The Theseus Painter
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VI. DEVELOPMENT AND CHRONOLOGY

1. Development

The Theseus Painter's style of painting and drawing varies rather much. As remarked above, this is partly due to differences in the proportions and dimensions of the individual shapes, as becomes readily apparent when one compares the broad and low skyphoi and the high and narrow lekythoi. The changes in the amount of available picture surface also significantly influence the painter's style, as is visible, for example, in the proportions of figures and, apparently, even the kinds of incisions.

Nevertheless, such stylistic differences can most certainly act as indicators of 'style groups'. It also proves possible to establish a chronological development linked to the style groups. In some instances, the style groups are also connected to particular shapes, for example, the alabastra which are narrowly associated with the Theseus Painter's 'very late' style. I divide these groups into five phases, with chronological indications that will be explained below: 1, early (515/510-505 B.C.), 2, middle (505-495 B.C.), 3, transitional from middle to late (495-490 B.C.), 4, late (490-485 B.C.) and 5, very late (485-480/475 B.C.).

The Theseus Painter's manner of depicting human figures - especially males - undergoes many changes during his career. In his early work he generally paints broad, rounded human figures. The musculature is often indicated by rather exaggerated forms: bulging blobs of black glaze represent the muscles of shoulders, arms and calves; buttocks and bellies are broad, round and protruding. Later, the figures usually become thinner, less muscular, and the forms of the bodies are more angular. Naked males, for instance, often have a very thin waist. Comparable changes also mark the other pictorial elements. In the later phases, attempts to depict more complicated figures or compositions are largely abandoned. The figures become more isolated and static, standing in a fashion comparable to that of his companion the Athena Painter.

Whereas pictures from the Theseus Painter's middle phase are quite full of human and animal figures, etc., which often overlap, his later scenes are as a rule less crowded. The painter's incising changes likewise. He started making rather carefully drawn and often rather detailed incisions. They became less careful in subsequent stages, culminating in the very limited, clumsy drawing of his latest vases. Examples of some differences in drawing from various phases are seen in satyrs (figs. 1-5), Herakles (figs. 6-11) and youths (figs. 12-15).

The drawing style of animals also shows a development, although it is less marked than in the human figures. Changes are most evident in the Theseus Painter's most popular animal, the goat. Clearly contrasting are the older, rather detailed goats of the Winchester skyphos (Cat. no. 4, pl. 1 c-d) and the less carefully drawn ones under the handles of Agora P 1544 (Cat. no. 45, pl. 20 c). Even more summarily rendered are the goats of the pelike Malibu 71.AE.297 (Cat. no. 150, pl. 47 a-b). The painter's later animals, in comparison to his earlier ones, have more slender proportions and stand on higher legs (compare also the snouts which look almost like human noses); the incising is more angular and less detailed.

In addition, the painter's early work shows much added colour, including a lot of yellow, whereas the use of added colour on his later vases becomes more sober and yellow completely vanishes. Regarding the secondary decoration, on the other hand, it is often difficult to discern a distinct development. In many instances, as best represented by skyphoi, the secondary ornaments undergo no fundamental changes at all, but are a standard feature of the shape. Nevertheless, the ornamentation of skyphoi shows small, but notable, differences. On many skyphoi, which I designate as 'transitional from middle to late', the ivy motif on the rim (which, as a rule, is somewhat clumsily executed anyway) has often deteriorated to

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414 The incised details of the skyphoi are, roughly speaking, rather broad and flowing, whereas the drawing of the lekythoi, for example, is more limited and scribbly. For these stylistic differences compare two extreme examples with the same subject: the skyphos Taranto 4448 and the lekythos Brussels A 1953 (Cat. nos. 14, 135, pls. 6 a, 42 d). The same differences are detectable in the Theseus Painter's other 'broad' and 'high' pictorial spaces, for example, the pelikai as opposed to the alabastra.
merely two rows of dots; compare the skyphoi with ivy (Cat. nos. 1, 4, 13-14, pls. 1, 6) and the large transitional vases with dots (pls. 29-31). This feature is however not always indicative for transitional skyphoi, as three skyphoi with dots on their rims – Guardia Perticara, Monopoli private collection, once Kropatschek collection (Cat. nos. 10, 16, 26, pls. 5 a, 7 c-d, 11 f-g) – appear stylistically otherwise not to differ from the skyphoi assigned to the middle group and have therefore been included in it.

The skyphoi also show some variation in the lines and stripes between the figured frieze and the tongues, which might be further indicative of developmental phases. Whereas Syracuse 26857 (early, Cat. no. 1, pl. 1 a-b) has a comparatively complex system of bands and lines above the tongues, Athens, NM 498 (transitional from middle to late, Cat. no. 80, pl. 34 e-f) is surrounded by three clumsily painted stripes only.

With regard to other shapes, like pelikai, kalpides and oinochoai, the specimens are too few in number to discern any development, because the decorative system finds either none, or very few, counterparts on other examples by the Theseus Painter. For all of them, however, one rough distinction can be made: in the earlier ones the ornamentation is rendered with more care and the decoration is more elaborate than in the later ones.

The only vase shape of the Theseus Painter that exhibits some development in the secondary decoration is the lekythos. The earliest lekythoi have broad palmettes with 7-9 leaves on the shoulder; later ones, thinner palmettes with 11-13 leaves. And the latest lekythoi have no palmettes at all, but are adorned with rays on the shoulder, a device associated with the Beldam Painter who is considered very late in the chronology of lekythos painters.

Viewed in combination with the stylistic phases the specific shape of an individual vase type can also be seen to change somewhat over time. The Theseus Painter's large cylindrical lekythoi, for example, show a figure style which can be regarded as relatively early in comparison to that of his other lekythoi (Cat. nos. 125-32, pls. 38-40, 41 a-c), although later than most of his skyphoi. In shape, his large lekythoi are related to those of the Edinburgh Painter and the Athena Painter. However, other lekythoi are clearly later in style and different in shape. The best examples are the two chimney-lekythoi: once Paris, Peyrefitte collection, and Boston 21.277 (Cat. nos. 146-47, pl. 46 d-f). Their distinctive form associates them with very late black-figure workshops like those of the Haimon Painter and the Beldam Painter, of which the general dating is certainly much later than the main body of work of either the Athena Painter or the Edinburgh Painter.

The Theseus Painter's skyphoi also show parallel changes in shape and painting style. The earliest ones tend to be rather small, shallow and broad. In style, the larger (particularly the very large skyphoi) are definitely later than the smaller ones.

Phases

Basically, the work of the Theseus Painter can be divided into five phases: early, middle, transitional from middle to late, late, very late. However, it needs to be borne in mind that the Theseus Painter's development is more gradual, as it were, flowing than its division into phases might seem to imply.

1. Early phase
Cat. nos. 1-6; pls. 1-2, 3 a-b

Few vases of the Theseus Painter can be considered early work. The early phase comprises exclusively skyphoi. Previously Ure saw that Syracuse 26857 and Winchester College are early (Cat. nos. 1 and 4, pl. 1).415 In my opinion, so are the skyphos fragments Acropolis 1281 (Cat. no. 2, pl. 2a, Dionysos in a ship-cart416) and Acropolis 1271 (Cat. no. 5, pl. 2 c-d, 'washermen', attributed to near the Theseus Painter

415 Ure, Krokotos, 95-96, 103.
416 ABL 250,29.
by Haspels⁴¹⁷ as well as Boston 99.523 and New York 17.230.9 (Cat. nos. 3, 4, pls. 2b, 3 a-b).

Generally, the Theseus Painter's early skyphoi are smaller (closer in size to skyphoi connected with the Krokotos Group) than those of his subsequent phases. Proportionately, they are usually broader in relation to the height, as compared to the later skyphoi (see Table 3 a). All the early skyphoi have a broad, rounded torus foot.

Their style can be described as quite stiff, while their painting style is very precise and their incising relatively detailed. They bear much resemblance to Krokotos Group skyphoi.

The stylistic differences between the early skyphoi and the later ones can be most clearly seen in Syracuse 26857. Its painting is exceptionally careful (Cat. no. 1, pl. 1 a-b, fig. 1 a-b); compare the satyrs with those of later vases by the Theseus Painter.⁴¹⁸ Nevertheless, many stylistic elements are consistent with the Theseus Painter; note for example the wavy chest-muscles, single line for both collarbone and biceps, curving line in the thigh, continuing down to the knee, although in one instance the thigh line is doubled, as found on only a few other vases of the Theseus Painter.⁴¹⁹ The Syracuse skyphoi also shares stylistic features with the Krokotos Painter,⁴²⁰ stiffness of composition and incising, and rather elaborate incisions. Otherwise without parallel in the Theseus Painter's skyphoi are the kraters used as handle ornaments, which are, instead, a main trait of Krokotos Group skyphoi. Ure recognised, rightly in my opinion, that the Syracuse skyphos was decorated by the Theseus Painter, whereas Beazley was apparently less certain and placed it near the Theseus Painter.⁴²¹

Another early skyphos, Winchester College (Cat. no. 4, pl. 1 c-d), is notable for its lavish use of yellow, ornate style and stiff composition. Ure also considered it one of the Theseus Painter's earliest pieces.⁴²² Its maenads wear stiffish garments, without the characteristic wavy and zigzag lines marking the clothes of almost all the other female figures by the Theseus Painter. Both maenads and goats are rendered very neatly, with atypically detailed facial incisions for the females. Another feature strongly linking the Winchester College skyphos to the earlier Krokotos Group is the abundant use of yellow.

As remarked, Acropolis 1281 and 1271 (Cat. nos. 2 and 5, pls. 2 a, c-d, fig. 53), are, in my opinion, early too. Their dimensions, as far as known, are quite small.⁴²³ The drawing of Acropolis 1281 is careful and detailed; and the incising of the head and upper body of the satyr confronting Dionysos in his ship-cart is very like that of the Syracuse skyphos. The other skyphoi with a Dionysian ship-cart (Cat. no. 8, pl. 4 a-b) lacks the detail and exactness of Acropolis 1281, which suggests it differs chronologically.⁴²⁴

Acropolis 1271 (Cat. no. 5, pl. 2 c-d), was assigned by Haspels to near the Theseus Painter.⁴²⁵ In a way it is a curious fragment its restored diameter is very small (only ca. 20 cm) and, as far as visible from what remains of the original vase, it must have been a very small skyphos. The style appears to be more refined than that of most of the Theseus Painter's work, with quite thin lines as facial incisions.⁴²⁶ Yet there are many traits which point to the Theseus Painter (for example the characteristic forelocks and ears).

According to Malagardis,⁴²⁷ New York 17.230.9, with 'Nereus' on a seahorse, is probably also early work (Cat. no. 3, pl. 2 b). The suggestion seems to me correct because of the relatively small size, very detailed incising and abundant added colour, including yellow.

⁴¹⁷ ABL 253,12.
⁴¹⁸ See, i.a., Naples 81154, Basle market, Lecce 560, Athens, Kanellopoulos, and once, German private coll. (Cat. nos. 24, 37-38, 78, 133, pls. 11 a-e, 15 e-d, 16 c-d, 33 a-b, 41 d-e).
⁴¹⁹ See, i.a., the wrestlers of New York 06.1021.49 (Cat. no. 42, pl. 18 b) or the Herakles of Taranto 4448 (Cat. no. 14, pl. 6 e). In contrast to the satyr of the Syracuse skyphos, the feature may explained in these two instances as the result of the figures' uncommon stances.
⁴²⁰ Compare esp. the satyr playing aulos in Cab. des Médailles 343 (Para 93,1; Beazley Addenda 55).
⁴²¹ Ure, Krokotos, 96, 103, which was later also confirmed by Malagardis, Skyphoi. See also Para, 257.
⁴²² Ure, Krokotos, 95. Only 15.3 cm high.
⁴²³ Diameters: Acropolis 1281, 21.5 cm, Acropolis 1271, even only c. 20.0 cm (fig. 53), which are indeed very narrow for a Heron Class skyphos.
⁴²⁴ This is confirmed by the skyphos Bologna 130 (Cat. no. N46), with the same subject, by an unidentified, apparently later painter of the White Heron Group.
⁴²⁵ ABL 253,12. 16.2 cm high.
⁴²⁶ This is not evident in pl. 2 c-d, which is a drawing taken from Graef and Langlotz, Akropolis.
⁴²⁷ Malagardis, Skyphoi.
Boston 99.523 (Cat. no. 6, pl. 3 a-b) is a borderline case. It is smallish,\(^{428}\) has much added colour, and shows a subject which is popular in the Krokotos Group: lions and bulls at a tree.\(^{429}\) On the other hand, the incising resembles much more the typically flowing lines of the Theseus Painter's middle period. Malagardis proposes that an unpublished fragmentary skyphos, which was once in the New York Love collection and which Beazley gave to the Krokotos Group, is also early work of the Theseus Painter.\(^{430}\) As I have not seen it, I cannot comment on either attribution.

Some other skyphoi by the Theseus Painter (Taranto 4447-8, Acropolis 1306, London 1902.12-18.3, Naples 81154 and 81159, New York 06.1021.49, Taranto 4449; Cat. nos. 13-15, 24, 33, 42, 44, pls. 6, 7 a-b, 8 d-e, 11 a-d, 14 a-b, 18 a-b, 19) are remarkable for their high quality and detail of decoration, in both the painting and the incising, as well as for much use of added colour. Therefore one could easily decide to place them in the early phase. However, because of the relative standard features of the incising, I assign them to the painter's middle phase.

Finally, it must be remarked that I cannot find any truly early vases by the Theseus Painter, that is, work which might reflect his apprenticeship, for instance, displaying signs of experimentation and clumsiness. All the skyphoi denoted by me as early are the products of a mature painter/draughtsman. Perhaps the absence of what might be considered the painter's truly earliest work provides grist to the mill of Eisman's arguments for placing the Theseus Painter's kyathoi at the very start of his career instead of at the end. Nevertheless, the style of the kyathoi simply fits better into the painter's later style as a result of preceding developments.

2. Middle phase
Cat. nos. 7-67, 150-52, 159, 163, 165-66, 171-72, 177, 206; pls. 3 c-e, 4-28, 47, 48 a-b, 50 a, 52 a, c-d, 55 a-c, 56 d-h, 65 d

The Theseus Painter's middle phase comprises the largest number of vases, consisting partly of skyphoi as well as of other shapes: large pelikai, kalpis (Cat. no. 159, pl. 50 a), oinochoai (Cat. nos. 165-66, pls. 52 c-d, 53 a-c), olpe (Cat. no. 163, pl. 52 a), cups, cup-skyphoi (Cat. nos. 171-72, 177, pls. 55 a-b, 56 d-h) and plate (Cat. no. 206, pl. 65 d).\(^{431}\) The skyphoi tend now to be somewhat larger, their rims show more variation, and the concave-shaped type 2 foot emerges.

Most of these vases, especially the skyphoi, exhibit all the basic stylistic traits described by Haspels and others (see above, general style). Some of them are painted relatively carefully and elaborately (see Taranto 4447-8, Mt. Holyoke, Taranto 4449, Cat. nos. 13-14, 19, 44, pls. 6, 9 a-b, 19,), others are clumsier (see Taranto 4591, Amsterdam 2178, Cat. nos. 50, 58, pls. 21, 27 a-e). Nevertheless, they all have the same underlying common stylistic elements.

The Theseus Painter's characteristically flowing, wavy incising now becomes a main feature. Males are depicted as broad, muscular figures. Some scenes are composed more freely and there is sometimes good observation of details and difficult anatomy, for example the abdomen of Alkyoneus in Taranto 4448 (Cat. no. 14, pl. 6 c) or that of Skiron in Toledo 63.27 (Cat. no. 30, pl. 13 d-e). In general, however, the figures on the Theseus Painter's middle vases show, for the most part, fewer incised details. In the middle phase, the eyes are often depicted in the standard black-figure fashion (circle and dot for the iris and pupil, stroke on either side), but they can also be sloppier and more summary. Additional characteristic details are: conspicuously incised forelock consisting of two lines with a row of strokes at the end, typical shell-like ears, hair at the neck, and beard. Careful incisions for the nose, cheek and moustache remain standard, although not all of them are included on every male face; see the central figure of Amsterdam 2178, Cat. no. 58, pl. 27 a).

In addition, the figures' postures are frequently complicated, and animals and objects are rendered in

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\(^{428}\) 15.7 cm high. As in the case of Acropolis 1281 in comparison to London B 79 (Cat. no. 8, pl. 4 a-b), the subject of the Boston skyphos finds a later parallel in the Theseus Painter's skyphoi in Guardia Perticara (Cat. no. 10, pl. 5 a). Clear differences mark both the style and the shape.

\(^{429}\) See n. 34.

\(^{430}\) Para 93,5; Malagardis, Skyphoi.

\(^{431}\) See also ABL 145.
relative detail (compared to later phases). Parallel incised lines occur often. Many animals are skilfully portrayed (see the cattle on the reverse of Taranto 4448, Cat. no. 14, pl. 6 d). The pictures often appear relatively crowded. Added colour is common, with yellow remaining in use. In the middle phase, the Theseus Painter displays the most inventiveness in his subject matter: monsters, mythological and real animals, variation in scenic additions and accessories like natural features.

3. Transitional from middle to late phases
Cat. nos. 68-81, 125-32, 173-75; pls. 29-34, 38-40, 41 a-c, 55 d-f, 56 a-b (possibly also Cat. nos. 178-81, pl. 57 a-b, e-g, which might also be middle, and Cat. no. 182, pl. 57 c-d, which might also be late).

The skyphoi made at this time stand apart from the preceding one, most of them are generally much larger (around 30.0 cm high) and tend to be more slender (Cat. nos. 69-81, pls. 29-33, figs. 51-52). But stylistically the painting is just as exact as in middle phase, although the amount of detail decreases. The incisions become simpler and nearly a kind of mannerism marks the drawing. In addition, the incising tends to be more careless; individual anatomical features are often rendered with fewer lines or they are linked together by one continuous line. Many ears, for instance, are drawn as part of the inner hair contour; beards, cheeks and moustaches generally become one single, flowing line; the difference can be seen, for example, in a comparison of the Hermes of Bologna 129 and Taranto 4448 (Cat. nos. 9, 14, pls. 4 c, e, 6 d) with that of Conservatori, and St. Petersburg 4498 (Cat. nos. 70-71, pls. 29 c-d, 30 a). Some typical features of the Theseus Painter’s late phase are already met on these vases. More figures are slender and the characteristic forelock is sometimes absent. There also seems to be a tendency towards a little less use of added colour; and on the skyphos rims the ivy leaves of the preceding phases are largely replaced by dots.

These transitional vases consist, as seen, of skyphoi, while also the type C cups London B 446, Taranto 6515 and Salerno 158a (Cat. nos. 173-175, pls. 55 d-f, 56 a-b) and some of the earlier, more careful lekythoi (Cat. nos. 125-132, pls. 38-41 a-c) must be included. Possibly also the skyphos Athens, NM 498 (Cat. no. 80, pl. 34, fig. 51) belongs here, although it stands rather apart from the others: the style is very clumsy and the particular shape finds no parallel among the Theseus Painter’s other skyphoi, as it is very slender while not being particularly high.

4. Late phase
Cat. nos. 133-44, 153-56, 161-62, 164, 167-69; Pls. 41 d-e, 42-45, 46 c-d, 48 c-d, 49, 51, 52 b, 53 d-e, 54 (possibly also Cat. nos. 145, 160, pls. 46 c, 50 b)

As late work of the Theseus Painter is not met on skyphoi, Haspels’ suggestion that he left the Heron workshop around this time in his career seems plausible. The shapes include many lekythoi as well as small kalpides, small pelikai and oinochoai, Petit Palais 313, once Brussels, Theodor collection, and Adolpheck (Cat. nos. 153-56, 161-62, 167-69, pls. 48 c-d, 49, 51, 53 d, 54).

The painter’s late-phase style can be characterised as less accurate, with more careless, angular incisions and yet more slender figures which increasingly remind one of the Athena Painter. The drawing is less fluent and scratchier; it starts to lose its former swing, culminating in Haspels’ “exaggerated crinkliness.” The typical forelock has sometimes been omitted and replaced either by a single contour for the inner hairline, including the hair overlapping the temple, rendered with longish parallel strokes, or by one wavy line as in the manner of the Athena Painter. Also the anatomical incising is often very different: more angular and sketchy, less flowing and curving. Abdominal lines are

432 See, i.a., Athens, Goulandris coll. 265; and once, Philadelphia market (Cat. nos. 125-27, pls. 38-39 a-c).
433 Although some traits of the small pelikai even border on the very late phase.
434 Probably in this phase the painters stylistically influenced one another.
435 See, i.a., Athens, NM 515, the lyra-playing youth of Athens, NM 9686 and the youth of Athens 1957 Aa 193 (Cat. nos. 136, 142, 182, pls. 43 a, 46 c, 57 d).
often straight and very short. The typical curving line of the thigh continuing into a curl for the knee frequently absent and is often reduced to semicircle (or two) as indication of the knecap; a straight vertical line indicates the breastbone and nipples are not included. Generally, the figures become stiffer and more rigid, facial incisions more simplified.

During the late phase the Theseus Painter began to employ the white-ground technique, frequently for oinochoai and lekythoi. The use of added colour diminishes, creating a more sober look. Added yellow completely vanishes.

What Haspels described as the "exaggerated crinkliness" of some incising can be seen in Berlin F 2005 and Madrid 10930 (Cat. nos. 145, 160, pls. 46 c, 50 b): the lines of especially garment folds are executed in wavy, almost shaggy lines, often close, parallel pairs. She regarded such incising as characteristic of a very late phase of the Theseus Painter. But as the trait is only found on the Madrid kalpis and the Berlin lekythos it would not seem to indicate a separate developmental phase. Moreover, all the other stylistic features of the Madrid kalpis and Berlin lekythos are comparable to those of other late work. Therefore I prefer to assign them to the Theseus Painter's late phase rather than to his subsequent very late one.

5. Very late phase
Cat. nos. 146-47, 192-97, 201-204; pls. 46 d-f, 58-64, 65 a-c
The Theseus Painter's latest phase comprises all his alabastra and kyathoi, and two, but possibly more, lekythoi, most of which have rays rather than palmettes on the shoulder. In shape, two of the lekythoi differ from the common cylindrical type and are chimney lekythoi: once Paris, Peyrefitte collection, and Boston 21.277 (Cat. nos. 146-47, pl. 46 d-f). All the very late work was attributed by Beazley or other scholars to the Theseus Painter; none is mentioned by Haspels. In the very late phase the style of painting and incising can only be described as deteriorated. The decoration is more simplified, with very limited, sparser and clumsier incisions. The style stands rather close to that of the (admittedly better) vases of the Haimon Painter and his workshop as well as to other later groups of black-figure pottery. Added colour is sparsely used: white for female skin (on red-ground vases) and red for headbands. Animals are rarely depicted and the iconography consists almost solely of stock subjects: komoi as on his earlier skyphoi, though much plainer, athletes, etc.

In his study of Attic black-figure kyathoi Eismann argues, on the basis of the shape, that the Theseus Painter's kyathoi are among his earliest pieces and therefore date from 515 B.C. onwards (see below, chronology). In contrast, as remarked, I regard their painting as stylistically parallel to the Theseus Painter's alabastra and lekythoi which I assign to the latest phase. These lekythoi, several of which have rays on the shoulder, are associated with the Beldam Painter, who, in turn, is related to the latest black-figure workshops.

The style of painting and drawing of the Beldam Painter's lekythoi is certainly later than that of the Krokotos Group skyphoi, to which the Theseus Painter's skyphoi, moreover, are stylistically closer. Therefore I conclude that the Theseus Painter's kyathoi were made towards the end of his career.

Tables 5a-b
To support my analysis of the Theseus Painter's general development I illustrate and trace in Table 5a-b the chronological variation in some incised traits of male figures which show the most categorical changes and which I therefore regard as generally representative: eyes, legs (especially knees), ears, forelocks. For each of them I illustrate the differences over the periods (Table 5a). In Table 5a each illustrated male feature is divided into five to seven developmental types (A-G, five for eyes, seven for

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436 Although this occasionally also occurs on earlier vases, Taranto 4449 (Cat. no. 44, pl. 19 d). At this point, however, it becomes standard.
437 ABL 146.
438 ABL 146.
legs and ears, six for forelocks) ranging from early to late. In Table 5b the seven types are then translated into seven vertical columns. The individual vases themselves are listed in Table 5b according to the Theseus Painter's chronological phases discussed above: early, middle, transitional, late, very late (right-hand vertical column, 1-5). Insofar as possible, the vases are sequenced roughly chronologically within each phase. Further, each feature illustrated in Table 5a is assigned a shade from black to light grey which makes it more easily recognisable in Table 5b. In Table 5b the general shift in the concentration of the blocks from early to late, that is, from left to right, seems to confirm my assumption that the variation in the treatment of the incised male features reflects a chronological progression.

However, the shift in Table 5a can only be slight and general because of the nature of the Theseus Painter's stylistic development: the changes take place gradually and different stages or features are often represented on the same vase. Furthermore, we must regard this table with caution because in itself it proves nothing as it is necessarily based on two sets of previously accepted assumptions: my sequencing of the vases from early to late, and the notion that the changes in the incised traits are indeed indicative of chronological progression in the work of the Theseus Painter as a whole. Moreover, my choice of incised traits cannot always be completely certain as indicator of a developmental phase on a vase because the features do not always occur together on each vase. Notwithstanding these restrictions, Table 5b demonstrates that this division is generally valid.

Some examples will be useful. In phases 1-2 the eyes (black blocks) are mainly types A-B (Table 5a) and, to a lesser degree, type C. In phases 3-4, type D eye occurs, which is the main type in phase 4. In phase 5, the main kind of eye is type E. In phases 1-2 the legs (dark grey blocks) are mainly types A-B, and in phase 3 types C-D. Whereas in phase 4 the legs are mainly type D and, less commonly, type E. Leg types E-G appear mainly in phase 5.

Equally interesting is the absence of some incised features. For instance, the typically curly ears (types A and B, Table 5a) are almost completely missing in the latest phases (4 and 5, Table 5b). Moreover, sometimes earlier elements strikingly recur on later vases like Malibu 86.AE.146 (Cat. no. 192, pl. 58a) on which Perseus has an incised leg of type C, although it is a very late vase. This may be explained by the fact that the decoration of this kyathos is anyway executed more carefully than the other very late vases.

Summary

The Theseus Painter's development can be divided into five phases which, in truth, are more fluid than the scheme might seem to imply. Each phase can be characterised by different stylistical or developmental elements.

1. Early Phase. Very reminiscent of the Krokotos Group; careful, detailed incising (standard black-figure eyes, typical Theseus Painter's ears); much added yellow; relatively small skyphoi only.

2. Middle Phase. More fluent style and incisions, robust figures; stylistically most characteristic of the Theseus Painter; still much added colour, including some yellow; bulk of the skyphoi as well as some other shapes (large pelikai, one large kalpis, an olpe, oinochoai, cups and a plate).

3. Transitional from middle to late. More anatomical elements joined by fewer incised lines; still rather much colour; largest skyphoi (as well as others like narrow-band skyphoi, Athens, Kanellopoulos, and Athens, NM 498) and a few other shapes (some lekythoi, cups and possibly loutrophoroi).

4. Late. Yet more deviations in incisions; white-ground, but less added colour; strongest resemblance to the Athena Painter; no skyphoi, most lekythoi and some other shapes (small pelikai and small kalpides, an olpe, oinochoai).

5. Very late. Limited and clumsy incising; less colour; only traces of the Theseus Painter's core style remaining; mainly alabastra and kyathoi, but also a few lekythoi.
2. Chronology

Introduction
The main criteria for the dating of the Theseus Painter are stylistic comparisons with Attic painters, sometimes combined with grave contexts. An indication of an absolute date can rarely be derived from the archaeological record. The most important find-spot of the Theseus Painter's vases that might be connected to a historical event is the dump of the 'Rectangular Rock-cut Shaft' in the Athenian Agora; the upper part of the fill has been associated with the Persian sack of Athens. In addition, some fragments of his vases have been linked to the so-called 'Perserschutt' on the Athenian Acropolis. Importantly, no pottery from the Marathon Tumulus can be attributed to the Theseus Painter.

The Theseus Painter is generally dated to around 500 B.C.439 However, the sizeable amount of attributable vases and their variation, in both shape and stylistic development, imply a considerably wider chronological range. The painter's association with the Krokotos Group (around 520 B.C.), the late Athena Painter (after 500 B.C.), the very late Beldam Painter (later in the first quarter of the fifth century B.C.) and other painters who definitely postdate the Krokotos Group suggests that his career spanned perhaps as many as 30 or 40 years, which is an unusually long time for an Attic vase painter, but well within the limits of a possible career.

On the basis of style, Haspel advanced the first chronological framework for the Theseus Painter. She made a clear chronological distinction between his skyphoi and lekythoi; while the former belong among his earlier vases, the latter can be placed at the end of his career, which, in her view, may have lasted until as late as about 480 or even the 470s B.C.440 But Haspel furnishes few additional clues as to the possible dates of other shapes, while giving some indications regarding individual vases which might belong to the painter's early or late phase; for instance, she observed that the kalpis Madrid 10930 (Cat. no. 160, pl. 50 b) probably belongs to the same period as the late lekythoi.

Haspel also compared the Theseus Painter's output with roughly contemporary vases found in the Marathon Tumulus which was probably the funerary mound erected after the battle of 490 B.C. against the Persians. The varied content was generally stylistically similar to the Theseus Painter, although none of the vases can be placed in his direct vicinity, with the possible exception of a kalpis by the Nikoxenos Painter (see above).441 The other black-figure pottery is by late lekythos painters.442

Eisman questioned the value of the Marathon Tumulus as more than a means of dating ante quem.443 The problem is made partly clear by the inclusion of an amphora attributed to Sophilos which is obviously much earlier than any late black-figure lekythos from the tumulus and the battle of Marathon itself.444 It has been suggested, however, that this vase by Sophilos and some other earlier pottery discovered at the tumulus have nothing to do with the burials after the battle of Marathon but may be the furnishings of earlier grave.445 On the other hand, D. Williams doubts this explanation because of the 'reasonably complete condition' of the earlier vases and the lack of additional evidence for another burial. Doubting that such early pottery would still be for sale in Athens around 480 B.C., he alternatively advances that the early vase might have been taken from a nearby sanctuary.446 With regard to the Theseus Painter, however, it can only be said that the Marathon Tumulus seems to demonstrate that painters who worked in a comparable style were active before 490 B.C.

Yet the dating of the Theseus Painter can be considered in the light of other basic points: the internal

439 See, for example, Boardman, ABFV, 147, 234 (505-485 B.C.); Agora XXIII, nos. 1484-1496, 1657, 1825 (ca. 500 B.C); CVA Toledo 1, 23 (about 500 B.C.); CVA Athens, NM 4, 49-50 (about 500 B.C).
440 ABL 146. See also Eisman, Kyathos, 443, n. 4.
441 Athens, NM 1037 (ABL 163; ABV 393,18).
442 Lekythoi by the Marathon Painter (Class of Athens 581, ABL nos. 221,1, 9-10, 222,11-12, 14), in the Class of Athens 581.ii (ABV 498,2, 9, Para 233) and in the Haimon Group (ABV 542,99-101, 544,148, 547,229). Furthermore there are some older vases associated with the tumulus; see, AM 1893, pls. 2-5.
443 Eisman, Chronology.
444 Athens 1036, ABV 38,2.
445 ABL 91-92; Shear, Agora, 407
446 Williams, Refiguring, 249
Eisman's style analysis of his work by scholars like Haspels, stylistic comparisons with other Attic painters and indications from graves and other find-contexts.

Eisman's chronology

Eisman is the only scholar to propose an extended chronological framework for the Theseus Painter. Unfortunately, I cannot agree with him, for as stated above he maintains that the kyathoi are the painter's earliest extant pieces. His opinion is based less on their decorative style than on their general ornamentation and, especially, shape. For the painter's other shapes, however, Eisman accepts the previously suggested chronologies.

Eisman's proposal is the following. The Theseus Painter starts his career as a painter of kyathoi in 515-505 B.C., employed in the Nikosthenic workshop.447 He then switches to painting skyphoi around 505-495 B.C. and is connected to the Krokotos Group and White Heron Group. Finally, he would end his career as a painter of lekythoi in collaboration or affiliated with the Athena Painter and his workshop, around 500-490 B.C. and probably later.448

However, there is reason to suppose that Eisman's framework is not correct. In the first place, the strict chronological separation of three shapes - kyathos, skyphos, lekythos - and the linkage of each to a distinct chronological phase in the work of the Theseus Painter seems rather forced. Significantly, these general divisions prove to be not always convincing when one compares the general style of painting and drawing. Moreover, the Theseus Painter decorated a much larger variety of shapes than the three singled out by Eisman, some of which are preserved in equally large or larger numbers than his kyathoi.

This leads to another point: Eisman's assignment of the kyathoi, skyphoi and lekythoi to three more or less equal periods seems odd when one notes that their relative numbers are very unequal: there are more than fifteen times as many preserved skyphoi as kyathoi, and more skyphoi than lekythoi and, in turn, more lekythoi than kyathoi. Furthermore, other shapes by the Theseus Painter fall within the same style groups as the three mentioned by Eisman: besides the skyphoi, pelikai, a large kalpis and two oinochoai etc.; besides the lekythoi, the small kalpides, several oinochoai and so on; besides the kyathoi, alabastra and the like. Eisman takes none of them into consideration. Finally, a stylistic comparison of the Theseus Painter's skyphoi and kyathoi seems clearly to demonstrate, in my estimation, that the latter display a much later phase in his development.449

Furthermore, the Theseus Painter's links to the earlier Krokotos Group and the contemporary Sub-krokotos Group are very strong. Not only because of the favoured shape, the skyphos, but also because of stylistic features, use of added yellow and iconography, it seems highly likely that he had an apprenticeship in that workshop, as he was obviously very acquainted with its decorative standard. In contrast, the Theseus Painter's kyathoi show no connections.

Finally, the shape of the Theseus Painter's kyathoi as a means of dating. As noted above, Eisman concludes that the potter of the Theseus Painter's kyathoi also shaped some kyathoi decorated by painters of the Group of Vatican G. 57.450 Insofar as I can judge, his conclusion seems based only on the occurrence of a double-ridged foot-plate on kyathoi of that group and the Theseus Painter, which, in my opinion, is hardly enough to assign all these kyathoi to one potter.

Stylistic and chronological connections

As seen above, the Theseus Painter is stylistically associated with several other painters and groups.

447 See also Tosto's comment, in Nikosthenes, 100-102
448 Eisman, Kyathos, 443-51; Eisman, Chronology.
449 Compare, i.a., the style of the kyathoi with that of the skyphoi Syracuse 26857 and Winchester, College Museum (Cat. nos. 1, 4, pl. 1), which are considered early.
450 Complègne 1074 (Eisman, Kyathos, no. 71; ABV 612,22); London B 463 (Eisman, Kyathos, no. 77; ABV 613,44); St. Petersburg 4472 (Eisman, Kyathos, no. 106; Gorbunova, Ermitazhe, 198-99, no. 174); Munich 1986 (Eisman, Kyathos, no. 113; Para 305,460).
Some are very close to him, others less so, yet all of them usefully supply some foothold for his chronology.

In style, the Theseus Painter has always been classified among the latest black-figure vase painters from around or after 500 B.C. Basically, the designation seems correct, although far too general, as we can doubtless assume that he started his career somewhat earlier because of his stylistic ties with the Krokotos Group which is usually put at around 525-515 B.C., although earlier dates are also given for this group. Because of this connection, Malagardis dates the Theseus Painter's earliest skyphoi about 520 B.C. The date seems a little too early, however, and I would prefer 515 B.C. as the earliest possible starting point. At any rate, it is clear that the painter's start can be regarded as falling within the production period of the Krokotos Group. The Sub-krokotos Group comprises the followers of the Krokotos Group and is generally dated around 515-500 B.C., that is, in any event, somewhat later than the Krokotos Painter.

Closest in style to the Theseus Painter, however, is the Athena Painter, which led Haspels to treat both of them in one chapter of ABL. The resemblances are most significantly stylistic, while extending, insofar as the Theseus Painter's lekythoi are concerned, to the use of the same vase-type and secondary decoration. But Haspels stopped short of stating that "they influenced each other." She further pointed out that the Theseus Painter would be the elder of the two. Whereas he first decorated skyphoi and only later turned to lekythoi, the Athena Painter seems to have made lekythoi right from the very beginning of his career. The Athena Painter is generally dated after 500 until around 470 B.C.

The shape and secondary decoration of the lekythoi of both the Theseus Painter and the Athena Painter appear to derive from the Edinburgh Painter. Nevertheless it is not yet entirely clear how they are related in stylistic and chronological terms. The Edinburgh Painter's style is not particularly close to theirs, although it certainly bears some similarities. On the other hand, the same can be said of other skilful painters of black-figure lekythoi in about 500 B.C. The Edinburgh Painter is connected to the Leagros Group and generally dated around 510-490 B.C. It seems that only the earliest lekythoi (transitional phase) of the Theseus Painter are more or less strongly linked in shape and decoration to the Edinburgh Painter's lekythoi: for example, as observed above, the use of different shades of white on the same piece.

In contrast, the other large group of painters of concave-rimmed skyphoi, the CHC Group, is not especially related to the Theseus Painter in either style or iconography. On the other hand, the shape and secondary decoration of their skyphoi are often very similar. Therefore it may well be that they are in some yet undiscovered way connected, which possibly implies that they overlap at least in part. The CHC Group is generally dated to the first quarter of the fifth century B.C., although some of the more carefully executed vases might be somewhat earlier.

In relation to the Theseus Painter's middle phase the Nikoxenos workshop might also provide a reference point. Both the Theseus Painter's kalpis London B 346 and his pelikai show links with that painter's workshop. The Nikoxenos Painter and the Eucharides Painter are generally dated from slightly before 500 B.C. onwards.

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451 Ure, Krokotos, 102, the Krokotos workshop “must fall early in the last quarter of the fifth [sic.] century”, for which surely read 'sixth'. Earlier dates are also mentioned: 530 or even close to 540 might be possible if the Krokotos cups are regarded as related to Exekias (see also Ure, Krokotos, 99, “brought up in the tradition of Exekias”, 101-102). Malagardis, Skyphoi, assigns the Krokotos Group to 540-520, although near to 530 or later are probably more realistic dates. Several Krokotos skyphoi might be as late as 515-510 B.C. M. Pipili dates skyphoi by te Krokotos Group to ca. 520-510 B.C., CVA Athens 4, 41-44.

452 Malagardis, Skyphoi.

453 See Ure, Krokotos, 93; CVA Athens 4, 44-49, pls. 32-40, all dated ca. 510 B.C.

454 ABL 141.

455 ABL 142, “it is only later that the Athena Painter becomes prominent.”

456 ABL 148.

457 ABL 87.

458 Cambridge G 3.1955 (Cat. no. 131, pl. 40 d-e).

459 For the Nikoxenos Painter see, i.a., Boardman, ABFV, 113, “from the last years of the sixth century”, CVA Mainz 1, 37, 500-490; CVA Munich 9, 17, ca. 500; J. Boardman, Athenian Red Figure Vases, The Archaic Period (London 1988) 111-113, ca. 500. For the Eucharides painter see, for example, J. Boardman, ibid., 112, “until the 470s”, CVA Oxford 3, with pl. 29.5-6, “early fifth century B.C.”

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The work of several other skilled black-figure lekythos painters supplies additional, slight parallels to the Theseus Painter’s late production; for example the Sappho Painter and the Diophos Painter, largely dated to after 500 B.C. Another important, comparable lekythos painter, the Gela Painter, started somewhat earlier, but also continued until long after 500. As discussed, the Beldam Painter, who is generally dated after 490 B.C., provides another lead for the very late phase of the Theseus Painter, whose chimney lekythoi are comparable to those from the Beldam Painter’s workshop.

In style, the Theseus Painter cannot easily be seen as linked to contemporary red-figure painting. Iconographical innovations, however, seem to be shared by both, as dealt with below in the chapters on iconography. One example will suffice at this point. Of the Deeds of Theseus, previous to ca. 510 B.C. only the subjects of Theseus and the Minotauros and Theseus and the Bull are represented in Attic vase-painting, but after ca. 510 B.C. several of the hero’s deeds on the way from Troezen to Athens are frequently met in red-figure. The Theseus Painter is one of the few black-figure painters who adopted these innovations in the iconography of Theseus, which would seem to furnish another marker for his dating.

The following sections examine additional external reference points for the chronology of the Theseus Painter.

‘Rectangular Rock-cut Shaft’
A deep shaft in the Athenian Agora, the so-called Rectangular Rock-cut Shaft, might be an important chronological indicator for the Theseus Painter, especially his middle period. It is located on the northeastern slope of the Kolonos Agoraios and is indicated as ‘shaft/well G 6:3’. It contained several skyphoi by the Theseus Painter, all of which are very close in style and subject (Agora P 1544-51, Cat. nos. 21, 25, 28, 45-48), as well as the cup and cup-skyphos Agora P 1383 and P 1384 (Cat. nos. 172, 177).

The Rectangular Rock-cut Shaft measures about 20.0 m. deep and was filled with large quantities of pottery. As based on stylistic analyses and ostraka, according to E. Vanderpool, the fill can be variously dated. The fill of the lowest more or less 8.0 m was left in the third quarter of the sixth century B.C. and contained pottery which was manufactured earlier. In his estimate, the uppermost fill, from 12.0 m upwards, was not deposited all at once. Shards found at a depth between 12.0-9.0 m might have been dumped in around 490 B.C.; they range chronologically from much earlier until that time. The fill at a depth of 9.0-5.0 m is assigned to just before 480 B.C.; the upper 5.0 m contained rather few pots and are linked to the Persian war and the subsequent destruction in 480/479 B.C. The fragments by the Theseus Painter were found in the 12.0-9.0 m range, thus indicating they would have been produced previous to 490 B.C. Table 16 presents a complete list of the pottery and the dates established by Moore, with a concordance between Moore and Vanderpool.

However, when one closely considers the dates of the pottery in the Rectangular Rock-cut Shaft, as

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460 Boardman, _ABFV_, 234, the Sappho Painter 500 B.C. and after, the Diosphos Painter 495 B.C. and after; _ABL_, 108-110, both 500 B.C. and after.
461 _ABL_, “from the time of Euthymides down to the time of Makron”; Boardman, _ABFV_, 234, 510-after 500 B.C.; _Agora_ XXIII, 211-13, ca. 500.
462 _ABL_, “last painter of large black-figured lekythoi”; Boardman, _ABFV_, 234, after 490-470s.
463 E. Vanderpool, ‘The Rectangular Rock-cut Shaft’, _Hesperia_ 7 (1938) 365-411; Vanderpool, _Shaft_; _Shear, Agora_, 383-482. Vanderpool warns that some caution is required concerning the stratigraphy (Shaft, 268).
464 See Shear, _Agora_, map on p. 385. fig. 1 (F-G 6).
465 Especially the skyphoi with komoi from the ‘Rectangular Rock-cut Shaft’ form a large group with almost an identical subject: Agora P 1 544, 1547-9 (Cat. nos. 45-48, pls. 20, 21 a-b, 23 a). Other subjects are: ephedrismos (Agora P 1 546, Cat. no. 56, pl. 26 a-b), Herakles regaled by Athena (?) (Agora P 1 550-1, Cat. no. 21, pl. 9 d), Herakles reclining (Agora P 1 545, 1543, Cat. nos. 25, 28, pl. 12 a-c). The fragments Agora P 9723, 13373, 23174 (Cat. nos. 60, 95-96, pls. 27 b, 36 J-k) were found in other wells of the Agora.
466 Vanderpool, ‘The Rectangular Rock-cut Shaft’, 266-68. See also Shear, _Agora_, 383 ff. The fill of the upper 12.0 m. contained 452 pieces of pottery.
given by M. Moore,\textsuperscript{467} in combination with the depth of the pottery, the chronological differences are not so very great between the ‘low’ and ‘high’ pottery in the 12.0-5.0 m range. Nevertheless, the pottery from the highest deposit seems generally to be the latest, and the latest pottery seems to be more or less pre-Persian in date, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Depth (m)</th>
<th>Chronology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>Late sixth cent. - 490/480 B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>Early fifth cent. - 490/480 B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>Early fifth cent. - 490/480 B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>Late sixth cent. - 480 B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.45</td>
<td>Late sixth cent. - 480 B.C. (also including an olpe incorrectly dated 550 B.C.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>510-480 B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.6</td>
<td>510-490/480 B.C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>510-490/480 B.C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.35</td>
<td>510-490/480 B.C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>500-490/480 B.C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.45</td>
<td>510-480 B.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>510-490 B.C.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several ostraka with the names of Hipparchos, Megakles and Aristeides, ostracised in 487, 486 and 482 B.C., respectively, were discovered in the 9.0-5.0 m range.\textsuperscript{468} This gives a strong indication that the pottery from that section of the fill possibly dates around ca. 490-480 B.C. or earlier. But a dating based on the ostraka should be considered with caution because it is, of course, not necessarily the case that the ostraka found in the Rectangular Rock-cut Shaft come from pottery that was made very close to the time when Megakles, Aristeides and Hipparcho were banished. On the other hand, T. L. Shear advances several good arguments why little time would have elapsed between production and banishment.\textsuperscript{469} Shear explains that as no one would waste a vote on someone who had already been exiled, the date of someone’s ostracism gives a kind of \textit{terminus ante quem} for votes against him: "Hipparcho, son of Charmos, was first to be ostracised and is never heard of after the Persian Wars, thus his ostraka must date to the year 487 B.C. Even if Megakles son of Hippokrates was ostracised twice, votes can hardly have been cast against him between 486 and 480 when he was serving his period of exile. [...] Aristeides, son of Lysimachos, is known to have been ostracised ca. 482; votes may well have been cast against him in any previous year, but his ostraka are much less likely to date to the 470s, the years of his high repute as one of Athens' leading statesmen during the formative stages of the Delian Confederacy.\textsuperscript{470} If we accept that the ostraka are indeed linked to the actual ostracism of these specific three men, it may be (provided a dividing line really marks the shaft at a depth of 9.0 m) that the fill of the 9.0-5.0 m range does date around 490-480 B.C., and that the pottery of the 9.0-5.0 m fill might be previous to 480 B.C. In turn, the foregoing also implies that the fill at 12.0-9.0 m should date at least before about 490 B.C or, more exactly, before 487 B.C. when the ostracism law came into effect. This would further mean that also the pottery in the fill at 12.0-9.0 m dates at least prior to 490 B.C, probably closer to 500 B.C. As the Theseus Painter's skyphoi and cup-skyphos lay in the 12.0-9.0 m range, they probably must have been decorated somewhere around that time. They are assigned above to his middle period, dated to 505-495 B.C., see below, which would fit within the boundaries of the given timeframe.\textsuperscript{471}

\textsuperscript{467} Agora XXIII and Agora XXX.

\textsuperscript{468} Vanderpool, \textit{Shaft,} 266-68, 387, 411-17.

\textsuperscript{469} Shear, \textit{Agora,} 412-13.

\textsuperscript{470} Shear, \textit{Agora,} 412-13.


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Athenian Acropolis

The Athenian Acropolis has yielded several fragments and nearly complete vases (solely skyphoi) by the Theseus Painter. Some fragments are linked to finds and find-spots associated with the Persian sack of 480 B.C., the so-called 'Persershutt'.

In his introduction to the publication of pottery from the Acropolis by Graef and Langlotz, P. Wolters gives some indications of the locations of and the reasons for identifying finds as part of the 'Persershutt', while emphasizing that the authors only reservedly designated pottery as such. Nevertheless, three fragments by the Theseus Painter were mentioned as being among the finds that could be reckoned to the 'Persershutt': Acropolis 1280, 1286, 1298 (Cat. nos. 76, 113, 88). Unfortunately, it is unclear exactly where on the Acropolis they were discovered or in what contexts with other pottery. The only possible clue is the date of their excavation which was October and December 1888, when the area around the south-western part of the Parthenon, near the Chalkotheke, was being explored. However, no further lead exists for a chronological reference point. W.B. Dinsmoor, who provides a good account of the pottery found in the excavations at that spot on the Acropolis and its stratigraphy, does not mention any pottery found around the dates when the Theseus Painter's fragments reportedly came to light, which, in turn, suggests there is no certainty about their belonging to the 'Persershutt'.

Another skyphos fragment attributed to the Theseus Painter, Acropolis 1295 a (Cat. no. 94), has as a recorded find-date and find-spot: 5 June 1888, 'Schüttung des Parthenonfundaments'. On this date, excavations took place in the south-eastern part of the Parthenon (4-8 June 1888, section A, 37 fragments in total). Dinsmoor assigned the strata of the area (IIa-b) to about 490-480 B.C., in accordance with his opinion about the beginning of the construction of the older Parthenon which he put after the battle of Marathon. In addition, Dinsmoor listed the pottery finds from this area. He assigned the latest fragments to 510-490 B.C., concluding that they were made before the building of the Parthenon foundation began. However, the range of dates for all the fragments is much wider: several are Geometric and proto-Attic, and one is placed near Lydos. On the other hand, the latest and most numerous of the fragments can indeed be dated around 490 B.C. or later.

The Theseus Painter's skyphos Acropolis 1295 a is stylistically somewhat earlier than, for example, the many cups of the Leafless Group and would therefore be nearer to 510-490 B.C. Unfortunately, due to the poor state of preservation and the lack of dateable elements, it cannot be placed with any certainty in a particular phase of the Theseus Painter's development. On the other hand, being a skyphos, it doubtless belongs to his middle or transitional phase.

Rhitsona

Although no pottery attributable to the Theseus Painter has turned up in the cemetery of Rhitsona in Boeotia, the skyphoi of the Krokokots Group and Sub-krokokots Group found there might provide some indication for the dating of the Theseus Painter. As said above, his early vases have much in common

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472 Graef and Langlotz, Akropolis, esp. XXVII-XXX.
473 9, 10-11, 16, 21 October and 13 December 1888.
474 W. Dinsmoor, Parthenon, 417-441. See also Williams, Refiguring, 245-48.
475 Wolters, in Graef and Langlotz, Akropolis, XVII-XVIII, fig. 1; Dinsmoor, Parthenon, 424-26, fig. 7.
476 Dinsmoor, Parthenon, 437-38: Acropolis, nos. 276, 286, 357 b, 360 a-b, 597 ce & e, 615, 645 a, 716, 731, 789, 811, 856, 1045 a, 1156, 1164-65, 1295 (Theseus Painter), 1322, 1669 a, 2010, 2028 a, 2038, 2045-48, 2192, 2260, 2271 b-c, 2462, 2516, 2549, 2562, 2680.
477 Acropolis 276, 286, 357 b, 360 a-b, Geometric/proto-Attic; Acropolis 597, 645 a, early sixth century B.C.; Acropolis 798, near Lydos (ABV 119,1); Acropolis 1156 a, loutrophoros, mid-sixth century B.C.; Acropolis 1164-65, Group of North Slope AP 942 (ABV 89,4-5, chapter VII, Nearchos and others); Acropolis 1669 a, band cup, third quarter sixth century B.C. 
478 All Acropolis numbers: 716 (silhouette animals on krater rim, late black-figure); 856 (late sixth century B.C.); 1322 (ABV 619,62, CHC Group); 2010 (late cup?); 2028a (ABV 643,158, Leafless Group, late cup); 2038 (Leafless Group, ABV 642,130); 2045 (ABV 642,147, Leafless Group, late cup); 2046 (ABV 635,43, Leafless Group, late cup); 2047 (ABV 635,45, Leafless Group, late cup); 2048 (ABV 635,44, Leafless Group, late cup); 2260 (late black-figure); 2271 b-c (late black-figure, lekythos?); 2549 and 2562, late black-figure plaques. Nos. 615, 811, 1045 a, 2192, 2462, 2516 and 2680 are not illustrated.
with the Krokotos Group, which means that he probably started adorning skyphoi when it was still operating, especially the Krokotos Painter with whom the Theseus Painter's early work has the most in common. It would therefore seem reasonable to place the painter's start not much after the general date given to that group. Several Krokotos Group skyphoi came to light in the grave 31 at Rhitsona, skyphoi of the Sub-krokotos Group in grave 18.

According to Haspels, grave 31 itself can be dated around 500-490 B.C. (like graves 18, 26, 80), although according to her the contents of the grave date variously. In her opinion the skyphoi and some other finds could be from around 520 B.C., while the other contents would be later.

On the other hand, Ure disagreed with Haspels and maintained that the entire contents of grave 31 must be assigned to around 520 B.C. In Ure's view, the Rhitsona graves show a chronological sequence, grave 31 being the earlier, grave 18 later. The disagreement clearly indicates that many of the black-figure vases found in grave 31 are of such quality that they cannot easily be exactly dated, which especially applies to grave 31's black-figure lekythoi. However, I am inclined to agree with Haspels that the contents of grave 31 was chronologically more mixed because, for example, vases of the CHC Group and the Class of Athens 581 are generally easier to date around 500 than 520 B.C. But on one major point Haspels and Ure did agree: the Krokotos Group skyphoi are among the earliest pieces in grave 31 and were manufactured around 520 B.C.

Many other skyphoi of Heron Class type were excavated from later graves at Rhitsona. Especially grave 18, dated about 500 B.C. or later, contained skyphoi which can be associated with Ure's Sub-krokotos Group. Such skyphoi were decorated by pupils of Krokotos Group painters, and the pupils can be considered contemporaries or even colleagues of the Theseus Painter. Grave 18 included, among other pottery, a skyphos by the Painter of Philadelphia 5481.

B.A. Sparkes dates the Rhitsona graves and lists their contents. He assigns grave 31 to 515 B.C. and grave 18 to 500 B.C. Although the Theseus Painter, as remarked, is not represented among the Rhitsona finds, his relation to both the Krokotos Group and the Sub-krokotos Group clearly demonstrates that the period in which he decorated skyphoi lasted rather long and that his early work must, at the latest, have appeared around 510 B.C.

Other graves

The Theseus Painter's skyphoi discovered in graves at Taranto might be chronologically comparable to other vases found in the same graves. The skyphoi Taranto 4447-9 (Cat. nos. 13-14, 44) lay in a sarcophagus, probably of a female (grave no. 42), together with several other vases which can be dated around 500 B.C. The skyphoi are very much alike, in shape (the same concave, curving type 2 foot) as

479 Inv. nos. 31.172-73 (Ure, Sixth, 59; Ure, Krokotos, 90, nos. 6-7; ABV 209,1-2; Para 94. Compare also Theseus R 31.174, Burrows and Ure, Rhitsona, 276, pl. 11.d).

480 ABL 108-110; C.H.E. Haspels, 'Notes', JHS 58 (1938) 256-258.

481 A.D. Ure, 'Review of C.H.E. Haspels, Attic Black-figure Lekythoi', JHS 57 (1937) 263-65; A.D. Ure, 'Notes', JHS 58 (1938) 258-59. See also Sparkes, Taste, 128-129, with a list of the graves and dates at Rhitsona.

482 Burrows and Ure, Rhitsona, 271-281, black-figure vases nos. 31.158-228. Of the lekythoi, three belong to the Cock Group: 31.160 (ABV 471,1); 31.166 (ABV 471,119); 31.166a (ABV 471,120). No. 31.165 (ABV 496,178) belongs to the Class of Athens 581. No. 31.166 b-c (ABV 201,7 and 204,7) are in the Phanylliis Group. None of the cups found in grave 31 is attributed to Beazley. Of the skyphoi, 31.172-73 are given to the Krokotos Group (ABV 209,1-2; Para 94, 99), possibly also 31.174. Nos. 31.76 and 31.182 are skyphoi of the earlier types A1-2 (Para 84,8, ABV 626,2, Para 91,A). No. 31.183 is attributed to the CHC Group (ABV 619,48), while 31.177 is compared to the Group of Theseus R 102 (ABV 625). See also Sparkes, Taste, 129, grave 31.

483 See the preceding n.

484 Ure, Krokotos, 92, no. 14, 93, n. 16.

485 Sparkes, Taste, 128-29.

486 Incidentally, Sparkes also gives a date of 520 B.C. for grave 102 (erroneously referred to as '120'), which contained skyphoi of the CHC Group (ABV 619,52 and 621,94), generally dated nearer to 500 that to 520 B.C. It also contained all the skyphoi of the Group of Theseus R 102 (ABV 624,25,1-9) and a lekythos of the Phanylliis Class (ABV 205,6).

487 See d'Amicis, Catalogo, 224-30, grave no. 42: skyphoi of the CHC Group, inv. nos. 4451, 4454 (nos. 42.02-1); several black-glazed and floral vases.

81
well as in style. The skyphos 4591 (Cat. no. 50), with a similarly shaped foot, came from a chamber tomb (no. 81) which housed seven sarcophagi. This chamber tomb contained much other black- and red-figure pottery. All the vases in this tomb can be dated within a rather short time span: around 500-480 B.C.488

The skyphoi in Guardia Perticana (Cat. nos. 10, 36) were discovered in two graves,489 each containing some other black-figure pottery as well as red-figure and black-glaze ware.490 Most of them confirm a date very roughly around 500 B.C.491

The skyphos Bologna C 44 (Cat. no. 9) was found in a grave at Certosa,492 with a large number of other vases of which the dates range from the late sixth to the early fifth centuries B.C. The earliest of them belong to the Leagros Group, the latest to the Leafless Group.493

The dating of the Theseus Painter
On the basis of the evidence provided by the Marathon Tumulus, Rectangular Rock-cut Shaft in the Athenian Agora, graves at Rhitsona and Taranto, Athenian Acropolis and stylistic comparisons, the main body of the Theseus Painter's skyphoi can be placed between 510 (or slightly earlier) and 480 B.C. (or slightly later). The former is the latest possible date for a painter who began in the tradition of the Krokotos Group, sharing many of the its traits, particularly as seen in the work of the Krokotos Painter. The later date is determined by his connections with very late black-figure painters like the Beldam Painter. The Theseus Painter's late and very late vases seem not to find external reference points on which to base their dating, but stylistic comparisons with, among others, the Athena Painter and the Haimon Group suggest that they were doubtless made after the skyphoi: about 490-480 B.C., possibly somewhat later. Therefore the Theseus Painter's career would have lasted quite long, 30 years at the least, 40 at the most. In my estimation, his career's duration cannot be shortened without undermining the above-mentioned 'upper and lower' external reference points. Moreover, the striking stylistic differences between the Theseus Painter's early and late vases seem not to contradict such a long career (compare Syracuse 26857 and a kyathos like Malibu 86.AE.147, Cat. nos. 1, 193, pls. 1 a-b, 59).

In conclusion, the bulk of the Theseus Painter's pottery would have been made between 510-490 B.C. His earliest work, as stated, coincides with the late production of the Krokotos Group, as indicated by the style of his skyphoi. The early skyphoi, like Winchester and Syracuse 26857 (Cat. nos. 1, 4, pl. 1), closely resemble work of the Krokotos Painter and might be as early as 510 B.C., possibly even nearer to 515 B.C.

Most skyphoi and some other vases like the kalpis London B 346 and the oinochoe Louvre F 342 (Cat. nos. 159, 165, pls. 50 a, 52 c-d) display the style of the Theseus Painter's middle phase and can be

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488 See Q. Quagliati, 'Una tomba monumentale del cinquecento A.C. in Taranto', Dedalo, rassegna d'arte 2 (1921-22) 617-27, and esp. d'Amicis, Catalogo, grave no. 81, pp. 288-304. Panathenacis amphora, Leagros Group, inv. no. 4595 (81,41) (ABV 369,113; Beazley Addenda2 98); cup, Leagros Group, inv. no. 20330 (81.12) (ABV 695,297bis); kalpis, Leagros Group (?), inv. no. 20320 (81.44); volute-kraters, Golvol Group, inv. nos. 4596, 20334-6 (81.36-9) (ABV 195,2-4; Beazley Addenda2 52); lekythos, Phanyllis Group (ABV 199,13); lekythos, Class of Athens 581, inv. no. 4592; olpai and oinochoai, Class of Athens 581 or near (?), inv. nos. 20351, 20351b, 20325 20318, 20321 (81.20-21, 81.45-7, 81.50); skyphoi, GHC Group, inv. nos. 4590 and 20323 (81.61, 81.83); oinochoe, Painter of Rhodes 13372, inv. no. 4598 (81.48); oinochoe, near the Athena Painter, inv. no. 20322 (81.49) (ABV 526,2); cup-skyphoi, Painter of Elaious I, inv. nos. 20326-8, 20337 (81.11, 81.17-19) (ABV 575,8-9); cups, Leafless Group, inv. nos. 20317, 20329, 20331, 20348-9 (81.22-26); fragment, inv. no. 20333 (81.43) (ARV² 34,12); column-krater, Goettingen Painter, inv. no. 20319 (81,40) ARV² 234,5; cup, Bonn Painter, inv. no. 4594 (81,60) (ARV² 351,2).

489 Cat. no. 10, pl. 5 a: grave 192, male burial; inv. no. 215223, Cat. no. 36, pl. 16 a: grave no. 218.

490 With Cat. no. 10: Haimonian cup-skyphoi; lekythoi by or near the Athena Painter; and three red-figure vases: mannerist Nolan amphora, column-krater and another vase from the second quarter of the 5th century. With Cat. no. 36: lekythoi by the Athena Painter; 'negro alabastron' (see the class in ARV² 267-69), late-archaic red-figure krater, several red- and black-figure cups and black-figure lekythoi. The grave is dated to the first decades of the 5th century B.C.

491 Although the Nolan amphora and the red-figure column-krater must surely be later.

492 Pellegrini, Vasi greci, 38-40.

493 Bologna 51, 52 (ABV 376,231, 234, Leagros Group kraters); Bologna C 63 (ABV 604,81, oinochoe, Red-line Painter, Pellegrini, Vasi greci, 26, no. 70); C 66 (ABV 534,10, olpe, Painter of Sèvres 100, Pellegrini, Vasi greci, 24, no. 63); 190 (ABV 641,117, cup, Leafless Group, Pellegrini, Vasi greci, no. 110).
placed between 505-490 B.C. The latter dates are primarily based on comparisons with the Krokotos Group and the pottery from the Rectangular Rock-cut Shaft in the Athenian Agora. The Theseus Painter's late work, on the other hand, is much closer to the Athena Painter and even later painters and groups like the Haimon Painter, etc. His last vases, like the chimney lekythoi, alabastra and kyathoi, which are comparable to the latest black-figure, might go down to as late as the 470s B.C., as Haspel proposed.\footnote{ABL 146.}

In sum, as set out in detail above, I divide the work of the Theseus Painter into the following five chronological phases:

1. Early  c. 515/510-505 B.C.
2. Middle  c. 505-495 B.C.
3. Transitional  c. 495-490 B.C.
4. Late  c. 490-485 B.C.
5. Very late  c. 485-480/475 B.C.