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## Some Thoughts About the Study of Iconography — Past, Present, And Future: Formal Analysis, Theory, the Inscription Painter and the First Cemetery of Athens

In Memory of Christoph W. Clairmont (1924–2004)

When the opportunity to speak about the study of iconography in Bern arose, I immediately thought that this would be a particularly appropriate place to do so, since my ‘Doktorvater’ was Christoph Clairmont.<sup>1</sup> He was Swiss and closely maintained his ties with his native land, although he spent most of his teaching career at Rutgers University in the United States where I was one of his students. He is now probably most well known for his scholarship on Attic gravestones, in particular his corpus *Classical Attic Tombstones*,<sup>2</sup> but he actually started his career primarily as an iconographer. His dissertation, *Das Parisurteil in der antiken Kunst*,<sup>3</sup> is still an important source more than half a century after it was published, and some of his early articles, such as *Studies in Greek Mythology and Vase-painting*, in *Yale Classical Studies* for 1957,<sup>4</sup> were also iconographical studies. Later in his career he moved away from pure iconography, but he always maintained a strong interest in it, as evidenced by the fact that he was responsible for bringing the American Office of the *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* to Rutgers University. It is to his memory that I dedicate this paper. Let me start by considering Christoph as a teacher, for I believe the principle behind his methodology for teaching is one that many a current iconographer, young and old, would do well to observe more closely. The technical term for the technique he used in his teaching is ‘formal analysis’. It consisted in his case of each student in turn being confronted by an object that he or she has not seen, which they had to carefully and accurately describe in a systematic, ordered manner. Only then, after having done this, were they allowed to suggest what the subject matter might be. In this manner the student not only learned all the technical terms for the various elements depicted and the conventions of drawing, but also how to deal with objects they had never seen before, since each object they described was an unknown to them. The principle



Fig. 1 *Fragment of an Attic red-figure cup with the Birth of Erichthonios. Paris, Louve Inv. No. 980.0820.*

behind this technique is that the careful and accurate observation of every element of the scene is needed in order to correctly identify what the scene depicts.

In my own case, the excellent training that I had underneath Christoph’s tutelage led me at an early stage of my career to correctly identify several mythological scenes, which others had misidentified or had not recognized what was depicted. A good example is a fragmentary cup in the Louvre (Fig. 1) that had long been connected with the myth of Danae and Perseus.<sup>5</sup> The upper half of a young boy extending out his arms is shown in a container with a woman standing behind it. Other scholars thought that the container was a chest, when in reality it is a basket, the top of which has been taken off and stands on the right. The child, therefore, is not Perseus in the chest but Erichthonios in the basket. The woman behind the basket is not



Fig. 2 Euboean black-figure lekythos with Herakles and Kyknos. New Haven, Yale University Art Collection 1913.110.

Danae, but one of the Kekropides, probably Aglauros, who has disobeyed Athena and opened the basket. The spear in the middle of the scene belongs to the goddess who approaches from the right. A lekythos in Basel with the same subject provides a good parallel for the basket, although in this case it is still closed.<sup>6</sup>

Today, unfortunately, iconographers sometimes become lax in observing this basic principle that demands careful and accurate observation of all elements of the picture. In their rush to apply various theoretical approaches to the interpretation of images and to find meanings behind the pictures, they do not always read the images correctly, thereby providing a false foundation for their conclusions. A good example occurs in Mark Stansbury-O'Donnell's recent book, *Vase Painting, Gender, and Social Identity in Archaic Athens*.<sup>7</sup> This very useful study's main goal is to analyze the various types of spectators depicted in Attic black-figure vase-paintings. The subject is particularly significant because in the past, these figures sometimes have been considered as little more than space-fillers.

Early in his study Stansbury-O'Donnell defines four classes of spectators, which are in turn further broken down by the mood of their behavior. One mood he terms 'mimetic', that is imitative.<sup>8</sup> The vase he first uses to illustrate this type is a Euboean black-figure lekythos at Yale (Fig. 2). He claims that the figure of the youth on the far right «mimics elements of Herakles'



Fig. 3 Attic black-figure amphora with Herakles, Nessos, and Deianeira. Attributed to the Princeton Group. Munich, Antikensammlung 1384.

action in the center».<sup>9</sup> To my eye, however, this is not the case, and the two figures are very different: Herakles strides forward with his legs apart, while the youth stands with legs together; Herakles looks forward to the right while the youth looks backward to the left; and despite the author's claims that the pose of the youth's arms mimic those of Herakles, I see them as unrelated: Herakles left arm is bent upwards, the youth's down and Herakles' left arm is extended straight out in front of him, the youth's, although out in front, is bent at the elbow.

The other cases of mimetic figures he cites later in the book are also mostly unconvincing, so that the conclusions he draws about these figures are, in my opinion, not valid. For example, he claims that the man before Nessos on an amphora from the Princeton Group in Munich is mimetic of Herakles (Fig. 3).<sup>10</sup> Again, their poses are very different — Herakles runs with legs spread apart, while the man stands, with legs together; Herakles' left arm is extended out in front of him, while the man's hangs down by his side; Herakles' right arm is bent at the side, and he holds a sword pointed forward, while the man's left arm is bent but directed backwards, not forward, and is partially covered by a piece of cloth. The figure of the man does not imitate that of Herakles in any way to my eye. If I am correct, then the following conclusions by Stansbury-O'Donnell have no basis on which to stand:

«Although not part of the narrative nucleus, the mimetic spectator (i.e. the man) is positioned between

the youthful spectator (i.e. the youth on the far right of the scene) and the ideal of Herakles and demonstrates the dynamic of social identification through the metonymic acquisition of the traits of an ideal. Given his placement and parallels to the appearance of the ideal Herakles, the mimetic spectator stands as a secondary role model in the field of vision for the youthful spectator. The youth can see both him and Herakles, and can note the similarities in their form that allow them to be linked together. It is not necessary to fight a centaur to be like Herakles; the mimetic man shows the youth how to transpose oneself to the ideal by taking on some more limited aspect of the action and attributes of the ideal. Thus, the patina of heroic nudity and the movement of the limbs mimic the ideal. Because the mimetic spectator is an adult like Herakles, it is likely that he is also a householder with a wife, and so resembles Herakles in these aspects. The hero is defending his wife, and so resembles Herakles in these aspects. The hero is defending his wife and household; the spectator's readiness to act, as suggested by the position of his right arm, shows that it may only be necessary for a figure to be vigilant in the protection of his house and family to emulate the heroic ideal ».

Stansbury-O'Donnell continues on in this vein, but as I have demonstrated, there is no mimetic relationship between the man and Herakles, so all of these suppositions and speculations are completely unfounded and find no support in the actual picture.

Although I have been critical of part of Stansbury-O'Donnell's normally excellent work, this should not imply that I am against using various theoretical approaches to aid the study of iconography. In fact, I am very much in favor of employing the various methodologies used in other disciplines, such as psychology, anthropology, or literary studies, in order to understand better the meanings behind images not apparent when using only a strict iconographical approach. These methodologies, however, need to be employed in a reasoned, non-overly speculative way that is based upon an accurate understanding of what the scenes show and how they were created. In my own work on white-ground lekythoi I found anthropological theory particularly helpful for understanding the ambiguous nature of many of the scenes on them showing a visit to the tomb. Specifically, I was able to use Arnold van

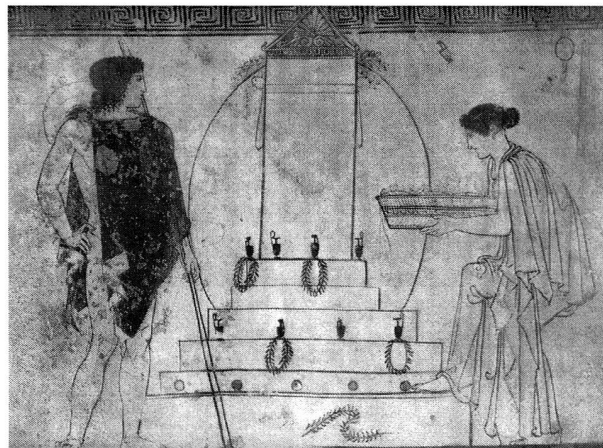


Fig. 4 Attic white-ground lekythos with a visit to the grave. Attributed to the Bosanquet Painter. Athens, National Museum 1935.

Gennep's «rites of passage» to help explain the complicated nature of these scenes and why they can be read on several levels.<sup>11</sup> Van Gennep noted that major transitions in life, such as birth, marriage and death, were marked by three stages with rites to mark the transitions: these stages are the initial, liminal, and final.

On a lekythos by the Bosanquet Painter in Athens (Fig. 4), a woman leaves a basket with offerings at the grave and a youth stands on the other side of the tomb.<sup>12</sup> Out of place are the objects hanging in the upper background — an oinochoe on the left and a lekythos, mirror and taneia on the right. These are the same types of objects that are found hanging in the background on the wall in domestic scenes found on early white-ground lekythoi, such as a lekythos by the Achilles Painter in Athens (Fig. 5) where an oinochoe and a sakkos hang on the left.<sup>13</sup> The presence of these objects hanging in the background of a scene of a visit to the grave is best understood as referring to the deceased's home where he or she lived in the initial stage. The grave, of course, refers to the final stage and the deceased's new home. Although it is uncertain on the Bosanquet Painter's lekythos if the youth is meant to represent the deceased or not, on other lekythoi, such as one in the Louvre from the Group of Berlin 2459, there can be no doubt that the youth seated on the tomb playing a lyre is the deceased, since one does not play a lyre at a tomb.<sup>14</sup> The youth in this case clearly indicates the liminal phase of the deceased — dead, yet not dead. The objects hanging in the background indicate the interior setting of the deceased's home: The



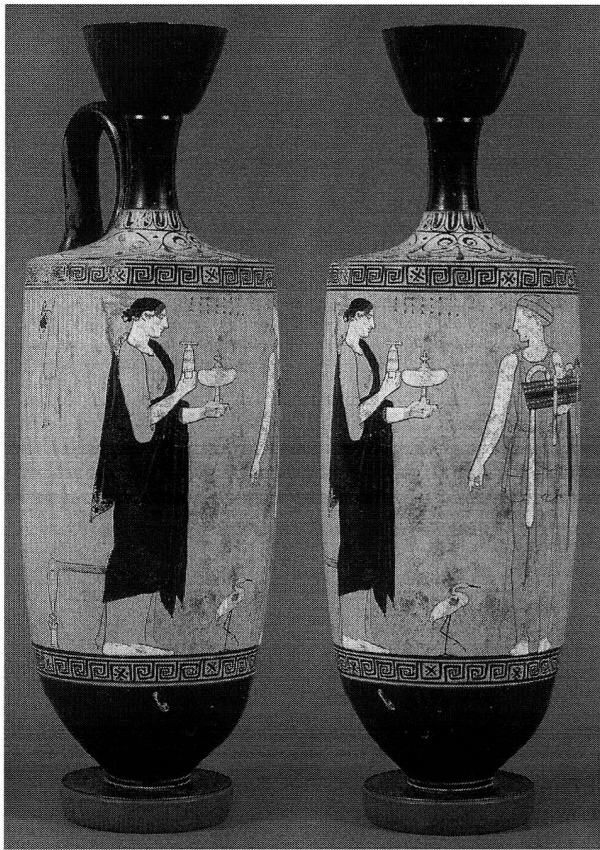


Fig. 5 *Attic white-ground lekythos with women preparing to visit the grave. Attributed to the Achilles Painter.*

lower part of a shield and scabbard, *phormiskos*, and mirror. Thus, van Gennepe's «rites of passage» explain why these apparently iconographically incongruous elements appear in these scenes. The viewer is meant to be comforted because the various elements of these scenes allow him or her to perceive the successful transition of the deceased from the initial to the final stage — home to grave or home to new home —, thereby assuring them that their lost ones are well.

Let us now turn to another old approach that I think we still need to pay attention to in the study of iconography, namely that of determining the artist's role in the development of specific scenes. A good example is the heretofore unrecognized role of the Inscription Painter in the development of the iconography on white-ground lekythoi.<sup>15</sup>

Polychrome lekythoi start being made around 470 BC and continue to near the end of the century. The vast majority made during the first twenty years (470–450 BC) show domestic scenes. The most popular is that of two women, as on an early lekythos by the Achilles

Painter (Fig. 5).<sup>16</sup> The lekythoi with this subject show the women involved in various activities, including preparing to visit the grave, as here, child care, dressing, playing games, gathering armor, and occupied with music. Complementing the lekythoi with two women are those which show a man and woman, again almost always in a domestic setting. Mainly they are depicted in situations where they would interact, such as departure or arming scenes. A lekythos in Berlin by the Painter of Athens 1826 is a good example,<sup>17</sup> where the poignancy of the bearded man's departure is highlighted by the presence of the baby held by his wife.

Although domestic scenes are the dominant subject matter on the early lekythoi, a few early lekythoi do show a visit to the tomb, such as the Vouni Painter's lekythos in New York.<sup>18</sup> Two large stelae atop block bases stand before a tymbos, and extend up into the shoulder. A woman and youth standing to either side prepare to decorate the grave, the right one of which is clearly a male's, as indicated by the halteres, aryballos and strigil that hang on its base. Large, monumental graves, as these, are typical of the few early scenes of a visit to the grave, and as on the Vouni Painter's piece, only living visitors to the tomb are shown, not the deceased making an epiphany, as happens frequently after 450 BC. A good indication of just how often these scenes do occur early is that from the two most significant early artists decorating white lekythoi, there are no grave scenes found on the eleven vases known by the Timokrates Painter<sup>19</sup> and only four grave scenes among the forty-one white lekythoi known by the Painter of Athens 1826.<sup>20</sup>

The picture after 450 BC is much different. If we survey the works of the Thanatos Painter, for example, who was active between 445 and 430 BC, we discover that at least 40 of the 49 vases listed by John Beazley as by this artist have a scene at the grave.<sup>21</sup> Also some of the elements in these scenes differ in many cases from what we saw on the early lekythoi. The grave stele tends to be simpler, such as the one with an *akanthus* and *palmette* finial atop a two-step base on a lekythos of his in Athens (Fig. 6).<sup>22</sup> The entire tomb remains in the picture zone, and the dead can make an epiphany, as is the case on this same lekythos. The woman holding the funerary basket on the right is clearly a living visitor, but the naked youth on the left, who holds a strigil in his left hand while standing in a statuesque, *contraposto* pose, must be the deceased, for this is not how one visits a tomb.



Fig. 6 *Attic white-ground lekythos depicting a visit to the grave. Attributed to the Thanatos Painter. Athens, National Museum 1822.*

Another lekythos by the same artist, this one in London, further indicates the more complicated nature of many of these later grave scenes.<sup>23</sup> Two youths are shown hunting hare in a rocky landscape. The one on the right races behind his Laconian hunting hound after a fleeing hare, who escapes up a hill, as is its habit when pursued. A youth on the left rears back to throw a stone at the animal. Meanwhile, in the background, a simple stele marks the grave. Again, we are not meant to understand this as a snapshot picture of a graveyard, but, rather, in this case, as the deceased involved in one of his favorite activities, which has been combined with a picture of his new home, the tomb. Other combinations are found on other vases, such as a fighting scene by the grave on one of the Woman Painter's lekythoi.<sup>24</sup>

This is not to imply, however, that in other cases we don't simply have a visit to the tomb where the deceased is not present, for this is certainly the case on others, as a lekythos by the Bosanquet Painter in Berlin,<sup>25</sup> where both figures are shown bearing grave gifts. On the left a negroid slave supports a diphros atop her head and carries an alabastron out in her right hand, while her mistress stands on the other side of the tomb holding a wreath and lekythos.

The two questions that presents themselves then, are, when do these more complicated scenes, that can be read on several levels, start on white-ground lekythoi, and who is the artist responsible for initiating them?

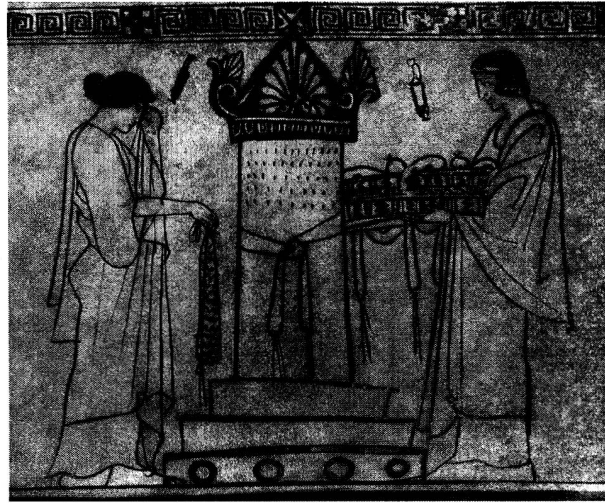


Fig. 7 *Attic white-ground lekythos depicting a visit to the grave. Attributed to the Inscription Painter. Athens, National Museum 1958.*

The answer, I believe, is a heretofore underestimated and not oft noted artist, the Inscription Painter. He takes his name from the stoicedon-like rows of short strokes that appear to imitate an inscription on two of his white-ground lekythoi, the only type of vessel he is known to have decorated.<sup>26</sup> All his work dates to the decade 460–450 B.C. One of the lekythoi by him in Athens (Fig. 7) has one of the most touching scenes of a visit to the grave. To the left of a stele a woman holding a *sakkos* in her right hand dabs away her tears with her mantle-covered left hand. The woman to the right of the stele carries a funerary basket, replete with ribbons and pomegranates. Crying is rarely shown in Greek vase-painting, indeed in Greek Archaic and Classical art as a whole. The pain she feels for a lost one is very evident. The stele is simpler, as on the later lekythoi, but neither figure can be said to represent the deceased here.

This is not the case, however, on other of the Inscription Painter's lekythoi. For example, on one in Providence, Rhode Island, to the right of the tomb a fully armed warrior practices maneuvers, a spear poised for action in his raised right hand, as he moves forward to the left.<sup>27</sup> Again, this is not how you go dressed to visit a tomb, or what you do once there, so clearly, he represents the deceased. On the other side of the simple stele is a woman visitor, who holds a funerary basket in her left hand, and a lekythos up in the right. On other of his lekythoi, as is very often the case with later lekythoi, the figures are more ambiguous, so that one cannot say for sure if the

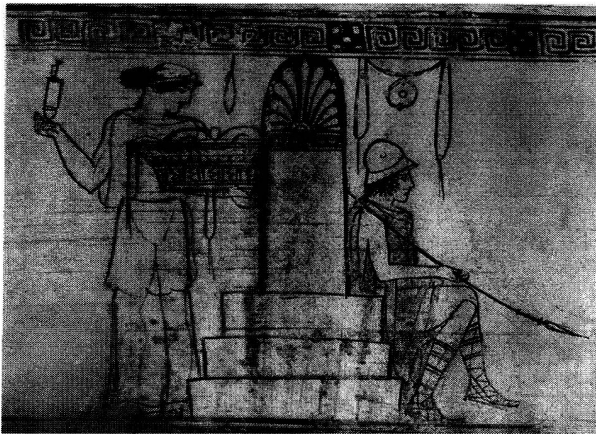


Fig. 8 *Attic white-ground lekythos depicting a visit to the grave. Attributed to the Inscription Painter. Athens, National Museum 1959.*

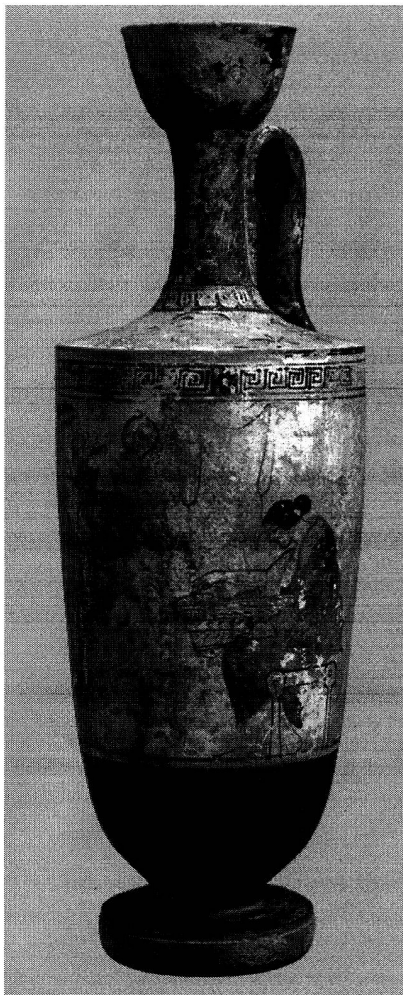


Fig. 9 *Attic white-ground lekythos with preparations for a visit to the grave. Attributed to the Inscription Painter. Once Art Market, Zurich.*

male represents the deceased or not. For example, it is unclear whether the youth, who sits relaxed in a cross-legged pose on the steps of the tomb on another lekythos in Athens (Fig. 8), is a male visitor accompanying the woman shown on the other side of the tomb, or the deceased?<sup>28</sup> Notice how she once again holds out a lekythos, something this painter's figures often do, suggesting a certain amount of self-promotion for his workshop. Similarly, it is uncertain if the youth holding out a lyre by the grave on a lekythos in Tampa<sup>29</sup> is merely a visitor making an offering, or the deceased, like other lyre-playing or lyre-holding youths on other lekythoi who clearly represent the deceased.<sup>30</sup> Note the lekythos-bearing woman on the right of the Tampa piece. In this case, the stele, although simple in form, does extend beyond the picture field, as on early lekythoi.

This reminds us that our artist is a transitional one, among whose works one should expect to see some of the old and some of the new. Thus, although 12 of his 16 lekythoi show scenes of a visit to the grave, a proportion that resembles those of painters from after the middle of the century, nevertheless he did paint some of the earlier domestic scenes. On one unknown to Beazley women prepare a funerary basket for a visit to the grave (Fig. 9).<sup>31</sup> The woman seated on the right balances the basket on her knees, as she carefully arranges the wreaths, while another on the left holds out another wreath ready for her. There is a certain charm to this scene, as is also evidenced in other of the painter's works, particularly his figures who act out their roles in not oft represented poses, reflecting well both their mood and activity.

The Inscription Painter, then, is the first white-ground polychrome artist to paint predominantly scenes of visits to the grave, and in so doing, he was the first to consistently use the simpler form of stele, common after mid-century, and the first to represent not only the deceased at the tomb, but also ambiguous figures who may or may not represent the deceased. He was also the first not to use second white for the flesh of females, as the Achilles Painter did on the one that we saw before in Athens.<sup>32</sup> In short, the Inscription Painter appears to have initiated changes in how white lekythoi were decorated, a fact heretofore unrecognized, but something we only now realize because we asked the question who was the artist responsible for the changes we noted.

Having considered some aspects of the past and present, let us now turn to the future. One area that I have started to become interested in is the use of ico-



nography to better understand the reception of classical antiquity. This, I believe, is an area that, although explored by some iconographers, still is one largely untouched and potentially a very fruitful area of inquiry for future iconographers. Specifically, I have always been fascinated by the grave monuments in the First Cemetery of Athens and their relationship to ancient monuments.<sup>33</sup>

Already during the early days of independence in 1833–1834 the new government of Greece forbade the burials of individuals in or by churches, which had been the common practice until then, and by April 8, 1835 plans were underway for a new cemetery in the Ilissos area, where the First Cemetery is located.<sup>34</sup> The earliest dated monument found in the cemetery as well as the first mention of it actually operating date to 1837.<sup>35</sup> Not too long after the middle of the century major monuments had been erected in this graveyard which now had a garden-like appearance because of the trees and shrubs that had been planted. Today the mass of sculpted monuments amidst the green evoke impressions of how the ancient Athenian graveyards must have looked lining the streets going outside of Athens.

The First Cemetery is truly a museum of sculpture and houses the graves of many of the most famous Greeks, including politicians, soldiers, actors, authors, musicians, etc. Its stone monuments take on an amazing variety of form. Two of my favorites are the tomb of Eugenia Diamantopoulou with a reclining lion that guards the plot, and the tomb of Felix and Eliza Maulwurf which is decorated with a Byzantine-style mosaic. A good number of monuments are clearly copies of or influenced by classical buildings. The family tomb of Maria K. Karapanou erected in 1895, for example, is a full-scale model of the Lysikrates monument (Fig. 10), the most famous Athenian choragic monument that still stands in the Plaka of Athens today.<sup>36</sup> Other copies of this ancient monument used as a tomb are found in the Peiraeus cemetery and on the island of Skyros. Many monuments in the First Cemetery, such as Heinrich Schliemann's grave, a work of Ernst Ziller, are based on Greek temple architecture. This Doric amphi-tetra-prostyle building with sculpted metopes also has a sculpted frieze running around the top of its base which includes scenes of Schliemann and his wife Sophia excavating and episodes from the Trojan War.<sup>37</sup>

In this paper, since it is dedicated to Christoph's memory, I will focus on the grave monuments in the



Fig. 10 *Family Tomb of Maria K. Karapanou modeled on the Lysikrates Monument. Athens, First Cemetery.*

First Cemetery that were clearly influenced by classical Athenian fifth- and fourth-century gravestones. To date, there is no comprehensive study of the grave monuments in the First Cemetery, a true *desideratum* in many scholars' opinion. Although a number of publications note the general influence of the classical gravestones on certain modern ones, the exact nature of this influence and the types and varieties of influence have not been studied in detail.<sup>38</sup> What follows is a step in that direction, although I make no claim to being comprehensive.

By far the most popular grave monument based on classical models is the simple, flat shaft stele with an acanthus-palmette finial and a pair of rosettes in relief on the upper shaft. This is the so-called palmette or anthemion stele. It is a uniquely Greek grave monument, normally not found in other European cemeteries. The earliest in the First Cemetery start to appear not long after the excavations in the Kerameikos began in the



Fig. 11 *Tombstone of Lysias, son of Lysanias of Thorikos. Athens, Kerameikos.*



Fig. 12 *Gravestone of Wolfgang Reichel. Athens, First Cemetery.*

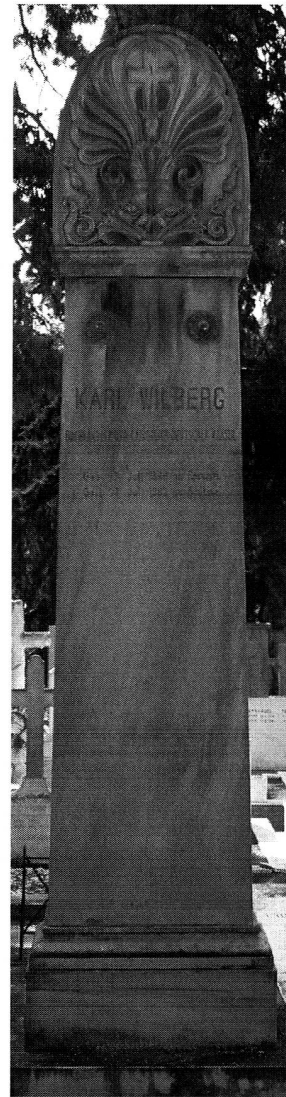


Fig. 13 *Gravestone of Karl Wilberg. Athens, First Cemetery.*

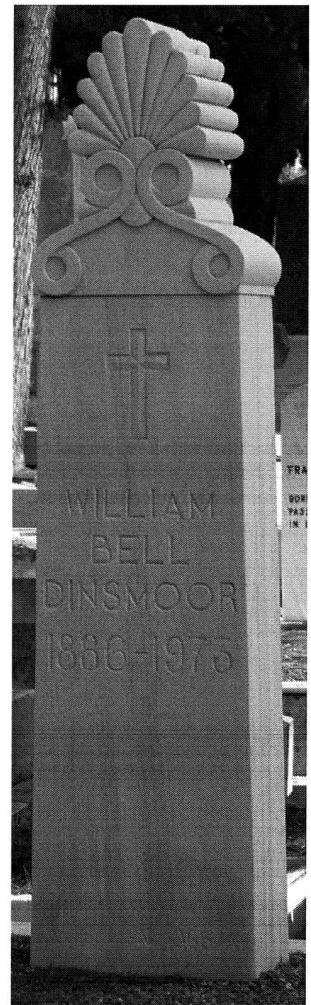


Fig. 14 *Gravestone of William Bell Dinsmoor. Athens, First Cemetery.*

1860's when a number of ancient stelae were found. A good example is the stele of Lysias, son of Lysanias of Thorikos (Fig. 11) whose stele was found in 1870.<sup>39</sup> The earliest neo-classical stelai of this type in the First Cemetery are by the brothers Francisco and Jacob Malakate from the Cycladic island of Tinos.<sup>40</sup> Tineans have a long tradition that continues today of producing grave monuments for the First Cemetery. A good example of this type is the gravestone of Wolfgang Reichel (Fig. 12), secretary of the Austrian Archaeological Institute, who died in 1900. A modern addition made to the ancient model on some of these stelai is a Christian cross placed amidst the foliage on the finial, as occurs

on the stele of Karl Wilberg, Buchhändler and German counsel in Athens, who died in 1882 (Fig. 13).

The other major form of figureless stele has a simpler finial with a palmette placed upon volutes. This type was used in both Archaic and Early Classical Athens.<sup>41</sup> Good modern examples from the First Cemetery are the graves of the American archaeologists Bert Hodge Hill and William Bell Dinsmoor (Fig. 14). The latter's has a cross upon the shaft so that once again the ancient form has been Christianized.

Some of the anthemion stelae have figured reliefs as did the ancient ones, although in most cases the figure types are not those from the classical Greek repertoire.





Fig. 15 Gravestone of Melina Mercouri. Athens, First Cemetery.

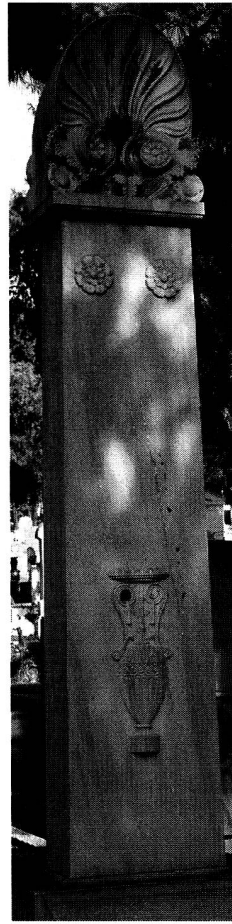


Fig. 16 Gravestone of H.G. Lolling. Athens, First Cemetery.

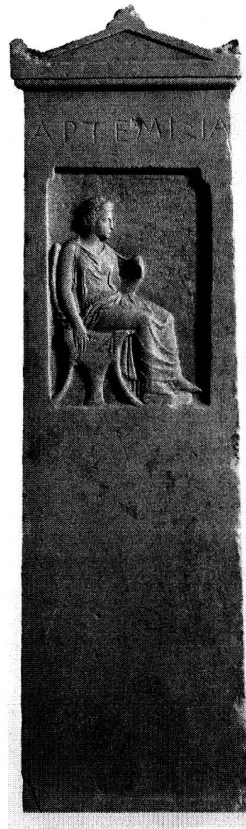


Fig. 17 Gravestone of Artemisia. Athens, Peiraeus Museum 3581.

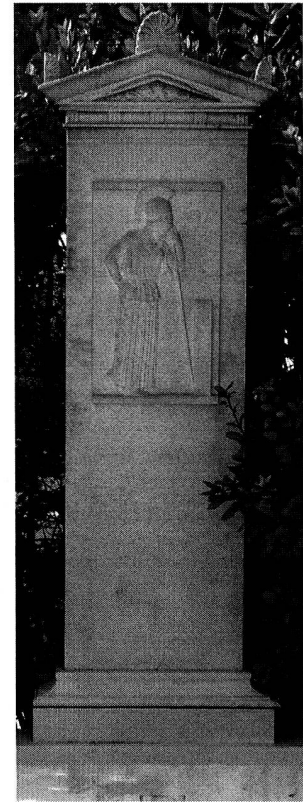


Fig. 18 Gravestone of Stylianos Gonatas. Athens, First Cemetery.

One of the newest and most famous gravestones of this type is that of the famed actress and former Minister of Culture, Melina Mercouri, who died in 1994 from lung cancer (Fig. 15). Figured is a winged female figure standing left in chiton and himation who holds a lamp in her right hand and a downwardly turned lit torch with her left. She has been called the *Πενθούν Πνεύμα*, the suffering spirit, a figure which first appeared on the tomb of Elisabeth Weckberg in 1864, a work of Christian Siegel.<sup>42</sup> This figure became a popular motif that is found on the Neoclassical monuments in other European graveyards, as well as in the First Cemetery, and represents the end of life.

On other anthemion gravestones, such as that of the German archaeologist H.G. Lolling (Fig. 16), a vase, often a loutrophoros, is rendered in relief on the shaft, as it is on some classical Athenian stelai as well.<sup>43</sup> Ce-

ramic loutrophoroi were used to carry the bath waters for the bride and groom and were placed on the tombs of those who died unmarried. Stone ones were also used to mark classical Athenian graves.<sup>44</sup>

Other ancient and modern stelai have a triangular pediment on top in place of the floral finial in addition to figures in sunken relief panels; these are called *Bildfeldstelen*.<sup>45</sup> The stele of Artemisia from the Peiraeus Museum is a good example (Fig. 17).<sup>46</sup> It shows her sitting on a *klismos* to the right, feet propped atop a stool. A *kalathos* sits by her right hand, as she pulls on the mantle that covers her *peplos* with her left. Similar in concept is the stele marking the grave of Stylianos Gonatas who died in 1966 (Fig. 18). He was Prime Minister of Greece in 1922–1924 and a major Greek military and political figure of the twentieth century. The image decorating his stele is a copy of the so-called

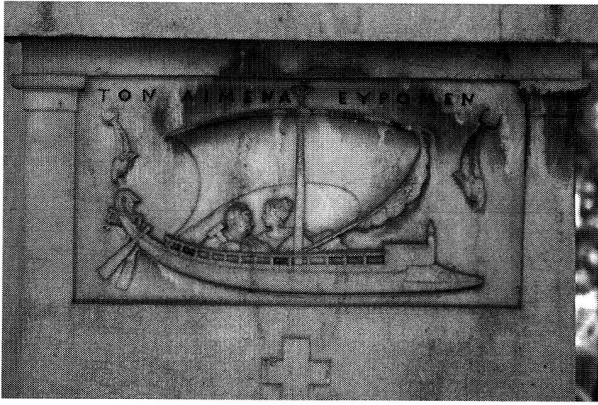


Fig. 19 Gravestone of Gorham Philip Stevens and Annette Stevens. Athens, First Cemetery.



Fig. 20 Attic black-figure cup with Dionysos. Signed by Exekias. Munich, Antikensammlung 2044.

«Mourning Athena», one of the most famous ancient Greek votive reliefs now in the Acropolis Museum.<sup>47</sup> Athena in *peplos* leans over resting on her spear while looking down at a stele. One interpretation is that she is reading a list of the dead Athenians who had fallen fighting for her city, hence the sobriquet the «Mourning Athena». One could well imagine why such a scene might appeal to an old soldier like Gonatas — he, like the ancient Athenians had died after fighting for and helping his country.

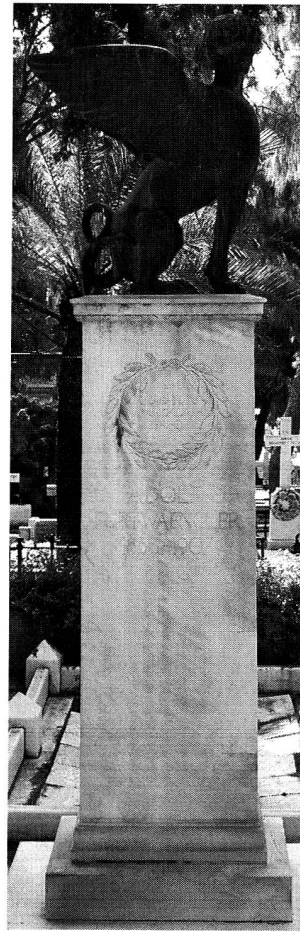


Fig. 21 Gravestone of Adolph Furtwängler. Athens, First Cemetery.

Another example is the stele of the American architect / archaeologist Gorham Philip Stevens and his Greek wife, Annette (Fig. 19). During Stevens' career, he served as both director of the American Academy in Rome and later as director of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. The stele shows the pair reclining in a boat with dolphins sailing to either side. The visual model for this relief is the magnificent Attic black-figure eye cup by Exekias in Munich that shows Dionysos reclining in a ship sailing on a coral red sea (Fig. 20).<sup>48</sup> Although there are clear differences between the two pictures — the god holds a drinking horn instead of an architect's T as Stevens does, he is alone and not accompanied as Stephens is by his

wife, and the ship goes in the opposite direction with no grape vine growing from the mast — the very close similarity in details of the ship on both, such as the stern, prow, railing, and sail, and the dolphins leave no doubt that the relief was derived from the cup. Thus, one relief is based on a votive relief, the other on a ceramic vase. Another modern gravestone that copies in part an ancient monument verbatim is the tomb of the German archaeologist Adolph Furtwängler (1853–1907) which was erected by the Greek Archaeological Society (Fig. 21). On top of his stele is a bronze copy of the marble Aegina Sphinx, an Early Classical votive that Furtwängler found during his excavations in the Apollo Sanctuary on Aegina.<sup>49</sup> The bronze copy restores parts of the Sphinx lost. Sphinxes are not found on top of Classical Athenian gravestones, but they are on Archaic Attic grave-stones,<sup>50</sup> which may be why the *Αρχαιολογική Εταιρεία*



Fig. 22 Gravestone of Tynnias, son of Tynnion of Trikorynthos. Athens, National Museum 902.

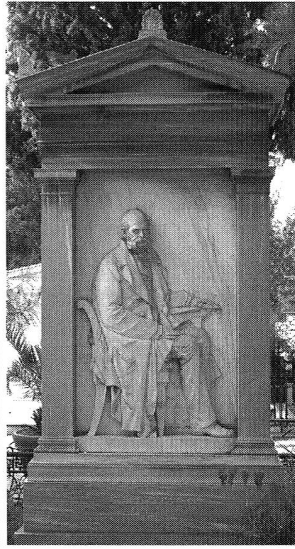


Fig. 23 Gravestone of Iannis Vouros. Athens, First Cemetery.

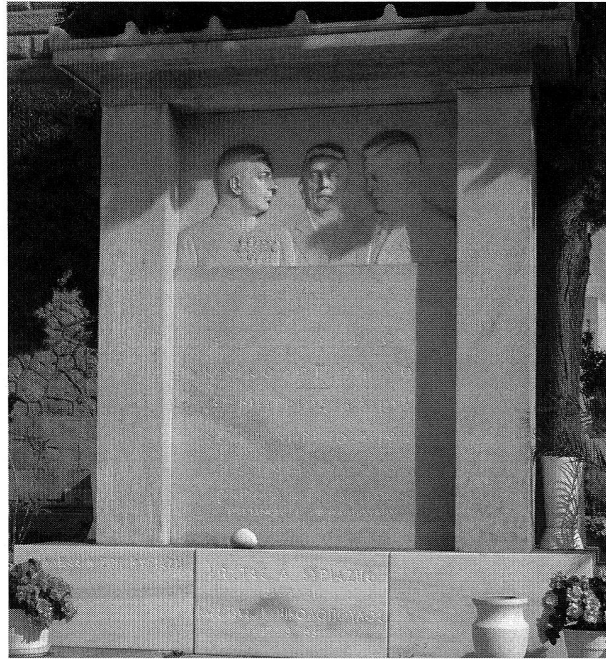


Fig. 24 Family tomb of Anathanasios Nikolopoulos. Athens, First Cemetery.

thought it appropriate to place it atop his grave — this plus the fact that he had found the Sphinx. The simple molding found atop the stele is also a form found on classical Athenian stelae.<sup>51</sup>

One of the most popular forms of sculpted gravestones with the ancient Athenians was the naiskos stele, characterized by antae on the long sides, a pedimental top, and figure or figures in the naiskos created by these architectural elements. A good example is the stele of Tynnias, son of Tynnion of the deme of Trikorynthos which shows a bearded man seated on a *klismos* to the right (Fig. 22).<sup>52</sup> The tombstone of Iannis Vouros (1808–1885) in the First Cemetery is also of this type (Fig. 23), and the seated figure of the doctor is roughly like that of Tynnias. The doctor, however, is dressed and has the hair style of a nineteenth-century Greek man, contemporary with his gravestone. Thus, the form of the stele is ancient, as is the composition of the scene on it, but the man is completely modern in appearance.

An alternate form of the naiskos stele shows the sima of the roof, including antefixes, rather than a pediment. The gravestone of Sosinous, the copper smelter from Gortyn on Crete, an Athenian metic, takes this form and once again shows a bearded man seated to the right in a *klismos*.<sup>53</sup> The family tomb of Anathanasios Nikolopoulos also has this form (Fig. 24), but only

the heads and upper torso of three twentieth-century brothers are shown in the naiskos, their lower bodies hidden as if by a wall. Thus, we again have a combination of ancient and modern.

An even more modernized and simplified form of the naiskos stele occurred around the middle of the twentieth century. The antae and pediment have become one unbroken border on the tombstone of Flora Kaminopetrou (Fig. 25) who died on Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>, 1957, and the figure is flatter, and more abstract than the ancient ones. Although seated on a chair to the right, she is not in profile, but angled in a three-quarter pose. This is a modern version of the ancient form employing the style of social realism.

In some cases the figural scenes depicted on the ancient stele decorate Christian graves of non-ancient form. One popular type of modern grave monument is a low rectangular base covered with a somewhat smaller rectangular slab with the deceased's name, cross, date of birth and death, and sometimes other information and decoration. The tomb of Johann Bernhard Busch, who died on August 30<sup>th</sup>, 1840, and was chamberlain to the Greek Queen, shows a man seated on a *klismos* across from a standing woman (Fig. 26). He wears a mantle and she a *chiton* and *himation*. They perform the *dexiosis*, a shaking of hands between two of the members



in the scene — one of the most popular motifs on classical tombstones.<sup>54</sup> Its exact meaning has been debated, but the motif is probably best understood as emphasizing the connection between the dead and the living. Are we meant to see the queen and her servant here?<sup>55</sup> There is no doubt that the scene on Busch's tomb was influenced by those on classical Athenian gravestones.



Fig. 25 Gravestone of Flora Kaminopetrou. Athens, First Cemetery.

The final category of monuments to consider is marble vases.

Lekythoi were the most popular form in classical Athens, and they are used to decorate graves in the First Cemetery as well. The most interesting is the one that marks the grave of Elli Lambeti (1925–1983), one of Greece's most famous actresses whose premature death in 1983 from breast cancer still haunts Greece today (Fig. 27). Her tomb is marked by a copy of one of the most famous classical marble lekythoi, that of Myrrhine (Fig. 28) who may well have been the first priestess of Athena Nike on the Acropolis.<sup>56</sup> The scene on it is unique for classical lekythoi and shows the god Hermes with winged sandals and chlamys in his role as Psychopompous leading the veiled woman in chiton and himation to the left. Her name, Myrrine, is inscribed on the original but not on the copy, and we are probably meant to think of her as Elli Lambeti on the copy. Three other figures rendered on a smaller scale stand on the left: a balding old man, youth and woman. They have been interpreted as either relatives of Myrrine or as bystanders on the original. Perhaps they should be understood as Elli Lambeti's *publicum* in the case of the copy.

This finishes our survey of the First Cemetery's grave monuments that were influenced by Classical Athenian gravestones. Specifically we have seen that:

- Some of the gravestones in the First Cemetery are direct copies of the ancient works.



Fig. 26 Tomb of Johann Bernhard Busch. Athens, First Cemetery.

- Many take on ancient forms, such as anthemion stelai and naiskos stelai.
- Some have an ancient form, but the figures on them are rendered in a modern style.
- Some have an ancient form, but copy the scenes found on other types of ancient monuments.
- Some have a modern form but a scene derived from an ancient gravestone.

And

- Some have an ancient form and/or scene which have been adjusted to a contemporary art style, such as social realism.

Finally, not surprisingly, many of the classicizing gravestones are found on the graves of archaeologists or foreigners who lived and died in Athens, but not all are, for even today classicizing stelai continue to be placed on graves, such as the one erected on the grave of Melina Mercouri.<sup>57</sup> Thus, Greece's past in the form of classical gravestones still continues to influence her grave monuments, and the iconographer can add much information to our understanding of these and other types of more modern monuments.

Let me conclude by summarizing the four main points about the study of iconography that I have focused on here:

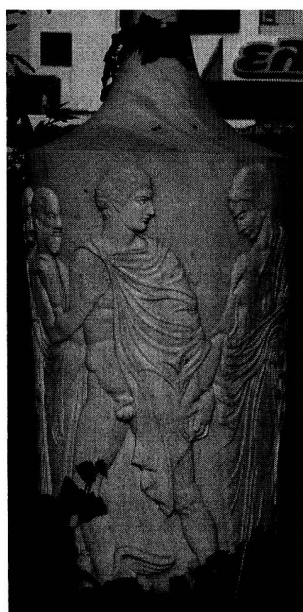


Fig. 27 *Tomb of Eli Lamberti. Athens, First Cemetery.*

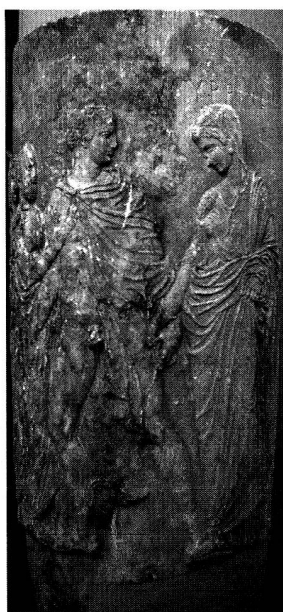


Fig. 28 *Marble lekythos of Myrrhine. Athens, National Museum 4485.*

- A careful and accurate visual analysis of any picture is a necessary and fundamental key to properly interpreting it.
- The use of various theoretical approaches to better understand images is important, but needs to be done in a reasoned, non-overly speculative manner.
- It is important to understand the role of the artist in the development of a specific type of scene.
- An understanding of ancient iconography helps us to better understand the reception of classical antiquity on objects and monuments from the more recent past.

## Anmerkungen

- 1 For his life, see A. Lezzi-Hafter, [http://www.akanthus.ch/nachruf\\_clairmont.pdf](http://www.akanthus.ch/nachruf_clairmont.pdf).
- 2 CAT.
- 3 Clairmont 1951.
- 4 Clairmont 1957.
- 5 Paris, Louvre 980.0820: Oakley 1982.
- 6 Basel, Antikenmus. BS 404: Oakley 1982; Oakley 1990, 83 no. 106 bis. Pl. 84.
- 7 Stansbury-O'Donnell 2006. See my review in the *New England Classical Journal* 34.3, 2007, 255–257. For another example, see Oakley 2007. I, too, have been guilty of misidentifying elements of a scene: see Simon —, forthcoming.
- 8 Stansbury-O'Donnell 2006, 24.
- 9 New Haven, Yale University Art Gallery 1913.110: Stansbury-O'Donnell 2006, 24–25 fig. 11.
- 10 Munich, Antikensammlung und Glyptothek 1384: ABV 299, 2; Stansbury-O'Donnell 2006, 75–76 fig. 14.
- 11 Oakley 2004, 225–227.
- 12 Athens, National Mus. 1935: ARV<sup>2</sup> 1227, 1; Beazley, Para. 466; Add<sup>2</sup> 350; Riezler 1914, pl. 23.
- 13 Athens, National Mus. 1963: ARV<sup>2</sup> 995, 122. 1677; Beazley, Para. 438; Add<sup>2</sup> 312; Oakley 1997, 136–137 no. 171. Pl. 93 B–C; Tzachou-Alexandri 1998, 113–116 no. 6. Pls. 17–20.
- 14 Paris, Louvre MNB 1729: ARV<sup>2</sup> 1374, 2; Add<sup>2</sup> 370; Riezler 1914, pl. 62.
- 15 ARV<sup>2</sup> 748–749. 1668; Beazley, Para. 413; Add<sup>2</sup> 284–285; Oakley 2004, 14–15. 149; see 21 and 35–36 for additions to Beazley's lists.
- 16 Athens, National Mus. 1963: loc. cit. n. 13.
- 17 Berlin, Antikenslg. F 2444: ARV<sup>2</sup> 746, 14; Oakley 2004, 66 fig. 39.
- 18 New York, Metropolitan Mus. of Art 35.11.5: ARV<sup>2</sup> 741, 1; Beazley, Para. 413; Add<sup>2</sup> 284; Oakley 2004, Color Plate VII A–B.
- 19 ARV<sup>2</sup> 743–744 and 1668; Beazley, Para. 521; Add<sup>2</sup> 284; add ones in Paphos and Gela: Oakley 2004, 58 no. 9; 67 fig. 40 [J.H. Oakley] and Panvini/Giudice 2003, 480 no. p128 [G. Giudice].
- 20 ARV<sup>2</sup> 745–747. 1668; Beazley, Para. 413; Add<sup>2</sup> 284; add the ten listed in Oakley 2004, 21 no. 25; 35–36 nos. 34–36; 59 nos. 16–20; 140 no. 2.
- 21 ARV<sup>2</sup> 1228–1231; Beazley, Para. 466–467; Add<sup>2</sup> 350–351. For the artist most recently, see Tzachou-Alexandri 2002–2003; Oakley 2004, 16–17 and n. 105 with earlier bibliography.
- 22 Athens, National Mus. 1822: ARV<sup>2</sup> 1229, 22; Add<sup>2</sup> 351; Oakley 2004, 175 fig. 133.
- 23 London, Brit. Mus. D 60: ARV<sup>2</sup> 1230, 37; Add<sup>2</sup> 351; Oakley 2004, 178–179 figs. 136–137.
- 24 Athens, National Mus. 14517: ARV<sup>2</sup> 1374, 18; Add<sup>2</sup> 370; Oakley 2004, 183 fig. 143.
- 25 Berlin, Antikenslg. V.I. 3291: ARV<sup>2</sup> 1227, 9; Add<sup>2</sup> 350; Oakley 2004, 162 fig. 122.
- 26 Madrid, Museo Arqueológico Nacional 19497: ARV<sup>2</sup> 748, 1; Add<sup>2</sup> 284; Kurtz 1975, pl. 19.1. Athens, National Mus. 1958: ARV<sup>2</sup> 748, 2. 1668; Beazley, Para. 413; Add<sup>2</sup> 284; Riezler 1914, pl. 17; Oakley 2004, 149 fig. 111.
- 27 Providence, R.I., Rhode Island School of Design 69.142.1: ARV<sup>2</sup> 749, 7; Add<sup>2</sup> 284; Ferrari Pinney/Ridgway 1979, 94–95 no. 44.
- 28 Athens, National Mus. 1959: ARV<sup>2</sup> 748, 3; Beazley, Para. 413; Add<sup>2</sup> 284; Oakley 2004, 150 figs. 112–113.



- 29 Tampa, Mus. of Art 86.79: ARV<sup>2</sup> 749, 10. 1668; Beazley, Para. 413; Add<sup>2</sup> 285; Murray 1985, 28.
- 30 The Phiale Painter's lekythos in Berlin is a good example of this type. Berlin, Antikensammlung F 2450: ARV<sup>2</sup> 1023, 141; Oakley 1990, Color pl.; pl. 113.
- 31 Once E. Brummer: The Ernst Brummer Collection, Ancient Art, vol. II, Galerie Koller, Zurich 16–19 Oct. 1979, 346 no. 708 [J.H. Oakley].
- 32 Athens, National Mus. 1963: supra n. 13.
- 33 An earlier version of this part of the paper was presented in Haifa, Israel on May 20, 2007 at the conference *Greek Art and Culture. Origins and Influences*. I want to thank Sonia Klinger for the kind invitation to participate in that conference.
- 34 For the first cemetery in general with earlier bibliography, see: Lydakis 1981; Mykoniatis 1990; Koimitirio Athinon; Petropoulos 2005, 10–31 (pictures only). I would like to thank Christina Mitsopoulou for her help and for lending me her copy of Koimitirio Athinon, a weekend issue of the newspaper Kathimerini.
- 35 For the early history of the graveyard, see Lydakis 1981, 18 and D. Ph. Markatou in: Koimitirio Athinon, 3.
- 36 Lydakis 1981, 25; ipse in: Koimitirio Athinon, 12.
- 37 Korres 1981; Korres 1984.
- 38 Broad groupings were made by Lydakis 1981 and Mykoniatis 1990.
- 39 Hildebrandt 2006, 38–50 for this type; 243–244 no. 58 & pl. 26 for Lysias's stele.
- 40 Lydakis 1981, 23–24.
- 41 The stele of Antiphon with figures of animals and another in Paris with the figure of a man incised on it are two good examples. Athens, National Mus. 86: Richter 1961, 40 no. 54 figs. 137 & 208. Paris, Louvre MND 1863; Richter 1961, 41 no. 57 figs. 138–140.
- 42 Lydakis 1981, 21 and ipse in: *Koimitirio Athinon*, 11.
- 43 E.g. the gravestone of Panchares, son of Leochares. Peiraeus Mus. 5280: CAT 3.443; Steinhauer 2001, 286–287 figs. 408–409.
- 44 E.g. Athens, National Mus. 954: Kaltsas 2002, 200 fig. 398. Peiraeus Mus. 3280: CAT 3.363a; Steinhauer 2001, 356–357 figs. 466–467.
- 45 Scholl 1996.
- 46 Peiraeus Mus. 3581: CAT 1.246; Steinhauer 2001, 318 fig. 427.
- 47 Athens, Acropolis Mus. 695: Ridgway 1970, 36. 42–43 figs. 51–52; Brouskari 1974, 123–124 no. 695 fig. 237; Bol 2004, 58–59. 502–503 fig. 57.
- 48 Munich, Antikensammlung und Glyptothek 2044: ABV 146, 21 and 686; Beazley, Para. 60; Add<sup>2</sup> 41; Simon 1976, 86. Taf. xxiv. 73.
- 49 Aegina, Aegina Mus. 1383: Ridgway 1970, 35–36. 42–43 figs. 51–52; Bol 2004, 41–42 text fig. 16.
- 50 E.g. the Brother and Sister stele. New York, Metropolitan Mus. of Art 11.185; Berlin, Antikensammlung A 7; Athens, National Mus. 4518: Richter 1961, 27–29 no. 37 figs. 96–109. 190. 204; Bol 2002, 175. 209. 211–212. 316 no. 292 a–b fig. 292 a–b.
- 51 For the type, see Hildebrandt 2006, 51–52.
- 52 Athens, National Mus. 902: CAT 1.251.
- 53 Paris, Louvre Ma 769: CAT 1.202.
- 54 For the dexiosis most recently, see Davies 1985; Mommsen 1989, 131–132; Pemberton, 1989; CAT 115; Breuer 1995, 15–39; Stears 1995, 126–128; Bergemann 1997, 61–62.
- 55 E.g. Havanna, Palacio de Belles Artes, collection of el Conde de Lagunillas: CAT 2.193.
- 56 Athens, National Mus. 4485: CAT 5.150; see Lougovaya-Ast 2006 most recently.
- 57 Ines Jucker informs me that the grave monument marking her husband Hans Jucker's burial in Bern is based on the Early Classical Giustiniani stele. Jan Zahle has published several Danish grave monuments modelled on classical gravestones: Zahle 2007–2008 and Zahle 2008. I thank him for sharing his work with me. Other Examples can be found in other European countries as, for example, the tombstone of C.W. Goettling in Jena, Germany: Greyer 1996, 3 fig. 2.

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