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VOLCANIC LANDSCAPE WITH CRATERS

By NIGEL SPIVEY

Most ancient Greek vases in modern collections were found in Etruscan tombs. To state this is not a revelation: however, it is a fact of provenance often overlooked or marginalized in discussion about Greek vases.[1] Some years ago, by way of contributing to a Festschrift assembled in honour of my postgraduate mentor, Robert Cook, I attempted an explanation as to why so many Greek-made pots had been hoarded by the Etruscans: an explanation steered predominantly by the final funerary context of those vessels.[2] Since then, a number of further studies relating to this phenomenon have been made, most notably by Christoph Reusser; and our archaeological understanding of how Greek vases were used by the Etruscans has become markedly more refined.[3] Traditionally, the separation of Etruria into 'cities' and 'cemeteries' has favoured the generous material evidence of the cemeteries. Investigations of the elusive cities – including the major centres of Tarquinia and Cerveteri – now offer some opportunity to review the ways in which certain artefacts frequently found buried among the 'community of the dead' were also in active circulation amid the society of the living. The assemblage of a corpus of Etruscan inscriptions on Greek vases attests to one highly significant local and particular value accrued by these objects.[4] And further to all this (or because of it), there has also been a palpable softening of the tendency, on the part of Classical art historians, to depict Etruria as a place where affluent barbarians took 'whatever they were offered' by trans-Mediterranean traders.[5]

[1] So (for example) only a passing mention of the Etruscan factor is made in C. Bérard et al., *A City of Images. Iconography and Society in Ancient Greece* (Princeton, NJ, 1989), 12; while in J. Boardman, *The History of Greek Vases* (London, 2001), neither 'Etruria' nor 'Etruscan' so much as feature in the Index. If nothing else, this represents an excessive reaction to the 'Etruscomania' of the late eighteenth/early nineteenth centuries (see n. 50).

[2] N. J. Spivey, 'Greek vases in Etruria', in T. Rasmussen and N. J. Spivey (eds.), *Looking at Greek Vases* (Cambridge, 1991), 131–50.

[3] C. Reusser, *Vasen für Etrurien. Verbreitung und Funktionen attischer Keramik im Etrurien des 6. und 5. Jahrhunderts v. Chr* (Zürich, 2002).

[4] A. Maggiani, *Vasi attici figurati con dediche a divinità etrusche* (Rome, 1997).

[5] See, e.g., J. Boardman, *The Diffusion of Classical Art in Antiquity* (London, 1994), 225, where a discreet admission of self-censure is made.

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We should not be surprised, then, that a recently-published volume surveying finds of Athenian painted pottery from Etruscan sanctuaries and domestic habitations supplies further proof that finely decorated imports were part of 'daily life' for some people in this part of the world.[6] Of course, the vases survived in such quantity because they were ultimately deposited as 'grave goods' in underground tombs; but that was not the prime reason for their acquisition. Banquets and symposia, libations and ceremonies, votive offerings, dowries, and prizes – such are likely to have been the generic occasions for the utilization of Greek vases in Etruria. The evidence may even go some way to confirming the Greek historical allegation that luxurious extravagance or *tryphe* was typical of the Etruscans. 'Among the Etruscans sumptuous tables are prepared twice a day, and richly colored rugs are spread, and there are silver cups of every kind, and a host of handsome slaves stands by, dressed in rich garments.'[7] This report, thought to derive from a Sicilian-Greek source of the fourth century BC, admittedly makes mention of not terracotta but metal vessels, raising a question of relative value to which we shall return later. But, however that question is resolved, it remains conceivable that, while Pericles and other officials of the Athenian democracy were accustomed to eating and drinking from a simple service of plain, black-glazed pottery, an Etruscan aristocrat of the same period commanded, for the sake of day-to-day dining, an array of vessels given figured decoration by the most proficient vase-painters in the Kerameikos.[8]

Gathering evidence from a wide range of Etruscan archaeological contexts, Christoph Reusser has proposed a new intellectual framework (*'neues Denkmodel'*) for understanding the abundance of Greek vases in Etruria.[9] It constitutes a minor example of 'paradigm shift'.

[6] M. Bentz and C. Reusser, *Attische Vasen in etruskischem Kontext. Funde aus Häusern und Heiligtümern*, Beihefte zum Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum, Deutschland 2 (Munich, 2004); with review by the present author in *American Journal of Archaeology* 110 (2006), 659–61.

[7] Poseidonius *apud* Athenaeus 153d (here cited in the Loeb translation). The same sentiment is also echoed in Diodorus Siculus 5.40.

[8] The studiously egalitarian nature of state-sponsored Athenian dining and drinking equipment in the mid-fifth century BC is noted in S. I. Rotroff and J. H. Oakley, *Debris from a Public Dining Place in the Athenian Agora*, *Hesperia* Supplement 25 (1992), 41–4 (though in this case the plainer black-glazed vessels were supplemented with a large number of red-figure kraters, perhaps by private donation). A well-deposit of crockery *c.* 440 BC from 'a wine-shop with some pretensions to elegance', on the edge of the Agora, features mostly black-glazed vases: see L. Talcott, 'Attic Black-glazed Stamped Ware and other Pottery from a Fifth Century Well', *Hesperia* 4 (1935), 477–523. On the social nuances of krater-usage see J. Luke, 'The Krater, *Kratos*, and the *Polis*', *G & R* 41 (1994), 23–32.

[9] Reusser (n. 3), i.204–6; ii.269–70.

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In the past, having found so many Greek vases in Etruscan tombs, we assumed that the Etruscans either deposited those vases as part of a funerary ideal of conspicuous consumption – offering 'exotic' imported *objets d'art* to the dead for the sake of marking social status – or else we sought to understand how the Etruscans might have given the images on these vases (or just the shapes of the vases) some kind of idealized significance for the afterlife. Reusser's revision of the evidence constrains us now to ponder on the use and meaning of those same vases as household goods. However Greek vases arrived in Etruria – and there is no doubt that some, at least, came 'second-hand'[10] – they certainly 'settled' there; they were assimilated for regular use.

What is implied by that phrase, 'regular use'? Some scholars will argue that what mattered most to the Etruscans was the shape of a vase, not its surface decoration.[11] Others have tried to establish distinct patterns of 'taste' on the part of an Etruscan clientele for select figured scenes, a process of discrimination partly determined by how the vase was going to be used.[12] The likelihood of at least some Athenian ceramic workshops creating vases specifically for 'the Etruscan market' has long been accepted: Nikosthenes is the best-known name involved in this demonstrable resort to long-distance 'market research' and consequent 'export strategies' by Greek artisans. And at the most basic level of quantitative assessment, a simple resort to the lists of provenance in Beazley's catalogues of Athenian black-figure and red-figure painters may be enough to

[10] It is a measure of our perplexity about this topic that Webster's original bold proposition that Athenian vases were somehow shipped to Etruria after being first used at Athens has hardly been developed, discussed, or refuted; hence a reference simply to T. B. L. Webster, *Potter and Patron in Classical Athens* (London, 1972). If there is any consensus on the matter, it may be summarized by the supposition that both new and used vases were included in the generally mixed cargoes of goods carried by trans-Mediterranean traders: see Alan Johnston's remarks in Rasmussen and Spivey (n. 2), 218, though direct evidence for second-hand trade remains elusive, as noted in A. Johnston, *Trademarks on Greek Vases. Addenda* (Oxford, 2006), 32–3.

[11] Thus H. H. Blinkenberg, 'La clientèle étrusque de vases attiques a-t-elle acheté des vases ou des images?', in M–C. Villanueva Puig, et al. (eds.), *Céramique et peintures grecques. Modes d'emploi* (Paris, 1999), 439–43, where comparison is made with the superficiality of the taste in nineteenth-century Europe for artefacts from the Far East; cf. Spivey (n. 2), 150.

[12] See R. G. Osborne, 'Why Did Athenian Pots Appeal to the Etruscans?', *World Archaeology* 33.2 (2001), 277–295; also D. Paléothodorus, 'Pourquoi les Étrusques achetaient-ils des vases attiques?', *Les Études Classiques* 70 (2002), 139–60; note, too, the corrective essay contributed by Warren Moon, at the height of the vogue for finding Peisistratid 'propaganda' on Attic vases, suggesting that the preponderance of scenes featuring the Apotheosis of Herakles within the output of the Priam Painter might be explained by the cult of Herakles (and a predilection for chariots) in Etruria: W. G. Moon, 'The Priam Painter. Some Iconographic and Stylistic Considerations', in W. G. Moon (ed.), *Ancient Greek Art and Iconography* (Madison, WI, 1983), 97–118.

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persuade us that certain Athenian-based craftsmen not only had their products despatched to Etruria as a remote destination, but enjoyed favour in one particular Etruscan centre or another. So it can be claimed, for example, that works by Euphronios and other 'Pioneers' of red-figure vase-painting in late archaic Athens were specially coveted by Etruscan connoisseurs in the city of Cerveteri (Caere) – because Cerveteri happens to feature markedly in the lists of known provenance for vases by Euphronios, et al.[13]

The time has come to accept the peculiar problem presented to us by Greek vases in Etruria. As articulated by two distinguished exponents of the interpretation of Etruscan art, we are obliged to put aside our preconceptions of some binding ethnic divide between 'Greeks' and 'Barbarians', and consider 'Etruria as one of the provinces of Greek culture'.[14] We should therefore abandon the stark categorical polarity of 'the Other', which would curb the notion of 'cultural interaction' to some mere commerce of objects, haphazard and impersonal as that model of exchange may be. To do so is a challenge, for the sheer quantity of Greek vases in Etruria remains an intimidating factor. So many thousands of Greek objects came into non-Greek hands: why not explain them *en masse* as simply the relics of a yearning on the part of Etruscan oligarchs and aristocrats for symbols of prestige and 'status' – or part of a stereotypical Etruscan penchant for 'conspicuous consumption'?

What follows here is an essay that has little to say about the statistics of Greek vases in Etruria. There are no graphs or pie charts of shapes, images, and suchlike. Rather, the emphasis is upon retrieving some sense of the quality of reception and response demanded by these artefacts. We shall assume, therefore, that Etruscan owners of Greek vases acquired such objects as not only proprietors but patrons. Anonymous patrons they may remain: but anonymity is not equivalent to non-existence. One type of vase will serve as exemplary, in its various modes of shape and decoration: the *krater*, a vessel whose

[13] Again, it is worth stressing that, where such patterns of provenance have been noted, the tendency has been to gloss Greek images with an Etruscan eschatological interest. Thus P. E. Arias – who used the recorded pattern of provenance for the vases of Euphronios as a means of deducing that the notorious 'Million-dollar vase' acquired by the New York Metropolitan Museum in 1972 probably came from Cerveteri, prior to any forensic proof (see n. 46) – presumed that an Etruscan 'reading' of the scene of the death of Sarpedon must have been conditioned by the eventual deposition of the vase in a funerary assemblage: see P. E. Arias, 'Euphronios, uno dei pionieri', in M. Cygielman, et al. (eds.), *Capolavori di Euphronios* (Milan, 1990), 24.

[14] B. d'Agostino and L. Cerchiai, *Il mare, la morte, l'amore: gli Etruschi, i Greci e l'immagine* (Rome, 1999), xix.

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function was clearly defined by the Greeks. It was a capacious vase intended as a bowl for mixing wine and water. Plenty of such vessels have been recovered from the hilltop cities and rock-cut cemeteries, the 'volcanic landscape' of Etruria. They are museum pieces now, of course – and one of them has become a highly notorious case of contested 'cultural property' in our own time. But what did these kraters mean to those who possessed them – some 2,500 years ago? To begin with an early and well-known instance of one Greek krater with Etruscan provenance is to apprehend the problems – and possibilities – that confront our endeavour to answer this question.

A case study: the 'Eurytios krater'

The potters of archaic Corinth are credited with inventing the specific type of krater known as the 'column krater', featuring two pipe-like or columnar handles either side of the vase.[15] A considerable number of these column kraters, ranging in date across their period of production (*c.* 625–550 BC), have been found in Etruria, and not only in tombs; with one Etruscan site, Cerveteri, dominating the list of findspots around the Mediterranean.[16] We shall address later the question of how 'properly' the Etruscan owners of these vases might have used them prior to deposition; for now, let us suppose that a Corinthian krater found at Cerveteri was used for its intended purpose, i.e. mixing wine and water at a formal drinking occasion, before being placed in a grave.

Such a vase may be decorated with scenes that appear to characterize a generally aristocratic 'lifestyle' – hunting, horses, combat, feasting, and games – in which case we presume that the images were viewed by its Etruscan owners as 'familiar', or at least consonant with their own ideals of the good life.[17] So far, such an analysis is not

[15] The shape was subsequently known as the *krater korinthios* or *korinthiourges*: see T. Bakir, *Der Kolonnettenkrater in Korinth und Attika zwischen 625 und 550 v. Chr.* (Würzburg, 1974), 7.

[16] See data assembled in M. Cristofani and M. Martelli, 'La distribuzione dei crateri corinzi: il mito e l'immaginario dei simposiasti', *Cronache di archeologia* 30 (1991) [1996], 9–25: for the krater-fragments excavated from the Vigna Parrochiale area of Cerveteri, see M. Cristofani (ed.), *Caere 3.1: Lo scarico arcaico della Vigna Parocchiale* (Rome, 1992), 61–5.

[17] Quite apart from the legendary evidence relating to ex-Corinthian oligarchs settling in Etruria, with attendant craftsmen (for which see D. Ridgway and F. Ridgway, 'Demaratus and the Archaeologists', in R. D. de Puma and J. P. Small (eds.), *Murlo and the Etruscans. Art and Society in Ancient Etruria* [Madison, WI, 1994], 6–15), plausible parallels can readily be drawn between the imagery of archaic terracotta plaques from various Etrusco-Italic sites and the imagery of Ripe Corinthian kraters, as demonstrated by J. de la Genière, 'Les acheteurs des cratères corinthiens', *Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique* 112 (1988), 83–90.

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difficult to sustain – and it works particularly well for the majority of Corinthian-made kraters, whose iconography includes scenes reflexive of the shape's specific function: that is, scenes of figures reclining and drinking according to formal protocol. What happens, though, when the imagery becomes more specific?

One archaic Corinthian bowl found at Cerveteri is sufficient to assess the interpretative *aporia* that may deter or else encourage us to pursue the 'poetics' of Greek vases in Etruscan hands. The so-called 'Eurytios krater', created *c.* 600 BC and now in the Louvre, features some images that may be glossed as generic and evocative of privileged status: a minor scene that shows a haunch of meat being prepared for consumption or sacrifice; on one main panel, a set of anonymous hoplite duels, one of them over a dead warrior; and, in a lower register, a file of cantering riders. But further images on the vase appear to require more intellectual investment from the viewer. Under one handle of the bowl, we find a vignette of the Suicide of Ajax, with inscribed labels identifying not only Ajax but also Diomedes and Odysseus as witnesses to his tragedy. Then there is the picture that gives the vase its modern title (Figure 1). Several men are stretched out on banqueting couches, evidently in the midst of a ceremonious meal. Dogs retained under the *klinai* may be read as pets or helpers in the hunt. But the single female figure present is immediately puzzling.

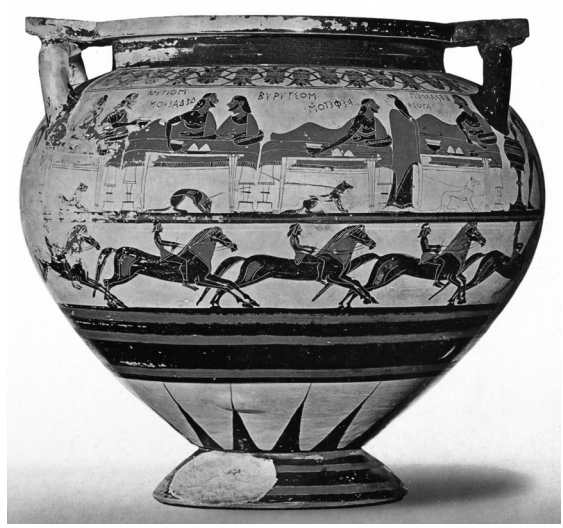


Figure 1. 'The Eurytios Krater', *c.* 600 BC, from Cerveteri. Paris, Musée du Louvre, E635.

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She carries nothing with her, and in any case appears too well dressed to be servile; and, with her cloak wrapped round her shoulders, too modest for a courtesan. She is shown as approaching one of the feasting men, who in return pauses in the act of slicing some food with a knife, and stares straight towards her. The girl, however, does not meet his gaze, but turns back, as if fearful and imploring, towards the other men.

Without any accompanying inscriptions, this scene strikes one as pregnant with a significance beyond its apparent evocation of gentlemen enjoying a noble repast. But what can it be? As if conscious of our concern, the painter of the vase supplies the clues we crave. The figure caught midway in the act of eating is named in large retrograde letters as Herakles; the girl he has apparently unnerved by his attention, Iole. Further inscriptions on the vase make it clear that the other figures are Eurytos (here 'Eurytios'), the father of Iole, and her brothers Deion (or Didaion), Iphitos, Klytios, and Toxeus. If we know the story entailed by these names, then we should be able to guess what is represented on the krater. Herakles has come to the court of Eurytos, king of Oichalia. As we see, Herakles is received hospitably by the king. But, as the artist hints, this conviviality is an overture to death and destruction – not only of the king and his sons, but also of Herakles himself. Herakles either wins Iole from an archery contest, or is simply smitten by desire for her; in any case, the king refuses him her hand, and this refusal makes Herakles fatally furious. Iphitos, the brother shown closest to Herakles at the banquet as depicted on the krater, will be first to go, tossed from the walls of Tiryns. An angry return to Oichalia by Herakles ends in the slaughter of Eurytos and his remaining sons. Herakles then embarks upon a tortuous journey of expiation for his fury; compounded by the jealousy of his wife Deianeira, this will climax in the hero's immolation by the shirt of fire – and finally, his apotheosis.[18]

With the benefit of such 'background information', we may savour the distinct edginess to our scene of aristocratic relaxation – observing, perhaps, the latent menace of the knife flourished by Herakles, or the reddish overpaint added to the men's faces, as if to suggest some flush of drunkenness.[19] But it is a dramatic tension

[18] See Apollodorus 2.6.1, 2.7.7, with J. G. Frazer's note in volume 1 of his Loeb edition, 265.

[19] I like this suggestion, made in the course of the first published discussion of the vase while still in the Campana Collection: see F. T. [*sic*] Welcker, 'Ercole ospite in casa di Eurito re d'Oichalia', *Annali dell'Istituto* 31 (1859), 249. But one is obliged to point out that it is not unusual, in Ripe Corinthian vase-painting, for the faces of male figures to be overpainted in red or purple.

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ultimately relying very heavily upon the addition of names. No club or lionskin is shown by way of Heraklean attribute. Herakles the stalwart symposiast will eventually become a stock figure – but *c*. 600 BC this is not established.[20] Nor was there, presumably, any text yet established of the *Oichalias Halosis*, the archaic saga of 'The Taking of Oichalia', which Hesiod seems to have known; one Creophylus of Samos is thought to have composed a poem on this theme in the seventh century BC, making it markedly different from – and much more elaborate than – the allusive summary given in *Odyssey* 8.224.[21] We have no dramatic confirmation of the story until Sophocles, whose *Trachiniae* (240 ff.) in turn assumes its audience will know that the cause of strife between Herakles and Eurytos arose from an archery contest.

Assumption of knowledge is always an imprecise science. And we do not have to sift very deep among the literary remnants of the tale of Herakles and Eurytos to realize that, for all its citation upon the stage of Classical Athens, this would hardly count as a 'popular' or 'well-known' myth. It is one of the many *praxeis* or 'doings' of Herakles not directly connected with his *erga* or *athloi*, the 'labours', eventually reduced to a canon of twelve. Altogether, these Heraklean adventures and exploits resist any neat chronological or topographical synthesis. The ancient mythographers seem only to have known of Creophylus by repute; and such is the consequent fluidity of the Eurytos storyline that it becomes, for instance, a matter of regional choice as to where his kingdom of Oichalia once belonged (Euboea is preferred, though not by Homer).

[20] See S. R. Wolf, *Herakles beim Gelage* (Cologne, 1993), 42–5 – adding some important data to the entry for 'Eurytos I' by R. Olmos in *LIMC* IV (1988), 117–19.

[21] As noted by several commentators, the names on the Eurytios krater correspond very closely (though not identically) to their forms in a passage of Hesiod cited by a scholiast: see D. A. Amyx, *Corinthian Vase-Painting of the Late Archaic Period* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA, 1988), ii.558–9. On Creophylus, see W. Burkert , 'Die Leistung eines Kreophylos', *Museum Helveticum* 29 (1972), 74–85; on the uncertain rapport between images and text, M. Davies, *Sophocles:Trachiniae* (Oxford, 1991), xxxiv–xxxvii. It may be noted that a fragmentary kylix by Onesimos in New York Metropolitan Museum, inv. 12.231.2, showing the 'next episode' after the moment of the Eurytios krater, i.e. Herakles pitching into a fight with the Eurytiads, is also listed as from Cerveteri: see D. Williams, 'Herakles, Peisistratos and the Alkmeonids', in F. Lissarague and F. Thelamon (eds.), *Image et céramique grecque* (Rouen, 1983), 138–9.

For a comparable case of Heraklean imagery on a krater in non-Greek (Sikel) usage, see J. Neils, 'The Euthymides Krater from Morgantina', *American Journal of Archaeology* 99 (1995), 427–44.

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Etruscans 'around the krater'

Some readers will be wondering why we have come down this 'literary' route. Why should it be necessary to search among the fragmentary remains of archaic Greek poetry for access to understanding the Etruscan reception of images on Greek vases? After all, it has been widely accepted, ever since the work of Carl Robert in the late nineteenth century, that images and texts may constitute distinct, even independent, traditions. Given the uncertain extent of literacy in the Greek world in the late seventh century BC, not to mention the likely 'language barrier' between Greeks and Etruscans, it seems overly perverse to attempt an Etruscan 'reading' of the Eurytios krater by reference to some distant Samian bard. But this is where a consistency of historical method needs to be maintained. If the Etruscans were using the krater-shape of vase for krater-shape purposes, that usage carries certain implications. The vase served for more than mixing wine with water. It was the centrepiece of the *symposion*, the 'drinking-together' by a certain social group. The symposium was also an occasion for poetry, both lyric and epic. If vases produced for the symposium were decorated, and such decoration took the form of figures and stories with poetic resonance, then we should suppose some intentional pooling of verbal and visual resources here. And as François Lissarague has argued, the relative size and central position of the krater at the symposium made it an obvious focus of attention for all sympotic participants.[22]

Not long after the Eurytios krater was painted, the Ionian-born poet Xenophanes celebrated the importance of a krater kept 'filled to the brim' (*mestos*) for sustaining a 'good mood' (*euphrosyne*) at the party (Athenaeus, 462c). In the same fragment, Xenophanes proceeds to warn against over-indulgence; no one, he says, should eventually have to be steered home by one of his servants. This reminds us that the Greeks differentiated themselves from barbarians whose habit was to drink wine undiluted, and therefore intemperately (see, e.g., Athenaeus 120d). Celts and Macedonians may have possessed kraters – in fact two of the finest surviving metal vessels from antiquity, the Vix krater and the Derveni krater, belong to Celtic and Macedonian contexts respectively – but by reputation both peoples, like the proverbial Scythians, did not use these vases as they should, and instead

[22] F. Lissarague, 'Around the *krater*. An Aspect of Banquet Imagery', in O. Murray (ed.), *Sympotica. A Symposium on the Symposium* (Oxford, 1990), 196–209.

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practised *akratoposia*, the quaffing of undiluted wine; which in turn (and by a nice chance of verbal association) led to *akrateia*: 'incontinence', 'unruliness', or a lack of self-control.

Though both Greek and Latin historical sources accuse the Etruscans of excessive consumption at the table, there is no literary evidence for an Etruscan custom of drinking 'neat wine', *oinos akratos* (or *chalis* as it is also known). From the remains of wine-drinking equipment discovered in Etruria, and the depictions of drinking and 'sympotic furniture' on the walls of Etruscan tombs, there is good reason to suppose that the krater was put to use as a mixing-bowl, and that Cicero's phrase (*Verr.* 1.26.66) could be applied to the Etruscans in this respect, *Graeco more bibere* – they drank in Greek fashion, though not observing the further Greek convention of excluding female members of the household (an Etruscan solecism reported by Theopompus *apud* Athenaeus 517–18). The question then arises of how far the Greek-style sympotic decorum of assembling 'around the krater' (*para krateri*) was indeed observed in Etruria: that is, the appropriate conduct relating to consumption, conversation, and entertainment. There is no shortage of images appearing to represent Etruscans 'banqueting': but we have no Etruscan literary sources to match, for example, the prescriptive lines attributed to Critias, spelling out the *telos sympotikon* as understood by an Athenian aristocrat of the fifth century BC.[23]

We may remind ourselves of Reusser's 'new paradigm' of defining the place of Greek vases in Etruria: vases were taken to the tomb as prized items of life above ground. Years ago it was possible for a very distinguished expert – indeed the 'founding father' of Etruscology, Massimo Pallottino – to explain the principal image on the walls of the Tomb of the Lionesses at Tarquinia (Figure 2) in solely funerary terms. As Pallottino saw it, 'the large *crater* in the center of the frieze obviously represents the cinerary urn' (holding the ashes of the deceased), while 'the black jug is probably the vessel containing the water for extinguishing the pyre'.[24] Our new paradigm adds to the doubt raised over this interpretation. For one thing, the painter of this scene has complemented his depiction of the krater with a suspended ladle or strainer, as if to confirm the sympotic purpose of the vase; the

[23] For a summary of evidence regarding the Etruscan banquet, see J. P. Small, 'Eat, Drink and Be Merry. Etruscan Banquets', in de Puma and Small (n. 17), 85–94. On the elegaic fragments attributed to Critias, see A. Iannucci, *La parola e l'azione. I frammenti simposiali di Crizia* (Bologna, 2002).

[24] M. Pallottino, *Etruscan Painting* (New York, NY, 1952), 44.

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Figure 2. Principal wall of the Tomba delle Leonesse, Tarquinia, *c.* 520–510 BC.

garland of ivy leaves only adds to this effect. Then we notice that one of the figures shown dancing to one side of the krater is carrying a wine-jug (*olpe* or *oinochoe*): surely this is borne along to receive and dispense what the krater contains.[25] The dancing and music-making figures either side of the krater are then to be viewed as expressive of the Dionysiac *enthousiasmos* suitably evoked in association with the vase.

Of kraters and 'prestige'

Before we proceed to investigate the further consequences of envisaging Etruscans gathered around the krater in Greek fashion, two points need to be made regarding our archaeological evidence for kraters in Etruria. The first concerns the medium of production. The krater represented so prominently in the Tomb of the Lionesses is

[25] Pallottino's reading of this scene was first corrected in S. de Marinis, *La tipologia del banchetto nell'arte etrusca arcaica* (Rome, 1961), 40 n. 4. See also K. Hitzl, *Die Entstehung und Entwicklung des Volutenkraters von der frühesten Anfängen bis zur Ausprägung des kanonischen Stils in der attisch schwarzfigürigen Vasenmalerei* (Frankfurt, 1982), 150; and B. d'Agostino, 'L'immagine, la pittura e la tomba nell'Etruria arcaica', *Prospettiva* 32 (1983), 8.

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manifestly metallic – of gilded bronze, perhaps, or silver. Such a representation is not unique. A number of tomb-paintings from the cemeteries of Tarquinia include images of one key accessory to the symposium – the so-called *kylikeion* or 'sideboard', a table designed to carry the various vessels and utensils required for the mixing, serving, and drinking of diluted wine; and some of these depicted *kylikeia* clearly show the sympotic *pièce de résistance*, the krater, as made of plain burnished metal, in contrast to some evidently ceramic and figured kylikes and other vases (Figure 3).[26] We have already encountered the Greek historical report that the Etruscans were accustomed to 'silver service' when it came to drinking; here it would appear that we have partial confirmation of that report. However, it is only partial.



Figure 3. Detail of the left-hand wall of the Tomba dei Vasi Dipinti, Tarquinia, *c.* 510–500 BC. After G. Dennis, *Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria*, 3rd edn. (London, 1883), i.361.

[26] See L.B. van der Meer, 'Kylikeia in Etruscan Tomb Paintings', in H.A.G. Brijder ed., *Ancient Greek and Related Pottery: Proceedings of the International Vase Symposium*, Amsterdam: Allard Pierson Museum 1984, 298–304. George Dennis, who saw the 'Tomb of the Painted Vases' before its present deterioration, noted that the prominent krater there 'is yellow, to mark it as of plain clay' – perhaps, rather, an indication of a gold or gilded vessel (see figure caption above).

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Despite the depredations of past ages – the raiders of Etruscan cemeteries in antiquity and the Medieval period were hunting for metals and jewels, not painted pottery – there is sufficient evidence from unrobbed tombs throughout Etruria to prove that metallic vessels (and gilded pots) were customarily deposited as grave goods. This runs counter to the theory that the Etruscans kept metals in circulation, while using decorated pots 'simply to provide the appearance of a respectable funeral without the expense'.[27] But no metal krater has yet been recovered from an Etruscan burial – nothing at all to compare with the great bronze vessels from Vix and Derveni; and if Poseidonius, et al. were right about Etruscan habits, then we should of course expect the entire sympotic service of a depicted *kylikeion* to be largely of silver – not just the krater. So there are discrepancies of evidence and interpretation here, not easily resolved.[28] Perhaps it is enough to point out that among the depicted *kylikeia* we do find the representation of a red-figured column krater, close to the elbow of a *kitharistes* who appears to be addressing his performance to an assembly of reclining banqueters (Figure 4). The musician we cannot hear; but close scrutiny of the krater reveals that the vase, for its part, sang of the battle between the Lapiths and the Centaurs.[29]

The second point to make about kraters in Etruria is that during the period with which we have so far been concerned – the sixth and fifth centuries BC – the Etruscans appear to have relied very much upon imports. Quite possibly they produced their own kraters of bronze or other metals, and it just so happens that none has survived. Whatever the case, we can only surmise that pottery workshops in Etruria did not often include the krater in their repertoire of shapes. Craftsmen of the indigenous bucchero ware occasionally released a type of krater based on Corinthian or Laconian models – but this is

[27] Quoting from M. Vickers, 'Golden Greece. Relative Values, Minae, and Temple Inventories', *American Journal of Archaeology* 94 (1990), 619; cf. D. Gill and M. Vickers, *Artful Crafts. Ancient Greek Silverware and Pottery* (Oxford, 1994), 172–5; and D. Gill and M. Vickers, 'They Were Expendable. Greek Vases in the Etruscan Tomb', *Revue des Études Anciennes* 95 (1997), 225–49. In fairness to the Gill–Vickers case, it should be pointed out that depictions of banqueting in Etruscan tombs from the late sixth century BC onwards often show participants using metallic *phialai*, and no examples of such vases made of silver have ever been found (to my knowledge) from tombs of that period. Instances of bronze kraters found in the Greek world are rare: see *American Journal of Archaeology* 68 (1964), 328. On the absence of kraters from the range of metal (i.e. bronze) vases recovered from tombs at Vulci, see L. Hannestad 'Athenian Pottery in Etruria *c.* 500–470 BC', *Acta Archaeologica* 59 (1988), 113–30 (esp. 124–5).

[28] The inconsistency of our evidence is candidly admitted by J-R. Jannot, in his discussion of such depictions, 'Les vases métalliques dans les representations picturales étrusques', *Revue des Études Anciennes* 97 (1995), 167–82.

[29] So M. Moretti, *La Tomba della Nave*, (Milan, 1961), 23.

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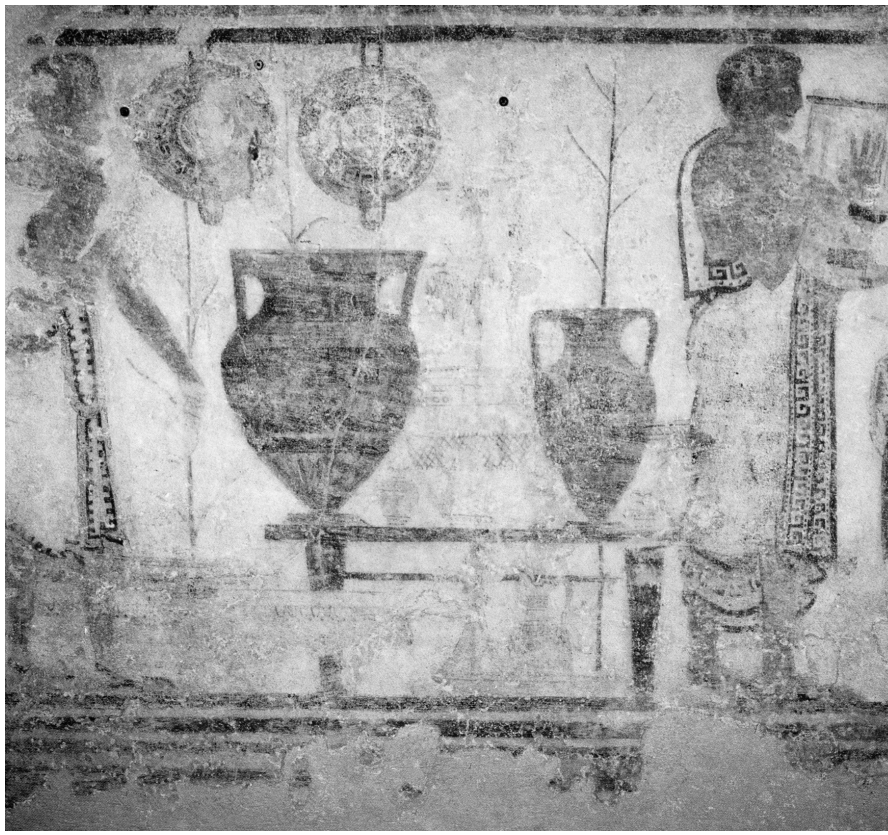


Figure 4. Detail of the left-hand wall of the Tomba della Nave, Tarquinia, *c.* 500 BC.

an indebtedness made all the more apparent by the relatively large numbers of imported Corinthian and Laconian kraters found in Etruria, some of them at sites in the rustic hinterland.[30] Likewise, makers of the imitative local fabric known as Etrusco-Corinthian

[30] See M. Martelli, 'La ceramica greca in Etruria: problemi e prospettive di ricerca', in *Atti del Secondo Congresso Internazionale Etrusco* II (Rome, 1989), 786 ff. For the Corinthian imports see n. 16. One third of the surviving production of Laconian kraters in the early sixth century BC went to Etruria, notably (again) Cerveteri: as reckoned by M. Nafissi, 'Distribution and Trade', in C. M. Stibbe, *Laconian Mixing Bowls. A History of the Krater Lakonikos from the Seventh to the Fifth Century B.C.* (Amsterdam, 1989), 71. Provenances range from Tarquinia's coastal port (see F. Boitani, 'Le ceramiche laconiche a Gravisca', in P. Pelagatti and C.M. Stibbe (eds.), *Lakonikà. Ricerche e nuovi materiali di ceramica laconica*, Bollettino d'arte Supplement 64 [Rome, 1992], i.19–67), to a minor archaic settlement in the Tolfa hills (see M. Rendeli, *La necropoli del Ferrone* [Rome, 1996], 88). An assemblage of early sixth-century BC column-kraters fashioned in *bucchero pesante* is collected by R. de Puma, 'A Bucchero Pesante Column Krater in Iowa', *Studi Etruschi* 42 (1974), 25–36: these seem indebted in basic shape to Corinthian models, but it is a debt made obscure by the powerful style of relief decoration.

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seem to have been reluctant to extend their range towards column-kraters of the Corinthian type.[31] As for the best-known and most prolific of Etruscan black-figure artists, the Micali Painter, just two column-kraters belong to the catalogue of his works as collected in 1987; it may be pertinent to add that the same painter never, so far as we know, fashioned a kylix.[32]

Not until the mid-fifth century BC, it seems, did Etruscan potters turn their hands to the regular production of kraters: perhaps, some historians would argue, because Greek trade routes to the Tyrrhenian coast were so disrupted after the battle of Cumae in 474 BC. Throughout the archaic period, then – from *c.* 600 BC to *c.* 480 BC – the krater in Etruria may be classified as something of a special acquisition, a distinctive object that came not only with a ceremonial function (the mixing of wine), but may also have carried a certain sacrosanct status. Although again we will be frustrated by the lack of direct archaeological evidence, the reports of Herodotus leave us in no doubt that it was *à la mode* in the sixth century for kraters to be offered to temples and treasuries as votive donations. The most spectacular of several instances mentioned by Herodotus was surely the endowment of a grandiose pair of kraters to the sanctuary of Delphi by King Croesus of Lydia; one gold, the other silver – with the latter boasting a capacity of 600 *amphoreis*, i.e. over 24,000 litres, or some 5,400 gallons (Herodotus 1.51). This account stretches our credibility – by way of comparison, the Vix krater holds a mere 317 gallons – yet the ritual purpose specified by Herodotus, the mixing of refreshments to be served at the springtime festival of the Theophania, is plausible.[33] Herodotus also tells us that it was an earlier Lydian king, the semi-legendary Gyges, who, in the first half of the seventh century, became the first non-Greek to present votive gifts at a Greek sanctuary: again Delphi, and again the offering included a number of (gold) kraters (Herodotus 1.14).

To bring up the topic of the Etruscans' hypothetical Lydian origins (along with the Virgilian note that Lydians colonized

[31] Some exception to this pattern is shown by vases of the Rosoni Group: see J. Gy. Szilágyi, *Ceramica etrusco-corinzia figurata II: 590/580–550 a.C.* (Florence, 1998), 369–70.

[32] See N. J. Spivey, *The Micali Painter and his Followers* (Oxford, 1987), pls. 31 and 38c (and forgive the counting error on p. 69). The 'indigenous' style of drinking-cup in Etruscan pottery is the kyathos – established in bucchero and eventually imitated by some late archaic Attic potters.

[33] A vessel some twenty times larger than the Vix krater is practically inconceivable, as pointed out by O. Kimball Armayor in 'Did Herodotus Ever Go to the Black Sea?', *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 82 (1978), 45–62 (esp. 49–57).

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Cerveteri); to make mention of the tradition (Herodotus 1.167) that the Etruscans of Cerveteri were unique among non-Greeks in erecting a cathartic *thesauros* at Delphi – these options are tempting here, but somewhat circumstantial for our present purposes. We are left nonetheless with an understanding that the krater possessed, as a particular shape of vessel, a particular prestige value; and that even by *c.* 650 BC this value was recognized not only at a nascent Panhellenic sanctuary such as Delphi, but also among some 'barbarian' powers in contact with the Greeks. Conceding that the highest value was fixed upon the quality of material used for its production (i.e. gold), or else the sheer quantity (a bronze krater supplied to the Scythians at Exampaios must have weighed, if Herodotus 4.81 is to be believed, over 20 tonnes), we can still accept that the krater, when fashioned from clay, was a vessel intrinsically suitable for figurative elaboration. Its very shape offered the patrons and artists an opportunity for something special.

Etruscan 'taste', sympotic 'decorum'

'A magnificent vase, the like of which has never been seen…'. So Alessandro François exclaimed of the find he made while digging up an Etruscan tomb not far from Chiusi, in November 1844. For all its magnificence, this Athenian black-figured krater of *c.* 570 BC, signed by its makers Kleitias and Ergotimos, had been disregarded, if not deliberately smashed, by tomb-raiders of antiquity. But, at the risk of hyperinflating ancient aesthetic values, let us assume that the 'François vase' was indeed a krater 'made special' by its ambitious, painstaking programme of visual narrative. Can we then assume that it was prized for that same reason by its Etruscan owner?

For some scholars, this second assumption is more difficult to make than the first. Chiusi, not only in Etruria but deep inland Etruria, is a long way from Athens: a direct commission to Kleitias and Ergotimos must be impossible. Several Athenian names seem to be inscribed on the vase, and we know that most other surviving vases made by the Kleitias–Ergotimos team were kept for use and dedication in Athens. But above all there rises the question: surely the registers of various (but connected) stories on the krater extend beyond what any barbarian could hope to comprehend of Hellenic mythology? So, in the opinion of Andrew Stewart, 'only Greeks steeped in the mythological, epic, and lyric traditions of

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their homeland could have appreciated its intricate and subtle iconography.'[34]

Stewart's choice of the term 'Greeks' rather than 'Athenians' is judicious: for the tales we see on the François Vase are Panhellenic stories, including those featuring Theseus, the arch-founder of Athens. But if we care to search for local versions of the various vignettes belonging to the presentation of such stories on this krater, we find indications that they were not only Panhellenic, but also part of the 'constitutive imagination' of the Etruscans – or at least *some* Etruscans. To take just three examples (from past personal interest): the suicide of Ajax; the burying of the Lapith Kaineus by the Centaurs; the ambush of Troilos by Achilles – for each of these themes epitomized on the François Vase, one can produce direct visual 'resonances' in Etruscan art of the sixth century BC.[35] And for each of those three stories, as with the main image of the Eurytios krater, a canonical Greek text does not readily suggest itself: we have, therefore, no easy measure of how far coeval patrons in Athens and Etruria *c*. 570 BC might have differed in their comprehension of this 'intricate and subtle iconography'. The geographical distance between respective aristocrats at Chiusi and Athens may have been great; the ideological gulf perhaps much smaller than we imagine.[36]

There is a curious feature of the decoration of the François Vase that begs for plausible explanation. Not only are the numerous names of the mythical and divine protagonists carefully written around their appearance on the krater; certain terms for non-animate objects are also added. The water-spout inside a fountain-house is carefully labelled for what it is, a *KRENE* (Figure 5); a vase typically used for collecting water is accurately labelled as a *HYDRIA*. To account for these inscriptions of generic nomenclature as merely expressions (from the painter) of some naïve delight in proficient literacy is not quite convincing. They recall nothing so much as a picture dictionary, or a Richard Scarry book, in which the story may be principally conveyed by images – but the juxtaposition of words and pictures encourages the proto-literate 'reader' to acquire a vocabulary. Later in

[34] A. F. Stewart, 'Stesichoros and the François Vase', in Moon (n. 12), 70.

[35] Suicide of Ajax: N. J. Spivey, 'Ajax in Etruria', *Atti e Memorie della Società Magna Grecia* Serie 3 (1992), 233–42; Kaineus: N. J. Spivey and S. Stoddart, *Etruscan Italy* (London, 1990), 98–9; ambush of Troilos: N. J. Spivey, *Etruscan Art* (London, 1997), 72–6.

[36] This is the message implicit from two recent discussions of the vase: C. Isler-Kerényi, 'Der François-Krater zwischen Athens und Chiusi', in J. H. Oakley, W. D. E. Coulson, and O. Palagia (eds.), *Athenian Potters and Painters* (Oxford, 1997), 523–9; and M. Menichetti, *Archeologia del potere* (Milan, 1994), 76–83.

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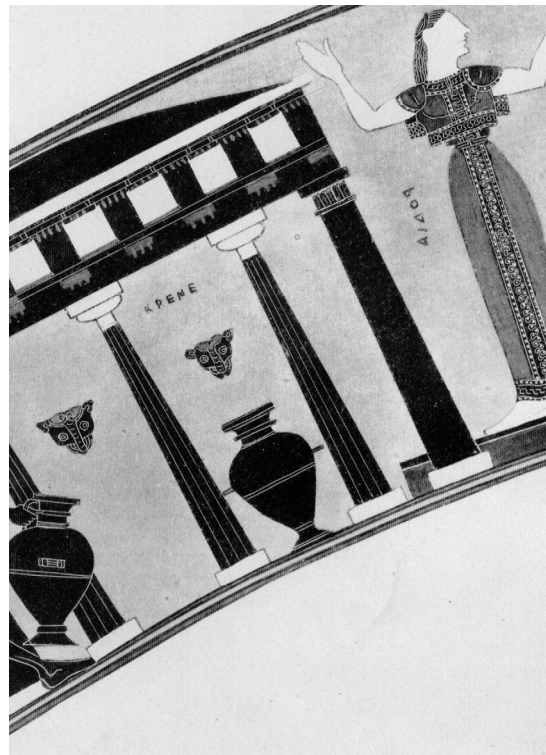


Figure 5. Detail of the François Vase, from environs of Chiusi, *c.* 570 BC. After A. Furtwängler and C. Reichhold, *Griechische Vasenmalerei* (Munich, 1900), ii. pl. 11.

the sixth century, some Athenian painters – notably those responsible for the so-called 'Tyrrhenian amphorae', destined primarily for the Etruscan market – may tease or test their barbarian clients by complementing some images with strings of nonsensical Greek letters. Kleitias and Ergotimos were, it seems, more earnestly conscious that the viewers of their special vase might be Greeks with only a poor grasp of the alphabet – or the viewers might not be Greeks at all.

The archaic poet Stesichoros, whose given dates (*c.* 630–555 BC) make him a contemporary of Kleitias and Ergotimos, has been invoked as a likely source for some of the stories depicted on the François krater, if not its entire iconographical 'programme'. We ought also to remind ourselves of the fame attributed to this poet in antiquity. Stesichoros earned a reputation for 'carrying on the lyre the weight of epic song'; he was the poet who 'channelled the Homeric stream' into forms suitable for singing accompanied by the music of the lyre. Whether or not we follow Martin West in believing that

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Stesichoros was not so much a choirmaster as a specialist in the solo kitharodic performance of his own songs, we can accept that the surviving fragments of Stesichorean poetry consistently evoke 'a Panhellenic fantasy world of heroic myth' – a fantasy world that was pitched carefully transcendent of time and place, 'and thus acceptable and interesting in all places.'[37]

It is not known if Stesichoros, himself not an Athenian but a Sicilian Greek, ever embarked upon a performing tour of Etruria. The notion is not unthinkable: after all, we are happy enough to locate various Greek artists and artisans – e.g. the maker(s) of the Caeretan hydriae – in Etruria, even as permanent residents, when it suits the evidence. Beyond such speculation, however, is the residual importance of his 'Panhellenic' (and prolific) poetic mode. Suppose that songs in the manner of Stesichoros were relayed by the kithara-players we see so often depicted in the Tarquinian tombs. Translated into Etruscan, or delivered in Greek to Etruscans conversant with the language – again, both options may be reasonably contemplated – these songs would essentially do for the Etruscans what Stesichoros did for an audience of Greeks: that is, to render Homer and the heroic sagas into forms suitable for sympotic entertainment.

How far should we pursue this supposition? In 1964, it was boldly proposed by Roland Hampe and Erika Simon that not only were the 'storylines' of Greek epic transmitted (iconographically) to Etruria in the sixth century BC, but that Etruscans by then had a direct 'textual knowledge' (*Kenntnis von Wortlaut*) of Greek epic.[38] This proposal rested upon the examination of a number of black-figured vases and bronze reliefs whose narrative imagery seemed so particular as to evoke at least the precise, word-for-word recitation of a professional rhapsode, if not some travelling manuscript of Homer or Hesiod. It was a theory greeted with scepticism at the time: a scepticism partly derived from reluctance to credit any artist of the archaic period, Greek or Etruscan, with access to poetic texts; and partly also derived from the suspicion that the 'Etruscan' images discussed by Hampe and Simon – for the most part painted on so-called 'Pontic' vases – were produced by Greeks anyway.[39]

[37] W. Burkert, 'The Making of Homer in the Sixth Century B.C.: Rhapsodes versus Stesichoros', in *Papers on the Amasis Painter and his World* (Malibu, 1987), 51. See also M. L. West, 'Stesichoros', *Classical Quarterly* 21 (1971), 302–14.

[38] See R. Hampe and E. Simon, *Griechische Sagen in der frühen etruskischen Kunst* (Mainz, 1964), xi.

[39] See, e.g., Robert Cook's response in *Classical Review* NS 15 (1965), 97–100.

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These objections to the Hampe–Simon theory remain valid. But it is fascinating to witness how the archaeological evidence for Etruscans showing precocious knowledge of Greek myths has continued to accumulate, with finds emerging from not only the sixth but also the seventh century BC; and how the level of Etruscan visual 'fidelity' to known Greek texts can still cause scholarly wonder. An obvious example comes from the well-known assortment of archaic images from Greece and Etruria apparently depicting the encounter of Odysseus and the Cyclops, a story we know textually from *Odyssey* Book 9. Anthony Snodgrass surveys these images in the course of his resolutely sceptical discussion of the supposed rapport between Homer and early Greek figurative art, and notes that one version of the myth on an Etruscan 'white-on-red'-style impasto pithos (probably from Cerveteri) is more 'illustrative' of the Homeric narrative than comparable images from Attica and Argos. 'Here,' he comments, 'in the art of a non-Greek people living many miles away from Homer's land of origin, we find a more convincing case for familiarity with the detail of the *Odyssey*' – presumably a *reductio ad absurdum*.[40] However, as recently emphasized by Marina Micozzi, this is not an isolated instance: with new finds published over the last few decades, the corpus of 'Greek' myths finding precocious representation on Etruscan bucchero and 'Orientalizing' vases has steadily increased – notably including the first known visual references to the Argonaut saga. [41]

The first Greek vase-painter known to sign his name was Aristonothos ('Best Bastard'). There is no doubt that he was a Greek, probably from Euboea; and little doubt, either, that during the first half of the seventh century BC this Aristonothos emigrated to Italy. To add any more detail to the *Wanderleben* of Aristonothos is optimistic, though it has been attempted: cautiously one might allow the possibility that Aristonothos himself ended up at Cerveteri, where his signed vase was discovered.[42] On one side of this vase, underneath the

[40] A. M. Snodgrass, *Homer and the Artists* (Cambridge, 1998), 96.

[41] See M. Micozzi, '"White-on-red". Miti greci nell'Orientalizzante etrusco', in B. Adembri (ed.), *AEIMNESTOS. Miscellanea di studi per Mauro Cristofani* (Florence, 2006), 256–66 . The remarkable Caeretan bucchero jug showing Daidalos and Medea, first published by M. Martelli and M-A. Rizzo, 'Un incunabolo del mito greco in Etruria', *Annuario della Scuola Archeologica di Atene* 66–67 (1988/9), 7–56, is already serving as paradigmatic of the 'naturalization' of Greek myth in Etruria: see C. J. Smith, 'Medea in Italy. Barter and Exchange in the Archaic Mediterranean', in G. Testskhladze (ed.), *Ancient Greeks, West and East* (Leiden, 1999), 179–206.

[42] See B. Schweitzer, 'Zum Krater des Aristonothos', *Römische Mitteilungen* 62 (1955), 78–106; and, for further discussion of issues raised by the krater and its signature, V. E. Izzet, 'Purloined Letters. The Aristonothos Inscription and Krater', in K. Lomas (ed.), *Greek Identity in the Western Mediterranean* (Leiden, 2004), 191–210.

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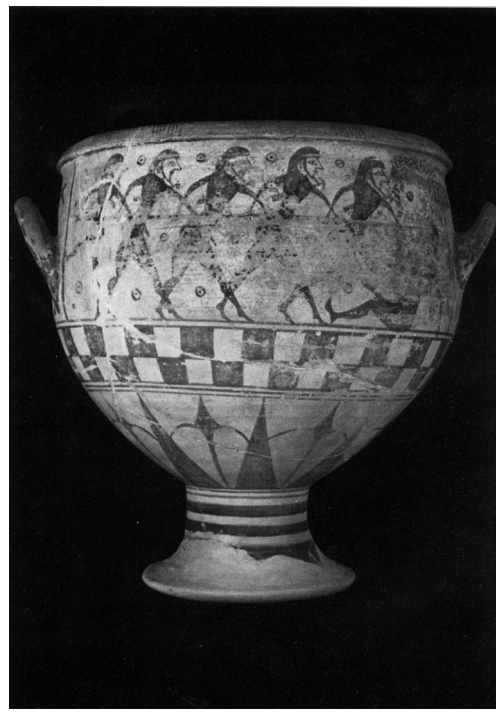


Figure 6. 'The Aristonothos Krater', from Cerveteri, *c.* 700–650 BC. Rome, Capitoline Museums.

signature, we find what may qualify as a studiously 'Homeric' representation of Odysseus and Polyphemos (Figure 6): at least, if the strange object behind the Cyclops be interpreted as a wicker cheese-basket (*plektos talaros*), and therefore in keeping with Homer's description of the Cyclops' cave (*Odyssey* 9. 219 and 247). The provenance of the vase is again telling: the same place that would become (it is generally accepted) the base of another migrant *technites*, the anonymous maker of the so-called 'Caeretan hydriae', who famously could remember the name of one of the most minor characters in Homer's *Iliad*.[43] But let us continue to make a priority of the shape. The vessel decorated (and perhaps also made) by Aristonothos was a krater. Admittedly it is an unusual type of krater, something of a hybrid with heavy-lipped bowls in the Italo-Geometric tradition: it looks to be a krater nonetheless, and as such had a function prescribed by the *nomoi sympotikoi*, the 'laws' of peer-group drinking.

[43] See J. M. Hemelrijk, *Caeretan Hydriae* (Mainz, 1984), 46–7, 81–3.

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The aristocratic peers reclining around this mixing-bowl were to be supplied, by poets and artists alike, with exemplary images. What Aristonothos provided as an artist was generically perfect. On one side of the krater, a sea-battle – the sort of encounter (we might guess) in which heroes of an Etruscan 'thalassocracy' proved themselves. On the other side, a recognizable story from the already far-famed Homer: a story which involved a hero from Troy blown westwards across the Mediterranean, a hero whom the Etruscans adopted for their own[44] – and a story, of course, concerning both rules of hospitality and the power of wine.

It is not whimsical to trace these same essential 'messages' on kraters subsequently brought from Greece to Etruscans at Cerveteri and elsewhere. The Eurytios krater delivers a similarly intriguing combination of themes: its viewers were shown Herakles, the supreme Panhellenic hero (whose exploits and attributes were refined and defined by Stesichoros), ensconced in a sympotic occasion that will boil over, like the ill-fated drinking-together of Lapiths and Centaurs, into a test of heroic honour. So too the François Vase, where amid the cumulative vignettes of Panhellenic *kleos* the figure of Dionysos is made conspicuous, shouldering a hefty amphora as he leads home the drunken Hephaistos. By the end of the sixth century BC, in short, the Etruscan recipients of a Greek-made krater knew what to expect: an iconography that 'set the scene' for the social occasion to which the vase was central. Allusions, accordingly, to the Dionysiac practice and consequences of drinking together; allusions that described or prescribed the 'lifestyles' of those that drank together (e.g. athletics, music, horses, or the call to arms), and depicted their ideal role models from the 'fantasy world' of epic, myth, and saga.

This iconography is what was supplied to Etruria by the Athenian red-figure vase-painters of the late archaic and early Classical period. Prominent among the suppliers is Euphronios, whose favoured shape of mixing-bowl seems to have been a typically Athenian type, the calyx-krater.[45] Now we know that Euphronios and his fellows produced vases for Athenian use: some of those vases were dedicated on the Athenian Akropolis, where they may well have been needed in the course of various rites and festivals. But from our survey of kraters in Etruria since Aristonothos, we are also able to place Euphronios firmly in a tradition of Greek craftsmen furnishing Etruscans with

[44] See I. Malkin, *The Returns of Odysseus* (Berkeley, CA, 1998), 156–77.

[45] A krater-type perhaps canonized in the Attic repertoire by Exekias: see S. Franck, *Attische Kelchkratere* (Frankfurt am Main, 1990), 23 ff.

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sympotic vases. As already mentioned, one of the several vases signed by Euphronios has become a modern *cause célèbre* – the krater depicting Sleep and Death removing the body of the Lycian hero Sarpedon from the battlefield.[46] We can be sure that it was once a cause of comment and admiration in late sixth-century BC Cerveteri, too. The theme of this krater made it eminently suitable for placement among grave goods; however, mindful of the Reusser model, and the evidence for high-quality Attic imports circulating in the city of Cerveteri at this time, we should presume that the vase did sympotic service with the Caeretans prior to its deposition.[47] Occupying central place upon the *kylikeion*, perhaps complemented by a cooling psykter (a Pioneer speciality), it was a piece designed to generate an emotional response (Figure 7). While committed to the aims of



Figure 7. Athenian red-figure krater by Euphronios, *c.* 510 BC, from Cerveteri. Currently New York Metropolitan Museum, 'on loan from the Italian Republic'.

[46] A summary history of the modern vicissitudes of this vase may be found in P. Watson and C. Todeschini, *The Medici Conspiracy* (New York, NY, 2006), ix–xx.

[47] In addition to his contribution to *Caere 3.1* (see n. 16), Fernando Gilotta highlights the quality of Athenian vases – especially kylikes – found at the Vigna Parocchiale site in his commentary on 'Ceramica attica dall'area urbana di Caere', *Prospettiva* 46 (1986), 42–9. Note also the kylix by Euphronios with a dedication to Hercle: this very probably came from the Sant'Antonio area of the city of Cerveteri – see A .M. Moretti Sgubini, *Euphronios epoiesen. Un dono d'eccezione ad Ercole Cerite* (Rome, 1999).

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'naturalistic' representation, Euphronios cannot resist depicting copious jets of blood spouting most unnaturally from Sarpedon's lifeless frame. More than that, though, this scene epitomized the aristocratic ideology for which Homer proved such an enchanting spokesman. It surely qualifies within the sympotically decorous category of *euphemoi mythoi*, those stories that have the power to uplift and ennoble those made privy to them.[48] Sarpedon, neither Greek nor Trojan, stakes his family honour on the battlefield of Troy, and claims his place in the patrimony of an epic that may be described as not only Panhellenic, but Pan-Mediterranean: equally accessible by Lycians in the East and Etruscans in the West.[49]

This may seem all too obvious as an Etruscan 'reading' of the image. Yet only a century or so ago it was possible for Wilhelm Klein, author of the first monograph on Euphronios, to wonder how the principal apparent destination of works by Euphronios could be reconciled with what he termed *'der schlecte Geschmack der Etrusker'* – 'the bad taste of the Etruscans'.[50] For Klein, the hoarding of such vases by the Etruscans was merely another symptom of their chronic *Gräberluxus*, their profligate funerary customs. In our view, by contrast, there must in the end be little difference between the customers of Euphronios, in Athens or Etruria.

To take such a stance is not to deny that among the many works of Athenian vase-painters recovered from Etruscan contexts there are numerous flourishes of local or 'closed' knowledge that must have been lost on Etruscan viewers. The distribution of *kalos*-names is a clear example of such 'insider information'. Certainly, it would be absurd to claim that every image on these objects was understood by the Etruscans and Athenians in the same way. For example, one of the kraters by Euphronios found at Cerveteri depicts, on one side, a group of young men falling over for no very evident reason, except that there are some wineskins around. Though we know that the cult of Dionysos-Bacchus, as Fufluns-Pachies, was established in archaic

[48] Again drawing upon Xenophanes 1, *apud* Athenaeus 462c – though whether Xenophanes himself would agree with this application of his advice is pedantically a moot point.

[49] In the spirit of this interpretation, we may prefer to read the names of the warriors/hoplites shown arming on the other side of the vase as those of minor epic figures, not contemporary Athenians: see J. Boardman, '*Kaloi* and Other Names on Euphronios' Vases', in M. Cygielman, et al. (eds.), *Euphronios* (Florence, 1992), 45–50. Further speculation as to the symbolic significance of the vase is offered in M. Turner, 'Iconology vs Iconography. The Influence of Dionysos and the Imagery of Sarpedon', *Hephaistos* 21/22 (2003/4), 53–79.

[50] W. Klein, *Euphronios. Eine Studie zur Geschichte der griechischen Malerei* (Vienna, 1886), 254. This, in turn, contrasts with an earlier nineteenth-century consideration of Euphronios as *'[un] vasellaio volcente'*, a 'Vulci-based potter': *Bullettino dell'Instituto* (1830), 233.

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Etruria, it is not easy to imagine that the peculiar game of *Askolia*, hopping around on greasy wineskins, was part of Etruscan experience. If not, then who knows what they made of the image? Yet on the other side of the krater there was Herakles, or *Hercle*, for whom at least one dedicated shrine existed at Cerveteri, and whose appearance here in combat with the Nemean Lion surely 'made sense' in Etruscan eyes.

Readers who have stayed with this essay so far will have apprehended that it offers no hard and fast rules for sympathetically interpreting Greek-made images in an Etruscan context. Much depends upon informed intuition – a general sense of cultural flux in Etruria as evident from what survives archaeologically, compounded by the historical premise that ideologies tend to be shared according to social rank rather than ethnic identity. But even if there is no fixed method of approach, the obligation remains to accept Greek vases in Etruria for what they were: objects of beauty and utility – choice possessions of the living as much as they were trophies of the dead.

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