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The Theseus Painter
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INTRODUCTION

1. General introduction

The subject of this monograph is the Attic black-figure vase painter known today as the Theseus Painter who, as we shall see, worked from about 515/510 to 480/475 B.C. First of all, the study aims at giving, as completely as possible, a full description of all the features comprising the painter's stylistic nature: painting, drawing, composition, use of added colour. These categories are, in turn, considered in relation to the potterwork, namely the types of vases the Theseus Painter decorated, the workshops with which they can be associated, and whether he might also have been involved in shaping some or all of them.

Another goal is to define the Theseus Painter's time frame, as based on both external and internal markers which help to determine the various phases in his development. The chronology depends, of course, for a large part on stylistic criteria and comparisons of work by other Attic vase painters. Additional chronological indicators will also be taken into consideration, including, among others, the changes in vase types that the Theseus Painter decorated, variation in their specific form and secondary decoration. Moreover, whenever possible, external reference points like find contexts are examined, sometimes viewed in combination with historical events such as the so-called 'Perserschutt' from the Athenian Acropolis.

Another topic regards the Theseus Painter's iconographic preferences and idiosyncrasies. Although he is a late black-figure painter and therefore, by definition, more or less second rate compared to the mainstream of Attic black- and red-figure, his subject matter is noteworthy not only for its diversity but also for its many themes and often special interpretations of them, which are only rarely or, insofar as known, never repeated elsewhere in vase painting or any other Greek art form. As far as possible, it will be attempted to identify the Theseus Painter's exceptional portrayals and, in turn, to place them in the context of the iconographic development of comparable themes in Attic vase painting as a whole. The discussion will also deal with the possible meanings of such subjects as well as their treatment and possible origins.

Furthermore, the scope goes beyond the Theseus Painter as simply an isolated artistic phenomenon in the production of Attic black-figure. He will be considered in the light of the one or more workshops with which he may have been affiliated. With varying degrees of probability, these workshop ties can be determined by considering the specific features of his painting and, perhaps more convincingly, his choice of vase types as illustrated by profile drawings. The examination is geared to gaining a degree of insight into aspects of the structures of Attic black-figure workshops during the late sixth and early fifth centuries B.C. Equally important are related subjects like the Theseus Painter's relation to the work of contemporary black-figure artisans and the degree to which he can rightly be viewed as a stylistic exponent of late black-figure.

An explanation of the book's organisation will be helpful at this point. The text is divided into two parts. Part A considers more usual matters like a description of the painter's style, the types of vases he decorated and their chronology, provenances, etc. The arrangement of the first part is largely based on the individual vase-shapes, starting with the Theseus Painter's most numerous product, skyphoi. Each chapter examines aspects like style, development, related painters, etc. which are typical for the shape under consideration. Part B exclusively treats the Theseus Painter's iconography, including descriptions, identifications of the subjects and, if possible, their meanings.

The text is followed by the main catalogue, which is also arranged basically according to the various shapes. It begins with the skyphoi and parallels the chapters in the text. The section on each shape is further subdivided into the painter's chronological phases, as explained in the text: early, middle, transitional from middle to late, late, very late. Within each subdivision, I have generally tried to order the vases by subject, starting with mythological themes, ending with ones closer to everyday life.

Several vases attributed to the Theseus Painter have not been adequately published, some of which, for various reasons, I have not been able to see. Each shape-section of the catalogue ends with the vases that Haspels and Beazley attributed to the Theseus Painter, but which were not seen by me. The main
catalogue is followed by three sections listing pottery which has variously been associated with the Theseus Painter: (1) by or near the Theseus Painter, (2) near the Theseus Painter, (3) erroneously attributed to the Theseus Painter. Much of this pottery is mentioned in the text on various occasions. However, none of it is illustrated in the plates, although some items appear among the profile drawings in the figures.

Much information about the Theseus Painter is further shown in tables, graphs and overviews. The tables and graphs deal with subjects like provenance and distribution; the overviews summarise the painter's development and iconographic usage. Occasionally they furnish information about related matters, for example Table 16 which is a complete overview of the chronology and attributions of the pottery found in the 'Rectangular Rock-cut Shaft' in the Athenian Agora. Nearly all the figures consist of profile drawings and line drawings illustrating typical stylistic features of the Theseus Painter as well as schematic reproductions of his secondary decoration, a map of the pottery's distribution, etc. Finally, a large number of plates (65), unfortunately of varying quality, illustrate the actual vases.

2. General problems concerning Attic late black-figure

Attic black-figure produced in the decades around 500 B.C. and especially afterwards occupies a somewhat awkward position in the development of Attic vase-painting. By its nature as a decorative style in decline it stands somewhat outside the general development of mainstream Attic black- and red-figure painting. Although some painters and groups can be recognised in the enormous amount of late black-figure pottery, its makers are of relatively minor importance in the history of Attic vase-painting. Their work is largely confined to a limited repertoire of almost exclusively small shapes consisting for the most part of lekythoi. Furthermore, the bulk of the painting can roughly be described as hackwork. Only a few late black-figure painters (among which the Theseus Painter) were capable of producing aesthetically above-average products.

Several basic problems surrounding the study of Attic black-figure painting centre mainly on attribution and grouping and the discernment of workshop connections. At times, even Beazley, it seems, was troubled by them. The style of much late black-figure painting barely lends itself to detailed analysis for the purpose of attribution. The elements that would normally define or make it possible to recognise the style of an individual painter are generally of such low quality and limited detail that identification is rarely possible. This is clearly illustrated, for example, by many of the amorphous groups of late black-figure lekythos painters, like the Haimon Group and the Class of Athens 581. Over a thousand pieces have been attributed to the former group, of which only relatively few are now given to an individual hand, the Haimon Painter.

Among the hundreds of vases in the latter group, very few have been assigned to a quite small number of painters or rather vaguely defined groups. Not even a single painter's hand has yet been recognised among the hundreds of skyphoi of the CHC Group. Although the Theseus Painter himself is quite recognisable, this problem does apply in linking him to other painters and workshops. In the light of all this it is not surprising that C.H.E. Haspels' Attic Black-figured Lekythoi, dating back to 1936, remains in

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1 See, i.a., D. von Bothmer, 'Beazley the Teacher', in D.C. Kurtz (ed.), Beazley and Oxford: Lectures delivered at Wolfson College, Oxford on 28 June 1985 (Oxford 1985) 15, in letters to the author: "I have been working at Attic BF Vase-painters and have had much trouble. It is like going down a mine. Or reminds me of watching a diving competition when I was a little boy at school. The biggest boy remained an unconscionably long time underwater, and everyone was sure he would fetch up all the pennies: but when at last he emerged he had found none [...]. Once in black-figure, one's boots stick in the mire [...]. I have been working on the dregs of black-figure again which is depressing [...]. I have done what I can to the eye-cups for ABV - not much, but I can now pass to something else. I cannot remember any class of bf vases I dislike so much, but others will occur."

2 ABL 241-47; ABV 538-83; Para 269-92.

3 ABL 221-25; ABV 487-506; Para 222-46: Marathon Painter; Group of Brussels A 1311; Class of Athens 581.i; Kalinderu Group: Painter of Athens 9690; Painter of Munich 1874; Haimonian lekythoi of the Class of Athens 581.ii; Groups of Agora P 24340, 24366, 24377, 24420, 24381, 24486, 24327; Group of Oxford 1940.74.

4 Beazley mentions that some of his groups of skyphoi with one particular subject are each by one hand, ABV 617-18,1-36, amazon and three-quarter chariot; ABV 619,62-66, Herakles and Triton, with Nereids fleeing, but does not explain further.
many respects the main source for the study of late Attic black-figure.

Similar difficulties apply to the establishment of potters’ hands or workshops and the links between potters and painters. While the recognition of potters’ hands by means of shape analysis is in itself problematical, the lack of quality or individuality in the potterwork of most late black-figure vases makes the field all the more elusive, at least to the same degree as regards the late painters, or even more so. Furthermore, the study of potterwork is generally much less advanced than that of painting, which once again holds more strongly for late black-figure. To date, no signature of either a potter or a painter is known in late Attic black-figure.

Equally problematical is the identification of late black-figure workshops. As a result, it is especially hard to discover which painters belonged to the same ‘group’, that is, linked by style, iconography and pottery. To give an example: many painters are associated with the Athena Painter’s ‘workshop of oinochoai’, like the Painter of Sèvres 100 and the Painter of Vatican G. 49, who are therefore automatically seen as closely collaborating with the Athena Painter. However, none of these painters is known to have decorated lekythoi, which is strange as the lekythos is the basic and most numerous shape in the Athena Painter's output. This leads to other fundamental questions: when may one speak of a ‘workshop’?, and what are the defining features which make it possible to decide whether a group of supposedly connected vases issued, in fact, from the same ‘workshop’? In the case of the Athena Painter’s ‘workshop of oinochoai’ it cannot easily be seen whether the ‘workshop’ was defined by Haspels and Beazley on the basis of specific links in the potterwork, painting style and subsidiary decoration between the Athena Painter's lekythoi and oinochoai, which would reflect workshop connections between both shapes. Or, as could just as easily have happened, the workshop was merely posited on the supposition that since the Athena Painter is considered the group's main artisan, he would necessarily occupy the central position in a workshop, and thus only decorated vases issuing from that workshop. Evidently, Haspels and Beazley implicitly assumed that the Athena Painter decorated both his lekythoi and his oinochoai in the same workshop. As noted above, it is remarkable that hardly any of the other oinochoe painters assigned to the ‘workshop of oinochoai’ (except for the Theseus Painter) seems to have decorated lekythoi, while the lekythos is, in fact, the Athena Painter's most important shape. Beazley and Haspels are probably right in accepting some kind of workshop ties between the Athena Painter and the other painters, although their extent cannot easily be assessed.

Within the same framework it is further important to determine which artisan must be regarded as the ‘major’ figure within a workshop or a concentration of related painters. In earlier black-figure the matter can sometimes be quite simple, for example Group E and Exekias, who is clearly defined as painter and potter by both style and signature. In late black-figure, however, such a neat division between a leading painter and lesser ones often relies on rather weak and more subjective criteria: the major painter is either the group’s ‘best’ painter, the individual hand which is easiest to identify, or simply the painter with the largest quantity of recognised work.

A similar concern applies to the Theseus Painter. Generally he is regarded as the most important painter in the skyphos workshop to which he supposedly belonged, the ‘Heron workshop’. But if he indeed played such an important role in this workshop one might expect that he would have kept decorating skyphoi in that workshop until the end of his career. Instead, he apparently chose to decorate other shapes, presumably borrowing directly from other workshops or perhaps changing his place of employment. In other respects, however, the Theseus Painter might rightly be regarded as ‘most important’: his iconography is more unusual or at least more often so than that of his contemporaries in the Heron workshop; he is a comparatively better draughtsman; and the number of his attributable vases is also the largest of any of the workshop's painters.

Finally, on the one hand, the iconography of Attic late black-figure often consists of frequently

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5 For the definition of workshops see chapter V, workshop connections.

6 This intermingling of painters and workshops seems to occur more often: the previously mentioned Haimonian style on lekythoi of the Class of Athens 581; one of the latest Siana cups (ABV 625, Louvre El 171) which, according to Beazley, can be connected to the Group of Thebes R 102 which, in turn, is related to the CHC Group; an oinochoe, of which the potterwork is connected to the workshop of the Red-line Painter, but the decoration is by a painter of the CHC Group (London B 493, ABV 606,18, 623). In some instances the same might have happened with regard to other accomplished late Attic black-figure painters. The potterwork of the Sappho Painter’s lekythoi, for example, appears to be very different from that of his larger vases, like his column-krater and amphora. This might indicate that he was also employed by various workshops.
3. The Theseus Painter and his environment

The Theseus Painter was one of the last fairly competent Attic vase painters who worked in the black-figure technique. Therefore he is in this one respect a special case, although all the above-mentioned difficulties apply completely to him as well. The painter was named by C.H.E. Haspel in 1936 because, according to her, "he often chooses the deeds of Theseus" as subject. However, the name might not be so suitable as only 6 of his more than 200 vases actually show Theseus.

For the most part, the Theseus Painter, like his contemporaries the Edinburgh Painter, Gela Painter, Sappho Painter, Diosphos Painter and Athena Painter, decorated smaller vessels such as skyphoi, lekythoi and oinochoai. But although such shapes are not always in actual fact small, as some lekythoi and skyphoi exceed 30.0 cm in height, the designation serves generally to differentiate them from shapes which are by definition considered large, for instance amphorai and hydriai of the Leagros Group. The Theseus Painter also adorned larger vessels like pelikai, kalpides and loutrophoroi.

The work of the Theseus Painter is generally assigned to the decades before and after 500 B.C. Haspels dated his career from somewhat before 500 until the 470s B.C. Eisman's dates range from 515 to slightly after 490 B.C. I suggest, as we shall see below, that the Theseus Painter started working around ca. 515/510 B.C. and might have continued until the early 470s B.C.

Prior to Haspels, some skyphoi by and near the Theseus Painter were already referred to as a group by M. Heinemann because of their unusual subjects. In 1930 P. Mingazzini compiled an extended list of more skyphoi of the type decorated by the Theseus Painter and supposed that many of them were painted by one hand. He placed them under the heading 'White Heron Painter', named after the white bird under the handles of many skyphoi of this type. In part, the list indeed mentioned skyphoi which later turned out to be assignable to the Theseus Painter, but it also included skyphoi by painters who definitely differed from him stylistically (see Table 14). Neither Heinemann nor Mingazzini, it seems, were much concerned with stylistic matters when defining their groups.

7 See, for example, 'Goddess mounting chariot', (ABV 539-43, Para 271-73), on lekythoi by the Haimon Group; or "amazons and chariot" on skyphoi in the CHC Group (ABV 617-18,1-36, Para 306-307).

8 The following is a select bibliography on the Theseus Painter. For a more complete bibliography and attributions see the catalogue, abbreviations and Table 15. Heinemann, Landschaftliche Elemente, 74-76; Graef and Langlotz, Akropolis, 141-47; Mingazzini, Castellani, 313-17; Beazley, Review Baltimore, 89; ABL 141-65, 249-52; CVA Robinson Coll. 3, 11-12; Vanderpool, Shaft, 289-91; Ure, Krokokos, ABL 518-20, 703-704, 718; G. Daux, 'Chronique des fouilles et découvertes archéologiques en Grèce en 1958: Delos', BCH 83 (1959) 787-90; E.A.A. VII, s.v. Theseus, pittore di, 752-53; Para 255-59; Eisman, Chronology, 200; Eisman, Kyathos, 440-73; Eisman, Chronology; Boardman, ABFV, 147; Becker, Peliken, 9-10, 24-25; Vermeule, Herakles; Eisman and Turnbull, Skyphos, 394-99; Meldahl and Flenberg, Hydra; Reho-Bumbalova, Vaso inedito, 53-60; Agora XXIII, 60, 94-95, 279-81, nos. 297, 1448-96, 1657; Beazley Addenda 129-30; Malagardis, Desa Temps, 73, 76-77; Kreuzer, Zeichner, 112-14, 116-23; CVA Athens 4, 49-51; d'Amicis, Catalogo, 224-30, 302-303; Malagardis, Skyphoi; Maffre, Thasos; Scheibler, Skyphoi; O. Borgers, 'Some Subjects and Shapes by the Theseus Painter', Proceedings AIAC, 87-89; forthcoming CVA Amsterdam.

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9 In the following senses: (1) artistic competence and ability correctly to depict human figures in various stances, animals and the environment; (2) a continuously recognizable (though changing) style during all the phases of his career; (3) a quantitatively large body of preserved work, equalling that of the major painters of Attic vases.

10 ABL 141-47.
11 ABL 142.
12 ABL 163-5. For the dating of the Theseus Painter see further Vanderpool, Shaft, 265-69; Eisman Kyathos, 443-48; Eisman, Chronology; Malagardis, Skyphoi.
13 ABL 146.
14 Eisman, Kyathos, 443-48.
15 Heinemann, Landschaftliche Elemente, 74-76.
16 Mingazzini, Castellani, 314-16, nos. 1-34, A-ZF.
As early as 1934 Beazley noted that one accomplished hand stood out from the 'hacks' of Mingazzini's skyphoi by the 'White Heron Painter'. Two years later this 'accomplished hand' became Haspels' 'Theseus Painter'. She was also the first to give a relatively extensive description of the painter's style, which remains today for the most part valid. In addition, she placed other skyphoi of the type decorated by the Theseus Painter under a separate heading: 'near the Theseus Painter'. These skyphoi are in many cases doubtless related to the Theseus Painter and sometimes quite close to him stylistically, but in most instances they are probably not by the painter himself. Apart from the extensive list of skyphoi, Haspels assigned several other shapes to the Theseus Painter.

Haspels connected the Theseus Painter to late black-figure lekythos painters, despite the fact that the majority of the vases attributable to him are skyphoi. She found him especially close to her 'Athena Painter' who, while being indeed stylistically linked, is known from numerous lekythoi and oinochoai but not a single skyphos. She supplied no further clue as to the Theseus Painter's possible antecedents, concluding only that he was the chief artisan among several painters of her White Heron workshop.

In 1955, however, A.D. Ure proposed that the Theseus Painter's origins lie in an older group of painters who decorated the type of skyphos for which he is known (see pls. 1-34, figs. B, 40-53, 73-76). Ure named these painters the Krokotos Group, after the chiton in added yellow which is often worn by many of their female figures. Some vases of this group were formerly assigned to Haspels' White Heron workshop and Mingazzini's White Heron Painter (see also Table 14). According to Ure, the Krokotos Group comprises painters who can be considered a generation earlier than the Theseus Painter. Her main painter became known as the Krokotos Painter; she also included the Hydra Painter, Herm Painter and several painters who were not given names.

Ure also defined a group of skyphoi which are generally less well executed than those by the Theseus Painter. Nevertheless, they show rather accomplished workmanship and, in her opinion, are possibly contemporaneous with that painter. She named these skyphoi the Sub-krokotos Group in order to distinguish them from the less distinct White Heron Group. The Sub-krokotos painters were seen by her as the immediate descendants of the Krokotos Painter and his fellows and the heirs to their workshop. Unfortunately, Ure did not entirely succeed in clarifying the relations or the exact boundaries between the Theseus Painter, Sub-krokotos Group and White Heron Group. Yet there seems to be a strong connection between the Sub-krokotos Group on the one hand and the Theseus Painter on the other. This might be concluded from one of Ure's Sub-krokotos painters, the Painter of Philadelphia MS 5481, who seems particularly close to the Theseus Painter in style and, to a lesser extent, iconography. It may therefore very well be that the Theseus Painter can rightly be regarded as a member of the Sub-krokotos Group.

Beazley distinguished another painter of the White Heron Group who appears to be quite close to the Theseus Painter: the Painter of Rodin 1000. However, even Beazley was evidently uncertain about the whole framework of painters and workshops surrounding the Theseus Painter, as becomes clear from his treatment of the Painter of Rodin 1000. In ABY Beazley named this painter and attributed several vases to him, whereas in Para the same vases are instead described as 'near the Theseus Painter': he had apparently deleted the name 'Painter of Rodin 1000' from his lists of identifiable painters.

The naming of overlapping groups or workshops of skyphos painters who may have surrounded the Theseus Painter is rather confusing due to the multiplicity of separate, but seemingly related, groups and

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17 Beazley, Review Baltimore, 89. See also Mingazzini, Castellani, 313-17, 'Pittore dell'airone bianco', hence the name for the specific type of skyphoi by the Theseus Painter and painters in his vicinity, 'Heron Workshop'.
18 Skyphoi (nos. 1-54), lekythoi (nos. 55-68), oinochoai (nos. 69-70), kalpides (nos. 72-73), loutrophoroi (nos. 74-75) and cups (nos. 76-77).
20 ABL 142.
21 Ure, Krokotos. The Krokotos Group is also known from several cups. Some of the Painters of the group specialised in skyphoi, others in cups, while a few (like the Krokotos Painter) decorated both shapes.
22 Two examples: Mingazzini, Castellani, 314, no. 12, later known as Athens, NM 12584, was attributed by Ure to the Sub-krokotos Group (Krokotos, 93, no. 15). Haspels' ABL 253, 1, Philadelphia 5481, became Ure's name-vase of the Painter of Philadelphia 5481 (Krokotos, 95, n. 23).
23 Ure, Krokotos, 92-95.
24 Ure, Krokotos, 95.
25 ABY 521-22,1-5; Para 259; Beazley Addenda 130.
The matter might be simplified as follows: the painters of the Krokotos Group started to decorate a specific type of skyphos which is variously defined as the 'White Heron type', 'Heron Class' or Ure's 'type B'. Furthermore, the Krokotos painters are distinguished by their relatively small skyphoi and common use of added yellow. They may date from around 530/525-510 B.C.

The shape and scheme of this type of skyphos are older. It seems that the Painter of the Nicosia Olpe decorated the oldest known skyphoi with this type of ornamentation, as at least two of his skyphoi are in shape and secondary decoration very similar to skyphoi of the Theseus Painter (see fig. 35, third in the upper row and all the Theseus Painter's skyphoi, pls. 1-34). The Painter of the Nicosia Olpe is generally dated earlier than the Krokotos Group. A connection of any kind, stylistic or otherwise, between the Painter of the Nicosia Olpe and the Krokotos Group or the Theseus Painter is not readily evident, however, and possibly does not exist.

The next generation (or phase) of painters of Heron Class skyphoi, who probably continued to operate the Krokotos workshop, is the Sub-krokotos Group, which must include the Theseus Painter. The line is continued by the much less accomplished painters of Haspels' White Heron Group, although the distinction between the Sub-krokotos Group and later (or less skilled) painters is not very sharp. In fact, the supposed differences between the two groups might be overstated. The differences seem to be founded on somewhat vague grounds. The Sub-krokotos Group can be regarded as the direct descendants of the Krokotos Group because of similarities in style and iconography and, not least of all, the use of added yellow. Generally, the Sub-krokotos painters are also older and slightly better craftsmen than those of the White Heron Group, although all of them undoubtedly belong to one workshop. In any event, both groups are firmly rooted in the circle of the Theseus Painter: shape (dimensions), ornamentation, subjects and, often to a lesser degree, style.

It is not clear whether a possible relation exists between, on the one hand, the Krokotos Group, Sub-krokotos Group and White Heron Group and, on the other, the skyphoi of a similar type in the so-called CHC Group and related groups. Perhaps the CHC Group can best be regarded as a 'parallel group', for it seems that some of the earliest vases attributable to or near it are contemporary with work of the Krokotos Group. Although the painters of the CHC Group decorated a kind of skyphos similar in shape to that of the other groups, their painting style and secondary decoration (compare fig. 35, second row) seems not to be related to them in any significant way, nor, in most cases, does their iconography.

In the light of the complexities of the groups and workshops of skyphos painters surrounding the Theseus Painter, and of different parallel names given to the skyphoi they decorated, a survey of them will be useful at this point.

1. Krokotos Group. Named after the yellow garment worn by many female figures. The members of this group were defined by Ure as forerunners of the Theseus Painter, and incorporated in Beazley's lists. They decorated skyphoi of 'type B' as well as eye-cups. Several hands have been identified, centring on the Krokotos Painter. They probably have a workshop link with the Theseus Painter. The supposed tie between the Krokotos Painter and the Theseus Painter is based on their stylistic similarities as seen in the Theseus Painter's skyphos SyracusE 26857 (Cat. no. 1, pl. 1 a-b) as well as on their shared preference

26 Ure, Fifth and Sixth, 59-61: concave lip, ivy rim, full picture panel, tongues.
27 Athens, NM 363 (ABY 200, 453,11; CV4 4, pl. 27) and Havana (ABY 453,10). Dated around 540-530 B.C., which is earlier than the skyphoi of the Krokotos Group, they are possibly the earliest examples of this type of skyphos.
28 The Painter of the Nicosia Olpe is generally dated around 540-520 B.C. As the earliest work of the Krokotos Group appears to be cups, it may have started around a decade later to manufacture skyphoi.
29 Ure, Krokotos, 92ff.
30 Compare, for example, the skyphoi in Bologna (Cat. no. N46) connected by subject to two skyphoi of the Theseus Painter - Dionysos in a ship-cart (Cat. nos. 2 and 8, pls. 2a, 4 a-b) - but not by style. Compare also a skyphos in the Castellani coll. (Mingazzini, Castellani, pl. 90), with an identical white heron, but painted in a very different style.
31 ABY 617-23; Para 306-307; Beazley Addenda' 144. For examples of skyphoi by the CHC Group, see esp., CV4 Athens 4, pls. 45-58.
32 Name introduced by Ure, in Krokotos. See also CV4 Athens 4, 41-43.
33 Compare the following satyrs in the Krokotos Group: Getty Museum 86.AE.462 (CV4 2, pl. 115.4); Heidelberg S 109 (CV4 1, pl. 44.11); Bollingen, private coll. (M 17.2, 1986, 56, fig. 1); Niarchos coll. A 035 (L.I. Marangou, et al, Ancient Greek Art from the Collection of Stavros S. Niarchos, Athens 1995, 94-98, no. 13); Munich 2051 (Ure, Krokotos, pl. 11.2); Cab. des
for the subject of a lion and oxen at a tree;\textsuperscript{34} compare, for example, also the very similar lions of Boston 55.923 by the Theseus Painter (Cat. no. 6, pl. 3 a-b) and London 1920.2-16.3 by the Krokotos Painter (see n. 34) which might suggest that the former was a pupil of the latter rather than a marginally related associate. The Krokotos Group is further characterised by relatively small skyphoi and the absence of concentric circles under the foot; white herons are not among the several kinds of known handle motifs. It may be assigned to around 530/525-510 B.C. The cups seem to have been made earlier than the skyphoi (see also chapter II.4, Krokotos Group).

2. \textit{Sub-krokotos Group}.\textsuperscript{35} This group of exclusively skyphos painters was also identified and named by Ure and may be regarded as the 'heirs' of the Krokotos Group. The painters were contemporaries of the Theseus Painter, probably his colleagues. The group is stylistically linked with both him and the Krokotos Group. The dividing line between the Sub-krokotos Group and 'near' the Theseus Painter or the White Heron Group is sometimes very difficult to draw. At any rate, the Sub-krokotos Group includes four artisans identified by Ure: Painter of the Louvre Argos, Hydra Painter, Herm Painter, Painter of Philadelphia 5481. Especially the latter is very close to the Theseus Painter. The group is characterised by skyphoi which are larger than those of the Krokotos Group, less use of added yellow, concentric circles under the foot, and white herons below the handles. It might date from the later years of the Krokotos Group onwards, that is, after 515 B.C.

3. \textit{Theseus Painter}.

4. \textit{Near (manner of) the Theseus Painter}.\textsuperscript{36} This term is applied to painters who are related to the Theseus Painter by their vase shapes, iconography and/or painting style. They includes painters of skyphoi as well as of other forms. To this category one might consider assigning, for example, the Athena Painter who is particularly near in style, but who did not, as far as known, decorate skyphoi and cannot therefore be assigned to the (possible) workshop of the Krokotos Group and its descendants. However, skyphoi painters closely connected by iconography, painting style and choice of shapes can also be placed under this heading, for example the Painter of Rodin 1000 and the Painter of Philadelphia 5481. The latter also finds a place in the Sub-krokotos Group. Under this designation, stylistic and chronological connections to the Theseus Painter are implied.

5. \textit{Related to the Theseus Painter}.\textsuperscript{37} Similar to 'near', but the term is applied to painters who are stylistically further removed from the Theseus Painter. Often they are associated with him by no more than vase shapes and iconography.

6. \textit{White Heron Group}.\textsuperscript{38} The name is indicative of a relation in style/workshop to the Theseus Painter and refers to skyphoi with the same decorative scheme as those by the painter himself, the 'white heron' below the handles (although other motives are also used). The ornaments are generally less well executed than those by the Theseus Painter, although they are, to some extent, certainly related to him. The designation might also be applied as an overlapping name for the skyphoi painters 'near the Theseus Painter', for example the Painter of Rodin 1000, while also including the Theseus Painter himself.

7. \textit{Heron Workshop}.\textsuperscript{39} The name covers skyphoi of the kind decorated by the Theseus Painters and others, while also referring to the ornamentation and, to a lesser extent, the style. The implication is that

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Médailles} 343 (CVA 2, pl. 69).
\item \textit{Beazley Addenda} 2.
\item \textit{CVA} Athens 4, 44-49.
\item CVA Athens 4, 44-49.
\item Compare, for example, also the very similar lions of Boston 55.923 by the Theseus Painter (Cat. no. 6, pl. 3 a-b) and London 1920.2-16.3 (Ure, Krokotos, 90, no. 4) and St. Petersburg 401 (Gorbunova , Ermitazhe, 52-53, no. 33) by the Krokotos Painter.
\item Name introduced by Ure, Krokotos. See also CVA Athens 4, 44-49.
\item Term used in \textit{ABV} 521; \textit{Para} 259. To avoid further difficulties of terminology, I adopt the usage in the mentioned literature, like 'near' or 'related'. Therefore I sometimes ignore the usage recommended by M. Robertson in \textit{Beazley Addenda} xii-xx.
\item Term used in \textit{ABL} 254.
\item Term used in \textit{ABL} 142, 253.
\item Term used by Ure, Krokotos, 90, 96.
\end{itemize}
one workshop centred on the Theseus Painter. While the term 'White Heron Group' mainly refers to the figurework, the name 'Heron Workshop' is more indicative of shape and secondary decoration. However, the two terms are quite interchangeable and have indeed been often used similarly. In a strict sense, the Heron Workshop could also include the Krokotos Group and the Sub-kroko
tos Group, provided the hypothesis is correct that the Theseus Painter stems from those groups.

8. Type B skyphos (fig. 35 third in the upper row). This is the skyphos type decorated by the Theseus Painter and the other White Heron Painters. The shape is of a Heron Class skyphos (see below). In Ure's definition, the term also embraces a specific type of secondary decoration - ivy on the rim and tongues below the figure frieze - as well as the figure frieze covering the main part of the bowl. The type B skyphos is differentiated from Ure's types C and D, which have a narrower figure frieze and which are generally linked with the skyphoi of the CHC Group (see also chapter II.1). Also the two skyphoi with identical decoration by the Painter of the Nicosia Olpe (ivy on the rim, tongues above the foot) can be included, despite the lack of apparent stylistic or workshop connections with either the Theseus Painter or the Kroko
tos Group; therefore they cannot technically be classed in the Heron workshop. A portion of the skyphoi in the Heron Class are this type.

9. Heron Class (fig. 35, all types, A2-Q). These skyphoi show concave lips, high bodies, torus feet and horizontally attached diagonal handles. The class includes the narrow band skyphoi of the CHC Group, etc. Whereas 'type B' refers to shape (of Heron Class skyphoi) and secondary decoration combined, 'Heron Class' mainly refers to shape. In contrast to the designation Heron Workshop, which implies a workshop structure, 'Heron Class' refers exclusively to a specific skyphos shape, while also including (but not exclusively) the skyphoi of the Heron workshop itself. Type B skyphoi are part of this class, but have a specific type of secondary decoration.

Despite the very cumbersome and artificial nature of all these names and classifications, they continue to be in wide use. Therefore it is advisable to adhere to them as much as possible, if only to avoid even greater confusion. However, clarity requires that each of them is consistently employed, and that the reader remains aware that they often may overlap to varying degrees. To give some examples of overlap: the Theseus Painter's skyphoi can be placed in categories 3, 6-9 and, possibly, 2. But this excludes the skyphos Kanellopoulos 842 (Cat. no. 78, pl. 33 a-b), for example, attributed to the Theseus Painter, which has the narrow banded decorative system of the skyphoi of the CHC Group and therefore fits into categories 3 and 9; further, owing to the narrow frieze, this skyphos is type C, not type B like the rest of the Theseus Painter's skyphoi. Similarly, the Krokoto
tos Painter's skyphoi can be assigned to categories 1, 7 (?), 8-9 and, possibly, 4-6, whereas his cups fall under category 1 only.

The Athena Painter fits solely into category 4; the Painter of Philadelphia 5481 into 2, 4 and 6-9; the CHC Group into 9. The two type B skyphoi by the Painter of the Nicosia Olpe might belong in categories 8-9, whereas his other skyphoi, all of which are Ure's types A (see below), conform to none of the above designations. A complete definition of a skyphos by the Theseus Painter would therefore read something like the following: Theseus Painter, Sub-kroko
tos Group, White Heron Group, Heron workshop, type B, Heron Class. All the definitions are equally applicable. In general, Heron Class will be used here as the preferred term for these skyphoi. If the secondary decoration is relevant, I shall instead mention the specific type (A-C).

Although the Theseus Painter was clearly imbedded in an extensive workshop structure, which apparently existed before he started his career (and which continued after he stopped decorating skyphoi),

40 Name used by Ure, Sixth and Fifth, 59: "Large skyphoi. 20 m or more in diameter, with figure scenes occupying practically the whole of the vase. Round rim an ivy wreath, and round bottom of cup several bands or lines of black and a band of tongues, in most cases alternately black and purple. No handle palmettes, but beneath handles generally an animal, fish or bird. There is a moulding at junction of foot and body either purple or left in ground colour, and bottom of cup is ground colour with or without circles of black. Inside black with reserved line round rim and in bottom a reserved medallion with black circles"; CVA Athens 4, 38.

41 Name used in ABV 205, 521; CVA Athens 4, 38-65.

42 See, for example, CVA Athens 4, where M. Pipili also uses designations like type B, Heron Class, Kroko
tos Painter and Workshop, Sub-kroko
tos Group, etc.
he was doubtless the workshop's central figure. First of all, because of the large amount of pottery which can be attributed to him, unparalleled by any other painter of Heron Class skyphoi, he is a much more definable 'personality' than any of those painters. Second, his importance would lie in an art historical or aesthetic sense because of his greater stylistic abilities and iconographical inventiveness.

Haspels attributed 77 vases to the Theseus Painter,\(^\text{43}\) 54 of which are skyphoi. From 1956 onwards, Beazley added many items,\(^\text{44}\) including a larger variety of shapes. Whereas Haspels lists skyphoi, lekythoi, oinochoai, hydriai, loutrophoroi and cups, Beazley notes also pelikai, kyathoi, alabastra and a larger range of cups.

The Theseus Painter worked exclusively in black-figure, unlike the painter who seems closest to him, the Athena Painter, who might be the same as the red-figure Bowdoin Painter.\(^\text{45}\) In the view of M. Eisman, the Theseus Painter shows a link with one other (partly) red-figure painter: Psiax;\(^\text{46}\) however, I cannot see any similarity in the style or the choice of shapes or iconography of these two painters.

At present, more than 200 vessels can be attributed to the Theseus Painter. The majority of Haspels and Beazley's attributions continue to be accepted, although, in my opinion, a few are not correct. A substantial number of pieces have been added by other scholars, including the present author; for the shapes, amounts and names of the attributors see Table 15.

The Theseus Painter figures largely in Haspels' book on lekythoi. She considered him an important exponent of the latest generation of Attic black-figure specialists in that form. In contrast to many of his contemporaries, the Theseus Painter is also known from a wide variety of other shapes, associated with several distinctly different workshops.\(^\text{47}\) Haspels proposed that this remarkable aspect of his work might be explained by the notion that he was a "travelling" artisan who offered his talents to several different workshops after becoming "tired of inspiring the hacks of the Heron workshop."\(^\text{48}\) However, many of the different types of vessels decorated by the Theseus Painter seem roughly contemporaneous with his skyphoi, like the kalpis London B 346 and the oinochoe Louvre F 342 (Cat. nos. 159, 165, pls. 50 a, 52 c-d). From the viewpoint of potterwork they seem, of course, to have little in common with the skyphoi, but the style of decoration is contemporary.

The Theseus Painter shows much variation in the way he paints and incises. Perhaps this is partly due to the shape of the picture surface in question or to the dimensions of the vase, for instance large, wide and low figures on skyphoi, and small, high and narrow ones on lekythoi. On the other hand, there are definite indications of chronological differentiation, ranging from rather detailed and careful execution in the early years to very clumsy, limited and deteriorating workmanship later. The latter is even comparable to the output of very late black-figure workshops, for example the Haimon Painter and his group.\(^\text{49}\) This differentiation, which I divide into five phases, will be dealt with in the chapter on development and chronology.

The interrelations of workshop and stylistic ties between the Theseus Painter and other artisans are not always so evident. In shape, subject and, less frequently, style his skyphoi are obviously linked to the above-mentioned Krokots Group, Sub-krokots Group and the less distinct White Heron Group. In his lekythoi and oinochoai similarities to the Athena Painter are quite obvious, as found in the style as well as in the vase shapes and the use of secondary ornamentation. For his numerous other shapes, however, the possible connections between workshops and painters are less certain.

The Theseus Painter is renowned for his rather extraordinary choice of themes. In many instances they

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\(^{43}\) ABL 249-52; also several near and related, ABL 253-54. See also n. 18.

\(^{44}\) ABL 518-20, 35 vases of which 14 skyphoi; ABL 703-704, four vases; ABL 716, one vase; Para 255-59: 40 vases, of which 19 skyphoi. For pottery near the Theseus Painter see ABL 521; Para 259-60. See also Beazley Addenda\(^2\) 129-30.

\(^{45}\) ABL 157-60; ABL 522; ARV\(^2\) 677-89; Para 405-407; Beazley Addenda\(^2\) 279-80. See also Kurtz and Boardman, Athena-Bowdoin Painter.

\(^{46}\) Kyathoi, 134-35, 442, 448, 450,

\(^{47}\) Although the Theseus Painter evidently preferred the skyphoi to all others, for the amount of his skyphoi exceeds all other vases put together.

\(^{48}\) ABL 146.

\(^{49}\) Compare, for example, the alabastra attributed to the Theseus Painter with work of the Haimon Painter, like New York 41.162.13 (ABV 538,1; Beazley Addenda\(^2\) 133), or with that of the Emporion Painter (ABL 263-66; ABL 584-85; Para 291; Beazley Addenda\(^2\) 138-39).
are so unusual that they remain unexplained or are rarely paralleled in any artistic medium, being usually limited to vase-painting in his direct vicinity. A well-known example is Herakles pulling a female monster by a rope in 'Kerberos-like fashion' (Cat. nos. 15-16, pl. 7) or the representations of Dionysos in a ship-cart (Cat. nos. 2, 8, pls. 2 a, 4 a-b). Many other themes, while being less remarkable, frequently show details or elements which are typical of the Theseus Painter only or, in some instances, his close circle.

All the painted inscriptions of the Theseus Painter's vases are nonsensical.50 Incised graffiti and votive inscriptions occur on some vases.51 The provenances of about half of the Theseus Painter's vases are known. Though rather widely dispersed, they are concentrated in a few areas of the Greek world: Greece (especially Athens and surroundings) and Italy (mainly the south). A few specimens have come to light in other Mediterranean places like Thasos, Delos and Cyrene. Of the vases with known provenances, several belong to more or less defined contexts. Some of them are linked to sanctuaries, of which the Acropolis at Athens is best represented. The painter's work has also turned up in funerary and, possibly, settlement contexts.

50 New York 17.230.9; Acropolis 1271; Taranto 4448; Monopoli, private coll.; London 1902.12-18.3; Naples 81154; Stuttgart KAS 74; New York 06.1021.49; Taranto IG 4591; Acropolis 1280; Port Sunlight 5019; Munich 1678; Naples 81082; once Adolphseeck; London B 446; Taranto 6515, Salerno 158a, Kerameikos (Cat. nos. 3, 5, 14, 16-18, 24, 41-42, 44, 50, 76, 140, 153-55, 169, 173-75, 179, see also pls. 2 b-d, 6 d, 7 c, 8 a, c-e, 11 b, d, 17 c, 18 a-b, 19, 21 c, 32 a, 44 c-d, 48 c, 49 a-b, d, 55 e, 56 a-b, 57 e).

51 See tracings, fig. 81.