

## Made for Trade?: A Study of Greek Vases in Etruria

When the tombs of Cerveteri, Vulci and numerous other Etruscan sites were first excavated, yielding well made, decorated painted pottery, these vessels were believed to be Etruscan, fueling 'Etruscomania' throughout Europe. It was soon learned that many of these vases were not Etruscan, but instead Greek, with most imported from the large production sites of Athens or Corinth. Once the true origin of these vessels was realized, many questions were raised as to why Greek vases were exported with such high frequency to Etruria. Was it simply because the Etruscans were artistically inferior to the Greeks, and thus eager for any type of Greek art they could obtain? Or were these vases fulfilling a specific function within Etruscan culture? Furthermore, were the Greek potters catering to Etruscan desires, producing vases specifically to export to their western customers? Or were the vessels used first in Greece, and then later traded to Etruria for use there?

The latter theory, of secondhand trade, was argued first by T.B.L. Webster, due to the significant presence of commissioned vases found outside of Greece (Webster 1972). Reviews of Webster's work reject this concept (B.F. Cook 1974, R.M. Cook 1975), doubt its importance in the pottery trade (Robertson 1991), or omit this theory entirely (Hauptli 1978). This paper aims to find evidence to substantiate Webster's claim that a secondhand market existed for Greek vases, particularly those that were specially commissioned in Athens. Through evidence compiled through groups of vases discovered in high frequencies in Etruria, it will be assessed whether the potters were actively targeting an Etruscan audience, with vases made for direct export from Greece or if these vases were first used by their Greek owners, and then traded to the Etruscans. The types of vases that will be discussed include Tyrrhenian amphorae (sometimes

considered to be of Etruscan origin, most recently argued by Ginge 1988), Nikosthenic amphorae, Panathenaic amphorae, the Perizoma Group, and vases with kalos inscriptions.

In some instances, such as the Nikosthenic amphorae, it seems that the Greek artisans were catering towards their Etruscan audience, since the shape imitates an earlier bucchero form and examples outside of Etruria are rare (Spivey 1991, Rasmussen 2008), though there is no way to prove that merchants did not first try to sell these vases in Athens. In other examples, such as the case of the Panathenaic amphorae, the vessels were clearly produced first with Greeks in mind, as Etruscans could not compete in the games, and then later exported to Etruria. Others, such as the kalos vessels, contain Greek inscriptions that would have been lost on an Etruscan audience, raising the question of why they were exported. It seems most plausible that both direct and secondhand trade existed for Greek vases, with some vases more suitable for Etruscan tastes and others accepted merely because they were Greek, with scenes or inscriptions that would have had little meaning to an Etruscan owner.

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