

perhaps too much so: it would be more natural to bury so shameful a memory.

After the victory at Pallene, Herodotus continues, Pisistratus sent his sons (of whom there were five) to ride after the fugitives and tell them to be confident and go home. It is suggested that the incident is recorded on a cup by the Lysippides painter, which shows a group of hoplites, archers and horsemen gathered round a bearded man in a chariot.²⁶ If so, this would be the earliest illustration we have in Greek art of a historical event, and one might expect that the painter (who could write) might have added a name or two to help identification, as not much later other vase-painters did for Anacreon and Croesus.²⁷ Also, Pisistratus should hardly be wearing civilian dress or in a chariot nor should he be so unattentive to his sons.

It is, as Boardman says, impossible on present evidence to prove or disprove the theory of political allusions in the subjects of painted pottery, and one must be content with probabilities. Tests that may be applied are whether a political interpretation explains difficulties of an interpretation that is not political, whether it was appropriate to the political situation, whether it would have been reasonably intelligible to the viewer, and perhaps whether modern interpreters are consistent in their results. To the first question, with the very doubtful exception of the Introduction scene on the Oxford amphora, the answer is no: by the middle of the sixth century Attic potters had become confidently vigorous and innovative and readily invented new subjects, most of them—so far at least—not suspected of having political purpose. As for appropriateness, reminders of Phye and of dicing at Pallene seem unhappy: and for intelligibility Triton rates low. Lastly modern interpretations of the same subject do differ, though (to be fair) some are argued less rigorously than others. At present, I think, arguments for the politically allusive and still more for the propagandist theory are too tenuous to be convincing.

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have been anti-Pisistratid, unless put up after the expulsion of Hippas, and then the disgrace would no longer have been a fresh memory. The subject could, of course, have been suggested by negligence at Pallene, but without any message.

²⁶ Williams in ed. F. Lissarrague and F. Thelamon, *Image et céramique grecque* (Rouen 1983) 135–6.

²⁷ *ARV²* 36, Gales painter no. 2; 185, Cleophrades painter no. 32; 238, Myson no. 1.

'Artful Crafts': A Commentary

In *JHS* cv (1985) 108–28 M. Vickers makes far-reaching claims for the dependence of Attic fine pottery on metalwork. I take them more or less in his order.

I *The Colours of Classical Fictile Vases*

Vickers starts by remarking, fairly enough, that the colouring of Attic pottery needs to be explained and then gives his explanation—red (that is the reserved surface of the pot) imitates gold, black silver, purple copper and white usually ivory. He does not say definitely when these equations were made. In his section IV he detects instances to well back in the

Bronze Age and not only in Greece, but perhaps he reckons such imitation a recurrent phenomenon. At any rate his principal concern is with mature Black-figure and Red-figure.

The most surprising imitation is that of silver by black paint. Vickers argues that till well into the Hellenistic period the Greeks liked their silver tarnished. His evidence is a statement attributed to the probably Presocratic philosopher Thrasyalces that silver is black,¹ a gibe by Theocritus on skinflints who would not give away the tarnish on a coin,² Asclepiades' commentary on Nestor's cup in the *Iliad*, and the use of silver for some naturally dark areas of the decoration of a bronze chariot presumably found in Macedonia.³ He also suggests that the so-called degeneration of the black paint (or 'glaze'), which from the fourth century on gives much Attic pottery a duller but more metallic look, should rather be considered a technological advance, since it makes the imitation more convincing.

These arguments seem to me insufficient. Vickers himself admits that not all Classical silver was allowed to tarnish, notably the silver teeth of some bronze statues; but the usage of such words as ἀργυροδίνης, ἀργυροειδής and ἀργυρόπτεξα imply that from Homer on silver was generally thought of as light in colour, and Sappho is said to have described the moon as ἀργυρία in a context that cannot refer to an eclipse.⁴ As for Thrasyalces' statement, we do not know in what context it was made⁵ and the unknown author who mentions it does so with surprise; Theocritus's remark has more point if tarnish was not desirable; and Asclepiades is indulging his interpretative fancy, nor was he far in date from Diodorus, for whom untarnished silver was evidently normal.⁶ The Macedonian chariot is more serious, but what was intended may have been contrast of colour rather than verisimilitude and anyhow it may well be as late as Diodorus.⁷ Further, if the radical change from tarnished to polished silver had occurred in the late Hellenistic period, it would be surprising for this to be so completely forgotten that Pliny did not mention it in *NH* xxxiii. On the change in Attic paint in the fourth century, we might perhaps expect it to have been sudden, if it was the welcome result of some new process; but, as Vickers says, it was only gradual.

If Attic black does not imitate silver, then the case for the other materials becomes unimportant. Still, the red is not very like gold nor the purple like copper; and if, as Vickers asserts in his introductory paragraph, the familiar colours are not the only ones compatible with Attic clay, one may wonder why better matches were not made (though I suspect that in practice these colours were the most convenient ones to obtain and that this

¹ *POxy* liii (1984) 3659.5–8.

² *Id.* xvi 16–17.

³ G. Seure, *BCH* xxviii (1904) 224–5.

⁴ [Julian], *Ep.* 19 (Bidez-Cumont no. 194). I am grateful to J. M. Cook for this reference.

⁵ D. Hughes and P. J. Parsons suggest that it might have been a paradox ([n.1] 62).

⁶ ii 48.8; xix 98.3.

⁷ The use here of silver seems inconsistent: Vickers notes the stripes and spots of felines and the eye of a horse (though it is not clear from Seure's description whether for the white or the pupil) but it occurs also on the legs of riders. The date should be late Hellenistic, so P. J. Callaghan kindly told me.

and tradition give the best and the simplest explanation for their use). It is also curious that from the later fifth century onwards some red-figure painters use real gilding for various details. For the white-ground lekythoi the derivation from ivory tusks is more plausible,⁸ though not (I think) very likely, anyhow till ivory specimens are found, and alabaster might be a better choice; but inlays of ivory (or alabaster) on metal vases, which usually have thin walls, are harder to credit.

II *Gold and Silver in Classical Athens*

Silver and gold plate, Vickers emphasises, must have been in fairly common use by rich Athenians in the fifth century and, though he may be exaggerating (since the greater prosperity of the past is a theme about as regular with moralists as its frugality) basically I agree with him and indeed would suppose such luxury not new at that time. It does not follow, though, that those who owned plate did not use pottery too, especially when they were not entertaining guests.

III *The Influence of Gold, Silver and Bronze on Black- and Red-figure*

In support of the argument that the colouring of Attic pottery imitates that of more precious materials, Vickers brings in the rise and fall of the red-figure technique. Red-figure, he says, required some working practices that are far more difficult than those of black-figure (which is true for certain details) and its adoption cannot be explained (though I do not see why) by an interest in problems of an artistic nature. So he looks for a straightforward economic reason—that, since red means gold⁹ and black silver, it would be quicker and cheaper for a metalworker to cut out figures than backgrounds in gold.¹⁰ Vickers does not, though, give reasons for the stylistic difference between black-figure and red-figure, which cannot correspond to differences in work in silver and gold: someone somewhere must have been interested in artistic problems. For the end of red-figure at Athens, usually put in the 320s, Vickers suggests that Alexander's conquest of the East brought a new preference for relief decoration in metalware; this may be so, but in pottery the 'Megarian' bowls, which evidently imitate metalwork, do not appear for another two or three generations and the immediate successor of Attic red-figure is West Slope, which does not use relief.

IV *Bronze and Gold*

Bronze, says Vickers, was the poor man's substitute for gold, and since decoration in gold, when used by itself, is always in relief, relief decoration on bronze vessels may be considered imitative: so too with cast handles, rims and feet. No supporting evidence is given,

⁸ I do not altogether understand the argument that the palmettes on the shoulders of lekythoi represent ornamental concealments of rivets. Should there not then be rivets, also to be concealed, at the top of the belly? Or were the rivets simply drilled into the wall?

⁹ To be more exact, Vickers thinks that in earlier black-figure red represents bronze, but that about the time when red-figure began it had come to be used for gold. This change would then have been in the 530s BC on the conventional chronology, but according to Vickers's (which I do not accept) around 480, so allowing Persian booty to increase the supply of precious metals.

¹⁰ Though I doubt if, as Vickers says, he would have made more profit. If less gold was used, customers would soon have noticed.

and one may well wonder why bronzesmiths, who were capable of such skilled work as making helmets and other armour and casting figurines, should have needed models in another material for necessary parts of jugs or kraters. One may also wonder if Greece ever acquired enough gold for the regular production of large gold vessels that this theory requires. Vickers then returns to pottery and lists various fabrics which he thinks imitate metal in their colouring:¹¹ I should be surprised if there are many that do not satisfy his criteria.

V *The Intellectual History of the Keramikproblem*

This is an interesting and informative section, but the power of fashion seems to me overestimated. I hardly knew Beazley, but doubt if he was as naive as Vickers makes out; and not all students of Greek pots have believed that the craftsmen who painted them mixed in high society¹² or thought of themselves as artists in the modern sense, though craftsmen too may think about art. On the ambiguity of κεραμεύς inscriptions Vickers's warning is salutary, though a pottery κεραμεύς may sometimes have been a proprietor who did little or no manual work himself. The argument from finding places of attributed Attic black-figure and red-figure pottery is very adventurous.

VI *Design, Execution and Patterns*

Athenaeus mentions a metal cup with the inscription γραμμά Παρρασίου, τέχνη Μυός¹³ and Pausanias was told of another collaboration of Mys and Parrhasius, the words he uses being τορεῦσαι and καταγράφαι.¹⁴ Vickers compares the familiar ἔγραψε and ἐποίησε of Attic black-figure and red-figure pottery and jumps to the conclusion that ἔγραψε indicates a designer, the 'design' of course being intended for metalwork. How closely the vase-painters copied the 'design' is left vague; but evidently Vickers does not think it close enough to obscure the vase-painter's personal style, since otherwise he would not distinguish different hands in copies of the 'designs' of Duris and Polygnotus; and if errors in spelling and nonsense inscriptions are the result of faulty copying, that suggests that vase-painters were not following 'designs' assiduously. So it seems that Vickers's novel theory has little or no relevance to Beazley's classification. What it does, if he is right, is to deny vase-painters—or at least the more accomplished of them—any general originality in the choice and composition of subjects.¹⁵ Correspondingly, the ἐποίησε inscriptions denote not the potter, but the silversmith who was to execute the 'designs': so, since the vase-painter was copying the 'design' and not the silversmith's product, they must become irrelevant for the study of painted pots.

¹¹ His first reference in n. 127 is perhaps a little unfair: I said of the shapes of Etruscan bucchero that there appears to be much imitation of metalwork. Incidentally some Etruscan bucchero pots, which from their blackness might on Vickers's theory be thought to imitate silver, seem to have been given a silver overlay; but this can be interpreted in different ways.

¹² From literary sources we hear only of sculptors and painters—of pictures, not pots—who were admitted, and not many of them either.

¹³ xi 782b.

¹⁴ i 28.2.

¹⁵ Vickers allows some independent artistry because on a few pots the traces of a preliminary sketch differ considerably from the final painting; and also he excepts hack work.

The evidence for all this does not amount to much; some artists—if I may use the word—made ‘designs’ for metalworkers and, since metalwork (according to Vickers) determined the colours as well as the shapes of fine Attic pottery, it might as well provide the decoration too. There are objections. Painted pottery was cheap and ‘designs’ relatively expensive (so Vickers reasonably observes)¹⁶ and, if only for economy, one would expect a design to have been used repeatedly by the potter who hired or bought it; yet in Attic painted pottery close duplicates are remarkably rare. It is perhaps not so important that, to judge by ἔγραψε inscriptions, most vase-painters (as identified stylistically) each used the ‘designs’ of a single and separate designer.¹⁷ A more serious difficulty, though, is in the interpretation of ἐποίησε, which appears on a fair number of simply decorated pots and on some with no decoration,¹⁸ so that for the latter at least the craftsman in the pottery cannot have been working to a ‘design’: so Εχσεκίας ποίησεν on two undecorated cups should mean that Exekias made pottery and not metalwork and, since we have two amphoras with elaborate decoration inscribed Εχσεκίας ἐγράψε καποίησε με, it should follow that he was also their painter (or designer),¹⁹ so that the old interpretations of ἐποίησε and ἔγραψε are justified. Further, in the metalwork that vase-painters are assumed to have been copying the decoration was, it seems, engraved; why then did the vase-painters develop three different kinds of line in their copies—the relief line, the flush black line and the dilute line?²⁰ Lastly, I doubt whether vase-painters regularly had any ‘design’ in front of them when painting a pot;²¹ if they did and it was a detailed one, there should again be more duplicates and the alterations from preliminary sketches on some pots—here Vickers and I agree—suggest that there they were painting from the head and not reproducing a previously drawn ‘design’. On archetypes I do not understand Vickers’s reasoning: where subjects and types recur, surely vase-painters could imitate or be influenced by one another, as sculptors and architects obviously were?

To sum up, Vickers’s claim that Attic pottery is almost wholly dependent on metalwork has little probability and less fact to support it. His argument is enviably wide-ranging, but it is shallow and skims over difficulties.

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¹⁶ The evidence is Pliny’s statement about Parrhasius—‘multa graphidis vestigia exstant in tabulis ac membranis eius, ex quibus proficere dicuntur artifices’ (NH xxxv 68): parchment (‘membrana’) was expensive.

¹⁷ This point is made by F. Canciani in ed. E. Böhr and W. Martini, *Studien zur Mythologie und Vasenmalerei* (Mainz 1986) 63 n. 8.

¹⁸ A convenient, though now very incomplete, illustrated corpus of signed pots is provided by J. C. Hoppin, *A handbook of Greek Black-figured vases* (Paris 1924) and *A handbook of Attic Red-figured vases* (Cambridge, Mass. 1919).

¹⁹ Hoppin (n. 17—*B.F.*) s.v. Exekias, nos. 1 and 4; 2 and 9.

²⁰ If there were different kinds of line in the ‘designs’ for metalworkers, what was their purpose and how was a relief line produced?

²¹ Vase-painters’ own trial sketches for elaborate compositions are allowed by J. D. Beazley (‘Potter and painter’, *PBA* xxx [1944] 38) and J. V. Noble (*The technique of Attic painted pottery* [New York 1965] 50).

After writing this I read M. Robertson’s sensible lecture in ed. D. Kurtz, *Beazley and Oxford* (Oxford 1985) 19–30. He makes some of the points I make and some I do not. But since our approaches are different, I have left my text unaltered.

Opramoas and the Anonymous Benefactor

Opramoas of Rhodiapolis in Eastern Lycia is one of the best known benefactors in the Greek half of the Roman Empire because the decrees and other documents inscribed on his tomb allow us to trace the extent and sequence of his benefactions and the honours he received.¹ Two inscriptions from the Letoon near Xanthos, recently published by A. Balland, seem to extend this picture of generosity, one of them virtually doubling the previous total of Opramoas’ benefactions.² The first, Balland no. 66, is a statue base recording that Opramoas gave to the Lycian League land to finance a distribution to the *koinobouloi* of the league; the second, Balland no. 67, is a stele listing a much longer series of benefactions, to the league, to Xanthos and to other Lycian cities, but it does not, and never did, include the benefactor’s name. Balland argues that the second inscription also refers to Opramoas, and this has been generally accepted;³ but it is argued here that its subject is not Opramoas but an anonymous contemporary, so that Opramoas loses his unique position among Lycian benefactors, and we can compare the nature, extent and distribution of his gifts with those of the Anonymous Benefactor and others.⁴

The main argument for identifying the Anonymous Benefactor as Opramoas is the inclusion in Balland no. 67 of a gift of 40,000 den. for the construction of a double stoa by the harbour at Patara, for according to document 63 of his mausoleum Opramoas undertook the whole cost of a double stoa by the harbour there. Three supplementary arguments are less telling. Firstly, both Balland no. 66 and no. 67 record large donations for distributions to the Lycian league. But the two benefactions, although of similar size, are described in different terms; Balland no. 66 names the nature of the gift (land), its income,⁵ and the

¹ Discussions of Opramoas: T. R. S. Broughton in T. Frank (ed.), *An economic survey of ancient Rome* iv (Baltimore 1938) 779–80; P. Veyne, *Le pain et le cirque* (Paris 1976) 295–6; his mausoleum inscription: *TAM* ii 905 = *IGR* iii 739. R. Heberdey, *Opramoas* (Vienna 1897) discusses the reconstruction of the inscribed walls and the chronology of the various documents recorded, and his numbering of the documents, retained in *IGR* and *TAM*, will be used here.

² A. Balland, *Fouilles de Xanthos* vii, *Inscriptions d’époque impériale du Letoon* (Paris 1981), cited below as Balland. The inscriptions discussed here, Balland nos. 66, 67 = *SEG* xxx (1980) 1534–5, are discussed at length by Balland 173–224.

³ Balland 186–7. The identification was proposed in a preliminary paper by Balland in *Actes du Colloque sur la Lycie antique* (Paris 1980) 89–93, and adopted by H. Metzger, *TAD* xxv (1980) 192–3. It has been generally accepted by reviewers e.g. *SEG* xxx (1980) 1534–5; G. Moretti, *ArchClass* xxxiii (1981) 423–4; J. and L. Robert, *REG* xciv (1982) 396–8.

⁴ My attention was drawn to this problem by A. Farrington, and I owe much to discussion with him of the architectural epigraphy of Roman Lycia. I am also grateful to A. S. Hall, S. Jameson, and S. R. F. Price for advice in the preparation of this paper, although they are not, of course, responsible for the errors and weaknesses that remain.

⁵ A gift by Opramoas for a comparable but a smaller foundation at Tlos (see below p. 174 and n. 12) is also specified as land, and valued only in terms of its annual income.