NEW VASES IN THE RHODES MUSEUM

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Since the appearance of our guide to the Rhodes University Vases in *Acta Classica* 9 (1966) four years have passed during which some new accessions were made to the small but growing museum. This report is intended to bring these items to public notice and to produce, together with illustrations, a first *addendum* to the original list. 1966 marked a kind of turning point for the Departmental collection, in that the University seemed to recognize our contribution to the Rhodes scene and most generously agreed to institute an annual grant for the purpose of increasing our holdings of Greek and Roman antiquities. The actual sum involved is not large, so that we are often compelled to save up for a year or two before raising our voice in the market place. In the meantime, however, it has been possible to establish further contacts with galleries, museums, and with some private collectors, in America, England, and Germany: all agencies which understand that we cannot compete with the wealthy few at Sotheby’s but have enough to advance our modest ambition: *ex parvis saepe magnum*.

There are four new pieces to be published here of different shapes, provenance, and period. Two are Attic and two South Italian. Our choice of these items was governed not only by the modest resources at our disposal, but particularly by the chance of supply at a given moment. Above all, however, we have tried to be guided by student needs, that is to say we aim to fill some of the more obvious gaps in our selection with the result that, with one exception, the new items belong to categories not represented in the earlier guide. Therefore, in order to preserve some sort of clarity, it seemed wise to continue the old numbering rather than attempt to introduce subgroups or observe a strictly chronological sequence. The exception I spoke of consists in the *kylix* No. 41 which in period, provenance, and style, is clearly related to the *lekythos* No. 5.1 Again the argument holds good that the old arrangement and numbering is best left undisturbed.

**Number 41**

Black-figure Attic *kylix* (cup). One of the handles is slightly cracked, the rim is chipped, and the glaze has worn rather badly (Height 4½ in., Diameter 7½ in., handle to handle 10½ in.). The cup is decorated with two similar scenes on the obverse and reverse. Two women are engaged in lively conversation. In one group both figures have the left arm bent at the elbow,

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hand palm outward, perhaps to emphasize a point. They are seated on chairs typical of the period and dressed in the long peplos. The folds of the garment are indicated by some careless incisions. At their feet, and between the figures, are what look like two large pots from one of which, in each tableau, vines or foliage are sprouting which, together with sundry blobs, achieve a rather restless and untidy picture. Both scenes are flanked by large palmettes.

The cup is an unmistakable example of the Late Attic black-figure style and can be dated c. 500 B.C., or slightly later. This period is contemporary with, and overlaps, that of Early Attic red-figure, a time in fact when more vigorous and accomplished artists, like the Andocides painter, were pioneering the new red-figure technique and style. Our vase is heavy and, with its uneven base, more than a little inartistic. It is narrower and has a deeper bowl than the usual kylix. Furthermore the bowl is directly joined to the foot, so that we are probably dealing with a cup-kotyle, that is a descendant of the so-called Band cup which can be distinguished by a concave lip passing 'into the bowl in a smooth curve'. The cup-kotyle became common in inferior Attic ware in the fifth century and later.3 We yet have to acquire a good example of the Attic black-figure style, but the scenes on our vase are not without charm and humour.

Number 42

Attic red-figure pelike decorated on both sides with a youth holding a garland. It is in perfect condition and the well preserved state of the glaze can be judged from the illustration (Height 4 5/8 in.). The date is c. 410 B.C., that is the Late Classical Period which extended roughly over the last quarter of the fifth century B.C. when vase painters were concerned with imparting greater depth and volume to their figures. Elaborate detail is lavished on garment folds, hair, and body form in general. The effect of many figures on contemporary vessels is one of striving after realism which is at times liable to ignore the apparent limitations in the vase shape.4 The pelike form (the so-called 'Schlauchamphora') first appears in Attic during this period, and it has been aptly described as a ‘one-piece amphora with a sagging belly’.5

Our example is one of a group of small pelikai known as the ‘Owen Class’ after the owner of one of them. These pelikai are decorated with framed

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2. Cf. the figure on the lekythos No. 5.
4. For a description of the style and technique of the period see Cook, op. cit. 185 ff.; G. M. A. Richter, Attic Red-Figure Vases, Yale 1958, 139 ff.
5. Cook, op. cit. 224.
pictures and are distinguished by the vertical line (in white or red added clay) that forms the side border.  

**Number 43**

Campanian *hydria* (water jar) with two carrying handles at the shoulder and a vertical pouring handle at the back. It is decorated in the applied red technique, with a seated woman holding a thyrsus: facing her, a youth pointing with his right hand and offering a bowl in his left. Male heads are added below the carrying handles, and a large palmette supported by volutes appears at the back. Second half of 4th century B.C. (Height 10½ in.). This vase comes from the collection of the Earl of Warwick.

In the applied technique, as the name implies, the pigment was added over the black background. Details were normally incised into the red to show the colour of the background. This practice was occasionally used in Attica as well, but found little favour there except perhaps in the fourth century ‘West Slope Ware’ (discovered on the west slope of the Athenian Acropolis) with its applied ornaments in red, white, and yellow.  

No. 43 is an interesting example of this technique which, because of its simplicity, competed with the reserving technique in South Italian ware at a time (4th century) when the good supply of the local product caused a decline in imports from Attica.

**Number 44**

Apulian fish-plate (Height 1 2/8 in.; Diameter 7 in.) of the late fourth century B.C. This type of plate does not occur much in Greece but is common during this period in South Italy, and particularly in Apulia. The shape is round, sloping gently inwards towards a circular depression in the centre which is designed to hold some kind of sauce, or to catch the water draining from the fish. The plate stands on a moulded base with a low stem. The decoration normally consists of two or more fish arranged around the central depression. The most favoured kind of fish seem to be sea-perch, mullet, sargus, rock-fish, torpedo, and cuttlefish; sometimes smaller sea-creatures, like shrimps and shellfish, are also represented between the larger fish. The stylized design of the decoration often makes it difficult to distinguish between plates of the different Italiote fabrics, but it is likely that a greater use of added white for details is a mark of Campanian ware.  

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6. For similar *pelikai* with one or two figures see J. D. Beazley, *Attic Red-Figure Vase Painters*, Oxford 1963, 1358f.  
8. *Handbook to the Nicholson Museum*, University of Sydney 1948, 333, on which this description is based.
This particular plate, which is practically identical with an example in the British Museum,9 shows two perch and one torpedo. The body-markings of the fish are clearly shown, and fins, spines, and other details are picked out in white and black. A good many plates of this type are painted with the torpedo (νάρκη), or electric ray, whose flesh was tender, while its liver was considered a delicacy.10

Our example, with its charming design of waves painted around the edge, is perfectly preserved; indeed the freshness of the colour belies its age of over twenty centuries. The plate was originally destined for the Staatliche Museum Berlin, Charlottenburg, where it would have been exhibited had the annual grant not already been spent. I recently visited Professor Greifenhagen, the director of the Charlottenburg museum, who put me in touch with the owner of the plate, Dr. Kurt Deppert of Frankfurt, and thus gave us the opportunity of acquiring a prized possession.

However, no collector can ever be satisfied. Dr Deppert offered me an exquisite Late Archaic red-figure kylix decorated by the Brygos painter. The price, alas, was well beyond our means, and I was obliged to abandon all hope of bringing this piece back to Rhodes. With this sense of frustration still lively in my mind, I should perhaps end the report with a question. Will we ever be able to import masterpieces of this kind and illuminate for our students one of the most fascinating aspects of Classical studies?

Plate 1. Number 41  
Black-figure Attic kylix  
Plate 2. Number 42  
Attic red-figure pelike
Plate 3. Number 43
Campanian hydria

Plate 4. Number 44
Apulian fish-plate
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