



PL. 11. Croesus on the pyre. Attic Amphora, with figures in red, (500-475 B.C.), from Vulci, Italy; Louvre, Paris. The names of the king (*Κροεσος*, sic!) and of his slave (*Ευθνημος*; Cheerful) are written on the vase. The slave holds two burning torches, with which he lights the pyre. While the light red-brown figures and pyre represent the original surface, being surrounded by the shiny black background, and the inner drawing and the contours have been indicated with black lines, the artist painted the flames blazing up from the pyre and also the burning torches with thin paint over red and black. Croesus, the last king of Lydia (560-546 B.C.) was ruined by the oncoming power of the Persians. According to Herodotus, his life was spared by Cyrus, the king of the Persians; in one of his odes, Bacchilides relates that Croesus ended his own life. This is the version of the saga followed by the painting on this vase. The technique of representing figures in red began about 530 B.C. (cf. Plates 7, 17). The vase is a splendid specimen of the severe style which dominated Greek art during the first half of the 5th century B.C. The archaic profuseness of ornamentation has been abandoned, but the very decorative effect of the ornaments and of the graceful folds recall the archaic art.