

NEWS ABOUT FOUR BLACK-FIGURE ATTIC CUPS ATTRIBUTED TO THE LANCASTRE PAINTER

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ABSTRACT

The study of a black-figure Attic cup belonging to a private Portuguese collection, generically framed in the FP Class (Flower-Palmette), and the identification of a parallel in the *Staatliches Lindenau-Museum*, in Altenburg, attributed to the same artist, led us to propose – in partnership with another author – a new painter whom we named as Lancastre Painter. In the study that we now present, we added two more black-figure cups that we think can be attributed to this painter – one is contemplated in the *Beazley Archive*, and was sold by the Bonhams auctioneer in the London market, and the other was included in the sales catalogue of the Royal-Athena Galleries in 1990. The study and presentation of these two last cups reinforces the aforementioned attribution and calls the attention to the possibility that we might come to identify other specimen attributed to the same painter.

Keywords: Black-figure cup; FP Class; Lancastre Painter.

RESUMO

O estudo de uma taça ática de figuras negras pertencente a uma coleção privada portuguesa genericamente enquadrável na Classe FP (Flower-Palmette) e a identificação de um paralelo no *Staatliches Lindenau-Museum*, em Altenburg, atribuível a um mesmo artista, levou-nos a propor – em parceria com outro autor - um novo pintor, a que designámos Pintor de Lancastre. No estudo que agora se apresenta adicionámos mais duas taças de figuras negras que pensamos atribuíveis a este pintor, uma contemplada no *Beazley Archive* e vendida pela leiloeira Bonhams no mercado londrino, e outra que em 1990 figurava no catálogo de vendas da Royal-Athena Galleries. O estudo e apresentação destas duas últimas taças permite reforçar a atribuição acima referida e chamar a atenção para a possibilidade de no futuro podermos vir a identificar outros exemplares atribuíveis ao mesmo pintor.

Palavras-chave: Taça de figuras negras; Classe FP; Pintor de Lancastre.

One of the most important private collections of Greek vases currently assembled in Portugal belongs to D. Manuel de Lancastre, and it was made known at an exhibition at Museu Nacional de Arqueologia, in 2007 – “Vasos Gregos em Portugal. Aquém das Colunas de Hércules”, commissioned by Maria Helena da Rocha-Pereira¹.

This collection was also the object of two further publications, together with another author, so as to review some of the previous classifications and to propose the attribution to known painters

¹ VGPortugal 2007 (= ROCHA-PEREIRA 2007).

who were consecrated by the major experts in Greek vases².

One of those vases, an Attic black-figure type A cup, was generically attributed to the FP Class (Flower-Palmette-Class). This cup is decorated with a lotus flower under the handles and two large horizontal palmettes topped by two small volutes which are motifs usually present in some cups and skyphoi of this class of painters³.

The identification of a parallel for this cup in the *Staatliches Lindenau-Museum*, in Altenburg, and the realization that we were before the hand of the same artist, led us to propose a new painter for both cups, naming him Lancastre Painter⁴.

The black-figure cup of the Lancastre collection fits in those of type A, dated from about 550 to 500 BC, and it is currently in the database of the *Beazley Archive* from the Oxford University under the number 9034207 (Fig. 3.1; 3.2). It is decorated on both sides of the external surface with what seems to be a horse-riding scene with all the figures positioned to the right. In the centre of the scene we can see the master standing with a spear in his right hand, between two young apprentices. These are depicted naked and on top of their horses in good balance, holding a spear in their left hands. On the left side of this scene, there is a falcon flying in the opposite direction of the figures suggesting that this is an outdoor horse riding lesson. On one of the sides, one of the riders on the right has a beard. Flanking both scenes and the handles, we can see two large palmettes topped by two small volutes and two other small palmettes with touches of red. Under the handles there are two stylized lotus flowers. Touches of red in the hair, manes and tails of the horses are also to be seen. As it is common in this kind of cups, the transition to the foot is signalled by a reserved band. The inside of the cup does not present any decoration; there, we can only see a reserved medallion with a central and circular point. The cup was restored from fragments and the foot re-made⁵.

As we have previously mentioned, the attribution of this cup to a new painter was only possible thanks to a parallel found in the *Staatliches Lindenau-Museum* which we think is attributed to the same hand⁶. This cup, integrated in the type C and dated from 550 to 500 BC, was published in the *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum* and is in the *Beazley Archive* under the number 12092 (Fig. 2; 3.1; 3.2)⁷. The representation is similar to the previous one: again, a horse-riding scene with all figures placed on the right side. The image only differs in the representation of three to four riders at a trot, flanked by two equitation masters. On the side where the three riders are depicted, a falcon is to be seen flying in the opposite direction of the figures, signalling, once again, that this is an outdoor horse-riding lesson. The number of figures represented occupies the whole surface, not leaving any space for the representation of palmettes, which could be found in the previous cup.

In the *Pottery Beazley Archive* database there is another cup that we think might also be attributed to the Lancastre Painter. It is a type C cup, registered under the number 9029587, sold by the Bonhams auctioneer in the London market and currently in a German private collection (Fig. 4)⁸. The thematic and stylistic affinities are identical to the ones previously referred to: here we see, positioned to the right and on both sides, a naked rider; also perceptible is a second horse, flanked by two young men. The young man on the right turns his head backwards as if showing the way, giving instructions or simply talking. Between the rider and the young man on the left, the representation of a faded falcon is visible. Just like in the previous cups, flanking both scenes and the respective

2 MORAIS e CENTENO 2013: p. 69-81; MORAIS e CENTENO 2015.

3 *ABFV* 1988: p. 107.

4 With this new attribution we intend to honour the collector for having been so kind as to publicly share his collection in the aforementioned exhibition in Museu Nacional de Arqueologia as well as for his generosity in having allowed us to study some of his vases again.

5 *VGPortugal* 2007: p. 80, n° 05 (= ROCHA-PEREIRA 2007); MORAIS e CENTENO 2015: p. 20-21, n° 3.1-3.2).

6 MORAIS e CENTENO 2015: p. 21-23, n° 3a-c).

7 *CVA Germany 17*: p. 38-39, Taf. (825) 40.1, 40.4, 40.6.

8 BONHAMS 29.4.2004: p. 27, n° 50.

handles, two large palmettes, topped by two small volutes with touches of red are to be seen. Under the handles two stylized lotus flowers are also depicted.

To this cup we should also add another one of the same type, which was in the sales catalogue of the Royal-Athena Galleries in November 1990 (Fig. 5)⁹. According to the catalogue description, two young riders at a gallop are depicted. The young riders are represented naked, except for one of the sides where one of them (preceded by the usual falcon) wears a robe. Touches of red on the hair, on the robe, and mane and tails of the horses are to be seen as well as the distinctive palmettes and lotus flowers. Again, a reserved band is signalled on the foot next to the wall.

As we can see, the affinities amid these four cups are clear: besides the horse-riding theme, we find the same position of the lower and upper limbs of the masters and young men portrayed. However, and above all, we should highlight the details of the drawing, in particular the representation of the eyes and hands as well as the incision lines and the touches in red which allow us to assume that we are before the hand of the same artist.

By simply consulting the CVA, we can find other black-figure cups with similar stylistic and thematic connections, normally assigned to the Runners Painter, but of inferior artistic quality; they were, most probably, influenced by the works of the painter of the specimens studied here¹⁰.

ABREVIATURAS

ABFV	<i>Athenian Black-Figure Vases</i>
ABV	<i>Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters</i>
Pottery Beazley Archive	http://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk .
CVA	<i>Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum</i>
Paralipomena	<i>Paralipomena: Additions to Attic Black-Figure Vase-Painters and to Attic Red-Figure Vase-Painters.</i>
RAG-cat.	<i>Royal-Athena Galleries one Thousand Years of Ancient Greek Vases, From Greece, Etruria & Southern Italy</i> , New York, 1990.
VGPortugal	<i>Vasos gregos em Portugal. Aquém das Colunas de Hércules.</i>

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⁹ RAG-cat. 1990: p. 12, nº 37.

¹⁰ CVA Germany 57, Taf. 50, nº 4-5 e Taf. 51, nº 1-2; OLMOS 1993: p. 97-98, nº 29.



Fig. 1.1: Private collection (Beazley Archive, n° 9034207)



Fig. 1.2: Private collection (Beazley Archive n° 9034207)



Fig. 2: Lindenau-Museum Altenburg (Beazley Archive, n° 12092)



Fig. 3.1: Lindenau-Museum Altenburg (Beazley Archive, n° 12092)



Fig. 3.2: Lindenau-Museum Altenburg (Beazley Archive, n° 12092)



Fig. 4: London Market, Bonhams 2004 (Beazley Archive n° 9029587)



Fig. 5: Royal-Athena Galleries, New York 1990

