On the Standard of Righteousness in *Dikaiosyne*

A list of vases and accompanying prices is scratched on the underside of the foot of an rf pelike by the Nikias Painter. The vase was published by W. Johannowsky and attributed by him to the Nikias Painter, whose career he puts at 420-390. The graffiti is written entirely in the Ionic alphabet, which is standard for graffiti on vases after 420. The graffito was published by A. W. Johnston, who compares it to price lists on five bell kraters of the later fifth century by the Kadmos and Pothos Painters and the Dinos Painter.

The Attic rf. pelike in Naples contains the designation ΛΗΚΥΘΙΑ ΜΙΚ ΔΔΔΔΔ ≡ ΛΗΚΥΘΟΙ ΔΙΚ : ΠΙ ΤΙ ≡ (“small lekythia 50, [price] 3 obols | standard lekythoi 6 pri[ce] 3 obols” ). If *dikaioi* is the logical completion of *DIK*, the term could mean “normal, of standard size” in the graffito. A. W. Johnston proposes “genuine” or “guaranteed” for the designation *DIK* as applied to lekythoi in the late fifth century, distinguishing them from the small lekythia in this batch but also, more specifically, from squat lekythoi and the false-necked types being produced in both red-figure and white-ground form in these years. In his discussion he speaks of the standard cylindrical lekythos as normal, and so I translate *dikaioi* as “standard”. The term continues in use, probably, in Roman times in graffiti indicating standard measure in notations of capacity on pottery, although examples are few. I wish to comment on Johnston’s statement: “One is tempted to think of λήκυθοι δίκαιοι being normal pieces without false necks, their capacity matching their appearance… Such usage of δίκαιοϛ could have evolved in the years before our graffito.”

This paper will discuss *dikaiosune* as expressed in the passages cited in *LSJ*  for “justice, righteousness” (Theognis, *Elegies* 1.147; Herodotus 1.96; Plato, *Republic* 4.433a; LXX *Genesis* 15.6), showing that in each case *dikaiosune* is related to an absolute standard. Analysis of Aristotle, *EN* 5.1129b-1130a contributes further information to the understanding of *dikaiosune* as a relational virtue. *Dikaiosune* has been studied many times, notably by Eric Havelock (1969. “*Dikaiosyne*. An Essay in Greek Intellectual History,” *Phoenix* 23, pp. 49-70; 1978. *The Greek Concept of Justice, From Its Shadow in Homer to Its Substance in Plato*. Cambridge, MA and London), but the graffito is essentially “new evidence”, which contributes significantly to an understanding of its meaning.