

Marks of Trade on Attic Vases: Distribution and Social Networks

The inner workings of the Athenian vase trade have remained a popular and occasionally problematic area of study (Gill 2009; Bundrick 2019). When considering the nature of the Attic pottery trade, many variables must be considered. The role of the workshop and the interconnectivity of Attic potters and painters are important for contextualization. The audience of a vessel also plays a key role, as many excavated pieces are figured and who the painted imagery on the pots was meant for can vary. Additionally, no form of trade can take place without traders and consumers. Both of whom play significant roles and can have great levels of influence. Overall, the pottery workshop, traders, and consumers are part of an interconnected web of trade relations. This paper will analyze one specific component of the Athenian vase trade that relates to all three, trademarks. I will argue that the trademarks on Attic vases are valuable indicators of trade. They provide evidence not only of a systematic pot-marking system, but also for complex ancient social networks.

To investigate the organization of the trade networks, I use as a proxy the trademark dataset in Johnston's *Trademarks on Greek Vases; Addenda* (2006). His lists of trademarks for studying the pottery trade and those involved in it have been underutilized. I will synthesize the material in different ways highlighting how it can be used to show distribution patterns and problems with provenience. It should also be noted that the modern concept of a trademark does not correlate with what many in the field of study are calling trademarks on ancient Greek pottery. A modern trademark is representative of a company or product of a company, while the 'trademarks' compiled by Johnston were mainly used by the facilitators of trade and not of direct importance or interest to the consumer, or even the pottery workshop. These marks were

identifiers for the traders and part of a pot-marking system (Johnston 1974, 138). The findspot data for ancient Greek pottery is largely the result of biased excavations and the negative impacts of the art market (Johnston 2006, 6-14; Bundrick 2019, 25-27). The findspot data for trademarks is equally problematic (von Bothmer 1981; Gill 2009). Bias is evident through the data being more numerous for Etruscan and Italic locations, sites which were the preference for many past studies and looting.

The second aim of this paper is to highlight how trademarks have contributed to larger discussions on ancient trade networks and how they connected consumers and workshops. I will apply social network analysis (SNA) to the dataset derived from Johnston's corpus of marks, so new insights can be gained on the trading patterns, networks of trade, and the interconnections of traders to pottery workshops and a broad and geographically varied consumer base. The value of SNA has become broadly recognized and resulted in new ways to analyze large and complex datasets in archaeology and ancient history (Cline 2012; Mills 2017). When contrasted with the recent work on the connections between Athenian potters' communities (Hasaki and Cline 2020), the production and trading of Attic pottery can be seen as an interconnected web of social networks and cultivated relationships. A renewed study of previously underutilized trademarks on Attic pottery can elucidate matters of excavation bias and provenience, and can enhance our understandings of Mediterranean networks of trade.

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