would be subjected to in a museum of wider scope. The current exhibition displays no artistic prejudices, except perhaps the altogether admirable prejudice in favor of the younger and less well-known artists. A fair cross-section view, so to speak, of what is being done here and now. The visitor, approving or disapproving, will be grateful for such a convenient opportunity.

The exhibits will be changed from time to time. A second group from the museum's collection is now on view and exhibitions of several artistic societies will be held later. As another of its activities the Whitney Museum issues monographs on American artists, a number of which have already appeared.

BRYSON BURROUGHS.

A NEW MELIAN RELIEF

Among the most attractive products of Greek terracottas are the Melian reliefs produced during the second quarter and the middle of the fifth century B.C. The extant material, which comprises over a hundred examples, has recently been admirably published by P. Jacobsthal in Die Melischen Reliefs. In this comprehensive study the author has been able to shed light on the many difficult problems presented by these reliefs. He has shown that they presumably served as decorations of wooden caskets similar to those which appear on some Lokrian terracottas and that they must be envisaged as gaily colored against an equally vivid background of painted wood. They were apparently a local product of the island of Melos, exported as far east as Troy and as far west as Sicily. This flourishing manufacture came to an end in the thirties of the fifth century,[1] perhaps owing to restrictions imposed on the commerce of neutrals[2] at the beginning of the Peloponnesian War. The artistic importance of the reliefs is due to the fact that they belong to one of the finest periods of Greek art.

A year or two ago the Museum acquired a good example of these Melian reliefs representing the return of Odysseus to the mourning Penelope,[3] a piece which had been known since 1904, but was subsequently listed as "lost," having "disappeared" into a private collection. We have now acquired from the same collection (in Paris) still another piece (figs. 1, 2; height 6 5/16 in. [16 cm.]), not hitherto published and not included in Jacobsthal's book. Though it is incomplete, one figure on the right being missing, it is otherwise admirably preserved, the modeling being unusually clear and sharp. It gives us in fact a realization of the original precision of these reliefs and shows us to what extent we must discount the present blurred effect of many of the examples. There are traces of the white engobe which once covered the surface but none of the original paint applied over the engobe.[4]

The subject of our relief is taken from daily life. It is one of those engaging, intimate pictures that make us realize how easily bridged after all is the gap of over two thousand years that separates us from the Greeks. A girl sitting in a chair is playing the double flute. To its music another girl was dancing with outstretched arms[5] (only the right arm and a small piece of the drapery are now preserved). A youth on his way home from the palaestra is watching the pretty scene. He is leaning on his stick,[6] his left hand placed on his hip, his oil bottle and strigil hanging by a strap from his wrist. The rendering of this attitude is interesting. The legs are placed in full profile toward the flute player, whereas the upper part of the body is in three-quarter view turned toward the dancer. This twist of the body is too pronounced: the left leg should be in three-quarter view, not in pro-

[1] Jacobsthal, op. cit., p. 176, suggests 440 as a general date for the cessation of the industry; but the style of the later examples (e.g., pl. 61) is contemporary with the Parthenon pediments, and the thirties of the fifth century would seem to be a safer limit; cf. Beazley, Deutsche Literaturzeitung, November, 1931, col. 2133. The beginning of the Peloponnesian War would then be a natural cause for the cessation of the industry.

[2] Thucydides II. 67.4; V.84.2.

[3] BULLETIN, vol. XXV (1930), p. 279, fig. 1.

[4] The surface is encrusted in places. The relief was broken into three pieces—the head of the girl, her body except the hands and knees, and the youth. The upper part of the youth's face is chipped.

[5] There is no trace of castanets such as the dancer has on the relief in Paris cited below.

[6] The lower part of the stick does not now appear and was evidently indicated only in paint.

file, and the plane of the upper left leg higher. Otherwise the perspective is ably managed, and the left foot with only the toes touching the ground, the heel lifted almost perpendicularly, is a pleasing device convincingly rendered. We can watch the fascination which the problem of foreshortening had for contemporary artists also in the marble reliefs and vase paintings of the time. In another decade or two the difficulties were finally mastered, and we get the superb representations of three-quarter views of the riders and the deities on the Parthenon frieze. Our relief belongs to the last stage before this final solution, and dates from about 460–450 B.C.

FIG. 1. MELIAN RELIEF DATING FROM ABOUT 460–450 B.C.

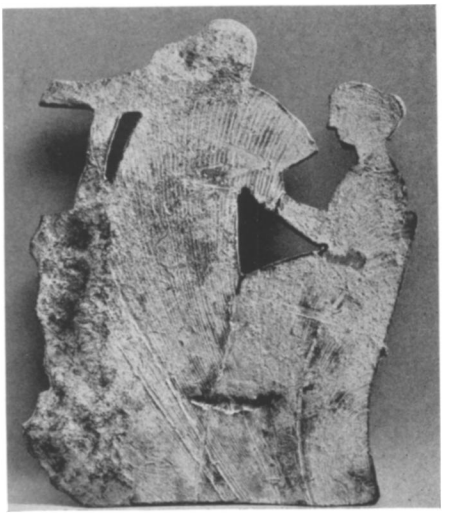

FIG. 2. BACK OF RELIEF SHOWN IN FIGURE 1

Two Melian reliefs closely related to ours are in Paris and Athens.[7] They have the same subject—musician, dancer, and spectator—slightly varied in the rendering. Such groups were popular also on Athenian vases[8] and were doubtless a common sight in any Greek city. Another interesting comparison with our relief is the lyre player in the "Sappho-Alkaios" group in the British Museum[9]; she is in the same attitude as our flutist and her mantle is similarly rendered, with the two ends folded over the right leg.

Figure 2 is a view of the back of our relief and throws light on the manufacture of these plaques. They were evidently made from open molds into which the clay was pressed. The ridges are due to the removal of the excess clay by means of a string pulled in rotary motion,[10] the deeper ridges being caused by dragged impurities in the clay or unevennesses in the string. At least practical experiments[11] bear out this explanation rather than that offered by Jacobsthal[12] that the ridges—which regularly appear on Melian reliefs—were produced by an uneven wooden scraper. The use of string for the cutting of clay is a well-known modern practice. That it was famil-

[7] Jacobsthal, op. cit., nos. 78, 79, pls. 39, 40. A piece of the Athenian relief is in Gotha.

[8] Compare, for instance, the kylix by Makron, acc. no. GR 1120 in our collection.

[9] Jacobsthal, op. cit., no. 76, pl. 38.

[10] The direction of the ridges in this example varies exactly according to such rotary motion except in one corner, where the ridges go in a different direction, evidently owing to the fact that another cut was necessary. Such variations occur also on the other examples I have been able to examine and are best explained by the natural surmise that it took more than one operation to remove all the excess clay. On Lokrian reliefs no such ridges occur.

[11] These experiments were made in the pottery studio of Maude Robinson, to whom thanks are due for her kind help and advice.

[12] Op. cit., p. 102.

iar also to ancient potters is seen, for instance, from the bottoms of some early Greek vases, where, when the foot was not "turned" but left as "thrown," there often appear similar ridges[13] evidently produced by the string with which the vase was removed from the bat. The size of the ridges varies according to the thickness of the string.

GISELA M. A. RICHTER.

AN EXHIBITION OF FORGERIES

Since the installation of the Riggs Collection in 1914 the Armor Department has had in its main gallery an exhibition of reproductions and forgeries. So far as the writer knows, this is the only exhibition of forgeries of arms and armor in a public museum, either in America or abroad. These objects are now more accessible, for they have been installed in three cases near the architectural setting known as the armorer's workshop, on the west side of the main armor gallery (H 9).[1] They are not all outright forgeries. Many of them are authentic pieces which have been glorified in recent times—for example, authentic helmets, originally without ornamentation but now etched, gilded, or embossed. There are also compositions which include genuine elements, altered elements, and modern restorations. There are even copies of known authentic pieces.

In the first case are shown the Gothic forgeries, that is, elements of armor in the style of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. If an element of Gothic armor is poor in form, its authenticity may reasonably be questioned. Gothic armor, when authentic, is a combination of simplicity and extreme elegance, and its rhythmical beauty and grace are difficult to imitate. The Gothic elements exhibited comprise breastplates and helmets. The series of helmets is particularly interesting, since each belongs to a distinct type (flat-topped, tournament, basinet, salade, or armet-à-rondelle), and it is just such a group as the collector is usually eager to form. It is the rarity of all of these types that has caused the manufacture of the specimens exhibited, for the demand has always been greater than the supply. Authentic specimens of all but one of these forms—the flat-topped helm—are included in the Museum's collection. In the exhibition, however, is a reproduction of this type not unlike the helm of Edward the Black Prince which hangs over his tomb in the Cathedral at Canterbury. In all probability our helm is the work of T. M. Grimshaw, who made the great series of heaumes and basinets purporting to date from the tenth to the fifteenth century, a series formerly in the Parham Collection and now in the Burroughs-Wellcome Museum in London.

In contrast to these copies of Gothic armor are the objects in the remaining two cases, which include pieces enriched by etching, gilding, damascening, and embossing. These, with the exception of a fine electroplate of a very ornate embossed helmet,[2] are all made of wrought iron, that is to say, made to the required shape by the hammer, not cast, rolled, or stamped. Space permits of the description of only one of these copies. It is a parade shield enriched by embossing, a process which was not employed in the decoration of armor until the third decade of the sixteenth century. The present shield is inscribed: "Opus Ambrosius Foppa MCCCCLXXX." As the signature and the date (1480) are an integral part of the design, they alone would condemn this shield. Other defects are: the inscription in poor Latin; the unfinished border; the overcrowded composition; the concave central outer surface (authentic shields are entirely convex); the stamped floral ornament repeated in lozenges whose borders overlap (Renaissance artists chased each ornament separately); and the lack of damascening and stippling in the background. Each of the remaining objects

[13] The Illustrated London News, February 7, 1925, pp. 214–215 (there explained by Sir Charles Walston as finger prints, for which, however, the marks on many of the vases are much too large).

[1] A similar exhibition of forgeries of weapons is planned for the near future.

[2] The original patent for electroplating was granted to Elkington & Company in 1840. After electroplating was introduced, the making of embossed armor with chasing tools was practically discontinued.