows an unmistakable Herakles, with two of his regular recognition-signs; another portrays the Judgment of Paris, a subject sufficiently obvious, it might seem, without the epigraphic aid provided, in spite of the absence of Hermes, who, in archaic art at least, regularly escorts the contenders in this beauty-competition.⁹ This help is however needed in the other two cases. On one of these Nike is shown in company with Hera, Artemis and Apollo, but we are left wondering what they are doing together: on the other the names of Dionysus and Eriope are required for identification; on Eriope something will be said presently (p. 40).

DESCRIPTION OF THE EIGHT PIECES (OTHER THAN THE AMPHORA)

Rhyton I (The Judgment of Paris: PLATE IIa). This is 13·5 cm tall and has a mouth 8·8 cm in diameter. It weighs 674·6 g, which is 1·4 g short of 80 darics (676 g). As in the other theriomorphic rhytons, there is a small hole for drinking, located here in the lower lip of the stag which forms the design. The hollow handle is in the form of a lion whose forepaws rest on the rim of the vessel. Except for the helmet in Athena's right hand, the dress and ornaments of the goddesses are those of ordinary mortals, as if to keep Paris (here called ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΣ) in countenance in divine company. Aphrodite stands, with one hand making the familiar gesture holding her dress high above her left shoulder. All four figures are shod.

Rhyton II (Herakles and Theseus¹⁰: PLATE IIb). Like Rhyton I, this is in the shape of a stag with a lion for handle. Its height is 13 cm, and diameter again 8·8 cm, but it weighs a little more, 689 g, just 0·6 g short of 80 Alexander staters at 8·62 g. On one side

⁵ Loss of metal by attrition and ignorance of the degree of precision possible with ancient weighing instruments discourages further speculation.

⁶ *Loc. cit.* (n. 3 above) p. 27. The deviations vary from –1·0 to +0·4 per cent except for Rhyton IV which is 1·9 per cent overweight.

⁷ These dispose of the wayward suggestion of Hoffmann (1958, pp. 121 f.) that the Treasure, with the exception of the phiale, dates from the age of Constantine.

⁸ The exact weight of the Lampsacene stater is not

known, but Venedikov (1961, p. 22) makes out a persuasive case for Lampsacus.

⁹ As on the Chigi Jug (c. 640 B.C.), which has the earliest representation of this scene: see K. Schefold, *Myth and Legend in Early Greek Art*, 1966, plate 29(b), and p. 42.

¹⁰ For the parallelism between Herakles and Theseus, increasingly evident in art from the end of the sixth century, see J. P. Barron in *JHS* 92 (1972) p. 23; cf. p. 28, n. 71.

is shown Herakles, beardless but clearly identified by his lion-skin streaming out behind him and his club lying on the ground beneath the Cerynian hind. He has captured the animal by its horns: in Greek poetry 'mythic does have mythic horns', to quote Gildersleeve's inimitable comment on the χρυσοκέρων ἔλαφον θήλειαν (also associated with Herakles) in Pindar (*Olymp.* iii. 29). Both the hind and the Marathonian bull are vigorously portrayed, although there is some awkwardness in the attitude of the bent forelegs, a stylistic defect which may be explained by the limitations of space available.

Rhyton III (Dionysus and Eriope: PLATE IIc). This is 12.5 cm high and 8.5 cm across the mouth. It weighs considerably less than the other two, 505.05 g, which is 1.95 g short of 60 darics. In this case the animal head is in the form of a sheep, with a small drinking orifice located in the underlip. Again the handle is in the form of a lion. Dionysus wears an ivy garland; he has a boyish face and hair in a style characteristic of fifth and fourth century representations. His right hand holds a thyrsus, his left rests on his chair. The maenad, on his left, bears the name *ΗΠΙΟΠΗ*, which is not only a misspelling for *ΕΠΙΟΠΗ* (or Eriopis) but betrays an interesting confusion on the part of the craftsman or his customer, which has so far gone unnoticed. From a fragment of the Naupactia-epic (*fr.* 1, p. 199, Kinkel)¹¹ we learn that the wife of Oileus and mother of the Locrian Ajax was known both as Alcimache and as Eriope (-pis): this lady has however no reported association with Dionysus. There was another Alcimache (or Alcimacheia), daughter of Harpalion of Lemnos, who as a maenad accompanied Dionysus on his journey to India and there met a not undeserved death in battle, as Nonnus tells (*Dionysiaca*, XXX. 192 f.; 210 f.). The artist or his client has done a little private conflation of two unrelated figures and given Dionysus' votary a name to which only the other Alcimache was entitled. Two dancing maenads fill the remaining space. They are barefoot and shown in the characteristic posture of their kind when in ecstasy, with the head thrown back.¹² The one on Dionysus' right holds a thyrsus, the other on Eriope's left a tympanum.

Rhyton IV (Nike, with Hera, Artemis and Apollo: PLATE IIId). This is 14 cm high, measures 9 cm across the mouth and weighs 439.5 g, which is 8.5 g in excess of 50 Alexander staters. It differs from the others, being conceived in the form of a protome of a goat, and its lack of handle accounts for its relative lightness. In place of the orifice on the animal's underlip, a small tube, about 6 mm long, protrudes from between the forelegs. Immediately above the goat is a seated figure, named as Hera, who would thus seem to be intended as the central one of the four. She wears a full-length, short-sleeved chiton and a himation, and has a necklace; her hairstyle is typical of fifth- and fourth-century representations. On her left is Artemis, standing with her weight on her right leg. Her attire is similar to Hera's, although her chiton is sleeveless and her footwear shown in less detail. Her right hand rests on the left of Hera's chair, and her bent left arm carries a bow. To her left is a winged Nike, with hair combed back and tied in a *κορυμβός*. She wears a sleeveless chiton, fitting closely over the breasts, and the feathering of her wings is delicately depicted, as is her hair, with one lock falling over her left shoulder. The fourth deity, on Hera's right and so between her and Nike, is Apollo. His face is finely drawn, and turned a little to his left. With his right hand he holds a fold of his himation, while in his left he holds his bow, as does his sister on the other side of the vessel. No situation familiar from mythology

¹¹ *apud* Schol. *Vict. ad Hom. Iliad* XV 336: *ὁμοίως τῷ ποιητῇ καὶ Ἑλλάνικος τὴν Ἐριώπην μητέρα Αἰαντός φησι. Φερεκύδης δὲ καὶ Μνασέας ἐν ἡ' Ἀλκιμάχην. ὁ δὲ τῶν Ναυπακτικῶν ποιητῆς διώνυμον αὐτὴν φησι.*

τὴν δὲ μεθ' ὀπλοτάτην Ἐριώπην ἐξονόμαζεν, Ἀλκιμάχην δὲ πατὴρ τε καὶ Ἀδμητος καλέεσκεν.

cf. Cramer, *Anecd. Par.* III, 286 (same information given in *cod. Townl.*)

¹² On the maenad's posture, see Dodds' note on *Eur. Bacch.* 862–5, who compares 150, 185, 241, 931 and cites, *inter alia*, *Ar. Lys.* 1312. See too M. G. Edwards in *JHS* 80 (1960) pp. 78–88, esp. p. 82.

suggests itself to explain the conjunction of these four divinities. Nike appears in art frequently together with Zeus or Zeus and Hera¹³ on red-figure vases. Poseidon also, either alone or with Zeus or Dionysus keeps her company, but search has not so far yielded a parallel to this particular quartet. I cannot improve on Conçev's suggestion that this is a cult-picture of deities connected with the family (1956, pp. 137-8). Hera is obviously relevant, and Artemis' associations with childbirth are appropriate, though Apollo's presence is perhaps puzzling. Nike will then personify success, rather than mark any particular victory.

RHYTONS IN THE FORM OF WOMEN'S HEADS (AMAZONS)

Rhytons V and VI (PLATES IIIa and b). These two very similar specimens are best described together. Both have the form of a woman's head and neck, surmounting a collar, in which there is, immediately below the chin of the figure, a small lion whose mouth is the orifice for drinking. Their dimensions are closely alike.

Rhyton V measures, to the top of the rim, 18.5 cm, to the top of the sphinx on the handle, 21.5 cm. The mouth is elliptical, 10 cm across from front to back, but 9.3 cm from side to side. The weight is 460.75 g, which comes out 4 g short of 55 darics. The corresponding figures for Rhyton VI are: height 18.5 cm (as before) to rim, 22.5 cm to top of handle: diameter of mouth 10 cm from front to rear, and 9 cm across. The weight, 466.75 g, in its present condition, exceeds 55 darics by 2 g. The wings of the sphinx have however been broken, presumably during excavation, but it seems that any damage will not have significantly affected the weight. The faces are sensitively delineated, with serene expressions. The hair is combed upwards and ends not in a knot or band but merges with the neck of the vessel. The winged sphinxes on the handle have been carved in great detail; the sphinx-hair is gathered into a wreath and the wings on Rhyton V bear marks of fine chiselling.

Rhyton VII (PLATE IIIc). This differs from the other two, in that it lacks the base collar and the hair of the female figure is swept up under a helmet to merge with the mouth-moulding. This accounts for its different dimensions, which are: height to rim 17.5 cm, to top of sphinx 20.5 cm; diameter of mouth from front to back 8.5 cm, from side to side 8.8 cm. The weight is thus only 387.3 grs, which corresponds, within 0.6 g, to 45 Alexander-staters. The shape of the helmet recalls some Thracian patterns, known from helmet-masks found in that part of the world. Just below the rim and facing the front are two vigorously depicted eagles' heads. Their wings, elaborately detailed, sweep down over the sides and back of the helmet. As in Rhytons V and VI, near the bottom there is the same small lion's head with mouth for drinking-orifice. Venedikov (1961, p. 12) noticed the pattern of small stars on the *sakkos* or *mitra* which keeps the women's hair in place on Rhytons V and VI and so thought that Amazons¹⁴ were intended by the artist. The martial appearance of the figure of Rhyton VII is consistent with this attractive sug-

¹³ Curiously, the artist spelled Hera's name with a final alpha on Rhyton I but here gives the Ionic form *HPH*. Can it be that in the one case he used the spelling familiar to his Thracian customer, the presumed first owner of the Treasure, but that here, if we are right in thinking of him as a man from the Ionic-speaking area of North-West Asia Minor, he lapsed into the dialect-form which came most naturally to him?

¹⁴ The magisterial book of D. von Bothmer,

Amazons in Greek Art, 1957, stops at the end of the fifth century, and the author is primarily interested in other descriptive features. Unfortunately some of the illustrations are somewhat unclear, so that I have been unable to use this to clinch the matter. H. Brandenburg, *Studien zur Mitra* (Münster, 1966) pp. 63, 69 f., makes one inclined to think that this is a *mitra* rather than a *sakkos*. (I owe this reference to the kindness of Dr A. M. Snodgrass.)

gestion: it might be added that Amazons, who are located around Thermodon (Hdt. IV. 110) might appeal to a Thracian owner. This is however only surmise.

OTHER OBJECTS

The phiale is made from a rather redder gold than the rest of the Treasure, but this does not always show in colour photographs. Its diameter is 25 cm and height 3·5 cm, giving a capacity of about 1 litre. In the centre is a boss (*omphalos*) 18 mm high and 47 mm diameter. The decoration is arranged in four concentric circles (PLATE III*d*). Innermost are 24 acorns, and then proceeding outwards three circles each composed of 24 negroes' heads, increasing in size towards the rim. The largest of these heads measure 32 mm, those forming the middle circle 22 mm and the smallest, on the inside next to the acorns, 17 mm. A pleasing pattern of floral motifs, lotus or perhaps palmettes, fills the spaces between the heads, radiating out from the centre. Parallels for this use of negro-heads in Greek art from the fifth century and after are to hand: one thinks of the description of the phiale in the hand of a famous statue of Nemesis made by Pheidias or his pupil Agoracritus¹⁵ which occurs in Pausanias (I, 33.3): his words are *Αἰθίοπες δ' ἐπὶ τῇ φιάλῃ πεποιήνται*, suggesting a very close resemblance. The weight-inscriptions have been discussed earlier (p. 38).

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The most impressive piece is undoubtedly the amphora-rhyton (PLATE IV). Its height is 24·5 cm to the rim and 29 cm to the top of the Centaurs which form the handle-pattern. It weighs 1·695 kg, and has a capacity of about 1·5 litres. The diameter of the belly is 14 cm. On the underside are two holes, concealed as the mouths of two negroes: the liquid from one would seem to pour into a cantharus held by a recumbent satyr, opposite whom is a representation of the infant Herakles strangling a pair of snakes, a subject self-evident without help from inscriptions. Because of these decorations the amphora cannot rest on its bottom unsupported. The sides are elaborately decorated, and the focus of attention of the main scene is a door immediately below one of the handles, the right-hand panel of which is held ajar from inside by a bearded dwarf-like figure (PLATE IV*b*). He is visibly alarmed by the threatened assault of a posse of four swordsman and a trumpeter. Their leader is a bearded, muscular individual, naked like the others, save for a *chlamys* or mantle thrown over his left shoulder. He advances purposefully with sword raised aloft in his right hand, his left rests on the panel of the half-open door. Another figure follows, with arm above the shoulder but sword pointing downwards, as if to deliver a devastating slashing stroke. Close behind comes a third man, whose lack of beard makes him look younger than the others; his sword is held at waist-height. Another agitated figure, gazing outwards like the leader of the party, but with sword held vertical (PLATE IV*c*) follows, and a trumpeter brings up the rear. The sixth and seventh figures form a pair, and though not separated by any artistic feature from the rest of the composition, seem detached from the action. The elderly man on the extreme left holds an object which has been plausibly taken to be a liver, lobe and all, which he is showing to his younger companion; both carry knotted clubs. Behind the shoulder of the older man the right-hand column of the door and the Ionic volutes of its capital can be seen (PLATE IV*d*).

¹⁵ There was dispute in antiquity about the maker of this statue: see Frazer on Paus. I, 33.3 (vol. II, pp. 455-6). D. E. Strong, *Greek and Roman Gold and Silver Plate*, 1966 p. 97, notes that the weight of the

phiale is close to one found at Solokha (Ukraine), and on plate 23A he reproduces a similar one recently acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of New York, with a pattern of acorn-decoration.

INTERPRETATION OF THE SCENE ON THE AMPHORA (PLATE V)

There are no explanatory inscriptions; the reason will shortly be apparent. The door-columns, with their lion-head antefixes and Ionic capitals, have been thought to suggest the entrance of a beleaguered palace or town. It does not look like a defensible barrier: the nail-heads on the cross-straps and its general proportions suit the door of a private residence as well or better. Ancient house-doors could be quite elaborate, as, to take a random example, that of a villa shown in a mural from Boscoreale, near Naples, dating from between 40 and 30 B.C. (PLATE VIa), which is flanked by pilasters with Corinthian-style capitals.¹⁶ In any event a city door would hardly be held ajar at such a critical moment: the progress of the assault would have been observed by the defenders in safety from the battlements above. Since however mythological themes appear on the four animal-rhytons, it is natural, but, as will appear, unjustified, to suspect a similar setting here. In 1956 Conçev argued that we were looking at Odysseus before the palace of Lycomedes, king of the island of Skyros: Odysseus had gone there to rescue Achilles, who was being kept safe from the hazards of the Trojan War, for which his services were urgently required, in the seclusion of predominantly female establishment. This view dies hard,¹⁷ but encounters fatal objections:

(i) If the artist intended Odysseus, he has got the iconography wrong. Elsewhere, unless the situation is otherwise obvious,¹⁸ Odysseus is portrayed on gems, coins, cameos and statuary wearing a *pilleus* or conical brimless cap, easily distinguished from the broad-brimmed *petasos* or slouch-hat worn by heralds and travellers.¹⁹

(ii) His plan was to gain access to the royal *gynaikōnitis* or women's quarters to display his wares to its inmates, after the manner of a modern commercial traveller. These had been selected to appeal to girlish tastes, except for some weapons intended to catch the martial fancies of Achilles and so identify him. The ruse depended on the king's goodwill, which would be forfeited by violent assault.

(iii) Odysseus had best prospects of success if he went alone or with only one or two companions, as in the literary accounts.²⁰ In these he is variously accompanied by Diomedes or by Nestor (whose presence suggests diplomacy rather than force) and Phoenix.

(iv) On Conçev's interpretation, what is to be made of the two club-carrying figures on the left? Hardly Lycomedes talking to a servant or counsellor: if the king was meant, why no sceptre or other emblem of royalty?

(v) When Odysseus' mission to Skyros appears elsewhere in art, the more dramatic moment is favoured when Achilles has been identified and the guilty secret of the king's

¹⁶ Reproduced in Pfuhl, *Malerei und Zeichnung*, vol. III, 707; PLATE VIa is taken from the more detailed picture in a publication *Greek Painting* (1952, p. 21) issued by the Metropolitan Museum of New York.

¹⁷ It reappears in A. Frova's article on the Panagjurische Treasure in *Enciclopedia dell' Arte Antica*, 1963, vol. IV, p. 924.

¹⁸ As in r.f. vases showing the Slaying of the Suitors (*ARV*² p. 1300(1) = Pfuhl III fig. 539) or the passage of the Sirens (*ARV*² p. 289 (1) = Pfuhl III, fig. 479).

¹⁹ So e.g. Roscher *Lex. der Myth.* s.v. Odysseus, vol. III cols. 674-9, with figs. 11, 14, 16-19. Also on fourth-century coins from Ithaca (Head, *Hist. Nummorum*² p. 428) and Mantinea (*ibid.*, p. 449).

I had thought that this distinctive headgear of Odysseus was neglected by the vase-painters: see however Brit. Mus. 1947. 7-14.8, a Lucanian calyx-krater by the Cyclops Painter (dated c. 410 B.C.): facsimile in A. D. Trendall-T. B. L. Webster, *Illustrations of Greek Drama*, 1972, II.11 (p. 36). Add too an Italiote crater in the British Museum showing the Doloneia: C. M. Robertson, *Greek Painting*, 1959, p. 159 (Odysseus on left). (I owe this reference to Dr A. M. Snodgrass.)

²⁰ Odysseus alone: Hyg. *fab.* 96 (Rose); Eustath. on *Iliad* IX 662 and XIX 327; *Myth. gr.* p. 365, 14 (West). Diomedes as companion: Stat. *Achill.* I 539 f., 689 f. Phoenix and Nestor: schol. on *Iliad* XIX 326. Palamedes is mentioned by Tzetzes, *Antehom.* 177.

daughter discovered: her pregnancy is the natural outcome of Achilles' proximity. This scene appears, for example, in the much-described bow-case from Czertomlik.²¹

Only one feature might lend some support to the Skyros story: the fifth attacker is blowing a trumpet. In Apollodorus' version (*Bibl.* III. 8) Achilles' reaction to the blare of a trumpet betrayed him. The trumpeter can however be explained otherwise, as will appear.

In 1958 H. Hoffmann²² stated dogmatically, in a treatment notable more for acute observation of detail than for poise of judgment, that the bearded club-bearer on the left was Herakles, talking to his constant companion Iolaus. This led him to the desperate idea that the rest of the scene portrayed an episode in the Herakles-legend not known elsewhere. Because a club is a regular recognition-sign of Herakles in art, it does not follow that any club-bearer must be Herakles, who usually wears his lion-skin over head and shoulders, unless, as in wrestling with Antaeus or the Nemean Lion, freedom of movement enjoins heroic nudity. This classical kind of garment draped round the waist is unparalleled for Herakles in art, so far as I know. Neither does Iolaus carry a club when in Herakles' company: he may act as charioteer, but traditionally he is a spearman, as in the victory-song associated with Archilochus (*fr.* 234 West = 120 Diehl³):

χαῖρ', ἀνάξ' Ἡράκλεις
αὐτός τε καίολαος, αἰχμητά δύο.

On the Meidias Painter's crater in the British Museum showing the Rape of the Leucippides,²³ the lower panel has a naked Herakles with his club sitting on his lion-skin, next to Iolaus, carrying two spears: both names are inscribed. Iolaus (spelled Ioleos) also appears on a fragment in Oxford from Naucratis, attributed to the Eretria Painter.²⁴ No time need be wasted over this aberration.²⁵

The rival explanation by Miss Simon²⁶ has to be taken seriously, especially since it has commended itself to authorities whose judgment commands respect.²⁷ She sees the seven figures on the amphora as the Seven Against Thebes, regarding the single door as a 'concentrated' representation of the seven gates of that city. In spite of his informal and unpriestlike attire, she identifies the figure on the left, holding what she takes to be a liver, as the prophet Amphiaraus. His interlocutor is the young Parthenopaeus from Arcadia, for no better reason than that a Herculean wall-painting shows a throned Arcadia holding a knotted sceptre.²⁸ Leaving this aside, she sees the trumpeter as Adrastus, because

²¹ The best reproduction of a part of this scene is in M. Artomonov, *Treasures from Scythian Tombs*, 1969, fig. 181; a sketch of the whole is in E. H. Minns, *Scythians and Greeks*, 1913, pp. 284-5. (This may have been the moment portrayed in a Polygnotan painting: cf. Paus. I 22.6 and Pliny *N.H.* XXXV 134 (Athenion)). It recurs on sarcophagi and in Pompeian wall-paintings, but seems neglected by vase-painters.)

²² *Mitteil. des deutschen archäol. Instituts (röm. Abt.)* 65 (1958) pp. 132 f.

²³ B.Mus. E224: refs. in ARV² p. 1313 (5). The panel in question is not visible in Pfuhl, *M. und Z.* vol. III, fig. 593, but is clear in Becatti's essay (*Meidias, Un Manierista Antico*, 1947), pl. 1.

²⁴ Oxford G 138, 14 (ARV² p. 1252 (49): reproduced in *JHS* 25 (1905) pl. vii(b)).

²⁵ Neither is Herakles as a seer (assuming the object in the hand of the figure to be a mantic liver) likely to have been recognised as such in default of external

hint, such as an inscribed name. Apart from a note in Pausanias (VII, 25.10) of a Herakles-cult at Boura in Achaia, I know only of *sortes* delivered by Herakles on a relief from Ostia. A cult-practice so thinly attested and only found on monuments from very different parts of the Mediterranean has next to no relevance to the kind of artefact we are discussing. (For illustrations of the Ostia relief, see R. Meiggs, *Ostia*, 1960, pl. XXX (a); his description (p. 347 f.) is based on Becatti, *Bull. Comunale* 67 (1939) pp. 37 f., cf. *ibid.* 70 (1942) p. 115 f.)

²⁶ In *Antike Kunst*, III (1960) pp. 1 ff.

²⁷ So Miss G. M. A. Richter in *A. J. Arch.* 74 (1970) p. 332; D. E. Strong, *Greek and Roman Gold and Silver Plate*, 1966, p. 102; P. E. Corbett in *JHS* 84 (1964) p. 230. In a letter to me recently Corbett said that he was not now so convinced of this interpretation.

²⁸ Illustrated in Pfuhl, *M. und Z.* III, fig. 659.

of the 'nobility of his portrayal' and the propriety of the leader of the expedition giving the clarion call: a trumpeter is of course in place in a siege-scene but not only there. The leading attacker is thus Tydeus (1960, p. 14), named first by the spy in Aeschylus (*ScT* 375 f.); the fourth in line is Capaneus and the key-figure of Polyneices the other beardless youth who is third in the assault-order: if it were at all likely that the Seven were in question here, he could as well be Parthenopaeus, *ἀνδρόπαυς ἀνήρ* (*ScT* 533), but that young man has been accounted for already. For completeness' sake, she envisages the dwarf holding the door ajar as somehow corresponding to Aeschylus' spy.

Other representations of the Seven in art differ *toto caelo*. So, for example, the reliefs from the Heroon at Trysa-Gjöl bashi dating from c. 400 B.C. may be cited,²⁹ or better, the volute-crater from Spina, reproduced here as PLATE VIb.³⁰ In each case the figures are fully armed, as the descriptions in literature would lead one to expect: everyone recalls the Sphinx on the shield of Parthenopaeus (*ScT* 541) or the proud blazon-device on Tydeus' shield (43) *πρήσω πόλιν*. Entry into Thebes through an open gate occurs nowhere, for the sufficient reason that none of the Seven ever got inside the city. Their tactic was to scale the walls (*κλιμάκων προσαμβάσεις*, *ScT* 466). Here Tydeus came nearest to success, being struck by a timely thunderbolt as he gained the top: possibly he can be discerned falling headlong in the Trysa reliefs. Similarly armed *cap-à-pie* are the warriors on the frieze of the crater of Vix, though for some reason Miss Simon doubts their identification with the Seven.³¹ Whether in art, literature or in real life, who ever heard of a defended city being assaulted by men dispensing with even the minimum of protective armour, without helmet, shield, corslet or greaves, and saved from a state of heroic nudity only by a *chlamys* draped over one shoulder?

Four years later G. Roux, in the same periodical (*Antike Kunst* VII, 1964, pp. 30-40), offered a fresh interpretation. He recognised the weaknesses of previous solutions, and made some of the criticisms I have mentioned; he cited the Spina crater, but missed the Gjöl bashi reliefs. He noticed the scanty attire of the attackers, but still thought in mythological terms. Rightly observing the absence of recognition signs, he uttered the unexceptionable proposition that 'the artist must have thought the scene *telle qu'elle était figurée par lui* must have been sufficiently distinctive for it to be identified without need of indications which were not provided' (p. 31). He lost the thread however when, after noting that the attackers were treading on uneven ground (p. 33, foot) he placed them 'devant un édifice qui est apparemment un temple, et à l'issue d'un sacrifice'. The rough ground can be explained on decorative grounds (p. 48, below), but it is, as in all languages, adverbs such as *apparemment*, which, when used in lieu of evidence, explode in their user's face. For the door is not obviously a temple-door: the Boscoreale mural (PLATE VIa) showed one very like it which belongs to a private house. He then has a long and not uninteresting disquisition on *μάχαιρα*, the weapon (*coutelas*) which four of the attackers are brandishing: this leads to a random assembly of instances in literature and art of the use of the *μάχαιρα*, concluding with a mention of Neoptolemus, who is portrayed by Cleophrades on the Vivenzio hydria in Naples butchering the aged Priam with just such an implement.³² Force of chance-association does the rest: for Roux the scene on the amphora is the preliminary to the murder of Neoptolemus in the temple at Delphi. The act of prophetic

²⁹ F. Eichler, *Die Reliefs des Heroon von Gjöl bashi-Trysa*, 1950.

³⁰ Ferrara T 579, by the Painter of Bologna 279; *ARV*² p. 612. The illustration here (PLATE VIb) is from Aurigemma, *Il Regio Museo di Spina in Ferrara*, 1934², pl. CXXV (cf. *ibid.* p. 256). On this painter's shortcomings, see J. P. Barron, *JHS* 92 (1972) p. 38.

³¹ *Ant. Kunst* III (1960), p. 15 '... hat man den

herrlichen Schmuck des Bronze-kraters von Vix wenig glücklich mit den Sieben in Verbindung gebracht'. She cites without comment (n. 81) a paper by J. Delepierre, *Le Sujet de la Frise du Cratère de Vix* (1954), who however argues for this interpretation of the Vix frieze.

³² *ARV*² p. 189 (74), reproduced in Pfuhl, *M. und Z.* III, fig. 378.

consultation by the two figures on the left is imagined to take place within the building; the attackers are the Delphians led by Orestes (whom Roux recognises as the leader of the assault) and a temple-servant (*νεώκορος*) is opening the door to them. Not surprisingly this myth was neglected in art of the classical period: its details are vague and controversial, as witness the unsolved problems of Pindar's Sixth Paean and Seventh Nemean Ode. It is indeed represented in later monuments, such as an amphora from Ruvo, where however Orestes is named. If ever a story needed the kind of hints which Roux mentioned at the outset of his essay, this is one. In fact, on Roux' own admission, the artist of the Panagjurishte amphora has taken liberties with the theme: there is, for instance, no trumpeter in the story of the death of Neoptolemus as told by the messenger in Euripides' *Andromache* (1085-1165). Regrettably, Roux has been carried away by his Neoptolemean fantasy, and forgotten the exemplary proposition from which he started.

* * * *

Everything falls into place once it is recognised that this is no scene from myth or history, but a picture of a *troupe* or *thiasos*—perhaps, though not necessarily an after-dinner *komos*—of revellers breaking in on the door of a courtesan or her keeper, that distasteful character the *leno* or *πορνόβοσκος*. The dwarf holding the door ajar will thus be a servant or *θυρωρός*, about to admit the visitors, but manifestly regretting his action. Assault on such a house-door is a genre-scene, familiar in literature from Menander, through Terence's *Eunuch*, and is used again, though narrated as an off-stage event, in his *Adelphi* (155 f.) where the youth Aeschinus forcibly abducts Pamphila, his brother's girl-friend, from the house of the pandar Sannio, the brother being too spineless to take the initiative himself. The siege-scene in the *Eunuch* is acted out on stage (771-860), and needs six actors, Thraso, his parasite Gnatho, slave Sanga and three other supporters, with slave-names, Syriscus, Donax and Simalio. The deployment of the attacking troops is worked out with plenty of comic detail, so that Thraso can 'lead his army from behind' and there is concern about medical treatment for the expected casualties. Thus Sanga, asked why he is going into action with nothing more lethal than a brush, replies (779) 'what am I to wipe away the blood with otherwise?' (*qui abstergerem volnera?*). As a variant for this comic motif of medical precaution in a mock battle, orders to a trumpeter would do as well, and this I take to be a sufficient explanation of his presence on the amphora.

The motif of the break-in is certainly in Menander, who was writing close to the likely date of manufacture of the Treasure, but goes back earlier. A fragment of Antiphanes (239 Kock) implies this: *θυροκοπῶν ὄφλεν δίκην* ('he was found guilty on a charge of door-battering'), while Aristophanes has an explicit references to the consequences of such roistering in *Wasps* (1253 f.):

ἀπὸ γὰρ οἴνου γίγνεται
καὶ θυροκοπήσαι καὶ πατάξαι καὶ βαλεῖν
κάπειτ' ἀποτίνειν ἀργύριον ἐκ κραιπάλης.

It is of course possible that the artist of the amphora never intended a theatrical scene at all, but was depicting a situation from everyday street-life. It is however the scenes from comedy or mime which certify for us the reality of such forceful approaches *Veneris causa*, and perhaps unduly predispose us to think in terms of a theatrical setting here. If it is theatrical, it is hardly necessary to warn against seeing in it a picture of any particular production, which may have inspired a play known to us either in the original, in adaptation, by title or from fragments.

Whether we have here a scene from the stage or from real life, a wide field is left open for explanation of the two club-carrying figures on the left. Knotted sticks are often shown in the hands of revellers on komast-vases, as, to name an obvious example, the amphora from Vulci by Cleophrades and now in the Vatican.³³ If the bearded one of the pair is in fact holding a mantic liver (as seems likely), he may be thought of as having withdrawn from the escapade for superstitious reasons, which he is explaining to his interlocutor.³⁴ Equally, this scene may not be contemporaneous with the main picture, and thus one may think of a conversation-piece in which an older man (perhaps, the *senex* of comedy) describes to a shocked listener the circumstances which led up to the scandal of the break-in. Since the closeness of the link between these two figures and the others cannot be determined, speculation is self-defeating; I have at present no definitive solution to offer on this point, but I do not think that the main contention of this paper is invalidated by this uncertainty.

We now understand not only the absence of inscriptions to identify the participants, but also their scanty and unmilitary attire. Vase-paintings show that the dress appropriate for a *komos* was a short cloak thrown over the shoulder, as in the well-known cup by the Brygos-Painter in Würzburg,³⁵ to name only one instance. Sometimes the revellers dispensed with clothes altogether, as well one might on a hot Mediterranean evening; shoes were not, it seems, usual on such occasions. Nevertheless the absence of garlands might call for comment. It may be enough to remark that on several undoubted komos-scenes in art such fripperies are not much in evidence, and the artist of the amphora may have felt that their inclusion might distract attention from the main point of his composition. Here another fragment of Antiphanes (*fr.* 199 Kock) is in point:

— Ἐπὶ κῶμον δοκεῖ
ἴωμεν ὡσπερ ἔχομεν. — Οὔκουν δάιδα καὶ
στεφάνους ἔχοντες;

One speaker says 'let's go to the party just as we are', in a condition defined precisely by the other's reply, 'not taking a torch and garlands with us?'. Informality was of the essence of the *komos*, which is recognised in art more by the spirit of the whole representation than by insistence on details.

A more substantive objection might be thought to lie in the use of swords rather than axes or crowbars for the break-in. Those coming fresh from a carouse may not have been particular in choosing implements for such a purpose, if only because, one suspects, the mere show of force was often enough to gain the desired object, and if indeed the situation was desperate, what matter if a sword was blunted against a door-panel once in a while? However a remark made by the philosopher Leon of Byzantium to his friend Philip of Macedon, which is quoted centuries later by Philostratus, loses all point unless swords might on occasion be used for this purpose. Reproaching Philip for attacking his city, he said: οὐ φοιτῶσι . . . μετὰ ξίφων ἐπὶ τὰς τῶν παιδικῶν θύρας οἱ ἀξιοὶ τοῦ ἀντερᾶσθαι, 'men who deserve to be loved in return do not go sword in hand against the doors of their boy-friends'.³⁶ It is tempting, though I should hesitate to go so far on the strength of Philo-

³³ *ARV*² p. 182 (3); illustrated in Pfuhl, *M. und Z.* III, fig. 376.

³⁴ Dr Snodgrass reminds me of Theocritus III 29 ff., though there the omen-taking is not so formal.

³⁵ *ARV*² p. 372 (32); illustrated in Pfuhl *M. und Z.* III, 422-3 (422a-423a). See, for some typical komos-scenes:

*ARV*² p. 72 (17); illustrated in Pfuhl, III, fig. 323 (Epictetus: all figures nude except one).

*ARV*² p. 78 (95); Pfuhl, III, fig. 329 (Epictetus: one reveller is shod).

*ARV*² p. 26 (1); Pfuhl, fig. 395 (Euthymides).

Cf. *ARV*² p. 181 (1) (Cleophrades); p. 15 (6) (Euphronius: *komos* on vase-neck); p. 325 (76). On the *komos* in general see S. de Marinis in *Enciclop. dell' Arte Antica*, IV pp. 383-4, or Lamer in *P.-W.*, *RE* xi 2 (1922) col. 1297.

³⁶ Philostratus, *Vita Soph.*, i 2 (p. 485, Olearius). This passage escaped the notice of F. O. Copley, *Exclusus Amator*, 1956, who conscientiously assembles the other literary references.

stratus' remark, to suggest a refinement on the proposed interpretation, by taking the relative age of the attackers to indicate that they are supporting an elderly gentleman in quest of a boy-friend (παιδικά). Nothing forbids this view, which would add a novel and piquant overtone of social satire to the scene, but neither is it demanded by the evidence. Philostratus' reference to swords in this context is however welcome and helps materially to clinch the matter.

I comment briefly on some outstanding questions of detail:

(i) Is the ground beneath the attacker's feet too uneven to suggest the frontage of a private house? Ancient streets were not always paved as regularly as our own, but, more to the point, the undulating decoration of palmettes occupying the lower register of the side-surface of the amphora gave scope for variation in the placing of the feet. Had these been drawn on a level surface, an awkward linearity would have been introduced at the bottom of the design.

(ii) Are the bearded leader and some others of the attackers rather too old for this kind of escapade? The wearing of beards is not a reliable indication of age in art of the fourth/third centuries, but this need not matter, since vases show young and old joining in the *komos* together. In New Comedy the middle-aged engage in flirtations of a kind they should by rights have outgrown long ago: Ἑλληνες αἰεὶ παῖδες. Witness the somewhat distasteful rivalry for the same girl on the part of father and son in Menander's *Dis Exapaton*, the original of Plautus' *Bacchides*. Or the bearded leader of the party may be that stock character in comedy, the Friend in Need (*amicus opitulator*), who might be any age. One such, whose good offices are exploited in a very different fashion, is Pleusicles in Plautus' *Miles Gloriosus*, who obligingly gives away his age as 54 in line 629. This would not however commit one to reading a stage-motif into the scene on the amphora: the *amicus opitulator* has his place in real life as in drama. The *exclusus amator* was similarly a stock figure, and not without the resources of his kind. Horace (*Odes* III. 26) gives a graceful description of such a one, now a little too old for the game, laying up in the temple of Venus, his patron deity, the conventional weapons of love's service, torch, crowbar and, symbolically, his bow, the armament of Cupid. The torch served not only to light his nocturnal path, but as a last resort to burn, or threaten to burn, the lintel of the loved one's house, an experience with which the Bawd in Herodas is all too familiar (II. 34 f., cf. 50-1; 63 f.):

οὐδεὶς πολίτης ἠλόησεν οὐδ' ἦλθεν
πρὸς τὰς θύρας μευ νυκτός, οὐδ' ἔχων δαΐδας
τὴν οἰκίην ὑψήψεν, οὐδὲ τῶν πορνέων
βίηι λαβῶν οἴχωκεν . . .

In the normal way the lover would have operated alone, for obvious reasons, but if he feared discomfiture, as might happen,³⁷ it would have been prudent to take willing friends along, to impress the object of his affections, or, at need, to reinforce his attempts to gain access, whether by verbal intimidation, after the manner of the *flagitatio*, that time-honoured remedy for the aggrieved in many communities,³⁸ or by physical violence, such as is, I conceive, depicted on the amphora under discussion.

The last word has obviously not been said on this subject, where in the nature of the

³⁷ One thinks of the embarrassment which Aulus Mancinus, curule aedile of 150 B.C., underwent at the hands of the harlot Manilia (A. Gell. *NA* IV 14).

³⁸ See Eduard Fraenkel's charming analysis, from

this point of view, of Catullus' 42nd poem in *JRS* 51 (1961) pp. 46-53 (reprinted in his *Kleine Beiträge*, II, pp. 115-25).

case certainty may well be ἐκτὸς ἐλπίδος. If my suggested solution fails to carry conviction, I shall be content if I have exposed some unfortunate misinterpretations, any of which, if accepted as final, would come between us and what I take to be a proper appreciation of one of the most exciting objects to be recovered from antiquity in recent years.³⁹

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³⁹ I am very grateful to friends who have aided and encouraged my trespass into a field outside my normal activities, especially to Professor C. M. Robertson for his helpful discussion at an early stage and to Mr M. Vickers and Dr A. M. Snodgrass who kindly read the typescript; I have tried to take account of their criticisms, so far as constraints of space allowed.



(a) General view of the whole find

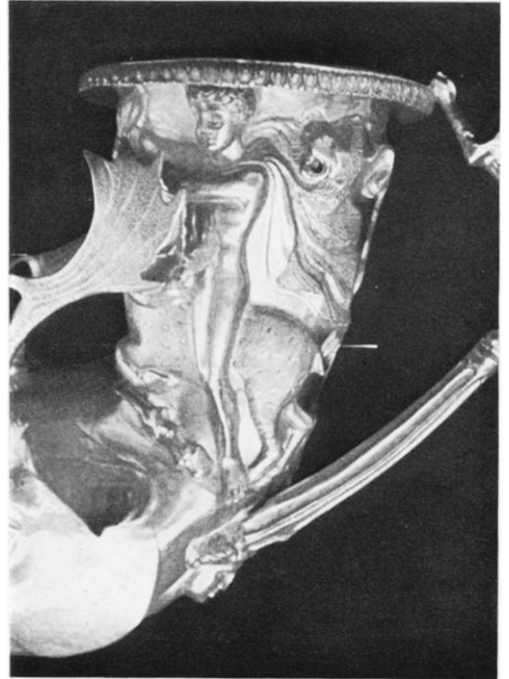


(b) Weight inscriptions on the phiale

THE PANAGJURISCHTE TREASURE



(a) Rhyton I: the Judgment of Paris



(b) Rhyton II: Herakles and the Cerynian Hind



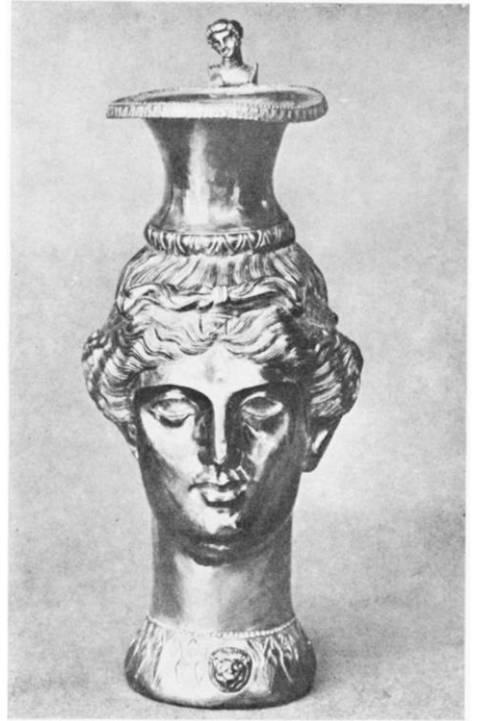
(c) Rhyton III: Dionysus and Eriope



(d) Rhyton IV: Nike, with Hera, Artemis, and Apollo



(a) Rhyton V: head of Amazon



(b) Rhyton VI: head of Amazon



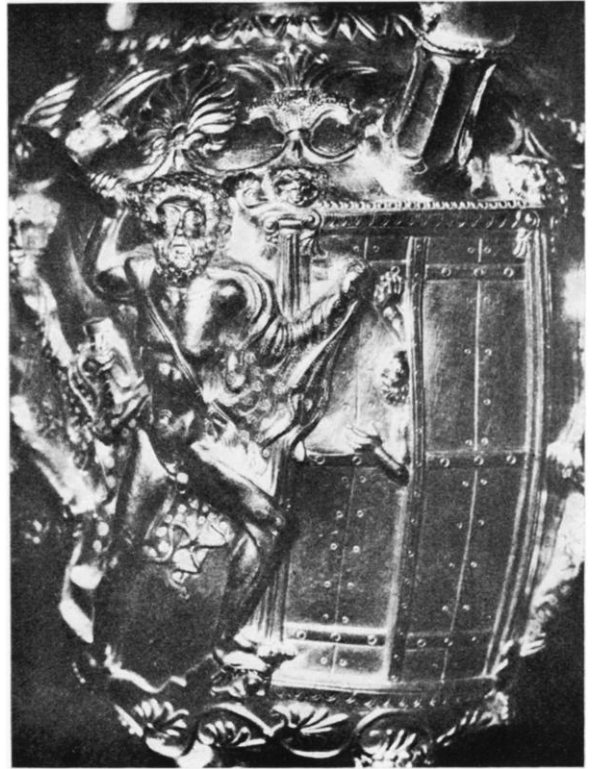
(c) Rhyton VII: head of Amazon



(d) Negroes' heads on exterior of phiale



(a) Amphora: general view



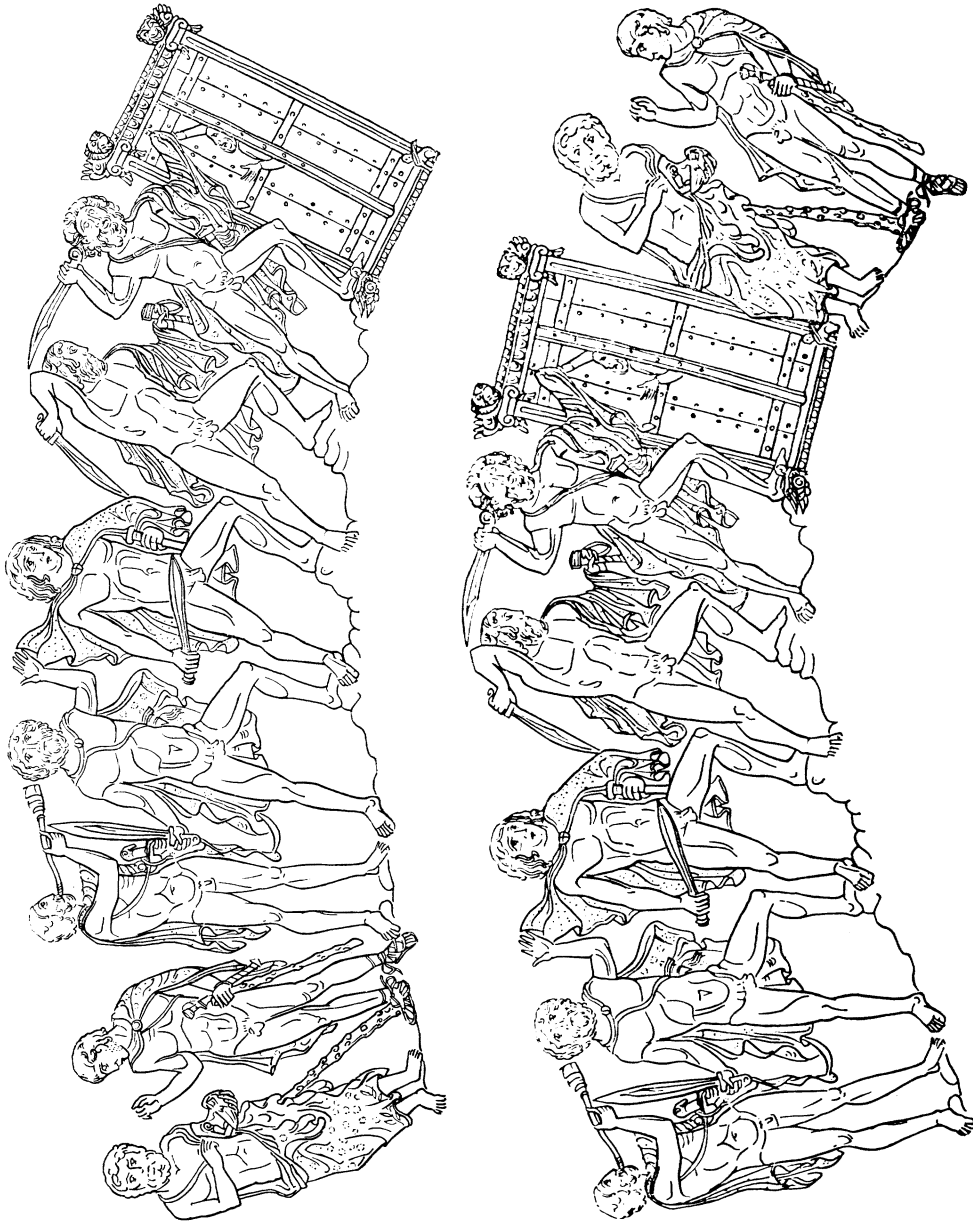
(b) Amphora: attack on door



(c) Amphora: armed men and trumpeter

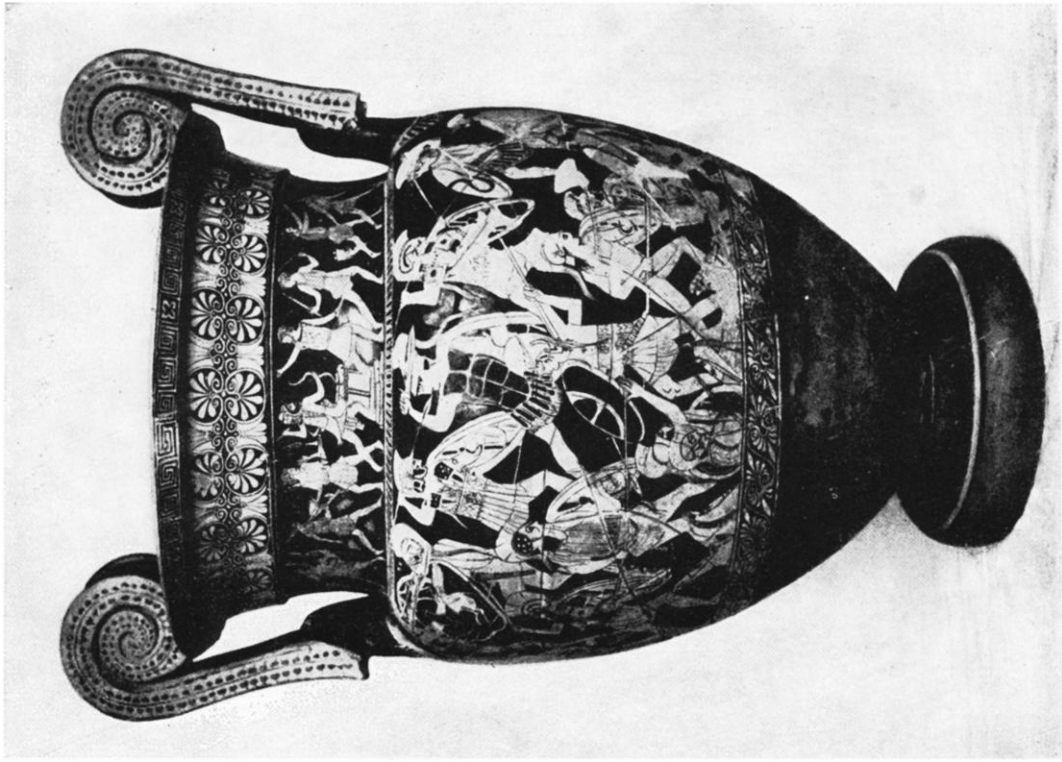


(d) Amphora: two men conversing

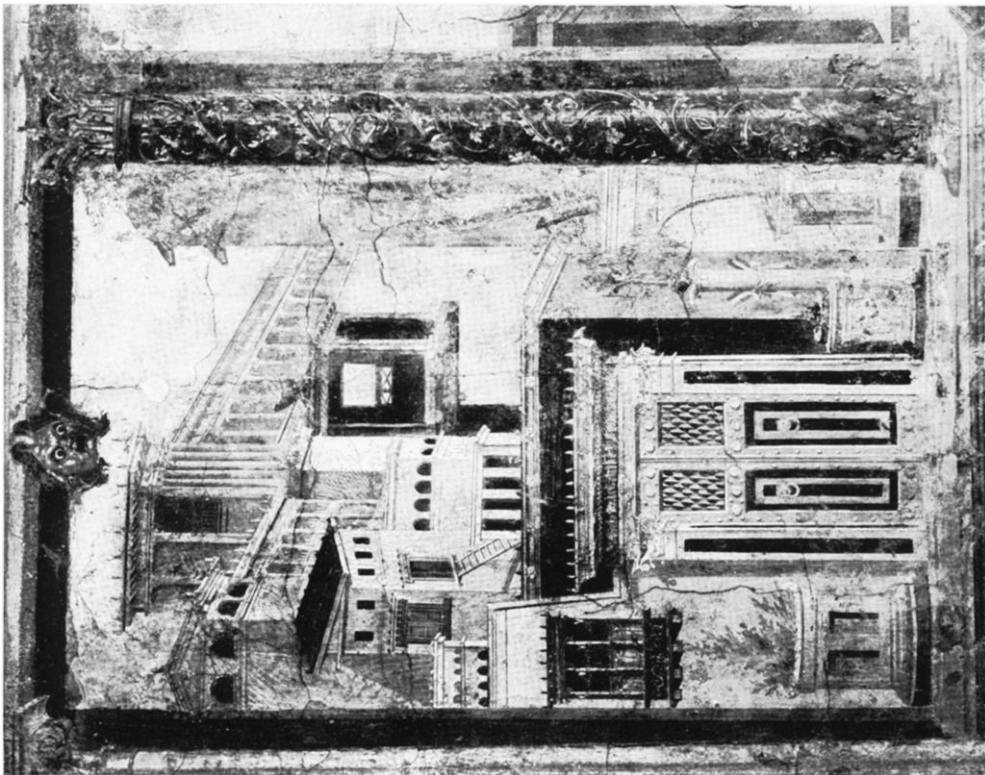


Line drawing showing relative positions of figures on the amphora

THE PANAGJURISCHTE TREASURE



(b) Amphora from Spina (Ferrara T 579), showing Seven against Thebes



(a) Door from mural of a villa at Boscoreale