AURAE.

THE XANTHIAN HEROON AND AN ATTIC ASTRAGALOS.

It is a generally accepted opinion that the marble figures¹ which adorned the intercolumniations of the most magnificent amongst the Xanthian sepulchral monuments, now in the British Museum, represent the chorus of the Nereids, though there is as general a discord amongst those who have treated the question as to the meaning of their presence there.² This seems a sufficient reason for questioning the accepted theory.

Let us state in a few words the subject: young maidens, clad in the thinnest garments, sailing by aid of their mantles³ over sea and shore, indicated by a fish, a dolphin, a waterfowl, a crab and a shell. They do not soar as high as the Nike of Paionios, who leaves the eagle beneath her in her flight, but they hover over the water without touching it, as is especially to be seen by the swimming waterfowl beneath one of them.

This is hardly a fit motive for the daughters of Nereus, the spirits of the waves, who, forming part of the sea, cannot be represented as hovering above their element, and are accordingly, as a rule, either thought of as playing on the shore or seen riding across the deep on the monsters of the ocean.

It seems evident that the element of these maidens is the air that blows over the water, and if they are not winged, like the other divine creatures that people mid-air such as Eos, or Iris, or Boreas, with his mighty wings, and the other gods of the winds, it is because they cannot fly up to the clouds but are confined to the surface of sea or land. One thinks naturally of the breezes, the *Auræ*, and this guess is confirmed by Pliny, who describes two marble statues of the *Auræ* as sailing by aid of their garments, *duaeque Auræ velificantes sua veste*.⁴

Pliny mentions these marbles, that were in the *Curia* of Octavia, together with others, as pleasing though by an unknown author, *sine auctoribus placent*. Most of these works, if not all, are from the end of the fifth or from the fourth century, and it is quite possible of course that the Roman *Auræ* were the originals after which the Xanthian figures were composed;

¹ *Mon. dell' Inst.* x. pl. xi. i.-xii. Brunn, *Denkmäler*, 211, 212, 213.

² Overbeck, *Geschichte der Plastik*,³ ii. p. 155-6.

³ Friederichs-Wolters, *Bausteine*, p. 314, die Maentel, welche die Maedchen halten, bauschen sich hinter ihnen wie Segel auf.

⁴ Plin. *Nat. Hist.* xxxvi. § 29.

but as there are eighteen intercolumniations of the monument, and the fragments of only twelve statues have been found, it is not impossible that the two best examples were carried off in Roman times to adorn the capital.

Prof. Furtwängler⁵ has shown the close connection with the Nike of Paionios and the *akroteria* of Delos, the rape of Oreithuia by Boreas, and of Kephalos by Eos, and I should not have much to add to his exposition were it not that the dates he gives can hardly now be maintained.

As we can no longer accept Paionios as the author of the east pediment at Olympia, we have not a single reason to date his Nike so high, and we appreciate better the indications of style which show it to be later than the Parthenon and dedicated probably about the ninetieth Olympiad, 420 B.C.⁶

The Delian sculptures too may be of the same period,⁷ but might equally well be posterior to the battle of Knidus in 394 B.C. when Athens once more was master of Delos.

The comparison of the Xanthian frieze with that of the Nike temple at Athens points to the time of the Nike at the earliest, as Dr. Wolters⁸ has shown this to be posterior to the *propylaea* of Mnesikles (437—432 B.C.).

This date is modified by the close likeness of the Xanthian capitals to those of the Erechtheion,⁹ the building of which was re-taken in hand in the years 408 and 407 B.C.

In fact Prof. Furtwängler is right in recognizing the influence of the great painters of the fifth century in the bas-reliefs. There is, for example, nowhere a better illustration of the Butes of Mikon, whose eye and helmet only were visible, than in the numerous besieged warriors of the second bas-relief (*h, p, q, r, t, u*). It is however probable that this influence lasted a considerable time, as it seems that elements of later date cannot be overlooked.

The second frieze contains a battle scene (*a—g*) that corresponds exactly to the description given by Pausanias of the picture of the battle of Oinoe¹⁰: αὕτη δὲ ἡ στοὰ πρῶτα μὲν Ἀθηναίους ἔχει τεταγμένους ἐν Οἰνῳί τῆς Ἀργείας ἐναντία Λακεδαιμονίων, γέγραπται δὲ οὐκ ἐς ἀκμὴν ἀγῶνος οὐδὲ τολμημάτων ἐς ἐπίδειξιν τὸ ἔργον ἤδη προῆκον, ἀλλὰ ἀρχομένη τε ἡ μάχη, καὶ ἐς χεῖρας ἔτι συνιόντες, and though the principal element, the scheme of two opposed lines of battle, already occurs at Trysa,¹¹ the coincidence is too strong to be fortuitous. Prof. Robert¹² has attempted in vain to assign an earlier date to this battle, and Prof. Wachsmuth¹³ has proved further that this event must be placed in the Korinthian war either with Prof. Koehler¹⁴ in 394 B.C. or rather with Ulrichs¹⁵ in 392 B.C.

⁵ *Arch. Zeitung*, 1882, p. 335 ff.

⁶ Friederichs-Wolters, *Bausteine*, p. 219.

⁷ Furtwängler, *l.l.* p. 363.

⁸ *Bonner Studien*, p. 92 ff.

⁹ Puchstein, *das Ionische Kapitel*, p. 27 and 28. According to Dr. Puchstein, there is no necessity for the Xanthian capital to be an imitation of the Attic, as both may be derived from earlier Ionic examples. Such is however

the similitude that it goes near to proving a direct connection.

¹⁰ i. 15. 1.

¹¹ Benndorf, *Gjölbaski-Trysa*, xii. A 10, 11.

¹² *Hermes*, 1890, p. 412 ff.

¹³ *Stadt Athen*, ii. p. 517 ff.

¹⁴ *Hermes*, v. p. 5.

¹⁵ *Jahrb. f. Philol.* 1854, vol. 69, p. 380 ff.

If however this date be controvertible, a still later date is proved by the following considerations :—

One of the smaller friezes (ix. x.) gives the first example, so far as I know, of a combat of horsemen against horsemen; now the first mentions made of a horse-fight in painting are an episode of the battle of Mantinea in 362 B.C.¹⁶ by Euphranor, and the victorious charge of Charon before the battle of Leuctra in 371 B.C. by Androkydes, which picture is said to have been painted so early as 379 B.C., and to have been inscribed with new names on that event, in contempt of Pelopidas and Epaminondas who were originally intended.¹⁷

If, as I suspect, we may find an allusion to the picture of Euphranor in the words of Nikias recorded by Demetrius Phalereus¹⁸—*ἵππομαχίας—ἐνθα πολλὰ μὲν σχήματα δείξειεν ἂν τις ἵππων, τῶν μὲν θεόντων, τῶν δὲ ἀνθισταμένων, ἄλλων δὲ ὀκλαζόντων, πολλοὺς δὲ ἀκοντίζοντας, πολλοὺς δὲ καταπίπτοντας τῶν ἱππέων*, it is most probable that the so much poorer Xanthian composition is anterior to Euphranor and posterior only to the work of Androkydes.

And this date is strongly confirmed by the discovery of paintings in the *lacunaria* of the Heroon, as we know from Pliny¹⁹ that Pausias was the first to paint these, *lacunaria primus pingere instituit*.²⁰ That is to say, our investigation has brought us back insensibly to the exact time of Perikles the Lykian king, whose date is pretty well fixed by his mention in Theopompus and by his coins to not much before 374 B.C. and not after 362 B.C.²¹ And after all nothing is more likely than that this Heroon is his tomb, even if we have no right to explain the whole second bas-relief as the siege of Telmessos.²²

The long duration of time elapsed between the Nike of Paionios and these figures so like in style is less astonishing in the beginning of the fourth century than it would be in the fifth or the latter half of the fourth: thus the rider of the Mausoleum and the Nike of Samothrake, though the first is from about 351 and the latter between 307 and 304 B.C., are decidedly more nearly allied.

There remains the question as to the intention of the artist in surrounding the tomb by a chorus of Auræ. Here Michaelis²³ has unwittingly shown the way. Wishing to prove that the Nereids may be thought of as surrounding the Island of the Blessed, the abode of the occupants of the tomb, he cites Pindar's²⁴ words about the breezes of the Ocean that blow around that island: *μακάρων νᾶσος ὠκεανίδες Αὔραι*

¹⁶ Pausanias, i. 3. 4; Plutarch, *d. Glor. Athen.* 2.

¹⁷ Plutarch, *Pelop.* 25. 7–9.

¹⁸ *De Elocut.* 76.

¹⁹ *Nat. Hist.* xxxv. 124.

²⁰ I have no further information about these paintings than from a short notice in a letter from my friend Dr. Franz Winter, who men-

tions expressly a head *en face*.

²¹ J. P. Six, *Monnaies Lyciennes*, p. 76, *Revue Numismatique*, 1887.

²² Friederichs-Wolters, *Bausteine*, p. 311 and 315.

²³ *Ann. dell' Inst.* 1875, p. 181.

²⁴ *Olympionike*, ii. 70.

περιπνέουσιν. The interpretation of Michaelis, so long as the Nereids were in question, was overstrained, and has not I think been accepted. Now that the Auræ take their place, there can no longer be any reason to doubt that he was right in the main.

Need it be said that in the burning clime of Xanthus none of the felicities of this isle would be more acceptable and more readily understood?

Only one other monument has come to my notice, well enough preserved to be compared here. It is an *astragalos* found at Aegina, published by Stackelberg, *Die Graeber der Hellenen*, Pl. XXIII.²⁵ It is now in the British Museum (E 783) and of such rare beauty of design that it deserves a better publication than that of Stackelberg.

It is, no doubt, the work of one of the best Attic potters and vase-painters of the middle of the fifth century B.C.

On three sides of this *astragalos* are painted a chorus of ten maidens in groups, three, three and four, floating through the air, several of them sailing by the aid of their garments, *Auræ velificantes sua veste*. I hope this interpretation will have no difficulty in superseding that of Stackelberg²⁶ who calls the figures Hyades and Pleiades, without much apparent reason.²⁷

The sprig in the hand of one of them (p. 135 Fig. 1) is a fit attribute for those who caress the flowers as Catullus²⁸ says, *flos . . . quem mulcent auræ*.

The greater is the difficulty with the principal design (p. 135 Fig. 2). If the *astragalos*, which is, like the basis found at Olympia,²⁹ from a left foot,³⁰ stands on the side called *ὑπρία* (Stackelberg, 6), the side called *πρηνής* (5) is turned upward with three Auræ (4), three (3) occupy the short side beneath their feet and the four others (Stackelberg's 2, our Fig. 1) are to be seen at their back on the side called *κῶρον*, that on which it stands in the best throw. The side called *χῶρον* (1 and 5 and 6, our Fig. 2) then shows to the left an opening which gives the effect of a hole, from which the man before it has just issued. This extremely vulgar fellow, with upturned nose and shaggy beard, a piece of cloth about his loins and legs, stands with bent knees and outstretched arms as if ready to spring upon his prey. And as such are advancing, not in terror but in curiosity, three women who come dancing along in the scheme of the Charites; the first and the

²⁵ Also, partially, in Schreiber's *Kulturhistorischer Bilderatlas*, Part i. Pl. xx. nos. 6 and 7. [Mr. van Branteghem has had the *astragalos* drawn for an adequate publication in colour. From this drawing, by his kind permission, our two cuts are taken.—EDD.]

²⁶ *l. l.* p. 19.

²⁷ The British Museum contains some fragments, D 60, with a similar motive and in the same style, of floating maidens, amongst whom are seen the legs of a man with striped shoes. These are red-figured, and occupy the outside of a cup the inside of which has on a white ground

a young man with black *chlamys* and *petasos*, charging with his lance, not unlike the Glaukon of a *lekythos* from Eretria (Klein, *Lieblingsinschriften*, p. 81, no. 13; *Jahrbuch*, ii. p. 163). The Λ which remains of the inscription claims to be completed into $\Lambda(\text{LAYKONKALOS})$.

²⁸ *l. xii.* 39–41.

²⁹ Benndorf, *Festgabe für Anton Springer; Ausgrabungen zu Olympia*, iii. Pl. xvi. 6. 2.

³⁰ I am told that this too must be an *astragalos* of some species of cattle, but it seems the forms are somewhat schematic and cannot be assigned to any particular species.

FIG. 1.

FIG. 2

third stretch their necks the better to see, the second turns her bent head with raised eyes as if making a malicious observation to the third. It seems evident that they are intruding upon the solitude of the troglodyte, whose intention may rather be to frighten than to harm.

I am sorry to say that I am unable to explain this scene and to assign the proper names, no doubt mythic, to the actors, although some connection with the shape of the vase is not improbable; the Auræ at least are a fit ornament for an astragalos as they symbolize quite well its playful, light and unsteady character.

A similar connection might be found with the Charites, as an astragalos was in the hand of one of them as an attribute at Olympia,³¹ but this does not explain the scene.

On the other hand, as the third woman is only half visible, cut off by the edge, one might be induced to think of the scene as occurring inside the grotto and of the women as its occupants, and so as Nymphs, and of the man as an intruder. His attitude may express fear, as may be seen by a comparison with the Thersites of Trysa,³² but I know not how far this will go to account for the outstretched arms. According to Darwin,³³ there is some affinity between the expression of fear and the position for attack. We should in this case have to recognize some *nymphholeptos*, of course no beautiful boy like Hylas or Bromos, nor an ordinary mortal like Archidemos of Thera, who finished the grotto of the Nymphs at Vari, but rather a prophet like Bakis, whose extasy may have been full of horror.

Now, let this be as it may, our ignorance about the principal subject cannot affect our identification of the Auræ.

Just as the water-carrying maidens in the Nekyia of Polygnotos³⁴ must have stood to the winged *eidola* that pour water into the *pithos* on the Cyrenaic Hades-vase,³⁵ so stand the Auræ of this astragalos to the winged breezes that hover about Kyrene on the cup from Naukratis.³⁶ And if Studniczka³⁷ is right—as why should he not be?—in calling these Harpyiaæ, we find a precedent and analogy to the Heroon of Xanthus in another Xanthian monument, namely the Harpy-tomb.

And as the Auræ, though corresponding to the softer side only of the double-natured Harpies, cannot fulfil all their functions, the rape of the daughters of Leukippos crowned the pediments of the Heroon on both sides as an akroterion, symbolical of death.

It is still the influence of Polygnotus that works here, whose symbolism hates all unnatural combination of human and animal forms, but rests content with an object or an action hinting at the intended meaning.

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³¹ Pausanias, vi. 44. 6.

³² Benndorf, *das Heroon von Gjölbaschi-Trysa*, Pl. ix. B. 2

³³ Darwin, *Expression of Emotions*, p. 308.

³⁴ Pausanias, x. 31. 9 and 11.

³⁵ Munich no. 153 Inghirami, *Vasi fitt.* ii. 135, Baumeister, p. 1924, fig. 2040.

³⁶ Studniczka, *Kyrene*, p. 18 fig. 10.

³⁷ *l.l.* p. 25 ff.