

A LYDIAN IMITATION OF A LACONIAN VASE

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IN 1897, through the generosity of the late John Wanamaker, the Museum acquired a box of potsherds from Orvieto. To this purchase, as readers of the *Journal* will recall, the Museum owes many of its best Greek vases. Conspicuous at first sight in the mass of fragments which the purchase comprised were the pieces of the vase of Figure 1. They were sorted out many years ago with the exception of the foot and one or two small bits, but were put together last spring for the first time.

The well-baked reddish clay, of which the vase is made, is covered with a fine slip. Visible in both slip and body clay, but more abundantly in the slip, are bits of mica. The rim is broad and flat; the shoulder, high; the foot, stout, with a flaring base. The shapely body is offset from both neck and foot by plastic bands, the outer faces of which were once white. A dark brown to black and slightly lustrous paint was applied to the upper part of the neck and to the foot, but outer edges of both were reserved; the inside of the foot is unpainted; the inside of the neck has a reserved band just below the rim. Above the shoulder is painted, in the same dark medium against a creamy ground, a band of zigzags; on the shoulder, a frieze of pomegranates; above the foot, a ray pattern.

The vase stands today in a case in the Sharpe Gallery near the 'Caeretan' amphora, to which Furtwängler called the attention of the archaeological world, and which has lately been figured by Mr. T. L. Webster.¹ The two vases are in some features strikingly alike: the high shoulder, the splay foot, the wide rim. But the 'Caeretan' vase has handles. A somewhat similar shape may be seen in Clazomenian amphorae.² From these vases, however, our piece stands in marked contrast in that it is without handles. A fragmentary vase, which may, like ours, have lacked handles, was found at Samos.³ It resembles our piece

¹ *J. H. S.*, 48, p. 203, fig. 4.

² Pfuhl, *Malerei und Zeichnung der Griechen*, fig. 144; Watzinger, *Griechische Vasen in Tübingen*, pl. 2, C 8.

³ Böhlau, *Aus Ionischen und Italischen Nekropolen*, Taf. VIII, 12.

closely, both as regards the curve of the body and the type of foot. The closest analogies, however, are furnished by a class of small vases called variously *Kugelgefäße*, *Henkellöse Becher*, and *Krateriskoi*.⁴ An example of such a small vase found at Ardea is in our museum.

Rumpf held that these small vases were first made in Lydia and that, filled with precious ointments, they were widely exported. Later they were imitated in various parts of the Mediterranean—in Ionia, Italy, and Attica. Our vase, therefore, may well be called Lydian. On the other hand, a frieze of pomegranates is not in accord with the precedents of Lydian potters who eschewed floral motives. It looks Laconian. On his recent visit to the University Museum, Dr. Robert Zahn suggested a solution of the problem, namely, that the vase is a Lydian imitation of Laconian ware. That is, I take it, a Lydian potter turned a vase of native traditional shape but painted it in the Spartan manner with friezes of zigzags, pomegranates, and rays against a white ground. But not quite; though he copied Laconian motives, he laid on his design cautiously in narrow bands with plenty of undecorated surface between, like one accustomed to a meagre system of linear ornament.

In the box of Orvieto fragments were sherds of 'marbled' Lydian ware. By way of experiment and of confirmation of Dr. Zahn's theory, a chemical analysis of the clay of this ware and of the Lydian-Laconian vase was made by Dr. Kenneth Rogers, of the University of Pennsylvania laboratories, through the kind offices of Dr. Arthur K. Graham, consulting chemist of the Museum, with the following results:

		LYDIAN Percent	LYDIAN-LACONIAN Percent
Silica	SiO ₂	60.09	62.00
Ferric Oxide	Fe ₂ O ₃	6.77	8.22
Alumina	Al ₂ O ₃	19.73	17.07
Manganese Oxide (Manganous)	MnO	0.13	Trace
Nickel Oxide	NiO	0.73	0.29
Calcium Oxide	CaO	6.39	5.53
Magnesium Oxide	MgO	0.26	1.95
Potassium Oxide	K ₂ O	} by difference 5.90	4.94
Sodium Oxide	Na ₂ O		

Dr. Graham adds: 'No attempt was made to detect traces of the less common elements as an ultimate analysis was not sought. The primary object, that of showing whether the two samples of pottery were made

⁴Rumpf, *Athen. Mitt.*, 45, pp. 163-170; Sieveking and Hackl, *Die königliche Vasen-sammlung zu München*, I, pl. XIX, pp. 46 and 53-54; *A. J. A.*, 18, pp. 434 and 435; von Mercklin, *Röm. Mitt.*, 38, pp. 74-75 and fig. 2.

of like or unlike clay, has been accomplished. There is such a close agreement in the two analyses that the oxides of sodium and potassium were not even determined since their combined percentages would only amount to 4 or 5% in either case. Mica consists of aluminum silicate and the percentage of Al_2O_3 would therefore be partly determined by the amount of mica present in the clay. It is doubtful if the visual amount of mica present in the samples of pottery would produce a noticeable difference in the analyses. In conclusion, it may be said that since the clays are alike the pottery may well be of the same source. Absolute proof of this would require analytical data on a vast number of pieces from various sources and even then it is not certain that it could be definitely established.⁷

That Laconian vases were at hand for Lydian potters to copy is shown by the presence of a Laconian III vase in a Sardis tomb.⁵

As to the date of our vase, the prototypes of its patterns may well be those of Laconian III ware,⁶ which is dated to the first half of the sixth century B. C.

⁵ *A. J. A.*, 1921, pp. 111-114 and pl. IV.

⁶ See *Artemis Orthia*, p. 87, fig. 59 *w* for shape of rays; p. 89, figs. 60 *g* and *l* for pomegranates.