

# **Relations among Workshops and Craftsmen in Protoattic Vase-painting: Limits and Perspectives in Quantifying the Production**

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## **Introduction**

In studying Athenian workshops of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC, we encounter the same questions as we do for their successors in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC, when the numbers both of painters/potters and of vases had grown considerably, to satisfy the export market. A mere tally of attributions, however, cannot be a starting point for quantifying the scale of production, or of a workforce. It is also necessary to analyze our limits and perspectives in reconstructing an individual craftsman's output and the organization of the work in the *ergasteria*.<sup>1</sup>

Athenian workshops involved in the production of painted pottery made mainly for ritual purposes seem to be limited in number, in comparison to the last quarter of the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC when figured vases appealed to a broader clientele. The reduced demand for finely decorated Protoattic pottery probably reflected rather exclusive commissions controlled by a more restricted aristocratic society.<sup>2</sup> These aristocratic groups, often residing in the Attic countryside, had also developed a taste for clay imitations of Near Eastern bronze vases, a prerogative of only few *genoi* in the Geometric period. We must remember, however, that more than one-half of the output of painted pottery can be attributed to minor artisans, still working in Subgeometric style on smaller shapes, often without a figural decoration. Painted and unpainted pottery, terracottas, and sometimes also storage vases were often made in the same *ergasterion*; moreover, some craftsmen, working mainly as potters, seem to engage in painting only rarely. In the absence of archaeological data, it is difficult to envision exactly how such a heterogeneous production worked, or to guess at the total number of workshops or their location (not only in Athens, but also in Attica), or to associate them with known painters. Consequently, just as in the Geometric period, the term “workshop” has been used, with all its limitations, to categorize Protoattic vases linked by stylistic elements, and not to represent the production of an *ergasterion* as a whole.<sup>3</sup>

## **Collaborations among Craftsmen Belonging to the Same Workshop Tradition**

The development of timelines for relationships between Protoattic workshops is often elusive, when compared to the Late Geometric period, but it is useful to approach the dynamics of production through the ideas of “interrelationships” and “interaction.”<sup>4</sup> The



Fig. 1: a) Hydria, Melbourne, National Gallery – Victoria D 23/1982 (H. 45.5 cm). b) Hydria, Athens NM VS 63 (H. 43.5 cm). c) Hydria, Baghdad, IM 52041 (not to scale).

importance of apprenticeship and collaboration among craftsmen belonging to the same workshop's tradition means that we must also examine the teacher-pupil relationship. Furthermore, we must keep in mind that we are not always dealing only with painters who share the same training, working for one potter, but also with painters and potters from different *ergasteria*, sometimes working together; such activities can be detected in their reciprocal influences, as well as in imitations of the work of the leading painter. The migration of potters and painters and the export of their expertise – which was more or less unknown in the previous period – strongly influences not only artistic development, but also production dynamics.

In the study of Protoattic vases, not much attention has been paid to recognizing the distinctive work of a potter, but focusing on the shape allows us to analyze some aspects of their interactions with painters. The potter's eye governed the freehand shaping of proportions, without the use of a template, but the individual styles of the craftsmen who threw the vases are less easily distinguished than those of the painters. From the Geometric period, the selection of vessel types and shapes defined the character of a workshop and of its leading potter, with strong differences in the same period; in Protoattic pottery, however, variations in vase profiles often do not follow a progressive chronological sequence.<sup>5</sup>

The Melbourne hydria painted by the Analatos Painter around 715–710 BC<sup>6</sup> (fig. 1a) in proportions and profile calls to mind those attributed to the Painter of the Stathatos Amphora<sup>7</sup> (fig. 1c), a member of the Workshop of Athens 894, where the



Fig. 2: a) Hydria, Bochum, Kunstsammlungen der Ruhr-Universität S 1067 (H. 42.5 cm).  
 b) Hydria, Athens, NM 313 (H. 80 cm).

Analatos Painter received his training. Similarly, the hydria by the Mesogeia Painter from Spata (fig. 1b),<sup>8</sup> is close to that old-fashioned model, with ovoid body and large cylindrical neck; one might wonder whether the potter of the Spata hydria, painted in a more advanced style than those from Kalyvia Kouvara by the same painter,<sup>9</sup> was an older craftsman of the workshop.

A slight attenuation of the profile can be detected on very early hydriae by the Analatos Painter in Bad Driburg and in Bochum (fig. 2a), the latter more advanced



Fig. 3: a) Amphora, Athens NM 894 (H. 77.5 cm). b) Amphora, Athens, NM, St 222 (H. 60 cm).

in design, and then on his name-vase (fig. 2b), which, although larger, maintains the same proportions between neck and body;<sup>10</sup> this trend could betray not a later chronology, but rather the hand of this innovative craftsman also as potter. The name-vase of the Workshop of Athens 894<sup>11</sup> (fig. 3a) has proportions between neck and body close to 1:1:25 like the name-vase of the Painter of the Stathatos Amphora<sup>12</sup> (fig. 3b) and the two amphorae in Oxford (fig. 4a–b). The Oxford amphora from Koropi<sup>13</sup> (fig. 4b) whose attribution to the Analatos or Mesogeia Painter is the subject of much debate, has elongated proportions, but its profile lacks the clear partitions that characterize the early vases of the Analatos Painter. Its decoration, however, is still close to late Geometric, and N. Coldstream was perhaps right to associate it with the apprenticeship of the Analatos Painter. On the other hand, the





Fig. 4: a) Amphora, Oxford, Ashmolean Museum 1935.19 (H. 51.4 cm). b) Amphora, Oxford, Ashmolean Museum 1936.599 (H. 49 cm).

Oxford amphora from Keratea<sup>14</sup> (fig. 4a), probably by the Mesogeia Painter, with its plump body, is more stiff and less precise in the moulding of foot and lip, with the upper part of the handles closely attached under the lip; we find the same details on the amphorae from Kerameikos, in Houston and San Antonio,<sup>15</sup> painted and perhaps also shaped by the Mesogeia Painter, often with horizontal straps added to the perforated plate of the handles. Thus, it is not just the painted decoration, but also different details in forming the vases that seem to reflect different hands on the two Oxford amphorae. It is likely that two modes could coexist in the workshops producing painted pottery in 7<sup>th</sup> century Athens: painters throwing their own vases, and master-potters collaborating with painters. Often the two roles had to coincide; the forming of the vases was often entrusted to a more experienced craftsman, sometimes working as painter himself.<sup>16</sup>

Other examples help us trace connections among artisans working together, such as a large number of vases from the offering trenches  $\gamma$ ,  $\zeta$  and  $\delta$  in the Kerameikos and from Vari, made in the same workshop but painted by different hands that shared the influence of the Parian school (fig. 6 b-c). The I Painter of offering trench  $\gamma$ , a prominent and innovative painter who introduced a kind of rich polychromy like that seen in coroplastic workshops, was probably also working as a potter, modifying some shapes inherited from the late Geometric period in accordance with the new taste for high feet, moulded appliques, and the imitation of bronze vases from the East. The II Painter of offering trench  $\gamma$  could be the early Kynosarges Painter. A third painter (Painter of offering trench  $\zeta$ ), working sometimes in the polychrome technique, decorated vases in the same workshop.<sup>17</sup>



Fig. 5: a) Lid of pyxis, Athens, NM 2491. b) Detail of the high-standed bowl, Athens, Kerameikos Museum 1277. c) Mug, Athens, Kerameikos Museum 93.

### Apprenticeship and the Teacher-Pupil Relationship

Identifying relationships among craftsmen in the same workshop could enhance our understanding of how the workers trained in and mastered their craft. We have already mentioned the first hydriae by the Analatos Painter, which show his master-pupil relation with the Painter of the Stathatos Amphora, but his smaller shapes also seem far too advanced to be the efforts of a beginner.<sup>18</sup> Susan Langdon, has recognized on some small vases, however, the work of apprentices or training exercises, which are to be distinguished from the hastily executed decoration by an expert painter;<sup>19</sup> these vases are not trial pieces, scraps or second-quality products, but were fired and used in funerary settings, often related to children. They were also probably made by children; some of them are upside-down painted vases. Sometimes the identification of apprentice work is more complicated, especially when the judging is based on the size of the vessel or on exclusively qualitative criteria. In a group of vases from Kerameikos and Phaleron that can be attributed to the same hand<sup>20</sup> (fig. 5 a– b), the vessel formation is competent and the Geometric decoration on some is complex and accurate, on others uncertain; still, it is difficult to say whether the figures were rendered by a craftsman training on unfamiliar subjects, or by a rushed painter. Closer to the style of training exercises are some cups from the child's grave 10 in Kerameikos<sup>21</sup> (fig. 5c), whose patterns resemble the

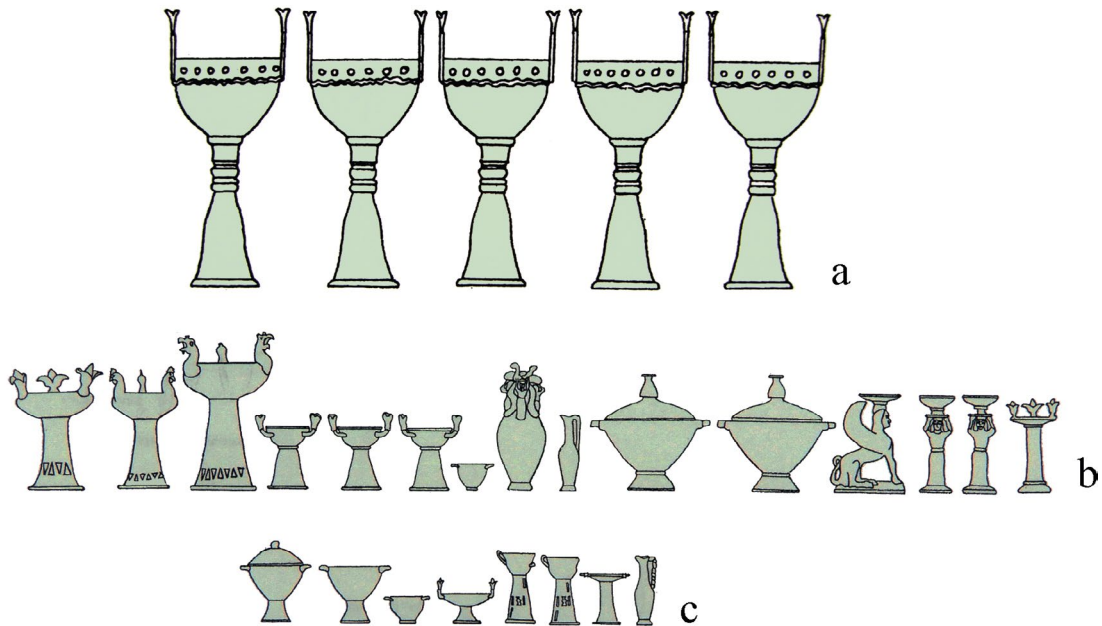


Fig. 6: a) Kraters from an offerig trench, Mainz, Sammlung der Universität; b) Vases from the offering trench  $\gamma$ , Athenian Kerameikos. c) Vases from the offering trench  $\zeta$ , Athenian Kerameikos.

contemporary Kerameikos Mugs Group (660–670 BC).<sup>22</sup> By contrast, the so-called “Phaleron vases” are usually classified as examples of poor production attributed to “minor” workshops in the area of the old harbor of Athens. If their findspots suggest that their *ergasteria* were located along the route from Phaleron to Athens, I would argue that a coherent group of them should be associated with one of the most prominent workshops of the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the Würzburg Workshop, and to the circle of its craftsmen, the Vulture, N, and Passas Painters, who were perhaps also working in that area.<sup>23</sup> They should not be considered as second-rate products, but rather as smaller and sometimes miniaturized shapes<sup>24</sup> with ritual purposes, often related to children’s graves or sanctuaries. Even if we count these vases among the workshop’s products, we are still far from estimating its output, considering the large number of vases with linear decoration that come from the necropoleis of Phaleron, and were probably made by the same craftsmen.<sup>25</sup>

Further, when we look at the lives of artisans, we must consider not only how a career started, but also how long it lasted, and what stages it went through. Groups of vases attributed to different hands could represent instead a development in the style of a single craftsman. From these stages we might follow the transformation from Late Geometric to Protoattic vase painting, and the transfer of skill and knowledge from one artisan to another. The hypothesis that the Analatos Painter’s career lasted from 715–710 until 660 BC or later, is unlikely, as it also is in the era of black- and

red-figure vase-painting, when careers of even 20 or 30 years are exceptional, given the high mortality rate. Thus, the two *louteria* from Thebes (one in Athens from an unknown context, the other from the sanctuary of Herakles), along with the one from Inoronata (Metaponto) can be better attributed to a second generation of craftsmen who spread and merged the Athenian tradition of the prolific Analatos Painter's workshop with the new tendencies of the "Wild Style" with its Cycladic flavor, well represented by the Checkerboard Painter.<sup>26</sup> Like the two painters of the vases from the offering place  $\alpha$  in the Kerameikos and the painter of the hypokraterion from Argos,<sup>27</sup> these craftsmen were apprentices under the influence of both the Analatos and Mesogeia Painters, whose common training at the beginning of their careers could have built up a long-term collaboration. Although they were influenced by the "Wild Style", they were able to keep the traditions of the Analatos Painter's workshop alive until the second quarter of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC.

### **Collaborations among Painters and Potters Trained in Different Workshops and their Relocation**

When we examine the production of 7<sup>th</sup> century BC Athenian workshops, it is sometimes possible to detect collaboration for the same commission (or, better, for the same potter), by painters trained and employed in independent workshops. This invites us to reflect on the role of painters who moved from one *ergasterion* to another. The Passas Painter, trained in the Würzburg Group Workshop, painted most of the *kraters* and *hypokrateria* in Mainz (fig. 6a), and for this commission the Analatos Painter spent most of his time creating the vases.<sup>28</sup> We cannot say if such occasional collaborations, perhaps necessary for the completion of a large commission in a short time, were the rule, or the exception: this corresponds to a model of activity in which specialized painters were hired by master-potters. The Passas Painter's name-amphora, however, with its perforated handle-plates, is closer to the Analatos Painter Workshop's shapes than to the Würzburg Group's.<sup>29</sup>

We cannot find examples of two painters working on the same vase, as in the Dipylon Workshop.<sup>30</sup> This can perhaps be explained by the abandonment of the labor-intensive Geometric-style decoration and the shift toward a preference for medium and small-sized shapes: the painter of the amphora from Mt Hymettus and the Polyphemos Painter of the amphora from Eleusis decorated their large vases without the help of other craftsmen (and one might also wonder how far away the workshop was located from the actual context of use for such large vases).<sup>31</sup> Workshop organization and scheduling may not have changed so much from the Geometric period, but they no longer involve the work of more than a single painter on the same vase; rather, more painters, sometimes from different workshops, came together to work on a large commission for vases made by the same potter. To what extent this suggests





Fig. 7: a) Oinochoe, Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung 5826. b) Kotyle, Kythnos, Museum B' 04/Pg12.

a reduced number of craftsmen – and of commissions of painted pottery – in the workshops, and a need for occasional collaborations, is impossible to determine. These examples shed more light on the production model for this period, which has been hypothesized as mainly family-based; in fact, there was probably also a variable number of craftsmen at work in the different stages of production and, perhaps, in the different seasons of the year.<sup>32</sup>

Moreover, small-scale local circulation could be representative of a more complex and widespread trend, involving craftsmen from the same workshop, as well as interactions extending even beyond the borders of Attica – the consequence of potters and painters relocating and thereby exporting their expertise.<sup>33</sup> This phenomenon, while not limited to Attica, is more striking there than in other areas. The lack of a long-lasting tradition inside a single workshop makes it impossible to trace developmental steps and the transfer of skill and knowledge from a workshop to another, as we can see in the late 8<sup>th</sup> century BC; minor staff members, in particular, seem to come in from elsewhere or to leave for other lands. K. Sheedy supposed that the leading painter of the Parian Ad Group learned to paint pots in the workshop of the Würzburg Group (around 710–700 BC), and adduced this as an explanation for the Atticizing style.<sup>34</sup> An echo of the styles of the Vulture and Analatos Painters can be detected on a group of Cycladic vases by the Parian Painter of the “winged horses”, found in the sanctuary at Vryokastro on Kythnos (fig. 7b) and in the Heraion on Delos<sup>35</sup>; in addition a “Phaleron” oinochoe from Aegina, attributed by Denoyelle to the Analatos Painter, seems near the vase-group from Kythnos, that also shares some details with the Passas Painter’s production<sup>36</sup> (fig. 7a). The Checkerboard Painter (fig. 8a) and other Athenian pottery of the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC (fig. 8b) seem to have strong ties with the Parian workshop that produced the vases of the Ad Group (fig. 8c), whose influence can be detected also in other craftsmen of the “Wild Style”, merging both the Parian and the Subgeometric

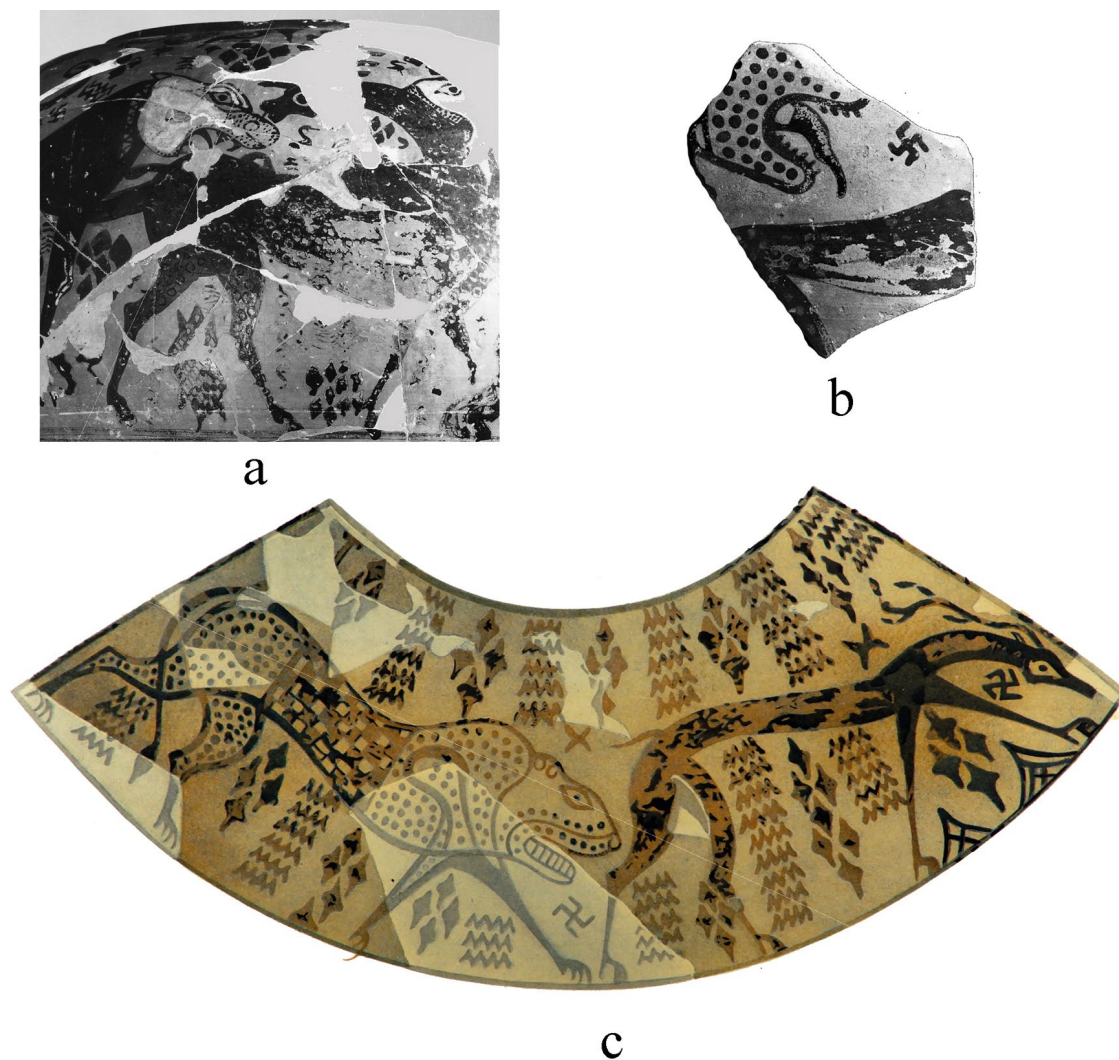


Fig. 8: a) Krater, Berlin, Staatliche Museen, Antikensammlung A 22. b) Fragment of an amphora, Aegina, Museo K 552. c) Drawing from the amphora Delos, Museum Ad 4.

Athenian tradition.<sup>37</sup> Some connections exist also between the Menelaos Painter and vases like the dinos with warriors from Despotiko, showing the creativity and pioneering spirit of the Parian workshops.<sup>38</sup> In the same period, relations between Athens and the Cyclades are documented by a Protoattic amphora of the third quarter of the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC that was offered as a votive gift in the Apollo sanctuary on Kythnos, related both to the Painter of the Burgon Krater and to the Kynosarges Painter.<sup>39</sup> It is also possible to trace the influence in the other direction: the heritage of the Parian school can be detected in works by the Kynosarges, Pair, and Protome Painters.<sup>40</sup>

## Conclusions

Despite the rich exchanges and borrowings between Attica and the Cyclades, when we look at Athenian pottery-shapes, we must recognize that the last great revolution took place in the Late Geometric Workshop of Athens 894: Protoattic potters often keep and perpetuate Late Geometric shapes for ritual and funerary purposes, a tendency inherited also by 6<sup>th</sup> century workshops. A pyxis dating back to the Protogeometric period is “updated” in the so called ovoid-krater, probably the model for the later standard shape of the lebes gamikos;<sup>41</sup> the hydria comes back into fashion for ritual purposes; from the neck-amphora is developed the amphora-loutrophoros,<sup>42</sup> and old-fashioned shapes such as bowls with high stands become the cultic vases for rituals to Artemis.<sup>43</sup> The workshop of the Analatos Painter improves a krater with a separate lip, almost a forerunner of the later calyx-krater, and develops the kotyle krater, which often fulfills more effectively the use of a pyxis or lekane.<sup>44</sup> Some shapes are modeled after Oriental bronze vases, or “borrow” from other vase-painting traditions, such as the oinochoe of East-Greek type by the Ram Jug Painter and an olpe of Protocorinthian inspiration decorated with Subgeometric and Protoattic patterns.<sup>45</sup> These are more often the exception than the rule, and did not form a tradition that lasted into the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC.

These examples lead us to hypothesize that established traditions tended to prevail in the potter’s work, in contrast to the swift transformations –in subjects, iconographies, styles, and techniques– in the painter’s world. One expression of the conservatism of Protoattic shapes is seen in the cementing of the role of some forms inherited from the Late Geometric workshops in worship and rituals in later ages, which further underscores the prominence of the potters’ work in relation to that of the painters. An investigation of the Attic vase-painting industry must begin with the potters.

## Notes

\* I thank the organizers of this panel of the Congress, M. Bentz and E. Hasaki. As the photos of the vases are taken from different angles, the proportions and the rendering of the profiles may present sometimes some inaccuracies.

<sup>1</sup> For the methodological approach: Bentz – Böhr 2002; Sapirstein 2013; Sapirstein 2014; Pevnick 2016; Stissi 2016. On the ergasteria in 7<sup>th</sup> century BC Monaco 2000, 24–34; Papadopoulos 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Osborne 1989; Whitley 1994; Alexandridou 2015; D’Onofrio 1997; D’Onofrio 2017; a review of the contexts in Doronzio 2018. For votive dedications on the Akropolis as mirror of the society in Geometric and Archaic Age Gauss and Ruppenstein 1998. A primary funerary destination is not always the rule; both the louterion from Thebes in Athens and the krater attributed to the Pernice Painter show traces of usage on the interior walls, as well as repairs, Rocco 2008, 117–119, LT 9. 156 f., Per 3.

- <sup>3</sup> On the limitations of the term “workshop” in discussions of vases that share stylistic elements, see Hasaki 2002, 6–8. 251–257.
- <sup>4</sup> Crielaard 1999, 49–81.
- <sup>5</sup> Kübler 1970, 150–196; Hünnekens 1987, 108 f. 236 f.
- <sup>6</sup> Sheedy 1990b; Rocco 2008, 15. 21–22. 28 An 10 pl. 1, 3.
- <sup>7</sup> Davison 1961, 79–82, n° 2. 8 figs. 116a–b. 121; Coldstream 2008<sup>2</sup> 59, 33 (Baghdad IM 52041) 62–63.
- <sup>8</sup> Coldstream 2008<sup>2</sup> 85; Rocco 2008, 32. 36. 39 Me 12 pl. 4, 2.
- <sup>9</sup> Rocco 2008, 32. 36–39. Me 10–11 pl. 4, 1. 3.
- <sup>10</sup> Rocco 2008, 14 f. 16. 27 f. An 8 An 9 An 11.
- <sup>11</sup> Davison 1961, 41, n°1 fig. 33; Coldstream 2008<sup>2</sup> 58, n° 4.
- <sup>12</sup> Davison 1961, 43. 79–82 n° 1 fig. 115; Coldstream 2008<sup>2</sup> 59, n°15.
- <sup>13</sup> Rocco 2008, 14. 27 An 1; Coldstream 2008<sup>2</sup>, 63 f. CVA Oxford 4, pls. 16–19.
- <sup>14</sup> Rocco 2008, 31. 38 Me 4; Coldstream 2008<sup>2</sup>, 145, n° 5; CVA Oxford 4, 12–15.
- <sup>15</sup> Rocco 2008, 31 f. 38 Me 3. Me 5.
- <sup>16</sup> For the organization of the Dipylon Workshop, Coulié 2010; Coulié 2012–2013; Coulié 2014; Coulié 2015; Vlachou 2015.
- <sup>17</sup> Brann 1962, 11. 24 f.; Kübler 1970, 310–312. 328–330. 453–470. 474–481; von Freytag 1975, 49–81; Kistler 1998, 50–54. 64 f. 188–190. 191 f. 206–208; Rocco 2008, 173–186. 190–196.
- <sup>18</sup> Rocco 2008, 13.28 An 26 An 27, the krateriskos from Kallithea could be related to a very early stage of the career of the Analatos Painter, Rocco 2008, 15. 30 BAn 9.
- <sup>19</sup> Langdon 2013; Langdon 2015.
- <sup>20</sup> Rocco 2008, 79 C1–C6.
- <sup>21</sup> Kübler 1970, 450–451. pl. 31 ns° 39–41.
- <sup>22</sup> Kübler 1970, 427–447; Rocco 2008, 161–165.
- <sup>23</sup> Rocco 2008, 47–78. More additions in Palaiokrassa-Kopitsa – Vivliodetis 2015; Palaiokrassa-Kopitsa 2017 252–254.
- <sup>24</sup> Ekroth 2003.
- <sup>25</sup> Pelekidis 1916; Young 1942; Petrocheilos 1996; Frangopoulou – Zosi 2017; Alexandropoulou 2018.
- <sup>26</sup> Denoyelle 1996 (Analatos P.); Giuliano 2005 (Checkerboard P.); Rocco 2008, 117–119; Morris 2014 (Workshop of the Analatos P.). On the sanctuary of Thebes, Aravantinos 2017.
- <sup>27</sup> Rocco 2008, 41–46.
- <sup>28</sup> Hampe 1960; Kistler 1998, 202 f.; Rocco 2008, 19 f. 33. 67 f.
- <sup>29</sup> Rocco 2008, 69 Pa 4; on the amphora from Odos Pireas, Palaiokrassa-Kopitsa 2016. On the amphora’s shape in the Analatos and Würzburg Group’s workshops, Rocco 2008, 14. 27 An 1–An 5. 29 BAn 1–BAn 2. 31 f. 38 Me 1–Me 8. 47–49. 60 Av 1. 61 Wü 1–Wü 4.
- <sup>30</sup> Note 16.
- <sup>31</sup> CVA Berlin 1, pls. 43. 44; Mylonas 1968; Rocco 2008, 101 W 2 140 Po 4.
- <sup>32</sup> For activity in potter’s workshops, Hasaki 2006; Hasaki 2011.
- <sup>33</sup> Coulié 2000.
- <sup>34</sup> Sheedy 1985; Sheedy 1990a; Rocco 2008, 51–60. See also the Euboean atticizing tradition of some pottery from Oropos, locally made, Charalambidou 2007, 279 f. fig. 5. For the circulation of potters and pots in

the Geometric Age and beyond, Papadopoulos 1997; Papadopoulos 1998; Papadopoulos – Lord Smithson 2002.

<sup>35</sup> Alexandridou et al. 2017, 137 f. figs. 5. 6; Koutsoumpou 2017, 164 f. 171 f. nn° 14–16.

<sup>36</sup> CVA Berlin 1 pl. 45, 2–4; Denoyelle 1996, 81. 86; Rocco 2008, 30 BAn 5.

<sup>37</sup> Rocco 2008, 89–92. 109–116 and on a group of Athenian vases near the Ad Painter, 89.

<sup>38</sup> Kouraghios 2005; Kouraghios 2012, 56. 58.

<sup>39</sup> Alexandridou et al. 2017 138, figs. 9. 10; Koutsoumpou 2017, 165 f. 172 n° 17.

<sup>40</sup> Hünnekens 1987, 18 f.; Rocco 2008, 173–181. 187–189. For the “Parian style” Croissant 2007.

<sup>41</sup> Rocco 2017b.

<sup>42</sup> Alexandridou 2014.

<sup>43</sup> Rocco 2017a.

<sup>44</sup> Kistler 1998, 31–38; Rocco 2008, 205.

<sup>45</sup> Coldstream 2007, 81 f.; Rocco 2008, 149 Ar 2. On the olpe, CVA Oxford 4, pl. 29.

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