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Review of *Das Basler Arztrelief: Studien zum griechischen Grab- und Votivrelief um 500 v. Chr. und zur vorhippokratischen Medizin*, by Ernst Berger

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The turn of the sixth century introduced a development in the conception of funerary art, according to various possible points of view: subject matter, style, purpose, artistic and cultural milieu. The most interesting result of this extended analysis is the information the author has gathered about ancient doctors and medical instruments, but equally important by-products are the surveys of late Archaic grave stones and votive reliefs, as well as other contemporary sculptures from Asia Minor. A stylistic assessment of the possible origin of the Basel stele is contributed by Hilde Hiller, whose 1968 dissertation dealt with the Ionic grave stones of the first half of the fifth century B.C. Other well-known monuments (e.g., the Pharsalos stele, the Leukothoe relief, the Harpy Tomb) are re-examined and re-interpreted.

The conclusion of the research is as follows. The Basel stele is the funerary monument of a doctor, carved perhaps shortly before 480 B.C. in an area stylistically related to Ephesus and Miletos. The physician is portrayed seated on a stool, facing a young attendant who is holding some instruments (a suction vessel for cupping and a surgical knife, or perhaps just its sheathing) and extending an undetermined object (a medicinal plant?) toward his master. Two more cupping vessels hang from the pediment in the open space between the doctor's and the attendant's heads. The physician may be wearing a cap-shaped pithos, like an ordinary craftsman, as perhaps was his status, at least during the Archaic period. The juxtaposition of dead and living is interpreted as a development in the conception of funerary art, which before 500 B.C., represented the deceased alone or, at the most, surrounded by mourners, but after the turn of the sixth century introduced "vignettes" symbolic of the deceased's status and interests.

The fragmentary Basel stele is integrated according to various possible reconstructions and photographed several times in detail and under different lighting conditions. Virtually every monument mentioned for comparison is illustrated at least once, and there are several color reproductions of high quality. The photographs alone would be worth the price of the book.

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The Athenian Agora: Results of Excavations Conducted by the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Volume XII: Black and Plain Pottery of the 6th, 5th and 4th Centuries B.C. Part 1, Text; Part 2, Indexes and Illustrations

by Brian A. Sparkes and Lucy Talcott. xviii, 382 pages, frontispiece, 25 figures with many drawings, 100 plates with many photographs, 7 Indexes. The American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Princeton, New Jersey 1970 $40.00

It would be difficult to praise this book too highly. It is distinguished not only for keen observation, shrewd deduction and lucid presentation, but also for the comprehensive view it affords of a large new field for the first time systematically explored. The subject is Athenian pottery for everyday use, as produced in the centuries between Solon and Alexander. The material on which the study is based comes from excavations conducted by the American School of Classical Studies in the Agora of ancient Athens. The first volume contains an introduction, separate histories of the individual shapes and a catalogue of some 2000 representative examples, most of them recovered from dump cast into disused wells and cisterns. The second volume is largely devoted to illustrations, but includes also information on the context of the finds and a series of indexes. Everything is arranged and organized with a remarkable sense for the reader's convenience, and the work as a consequence is a delight to use.

Kitchen and cooking ware, and even the finer black-glazed ware, have too often been subject to undeserved neglect. That this attitude has changed is due in significant measure to the spirit in which the Agora excavations have been conducted, to say nothing of the effective and ingenious methods there devised for recording finds and rendering them accessible for study. It is an achievement in which Miss Talcott played a leading role.

Many readers of Archeology will be familiar with the Agora picture book, Pots and Pans of Classical Athens, earlier published by the same authors, and will find that the larger work is tempered by the same lively spirit. They will find also that in addition to the stylistic and chronological studies that form the heart of the work generous consideration is regularly given to many related and incidental aspects of the subject, such as the parallel development of shapes in figured pottery, the practices of the potters' workshops, the tastes of the customers, the circumstances explaining the presence of imported pottery at Athens, the results of modern research on technical problems and much else.

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