A RARE VASE-TECHNIQUE.

[PLATE XVII.]

*Cette figure, d'un beau dessin, est peinte en noir sur un fond blanc. Les traits de l'intérieur, au lieu d'être tracés à la pointe, le sont ici en relief noir, comme sur les figures rouges.*¹ This is the Duc de Luynes' description in 1840 of the technique of a lekythos, with a hoplite in black swinging his lance, wearing a helmet and holding a shield, in outline, and wounded by two arrows. It was then in his collection, now in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris. This description, in which so distinguished an amateur can hardly have made a mistake, the object being in his own hands, is fully corroborated by Plate XVI. of his work, made as all those of this publication, not with a view to the subject, but in the intention of rendering the art. Here this design of black on black has been rendered by deeply bitten etched lines, standing out in velvet-black relief on an even tint of gray so dark that it looks black on the white paper. I need hardly add that a mechanical reproduction of this plate is impossible.

That this technique is not altogether unknown I shall soon show by a few examples.

Still a curious problem arises from the fact that nowadays not a trace is to be found of these lines in black relief, but that the vase is known as black-figured with incised lines. Thus Furtwängler² describes it, the first as far as I know, calling it *leicht gravirt* and giving a rather bad zincotype after the photograph in the *Vases peints du Cabinet des Médailles*, Pl. 111. A. This is not altogether trustworthy, as it gives as incised lines the border of the shield on the hip and the arrow across the thigh, though both are in the ordinary black varnish of the whole work, that was never meant to show, and do not appear on the plate of de Luynes. Like this are also in black relief the lance, the rest of the shield border, the arrows and corrections at the sword sheath, all lines that cannot be called details (*traits de l'intérieur, Innenzeichnung*). The details are also called by Bosanquet³ 'incised lines even finer than those in the Eros' (on a similar lekythos). Nor does de Ridder⁴ gainsay it, nor Fairbanks,⁵ though he strengthens the

¹ *Description de quelques Vases Peints*, p. 8.

² *Meisterwerke*, s. 280, note 3.

³ *J.H.S.* xvi. (1896), p. 173, note 21 (5).

⁴ *Catalogue des Vases Peints de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, No. 299.

⁵ *Athenian White Lekythoi*, A. i. 6, p. 30.

published by Studniczka in 1887.⁶ I have not seen it but must presume this from the description. Studniczka writes describing the black chlamys in which the youth is clad: *In dem ganz mit Firniss überzogenen Gewande waren die Falten mit erhobenen Firnisstrichen, welche ich schwarz, und mit Streifen einer ganz nachgedunkelten matten Farbe, Weiss oder Rot, welche ich durch ein helleres Grau wiedergegeben habe, angedeutet.* Fairbanks⁷ puts it thus: 'On the black garment the brush was drawn in the direction of the folds, and the folds themselves (called by Studniczka Streifen) were added in purple (or white) lines of dull colour.' Not a word by either of incised lines, any more than in de Luynes' description, but evidently the same technique of black on black, whatever the original colour may have been.

This vase is of the more importance as it is pretty well dated by its inscription. It does not differ in style from the fragments we publish. Perhaps they once bore the same name. The only remaining letter V would well fit in to (ΛΛΑ)V(KON KALOS). In the British Museum catalogue they follow immediately on the famous Aphrodite riding a goose that bears the same inscription, and if Hartwig⁸ interpolates four others, I think it is more the subjects that lead him to this classification than the style that would exact precisely this order.

Here also the details and the silhouette are in two shades of the same colour, only this is black-brown on brown, not brown-black on black.

A lekythos in a private collection at Athens with a woman before an altar is described by Fairbanks⁹ similarly: 'The chiton is dull reddish-brown (laid on thickly) with black folds;' and another in the Salting collection, Victoria and Albert Museum,¹⁰ again: 'garment solid black with purple folds.' In neither case a word about incised lines, so that probably these are covered up. They are not rare in Fairbanks' Classes I. and II., wherever the painted lines are missing now. Nevertheless this technique is rare enough and it does not look probable that it would stretch over a very long lapse of time. If there is some small difference of style between the lekythos of de Luynes and the Glaukon-vases I should prefer to ascribe this to an older and a younger master working simultaneously with the same means. In every period of art where we can control this kind of thing we naturally find older men working in an older, often an antiquated, style, alongside of the younger generation, and even find that those older men, while clinging to their style, sometimes use the methods of the younger. Thus I still hold that the lekythos of de Luynes, which I have brought into connexion with a work of Kresilas, dedicated by a contemporary of Glaukon, Hermolykos, the son of Diitrephos,¹¹ is not anterior to the epoch of this statue, an opinion held equally by Furtwängler, who came practically to the same reconstruction of this work as I did and who states that Benndorf also held the same view. We only differ in this that Furtwängler states the warrior is giving way, and that I take him

⁶ *Jahrbuch des Arch. Instituts*, ii. (1887), p. 163.

⁷ *L.c. A*, ii. 17, p. 51.

⁹ *L.c. A*, ii. 12, p. 45.

¹⁰ *L.c. A*, ii. 7, p. 43.

¹¹ *Jahrbuch des Arch. Instituts*, vii. (1892), pp. 185 ff.

⁸ *Meisterschalen*, p. 501.

still to be acting on the defensive, his wounds and movements only forboding his ultimate fall.

This is not the place to enlarge on my previous thesis, though I might now refer to the fine head of a youth with parted lips, acquired some years ago by the British Museum,¹² in which Murray immediately recognised the style of Kresilas. This head would fit perfectly to the reconstruction of the statue I have suggested, as it certainly is not the artist's intention to render a dying, but rather an exhausted man. It may be true that in life no man could tell the difference in a falling man between swooning and death; but an artist will find the means to let us feel the ulterior event, if he sees reason to.

It is true that the marble head, which wears a Corinthian helmet, is beardless, the hoplite of the lekythos bearded; but this is again easily accounted for by the supposition we started from, that this vase-painter was an elderly man copying, of course not in a photographic way, the work of Kresilas.

And this too explains the difficulty he found in rendering this somewhat contorted scheme, wherein he drew the muscles of the stomach which never could be seen in this aspect of the back. Such an aspect was evidently new to him and strange, and he thoughtlessly introduced into it the details he was wont to draw. We notice the same mistake in the flying Eros, seen in profile (Fairbanks A. I. 4, Pl. I. 2), and this figure and the Athenian with the cock and lyre, occurring thrice (Fairbanks A. I. 1, 2 and 3, p. 24), are so akin in style that I think they must be of the same date, which is not so evident for another design, classed in the same group by Fairbanks, an Apollo (A. I. 7, Pl. II. 1). These vases, though technically speaking black-figured, are in style and subjects akin to the red-figured of the middle of the fifth century, as M. Mayer has already rightly observed.¹³

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¹² Photograph, Mansell, No. 1151.

¹³ *Ath. Mitth.* xvi. (1891), pp. 311 ff.

KYLIX IN BRITISH MUSEUM.