

# **GREEK TRAGEDY IN THE LIGHT OF VASE PAINTINGS**

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Greek Tragedy in the Light of Vase Paintings by John H. Huddilston

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BY

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(Size, about 1:9)

MEDEIA AMPHORA IN THE OLD PINAKOTHEK, MUNICH

(Vid. p. 145 ff.)



TO  
PROFESSOR CARL RIEMENSCHNEIDER, Ph.D.  
GERMAN WALLACE COLLEGE  
BEREA, OHIO  
WHOSE RARE CLASSICAL SCHOLARSHIP  
IS ALL TOO LITTLE KNOWN  
THIS VOLUME  
BY ONE OF HIS FORMER PUPILS  
IS AFFECTIONATELY  
DEDICATED



Πλήν ὁ Σιμωνίδης τὴν μὲν ζωγραφίαν ποίησιν σιωπᾶσαν προσ-  
αγορεύει, τὴν δὲ ποίησιν, ζωγραφίαν καλοῦσαν· ἅς γὰρ οἱ ζωγράφοι  
πράξεις ἅς γινόμεναι δεκνύουσι, ταύτας οἱ λόγοι γεγενημένας διηγοῦνται  
καὶ συγγράφουσιν.

PLUTARCHI, *De Gloria Athen.*, c. 3.

Nec mirum, si ista, quae tamen in aliquo posita sunt  
motu, tantum in animis valent, cum pictura, tacens opus  
et habitus semper eiusdem, sic in intimos penetrat adfectus,  
ut ipsam vim dicendi nonnumquam superare videatur.

QUINTILIAN, *Inst. Orat.*, xi. 3. 67.

## PREFACE

ALTHOUGH the archaeologists and mythologists constitute for the most part the number of those seriously concerned with Greek vases, there still remain many engaged in the study of Greek literature for whom the vases are bound to possess an abiding value, since they often relate the stories that Homer, Pindar, Aischylos, and Euripides tell. One may find on vases of the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries B.C. illustrations for not a few of the famous pieces in Greek poetry. The paintings may have been an outgrowth of the common stock of legendary tales, having their origin in the folk-lore, and in such cases they are independent of the written literature and go along, so to speak, parallel with the work of the poets, who drew from the same source. These paintings are valuable as illustrations of the myths, quite apart from any literary version of the same. Another class still more interesting, perhaps, owe their origin to some particular poem or play, and are to be taken as direct products of the poets' work. Such are of

prime importance for one who would understand the poet thoroughly.

The first class of paintings of the latter sort are based on Homer and the Cyclic poets. After the epic literature, the tragic drama became the chief formative force in Greek legend and its representation in art. Yet here again, as in the case of the Cyclic poets, one is compelled to interpret paintings inspired by works that have come down to us either as mere names or in a few wretched fragments. The relation of these monuments to the lost literature is of paramount importance, but the investigation is beset with many obstacles and will continue to be largely a field for the specialist. *Extant* tragedy and vase paintings, however, come together at so many points, and the former is so illumined by the latter, that every student of the classics should become acquainted with at least this part of Greek ceramics.

The present work represents an attempt to bring this material together in a convenient and accessible form. The first chapter, which deals with the influence of tragedy on other classes of monuments, is meant to be suggestive, not exhaustive; if I shall have succeeded here in setting the student to think along some new lines that in the end will place him in more direct touch with antiquity, and help him to a better understanding of Greek tragic poetry and the part it played in the artistic life of the Greeks and Romans, my aim will have been achieved. The foot-notes all the way