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AN ATHENIAN RHO IN THE ADRIATIC?

In Riv. Stor. Ant. 4 (1974) 1ff G. Colonna has published some stimulating remarks concerning the late sixth and early fifth century graffiti on sherds found at Adria. From the letter forms of some of them he persuasively argues a certain Aeginetan presence there at this period. My purpose here is to add an unpublished scrap which is of a more perplexing origin.

Schoene, *Le Antichità del Museo Bocchi di Adria* pl. 21, 1 (here p. 280) is cut on the foot of an Attic type B kylix, 8.6 cm. in diameter. The profile of the foot is very simple, with the jog on the upper surface about half way between stem and edge; the thickness of the foot is moderate and the normal parts are reserved: outer face of jog, outer edge and resting area, inner part of underside. It is not easy to put a precise date on such a fragment; the first quarter of the fifth century should cover all possibilities.¹⁾

A monogram inscribed on the underside is published by Schoene; it consists of an alpha in ligature with another letter, epsilon or possibly nu.²⁾ The mark is prominent and I suppose that it was cut by the owner of the cup, whose name began with those letters.

Unnoticed previously is a far more reticent graffito, the end of which is preserved at the break on the left of the fragment. Although it is cut in small, lightly incised letters, there can be no doubt of the reading: epsilon, tailed rho, alpha; the vertical of the epsilon is not preserved, but the only possible alternative is a punctuation mark, which is scarcely in order here.

These three letters could be rounded out in many ways, but statistically there is one supplement that must take preference – indeed it would be a surprise to me if it were not the original word – (h)ερᾱ. One alternative that should be given some consideration is Ἡερα, to be interpreted either as an abbreviated name (not that of the inscriber of the

1) I am grateful to Dr. Elisabetta Mangani for facilitating my study of this material at Adria. There is no established typology for the development of the foot of such simple type B cups (the piece was probably wholly glazed); the thickness of the foot and the extent of the glazing underneath indicate a date not far into the fifth century; see Agora xii 92, where the import of the type B cup into the Adriatic area is particularly noted.

2) The former is more likely, if the mark is orthograde. Since some other monograms at Adria seem retrograde (Schoene o.c. pl. 21, 17–19, BICS 25 (1978) 84 n.9), I would not rule out the possibility of retrograde, rather than 'orthograde' AN; this would have some significance for the form of the alpha, discussed below.

other graffito) or as an unusual nominative of the deity's name. The insignificant size of the mark makes the former alternative unlikely, while the difficulties of the nominative form throw similar doubt on the latter.³⁾

It seems highly likely therefore that the vase was dedicated in a sanctuary at Adria, along with other pieces published by Schoene and commented on by Colonna. By whom was it so dedicated? Despite the fact that only three letters are preserved, we can locate the origin of the inscriber quite closely, and we are led into a perhaps unexpected area.

I make one further supposition, that the -α termination is of the nominative feminine singular rather than the neuter plural. The latter would be unusual, cut on a single, small object, and would have to be taken with some such noun as ἀγγεῖα or ἀγάλματα, while the former would correspond with other available evidence.⁴⁾ The word to be understood is probably κύλιξ.

Such a feminine termination in -α rules out an Ionian or Euboean inscriber, while on the other hand the epsilon rules out a large range of other possible origins; the form (h)ερόc is attested in the archaic period only in Arcadia, Ionia and Attica.⁵⁾ It may seem high-handed to dismiss the first of these without further discussion, but it is reasonable to think here in terms of an Athenian inscriber. Such a conclusion finds a little support in the tailed rho, rare in Ionia.⁶⁾ If our thoughts turn to Aegina, the epsilon is incompatible with the Dorian dialect of the island, and the tailed rho is not common in Aeginetan inscriptions.⁷⁾

3) I assume that it is pure coincidence that two very similar marks appear on a foot of a rather later bolsal from Apollonia Pontica, with HRA and an orthograde version of the ligature, Izv. Burgas 2 (1965) 30, no. 68. There is little conclusive evidence for the use of the nominative case in dedicatory formulae; Führer durch Tiryns 105 and Abb. 25 is a possible example, but here again we may simply have an abbreviated personal name; for mistaken vocatives see BICS 21 (1974) 96-7.

4) On cups from the Athenian akropolis there are examples of ἑρά and ἑρόν, as well as one use of κύλιξ in the singular: Graef and Langlotz, Die Antiken Vasen von der Akropolis zu Athen ii 1300, 1304, 1352, 1357, 1376-8, 1380-1, 1383, 1400-1. At Gravisca we find the Ionic form τήνδε as well as ἑρόν (PdP 32 (1977) 406-7 figs. 5 and 7); Ionic feminine singulars also at Naukratis, Naukratis ii 753 and BSA 5 (1898-9) 55, 61.

5) The form is also attested in Thessaly, but I know of no example of the spelling in the archaic period; see Bechtel i 168 § 47 etc. The abbreviation HIA is attested on the Athenian akropolis, Graef and Langlotz, o.c. 1388-9, 1396 and 1403.

6) See my forthcoming Trademarks on Greek Vases, commentary on type 3E, and LSAG 325.

7) LSAG 109 and ΦΟΡΟϚ 78, 5 and perhaps 4; four or five examples of tailed rho are known (LSAG nos. 9, 13 and 15, ΦΟΡΟϚ ibid.), approximately 25 % of the total known in the later sixth and fifth centuries.

The form of the alpha may also be noted. In the dedication the cross-bar slopes down to the right, a frequent archaic rendering at Athens, while in the monogram it slopes in the other direction, a regular Aeginetan form.⁸⁾ While this again supports an Athenian origin for the dedicator, the presence of a monogram in an apparently different hand is a little perplexing. It may indicate a prior (?Aeginetan) owner who was not the dedicator, or a trader, despite the fact that 'regular' trademarks are rarely found on cups, since they so obviously deface the vase. Perhaps we should not overstress the different forms of the alpha.

In sum, unless the inscriber was using a dialect form not normal in his home state, the trail leads us to an Athenian dedicator. His name perhaps began Au—. The dedication of vases that had already seen use, as evidenced by the presence of owners' marks, is sufficiently well documented from the material found on the Akropolis and elsewhere.⁹⁾ I would rate very high the odds against the piece having been marked by Au— after its dedication elsewhere.¹⁰⁾ All things being equal, this sherd demonstrates the presence of at least one Athenian at Adria in the early fifth century B.C. This conclusion may not seem particularly striking in view of the considerable amount that has been written of late on Athenian trade with the area around the Po delta, but to my knowledge the sole evidence brought forward to substantiate such a trade is the amount of Attic pottery found at Bologna, Spina and Adria.¹¹⁾ We constantly remind ourselves that Corinthian pottery

8) LSAG 66 and 109, Φ ORO ς 76, Agora xxi 23. Other graffiti from Adria present both forms: Schoene, o.c. pl.21, 3-5 and 25 (A); pl. 19, 2-3, 12, pl.20, 32, pl.21, 14-19 (A).

9) Graef and Langlotz o.c. 1517ff; they suggest that the full names inscribed on such pieces are the names of dedicators cut at the time of dedication (p.122), but this can hardly apply to the abbreviated versions and ligatures; some of the latter may have been casual finds on the Akropolis, but most would have been deliberate dedications.

10) The examples of deities' names in the genitive inscribed on vases from tombs at Spina (Colonna l.c. 3, with n.8) may cause us to think twice on this point, but in general terms there is very little evidence in the Greek world of material being removed from sanctuaries and returning to profane use; examples seem confined to peripheral, less organised areas - which would not include Adria - e.g. the pin from a Macedonian grave once dedicated at Megara (LSAG 137, 22) and just possibly the prize hydria from Epirus, BCH 99 (1975) 750-4.

11) e.g. G. Vallet, MEFR 62 (1950) 34 'tout ce material n'a pu être apporté que directement par les navires marchands athéniens'; M. Zuffa, *Emilia preromana* 5 (1975) 151ff; L. Braccisi, *Grecità adriatica* (2nd ed.) 129ff. For a more recent review of the archaeological evidence for the Greeks in the Adriatic, at least in the earlier period, see F. d'Andria, MEFR 89 (1977) 525ff. Colonna (l.c. 1, with n.3) also discredits the 'Panathenian' line.

of the eight and seventh centuries does not prove the presence of Corinthian traders, and the bulk of Attic vases were not sent to Etruria in Athenian hulls; it is therefore curious that direct Athenian trade with the Adriatic has been so readily accepted; no doubt the very probable, but again not proven, situation of the period after, say, 460, has been unconsciously projected back to as much as one hundred years earlier. It is unfortunate that differences in scripts of the period after 450 are not substantial enough for us to be able to pinpoint the origin of those Greeks who are epigraphically attested in the area.¹²⁾

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¹²⁾ See Colonna l.c. in note 10. Further Greek graffiti from Spina will be found in *St.Etr.* 46 (1978) 287ff (I am most grateful to M.Cristofani for showing me proofs); the aspirate in two possible owners' graffiti and the lack of an omega in another (nos. 9, 51 and 18 respectively) point away from Ionia, the last possibly away from Athens in the late fifth century.