

nised her. F's text should be seen as . . . πάντα ἤρωτ, τὰ δάκρυα, . . . If either ἄμα or ὁμοῦ is right, ἄμα is to be preferred to ὁμοῦ (which does not occur in Xen.); cf. i 10.7, πάντων ἄμα ἐν ὑπομνήσει γενόμενοι, τοῦ χρησμοῦ, τοῦ παιδός, τῆς . . . ; with πολλά at iii 5.2; iii 12.4; v 13.3. But one can hardly feel that ἄμα is particularly appropriate with συμβάλλουσι (how else can one συμβάλλει?); and for πάντα introducing a list without ἄμα see ii 5.5; ii 13.1; iii 10.4.

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### A Greek painting at Persepolis

In his magnificent report on the American excavations at Persepolis E. F. Schmidt published a fragment of a stone plaque found in the Treasury (frag. 2 on FIG. 2).<sup>1</sup> This plaque bore a sketch of a human torso, which G. M. A. Richter considered to be Greek work of about 500 B.C. : she identified the figure as 'Heracles wearing a chiton with a lion's skin over it which is knotted on the chest'.<sup>2</sup> This fragment was lost when the ship in which the finds from Persepolis were being transported to America was sunk by submarine action during the Second World War.<sup>3</sup> But recently Giuseppe Tilia discovered further fragments in a storeroom at Persepolis, which he recognised as probably belonging to the same plaque;<sup>4</sup> and from these Prof. Boardman has been able to determine that the original scene was of a contest between Herakles and Apollo (FIG. 1).

Three of these fragments (1, 3a and 3b) joined the published fragment. Two other fragments (4a and 4b) join and show parts of the heads of two figures in the top right hand corner of the plaque. The final fragment (5) comes from the middle of the right hand edge and shows part of the backside of the right hand figure.

Frag. 2 with the torso of Herakles was found in courtyard 29 of the so-called Treasury building on the citadel terrace at Persepolis.<sup>5</sup> According to E. F. Schmidt fragments of 'four dark gray limestone slabs of similar nature' were found in the nearby columned hall 73.<sup>6</sup> These fragments were not illustrated nor were their registration numbers given, but Schmidt's description suggests that these are the fragments discussed in this article.

<sup>1</sup> E. F. Schmidt, *Persepolis* ii (1957) pl. 31.2. FIG. 1 is drawn by Marion Cox, based on Schmidt, pl. 31.2, and on tracings and photographs of the fragments at Persepolis made by M. Roaf. While every effort has been made to make the drawing as accurate as possible the processes of tracing and of redrawing have, because of the fineness of the detail of the original, led to some minor distortions. The condition of the stone being either eroded or encrusted has made the incision impossible to record, especially on frag. 1 and on the right hand edge of frag. 4a. Furthermore, a few of the lines on the drawing may be accidental scratches on the stone and not part of the original design.

<sup>2</sup> G. M. A. Richter, in Schmidt, *Persepolis* ii 67.

<sup>3</sup> Schmidt, *Persepolis* i (1953) 5 and ii 155.

<sup>4</sup> I am grateful to Giuseppe Tilia for drawing my attention to these fragments and to Dr Shahbazi, the Director of the Institute for Achaemenid Research at Persepolis, for giving me permission to publish them.

Fragment	1	2	3a & 3b	4a & 4b	5
Field no.	PT 6-476	PT 6-595	—	PT 6-476	PT 6-476
width in cm	6.5	7.1	11.9	14.0	4.1
height in cm	4.1	10.3	7.8	8.4	4.8
thickness in cm	3.5	3.1	3.4	3.2	3.2

<sup>5</sup> Schmidt, *Persepolis* i 189.

<sup>6</sup> Schmidt, *Persepolis* i 196, ii 67-8.

Assuming that all these fragments belonged to a single rectangular plaque with only three standing figures (and this is confirmed by Prof. Boardman's study of the iconography), the plaque was originally 18 cm high, about 38 cm wide, and between 3 and 3.5 cm thick. The stone has not been examined by a geologist, but in appearance it is like the dark grey limestone found in the neighbourhood of Persepolis. The back is roughly dressed with a pointed tool, the sides have been smoothed with a toothed tool and occasionally with a flat chisel, and the front has been polished smooth so that no tool marks are visible. On this surface the design has been lightly incised with a sharp point. If it had been intended to carve the stone in sunken or raised relief, it is unlikely that the surface would have been so highly polished. Presumably therefore the sketched design was a guide for painting the plaque. Similar lightly incised sketches were made on the Persepolis reliefs and in a few cases the paint was preserved above the guide lines.<sup>7</sup> The fragments of the rectangular plaque, however, are eroded and encrusted and no traces of paint are visible now.

It is generally assumed that the objects kept in the Treasury building belonged to the royal Achaemenid treasure and so we may ask how such a very Greek object as this plaque became the Greek King's property. It is improbable that the king himself should have commissioned the plaque, for the scene would have had no significance for the Persian monarch. The style suggests a date of about 500 B.C., which would preclude the possibility that it was made for the Macedonian invaders. Furthermore if the stone is local Persepolitan stone, the plaque was not an import but was actually made at Persepolis. Probably then the plaque was made for a Greek by a Greek. Perhaps it was commissioned by one of the many Greeks who sought refuge or employment at the Persian court, and when he died or fell out of favour, this plaque together with the rest of his possessions entered the king's treasure.

(M.R)

The plaque reconstructed by Dr Roaf was decorated with three figures—we shall see that there is no reason to suspect a fourth, or more, in the missing part. At the left is Herakles, recognised by Miss Richter in the Persepolis publication from the one fragment then known. He is striding left wearing a short chiton beneath his lionskin, which is knotted over his chest and belted. It may be the tail or a leg that we see behind his left thigh. He is carrying his club in his right hand and the traces below his right arm are almost certainly from his quiver. He was looking back to the second figure who must be Apollo, bare-headed, a fillet over his long hair, holding a strung bow. Behind him stands his sister Artemis wearing a 'polos' headdress decorated with two rows of roundels, and a chiton of which we see part of the sleeve on her outstretched left arm and part of the skirt.

The group is a familiar one in Archaic Greek art and depicts Herakles' struggle with Apollo, usually over the tripod, occasionally over a deer. The tripod would have been shown held by Herakles, and probably by Apollo also, but there are no certain traces on the stone and various schemes are possible. In one which appears on Athenian vases Herakles shoulders the tripod, but here

<sup>7</sup> See e.g. P. Roos, 'An Achaemenian sketch slab and the ornaments of the royal dress at Persepolis', *East & West* xx (1970) 51-9.

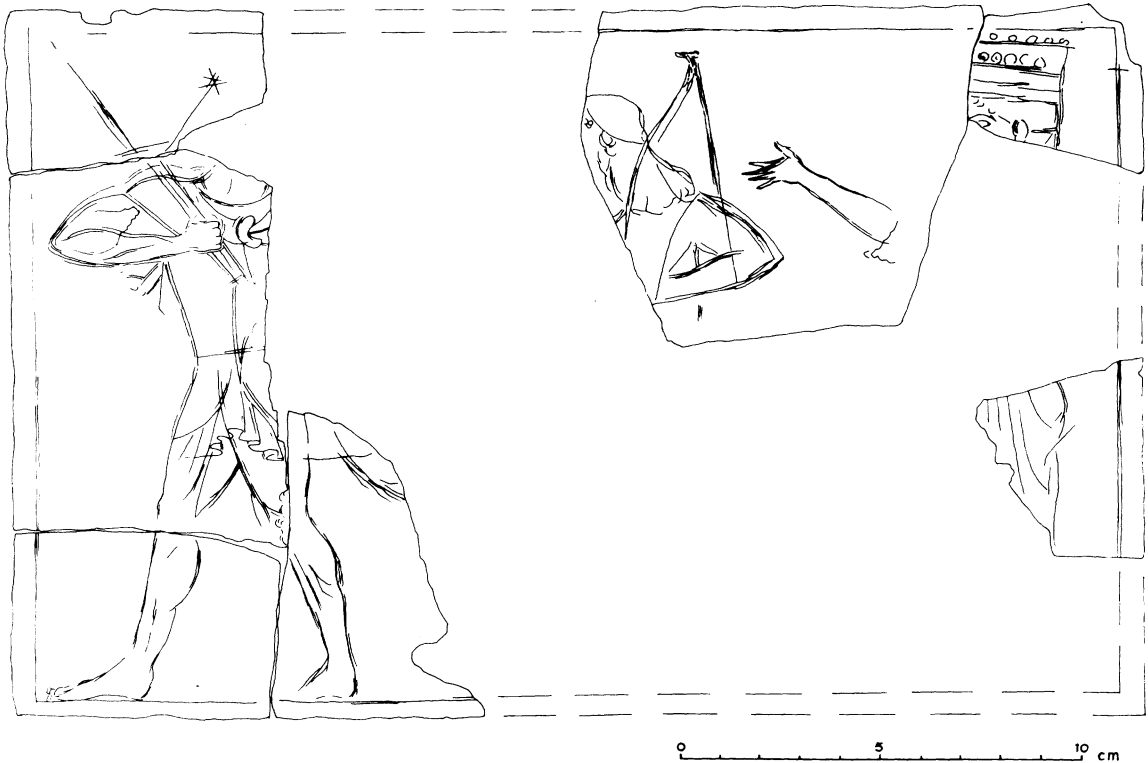


FIG. 1



FIG. 2

there is no room for it over his right shoulder and the club is surely a club, with its well-defined end, and not a tripod leg, which would have been appreciably longer.

All the elements on the scene are easily matched on late Archaic Athenian vases and these, together with what little we can judge of anatomy and dress, give the date, around 500 B.C., earlier rather than later. On the vases Herakles more commonly waves his club over his head in a threatening attitude, but this scheme with the club held oblique is met in other scenes, such as those with Kerberos. Apollo may wear or hold his bow. Artemis, his sister and supporter, is often shown wearing the 'polos'.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Representations are listed in F. Brommer, *Vasenlisten zur griechischen Heldensage*<sup>3</sup> (Marburg 1973) 38–46 and *Denkmälerlisten zur griechischen Heldensage i, Herakles* (Marburg 1971) 37–40. Scenes which demonstrate most of the elements appearing on the Persepolis plaque are (selectively): amphora in Basel (Schweizer loan; Antimenes Painter, *ABV* 269, 41; J. Boardman, *Athenian Black Figure Vases* (London 1974) fig. 188; cf. figs 191, 228); Munich 2080 (Lysippides Painter, *ABV* 256, 22; P. Arias, *Storia della Ceramica* (Torino 1963) pl. 56.1). Herakles still shoulders his club on the early Boston pyxis, Boardman, *op. cit.* fig. 320 and *RA* 1978, 230 fig. 4.

We turn to Athenian vases because these offer the fullest series of representations, and in Athens the scene probably had some symbolic significance.<sup>9</sup> We have no particular reason for believing that an Athenian hand executed the Persepolis plaque. In Athenian scenes Athena is regularly shown supporting Herakles and she is missing here. The Greek artists working in Persia were recruited in the East Greek world and although Herakles scenes are comparatively rare there, and the tripod scene so far unrecorded, this need not worry us unduly.

The technique is an interesting one. The stone had been carefully smoothed before being lightly scratched with the outlines and some details of the figures. The intention was clearly to paint over these lines, and to fill both the figures and the background with paint so as to obscure the lines completely. This technique (we shall meet other examples later) is that used at Persepolis for sketching figures to be painted on the dress of relief figures, and on a 'sketch slab'.<sup>10</sup> In Greek art the appearance of the sketches is exactly that of the preliminary sketches which appear on Athenian red figure vases, executed on the unfired clay by a pointed instrument which just bruised the surface.<sup>11</sup> The technique is, of course, the obvious one for laying out figures which are to be wholly painted over, with their background, and it is not confined to vase painting. It is very probable that the Archaic painted gravestones were prepared in the same way. One is preserved with a faint

<sup>9</sup> The writer explores this in *RA* 1978, 227–34.

<sup>10</sup> *Persepolis* i, pls. 142, 143, 198b; Roos (n. 7) esp. 53 n. 3.

<sup>11</sup> P. E. Corbett, *JHS* lxxxv (1965) 16–28, gives an excellent study of the sketch techniques on Athenian vases. In black figure, where the background is not going to be painted over, the preliminary sketch is more often painted within the final outlines or more cautiously executed with faint incision.

sketch of this type.<sup>12</sup> On others the sketch has not been observed or recorded, and on some the final outlines were strongly defined by a bold incised line and any sketching may have been polished away.<sup>13</sup> A comparable technique was employed for the painted stone stelai of Chios and Boeotia a century and more later;<sup>14</sup> for tomb paintings in Italy;<sup>15</sup> and for engraved gems.<sup>16</sup>

It is possible, though I think unlikely, that our stone plaque carried a ground wash before the sketch was made. We may be sure that this was not to be the ultimate background for the figures. On white ground vases, where the ground underlies the figures, the sketch is naturally made over the ground.<sup>17</sup> Here we may assume that the background was painted in, but we cannot tell whether it was dark—like relief sculpture, some painted stelai and red figure vases; or light—like the background of all known Archaic clay or wooden panels.

Whatever the colour involved we can readily envisage the result: a panel painting depicting a Greek mythological scene such as we might expect to see on a vase. We cannot tell whether it was intended as votive or purely decorative (see Dr Roaf's comments above). It seems to be in local stone, so it is not looted from some Greek sanctuary. There are no signs of attachment or provision for hanging visible on the extant fragments. And it is no mere 'doodle' like other Archaic Greek sketches found at Persepolis and discussed by Miss Richter,<sup>18</sup> nor, given its subject and style, can it be a trial for a work to be executed on another piece of stone.

Panel paintings of this type must have been extremely common in late Archaic Greece, but not on stone, or surely some would have been preserved from homeland sites. Our expatriate Greek must have been influenced by local practice of painting on stone. At home he may well have been familiar with figured plaques of fired clay which were made to be used as votives, some for tombs, usually with appropriate scenes upon them. Most, though not all, are from Attica and are in black figure or earlier techniques.<sup>19</sup> For the display of similar clay plaques in purely secular or domestic contexts we have as yet no evidence. There must have been very many more in wood, but we have only the fragments of votive plaques from Pitsa near Corinth,<sup>20</sup> executed on a white ground in a technique like that of the slightly earlier Corinthian vases. Other wooden plaques were probably prepared on a white ground and for this reason alone it is likely that the

Persepolis plaque too had a pale background to its figures. Since it is not demonstrably votive, and obviously not funerary, it is precious testimony to the probable appearance of the decorative wooden plaques of the Greek world. It tells us how much like the vase scenes they must have been, and reminds us of that even greater wealth of imagery to which Greeks of the Archaic period were exposed, by which their views of myth were moulded, and in which their artists expressed their narrative skills.

It is of just this period that we begin to have record in ancient writers of the names and works of Greeks painters—not vase painters but panel painters whose works probably resembled our plaque, in its finished state, and possibly were no larger, or not much larger. In other words very much like the familiar vase paintings, but executed on a flat surface. In the only case where we have some description of a painting we can see that this parallel is a fair one. Two sources mention a painting by Kleantes of Corinth in the Temple of Artemis Alpeioussa near Olympia. Strabo (343) mentions a birth of Athena, and Athenaeus (346 b,c) Poseidon offering (*προσφέρων*) a tunny fish to Zeus in labour. From what we know of Archaic art it is easy to understand that Poseidon was not offering the fish, but merely holding it as his attribute, in a scene of gods attending the birth of Athena such as is familiar on several late Archaic vases. We need not envisage a panel much larger than the Persepolis plaque, or at least with figures any larger than those on vases. If this is the character of late Archaic panel painting, brought vividly before us by these fragments from Persepolis, we can better judge the character of the revolution in scale and composition worked by Polygnotos and his colleagues in the next generation.

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### The Midnight Planet

Choeroboscus preserves the following notice, which came down to him from Herodian (i 45. 14, ii 743. 24 Lentz):

Μεσόνυξ Μεσόνυχος· εἰς τῶν ἐπτά πλανήτων παρὰ τοῖς Πυθαγορείοις ὀνομάζεται. μέμνηται Στησίχορος (PMG 259).

It has been almost entirely overlooked by historians of Greek astronomy. The only published discussion known to me is a short article by P. J. Bicknell in *Apeiron* (Monash University) ii 2 (1968) 10–12.<sup>1</sup> He observes that it is a notice of considerable significance, and he makes some important inferences from it. The only planet mentioned in Hesiod and Homer, or in early poetry generally, is Venus, under the names *Ἑσπερος* and *Ἐωσφόρος*.<sup>2</sup> Bicknell notes that the name Mesonyx must have been chosen 'on analogy with' those names; I would prefer to say, by antithesis to them. Hesperos was the luminary that only appeared in the evening, Heosphoros always pre-saged the dawn: Mesonyx was the planet that could be seen in the middle of the night.

<sup>1</sup> I owe the reference to Dr Malcolm Davies.

<sup>2</sup> Hes. *Th.* 381, *Il.* xxii 318, xxiii 226, Sappho 104ab, 117b?, Ibyc. 331, Pind. *L.* iv 26; without name, *Od.* xiii 93 f.

<sup>12</sup> The cock on Antiphanes' stele of about 520: Athens NM 86; G. M. A. Richter, *The Archaic Gravestones of Attica* (London 1961) 40 no. 54.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *ibid.* fig. 139; contrast figs 160 and 163 where there is no bold outline incision and the sketch is apparently lost. The same sketching problems must have attended the preparation for painting Archaic statuary and architectural features.

<sup>14</sup> Boeotia—A. D. Keramopoulos, *AE* 1920, 1–36; Chios—N. M. Kontoleon, *BCH* lxxi/lxxii (1947/8) 273–301; lxxiii (1949) 384–97.

<sup>15</sup> References in Corbett (n. 11) 18 n. 14; cf. M. Napoli, *La Tomba del Tuffatore* (Bari 1970) 100 f.

<sup>16</sup> J. Boardman, *Greek Gems and Finger Rings* (London 1970) 381; *Burlington Mag.* 1969 fig. 33 opp. p. 595; with D. Scarisbrick, *The Ralph Harari Collection of Finger Rings* (London 1977) no. 44.

<sup>17</sup> Corbett, *op. cit.* 18.

<sup>18</sup> *AJA* 1 (1946) 27 f.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. J. Boardman, *BSA* xlix (1954) 183–201 (votive); l (1955) 51–66 (funerary); *JHS* lxxvi (1956) 20–4 (red figure) and 24 f. for later red figure plaques. Unusual plaque techniques (red figure with coral red or white ground) are mentioned in *Athenian Red Figure Vases; Archaic Period* (London 1975) 277, and see A. Greifenhagen in *In Memoriam Otto J. Brendel*, edd. L. Bonfante and H. von Heintze (Mainz 1976) 43–8.

<sup>20</sup> M. Robertson, *History of Greek Art* (London 1975) 120 f., 635 f., pl. 34d; A. K. Orlandos, *EAA* s.v. 'Pitsa'.