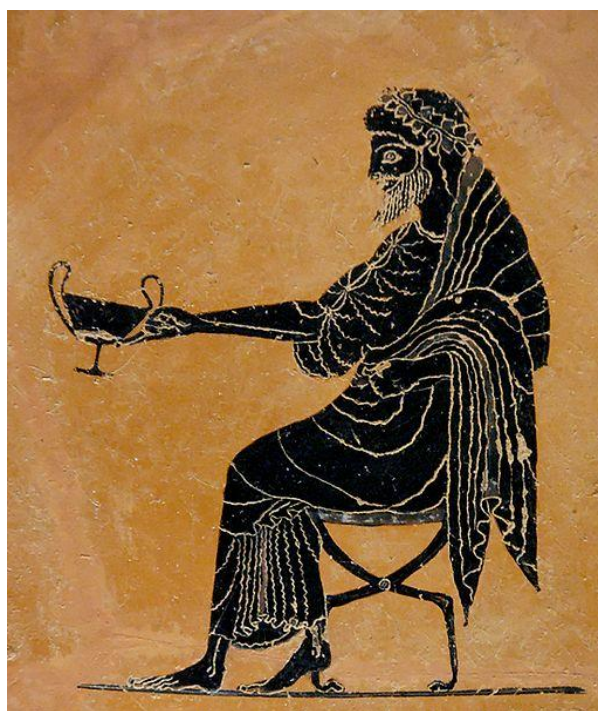


Boeotia, Land of the Kantharos

Explanations for the high number of kantharoi present in the Archaic and Classical period in Boeotia



E. Mulder

Figure: Dionysos depicted holding a kantharos by the Psiax painter.
Source: http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/galleries/ancient_greece_and_rome/room_14_greek_vases.aspx

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Explanations for the high number of kantharoi present in the Archaic and Classical period in Boeotia

**Esther Mulder, 0928038
Thesis BA Archaeology
Prof. Dr. Bintliff
Classical Archaeology
University of Leiden, Faculty of Archaeology
Leiden, 25/05/2012**

E. Mulder
Waardstraat 45
2315 KL Leiden
esthermulder_1991@hotmail.com
06-22653822

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1. Introduction

Before explaining my own research, a general introduction into the subject is required. What exactly is a kantharos? The kantharos is a relatively clearly distinguishable type of pottery with high-swung handles, as seen on Fig. 1 (Kilinski II 2005, 184). The kantharos is mainly interpreted as a drinking cup with an ideological function pertaining to hero-cult or funeral-cult (Schilardi 1977). However, these ideological connotations are still a subject of debate. The precise ideological purposes and activities in which these kantharoi were used and what their specific role and meaning was during these activities is not sure up to this date.



From the Proto-Attic period, when the Attic version of the cup became less popular, the kantharos continued to be manufactured in the Greek province of Boeotia, and stayed in use for several centuries (Kilinski II 2005, 183). In Boeotia the cup is a well used artefact when comparing Boeotia with other areas in Greece (Kilinski II 1990, 58). The reason for the particular usage of this cup is still unexplained, although a few scholars made interesting suggestions. These usually link the popularity of the cup to tradition, local identity or fashion. However, any of these assumptions are hard to prove. Traditional approaches to pottery assemblages have neglected the kantharos and have not really tried to answer questions about regional differences in pottery assemblages. One of the difficulties encountered within this research is the lack of scientifically excavated sites or sufficiently published excavations, since many of the ones that have been excavated are not documented well enough. Not to mention illicit digging which also contributed to this lack of knowledge (Sparkes 1976, 2). Furthermore, the kantharos' place of origin and the meaning of its name are still subject to debate. Kantharos literally means dung-beetle in Greek and it is not clear why the cup is termed this way (Kilinski II 2005, 176). Some evidence is available that the cup was also termed kotyle in Classical times, however, this term kotyle is now used for ordinary drinking cups (Nevett 2001, 43). These problems make it even more difficult to investigate why there is such a large number of kantharoi in the archaeological record in the Archaic and Classical period in Boeotia. Despite all these difficulties and uncertainties it is still important to investigate why the ancient Boeotian people preferred using this type of cup, instead of following the decline of the Kantharos in the Proto-Attic period in the

Fig. 1 The characteristically shaped kantharos.
(<http://colorado.edu/cuartmuseum/collection>)

province of Attica, in favour of other types of drinking cups, such as the kylix and skyphos (Kilinski II 2005, 182).

1.1 Previous research on the kantharos

The previous research that has been conducted on this type of pottery will be discussed in the following sections. First, the typology will be presented to give an overview on the various appearances of the kantharos and to highlight what other scholars prioritised for their research. Secondly, the origin of the kantharos will be explored. The origins and the typological development of this vessel are of specific interest since they could indicate why Boeotians started to use this cup in the first place. Thirdly, the strong connection between mythology and the kantharos will be elucidated. The archaeological record offers evidence for the usage of the cup, in addition the appearance of the kantharos in iconography shows us that a strong connection between the kantharos and myths or mythological personae existed. Finally, a brief introduction to the area will be provided to provide the geographic and historical framework in which this thesis is set, namely the province of Boeotia.

1.2 Typology

The kantharos comes in many different shapes and sizes. What makes the kantharos distinguishable from other pottery types however, are the two parts of the body (a lower part and the upper part) that are separated by a narrow offset (Schreiber 1999, 125). Although both shallow and tall lower bodies occur, in its most characteristic shape, the lower body is shallow while the upper body is relatively tall. The kantharos has an average height of 20 to 25 cm, measured from the foot to the rim. The diameter of the cup averages about 15 cm (Schreiber 1999, 125).

The kantharos has high handles, starting on the fusion point of the lower and the upper body, and ending at the rim. The kantharos frequently has a stem with a foot, although it can also appear with a ring foot without a stem. There are kantharoi with only one-handle, and a footless variety with perhaps geometric antecedents occurs as well (Kilinski II 1990, 58). The krater and skyphos (both used in the activity of consuming beverages) are the closest pottery-types to the kantharos, although their handles are horizontally placed, in opposition to the vertical position of the handles of the kantharos.

The following typologies established by different scholars have been made mainly on the phenotype and dimensions. They mention the dimensions of the upper and lower body, and the size and form of the stem and/or foot. The multiple types and the distinctions between them are explained in more detail in the following sections. These typologies can be analyzed on their usefulness in the research on kantharoi in general as well and give perhaps a small history of this research, next to their function of classifying the different appearances of the kantharos.

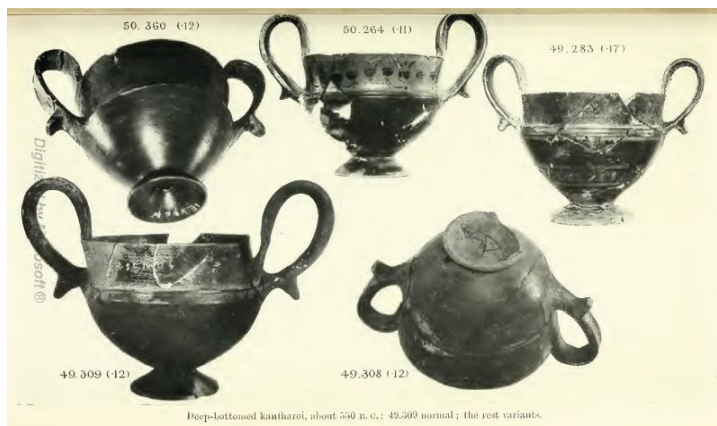
1.2.1 Typology by P.N. Ure

Percy N. Ure was the first scholar who attempted to group his assemblages of kantharoi into different types (Ure, 1913). Ure published the excavations of the Rhitsona cemetery, located to the east of Thespieae in Boeotia. His publication devoted one entire chapter to 'The VI century Black Glaze Kantharoi'. For the first time the kantharoi were singled out from the total assemblage of pottery. Ure divided the graves according to the pottery finds into group A and group B. This division was based on the presence of early black figure pottery, the occurrence of aryballoi which feature the Group A quatrefoil and Group A cinquefoil ornaments, and thirdly, the presence of Boeotian Class 1 kylikes (Ure 1913, 5). The group A graves are considered to be older than the B group graves. Hence, the presence of kantharoi provided a fourth characteristic on which to differentiate between the A and B graves.

The *Group A kantharos* is described by Ure as following (1913,5):

"12 cm high; the handles are spurred; the lower part of the body is as deep as the upper; the foot is low with no suggestion of a stem; underneath it has a flat rim, left in the ground colour, for the vase to rest on. [...] The essential feature of this type is the depth of the lower part of the body."

The dominant type of kantharos in the Group A graves at Rhitsona has the characteristics as described by Ure and has the essential feature of a deep lower part of the body. This type is therefore referred to as the (*Group A*) *deep-bottomed type*. The Group A kantharoi include the *shallow-bottomed type* as well. These appear less frequent in the Group A graves: 33 shallow-bottomed kantharoi have been identified; this seems a small number compared to 301 deep-bottomed ones. The shallow-bottomed type is recognizable by a shallow lower part of the body and a



more developed foot which turns into a short stem (Ure 1913, 6). The *deep-bottomed type* is a bit later than the *shallow-bottomed type*; the latter appears in the first quarter of the sixth century. This cup steadily grows a stem as the century progresses (Kilinski II 1990, 58).

Fig. 2 Several deep-bottomed types described by Ure (1913, 64).

Ure separates the *small decorated kantharoi* found in the A graves from the other two types of kantharoi. These vases are mostly decorated with white and purple paint, creating dots and straight and wavy lines on the outside of the cup. The inside is decorated with thin bands, using the same colours as on the outside.

Some of the vases have only one painted ornament, e.g the swastika. This single ornament is painted in white. Furthermore, Ure discusses some other types, which are considered variations on the Group A deep- and shallow-bottomed types. He distinguishes between the types I, II and III on several small variations in foot- and body height (Ure 1913, 11).

The group B graves have their own typology. The deep-bottomed type which was most common in the group A graves began to disappear. The oldest grave of the B group is grave 31. This grave still contained some (group A) deep-bottomed type vases, moreover, these vases hardly deviated from the typical group A vase. Although this might seem a good opportunity to suppose seriation in the typology, this is clearly not the case. Ure himself warns the reader that the shapes in themselves do not help the question of chronology at all (Ure 1913, 8).

Ure classified the larger part of the kantharoi from the group B graves as variants off the (group A) shallow-bottomed type. All of the main variants have a similar shallow-bottomed lower part of the body, and there is no occurrence of spurs on the handles. The foot however is the most typical element which distinguishes the variants off the Group A vases, and from each other. The Group A foot is smaller and lower, and generally of finer workmanship (Ure 1913, 6).

There are two more types of vases which can be identified in the Group B graves. The first is associated with the potter Teisias "the Athenian" as he called himself (Raubitschek 1966, 160). These kantharoi have a very fine glaze, which makes them distinguishable. Furthermore, they have unusual shapes and the sections of the handles are equally noteworthy.

The last type of kantharoi in the Group B graves is extraordinarily large. In some cases the size of the vase is accompanied by experiments in applied decoration, which Ure describes as bold. The size of these vases is 19 cm high, from the bottom to the mouth and has white decorations on the handles and the body.

1.2.2 Typology by L.D. Caskey and J.D. Beazley

The two scholars L.D. Caskey and J.D. Beazley, who are renowned for their extensive research in the field of pottery of Classical antiquity, established their own typology of kantharoi in 1931. This typology consists of seven varieties:

1. Type A1 is the first variety of the kantharos characterized by its high handles, tall body and high foot. It has high incurving, concave handles and a shallow bowl with a tall, upper body. The high foot has a fillet between the stem and the bowl.
2. Type A2 is similar to A1, though the handles are flat and have struts and spurs. The stem is heavier and is ridged.
3. Caskey and Beazley, just as Ure had done earlier, made a new category solely for those kantharoi produced or signed by Teisias. They described the Teisias kantharos as similar to type A2, but without spurs on the handles. The handles are triangular in cross-section (a detail that Ure had noted as well) and flat on top. The kantharos has no ridge on its stem, the ridge is replaced by a fillet.
4. The stemless kantharoi category is a further category identified by Caskey and Beazley. It is similar to type A2, just as the Teisias kantharoi. Nevertheless, this type (as the name implies) has no stem whatsoever. It does however have a ring foot in two degrees (this ring foot is visible in Fig. 3, type D).
5. Type B is similar to A1 but has low handles, and a low, stemmed foot.
6. Type C has high handles which are seen in type A1. The body is hemispherical. There is no division between the bowl and the upper body. The foot is low and has a stem.
7. The last category which Caskey and Beazley have listed or distinguished is Type D. The description of this type is as follows: 'Like C, but with squat body and stemless ring foot'. (Caskey & Beazley 1931, 14-18)

Caskey's and Beazley's typology of kantharoi is considered (as well as their typology of other pottery) as one of the most extensive and well-researched typologies, and is still used by scholars today (Schreiber 1999, 125).

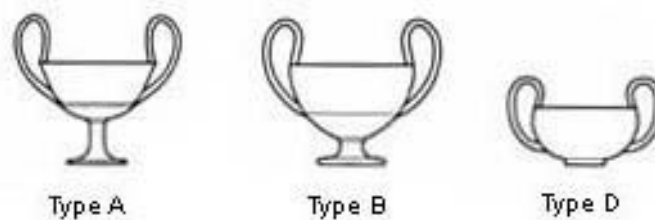


Fig. 3 Type A, B and D by Caskey and Beazley

(<http://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/tools/pottery/shapes/kantharos.htm>)

1.2.3 Typology by B.A. Sparkes and L. Talcott

Although these scholars use some of the types discerned earlier by Mr. Caskey and Mr. Beazley (Type A1, Type B and Type D), many new categories or varieties are added. Furthermore, a slight chronology is integrated in their typology.

Firstly, the 6th century shapes are discussed. Only one shape however is treated in more detail: the tumbler kantharos, with its handles rising from the lowest part of the wall of the upper body and joining the lip without curving high above it. (Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 114)

Secondly, *Type A1* is briefly discussed, mentioning only the places where they have been found. For the description of this type, one is referred to Caskey and Beazley. The *sessile with high handles* however, is described and identified as a sister form to the *Type A2* kantharos. This kantharos has a similar body and handles, but is set on a low foot instead of a high stem. The concave handles rise from the junction of the upper and the lower body. They continue over the rim. Between the rim and the handles, struts strengthen the construction. On the handles, spurs are attached as well.

Type B is the next category discussed, although not very extensive. After this follows the *sessile with low handles*. This is a compact cup with a tall, slightly flaring wall and shallow rounded bowl. The handles begin at the junction of wall and bowl and end at the rim. It has an elaborate heavy foot. There is a concave moulding at the inner face of the foot while the underside is cushioned and ridged. Usually, it is completely glazed (Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 115-116).

Type D is the next category which is distinguished by Sparkes and Talcott. This type is also called *Sotudean*, from the example signed by the potter Sotades. *Type D* is related to *Type C* in the set of the handles and the curve of the bowl, however *Type D* is stemless, while *Type C* is not. The bowl is low and wide and is set on a small foot. The handles curve up from the wall and rise above the rim. The handles join the rim vertically from above.

A next category which entails a few shapes and types are the *miscellaneous 5th century shapes*. This category has been called into life, for the three kantharoi that were found are not coherent with any other class. The first has the lip pinched in at both sides e.g.

The next category entails the *cup-kantharos and the kantharos from the 4th century BC*. In examples of the early 4th century, the lip of the vase is divided into two parts, a narrow neck and thickened rim. The bowl is losing height. The foot has a heavy lower member and a narrower upper member or neck on which the stem will rest.

Furthermore, some varieties of the *cup-kantharos* found on the agora in Athens are discussed, such as the cup-kantharos with a moulded rim, in combination with a heavy filleted stem, a globular shape, a pointed body, or just the standard characteristics.

The same is done for the cup-kantharos with the plain rim.

The varieties in appearance of the kantharos are numerous. The last kantharoi described show that there is a division between moulded and plain rims, and kantharoi having only one handle, or even very special handles (Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 117-124).

1.2.4 The Usefulness of the typologies

It is very common practice that many archaeologists, who have their own pottery data also establish their own typologies. Ure was the first who developed a typology for this type of drinking cup, however his typology was not adopted by Caskey and Beazley while several types mentioned and described by Caskey and Beazley, were re-used in the typology of Sparkes and Talcott.

It would be perhaps more practical if earlier typologies would be integrated into one's own data, and a new typology should only be introduced for those kantharoi which do not fit into the categories established by earlier typologies. This would contribute to a clearer defined field of research and could be more universally used in comparative studies.

Furthermore, Caskey and Beazley describe every little aspect of the different types. Their data were based on kantharoi which were already stored and exhibited in several museums, while the typologies by Ure and Sparkes and Talcott were based on their own excavations. Hence, the typology of Caskey and Beazley follows a more art historical approach, whereas the typologies based on the excavations from Rhitsona and the Athenian Agora include more archaeological considerations. What is perhaps not very useful of the typology by Caskey and Beazley is that the archaeological context of the data is absent. Hence, when trying to make a chronological typology (putting the several types into a chronological order) this typology would not be helpful.

In this thesis the focus is not so much on the various types of kantharoi, although sometimes they will be mentioned. Nevertheless, this short introduction into the typologies is helpful to give a broader view on the history of study before continuing to the new research presented by this thesis.

1.3 Origin of the kantharos

Starting from the Late Geometric era, this drinking vessel developed into an important artefact holding great significance for the people of Boeotia. The origin of the kantharos is still a subject of debate, in addition there is a little consensus about the general lines of the spread of this vessel. Since kantharoi dating to the Archaic and Classical periods in Boeotia have been recovered in abundance, even surpassing to a great extent the production of kantharoi in other contemporary production centres (Kilinski II 2005, 182), it is important to establish the 'evolution' of this vessel. Once we know where the kantharos originated from, this should help us to gain a deeper understanding of this type of pottery. Most scholars admit that the story of this cup is very complex (Kilinski II 2005, 182), and hence the 'history of the kantharos' is still to be written.

The appearance of the drinking cup is supposed to have originated from Etruria (Kilinski II 2005, 188) where it occurred in the seventh and sixth centuries BC. It seems to have found its way into the pottery repertoire of Athens, and through Athens it must have reached Boeotia (Kilinski II 2005, 188). However, although this cup has many similarities with the types 3d, 3e and 3g kantharoi from Etruria, the influence should be interpreted the other way around. The Etrurian cups appear in the seventh and sixth centuries BC, while the Greek kantharos emerged probably from the Middle Geometric onward (see below). Nevertheless, where the cup was originally created has still not been answered (after J. Bintliff, pers. comm.)

In Boeotia it emerged in the Late Geometric period or probably even sooner, but probably derived from Athens where the type appeared from the Middle Geometric period, where the earliest types had an offset lip. The Attic kantharos probably originated from Central Greece, in particular Thessaly. Here, the kantharos appeared during the Proto-Geometric period. In the Middle Bronze Age (MBA), kantharoi were widespread all over Greece. These kantharoi show a great resemblance with the Proto-Geometric, although there seems to be a lack of information between these periods (after V.V. Stissi, pers. comm.).

The Attic kantharos also included components from the krater and skyphos. In the Late Geometric II a lipless kantharos with a bulbous body and a flat base was developed. This latter version is the one that was most often followed in Boeotia in the Late Geometric period. Due to the lack of knowledge of the Proto-Geometric period in Boeotia, it is not certain that the kantharos made an appearance sooner than the Late Geometric. If this is so, the role of Athens seems to be less than most scholars believe now (after V.V. Stissi, pers. comm.).

Although Kilinski II suggests in his article that Boeotia also had direct influences from Etruria instead of influences via Athens (Kilinski II 2005, 190), this is not fully confirmed. Schilardi argues that "Boeotian kantharoi of the "shallow-bottomed" class, although recalling traits of Etruscan versions,

correspond closely to Archaic Attic kantharoi and copy from them the decoration and a number of typological characteristics” (Schilardi 1977, 305). The carinated kantharos is considered to have independently developed in Boeotia (Kilinski II 2005, 185). By the seventh century the shape developed a distinct ring foot, an off-set lip and shorter handles. This occurred probably under Attic influence as well. The kantharos then ‘faded out of fashion’ in Athens, while in Boeotia the drinking cup was gaining more and more popularity. The earliest models from the Rhitsona graves (see below) in Boeotia can be considered to date from the sixth century BC onwards (Kilinski II 2005, 182). Around the middle of the fifth century BC a new shape appeared with elegant proportions, including a long stem with raised angular moulding, a protruding keel and a pair of thin strap handles (Schilardi 1977, 309). Whether these new shapes or types evolved in Boeotia, or developed under strong influence from the outside is not sure.

We can conclude that the kantharos was not only produced in Boeotia, but also on a smaller scale in Attica, Euboea, East Greece, Laconia, Elis and in the Argolid in several places, although it was indeed produced and used more in Boeotia. The kantharoi from other areas often have other characteristics, which makes them easier to distinguish from the Attica and Boeotia kantharoi.

It is an interesting observation that the Boeotian type of kantharos rarely reached foreign markets and only in exceptional circumstances (Schilardi 1977, 305). The only probable export partner was neighbouring Euboea (modern day Evvia), whereas most of the kantharoi that have been found outside of Boeotia’s boundaries are likely to have been taken along by travelling individuals (Sparkes 1967, 1). The fact that few kantharoi from Boeotian production were exported, shows that this cup was indeed a local tradition or only produced for local use. The opposite is happening in Athens and the Attica region. The small-scale production in Athens and the Attica region was largely, if not all, produced for export (Schilardi 1977, 305). This shows even more that the Boeotian population was attracted to the drinking cup.

Fig. 4 An Attic vase-painter at work on a kantharos. These were mainly produced for export (Noble 1984, 35).



1.4 Connection between the kantharos and Greek mythology

The most obvious connection between the kantharos and mythology is made by the fact that it served the 'favourite' cup of Dionysos, the God of Wine. The association with Dionysos starts in approximately the mid-sixth century in art and iconography in various parts of the Greek world (Kilinski II 2005, 177). The emphasis on the shape in iconography in Boeotia is an argument in favour of its ritual affiliation, for it is mostly depicted with the god and his followers, instead of placing the cup in symposion-scenes (Elderkin 1924, 2). In the banquet iconography, the kantharos is hardly ever held by regular humans in a symposion, but almost always by a god or hero (Verbanck-Piérard 1992, 98). The regular symposion scene should suggest a more domestic application. The mythology behind the kantharos is especially interesting, because this may give strong indications to the usage. The mythology is therefore a useful tool in this research to study the reasons for favouring this cup by the Boeotians.



Fig. 5 One of the rare appearances of the kantharos in a banquet scene with humans. The kantharos is highlighted with the red square (Scheffer 1992, 121).

Many scholars assume that the kantharos had a more pronounced ideological function than a functional usage in e.g. festivities (Schilardi 1977 and Schreiber 1999 and Elderkin 1924). Although they are often depicted on other vases, when held by Dionysos himself or by one of his satyrs and even occasionally by Silenos (Dionysos' teacher), depictions of kantharoi also appear in funerary contexts. Occasionally they are depicted on grave markers (Kurtz and Boardman 1971, 236). This implies that the kantharos is a symbol of death, similar to the already known symbols of death such as snakes, pomegranates, sphinxes and Gorgons (Schilardi 1977, 304).

The suggestion that an ideology existed that the deceased could feast in the afterlife, if they was provided with enough kantharoi, is quickly discarded by Elderkin (Elderkin 1924, 2). He clearly stated that the kantharos was not a banquet-cup due to the fact that kylikes were always

represented in banqueting scenes on vases. Therefore, the argument for them being implemented in feasting in the afterlife is not very probable. Schilardi, who studied the pottery of the Thespian Polyandron state burial (see section 1.4.2 below), suggests a possible link between the kantharos and Dionysos, who was closely connected to the city of Thebes. According to myth, Dionysos was born in the city of Thebes from the union of Zeus and Semele, the daughter of the first king of Thebes (Schilardi 1977, 303). Therefore, the connection between Dionysos and the cup should make it a well-used vessel in Boeotia. This statement is however only speculative.

1.4.1 Dionysos, Herakles and fertility

Not only Dionysos was depicted handling a kantharos, but also the semi-divine hero Herakles. Elderkin (1924) states that there are many indications for the similarities which Dionysos and Herakles originally had. According to A. Verbanck-Piérard the relationship between Dionysos and Herakles was mutual and reciprocal. Herakles was also known for his fondness of wine (Verbanck-Piérard 1992, 98). Dionysos was not only associated with wine, he was also associated with agriculture, viticulture and fertility, some of the depictions with satyrs and maenads clearly allude to procreation. Herakles, according to Elderkin, was supposed to have originated as a fertility *daimon* or spirit (Elderkin 1924, 99). Dionysos and Herakles were both born in the city of Thebes.



Fig. 6 Dionysos and Herakles depicted in a symposium scene. Dionysos (on the left) is holding a kantharos (Verbanck-Piérard 1992, 92).

The connection between these gods as symbols of fertility and the depictions of kantharoi on grave steles and the appearance of them in graves can easily be made. The fertility position entailed the responsibility for the cycle of the birth, death and rebirth of plants and fauna. Death and rebirth played a part in the cults of this god and demi-god. The gods of fertility and vegetation who died periodically and were revived in the spring reinforce the whole concept of death and resurrection.

Perhaps, when taking the mythological ideas into account, the appearance of kantharoi in graves and on funeral steles and pyres might not seem so peculiar. The ancient Boeotians might have linked these kantharoi to resurrection after death. Nevertheless, this is all speculation and no real proof has been presented to underpin this view.

1.4.2 Kantharoi in funerary 'rituals'

What is clear from several funerary sanctuaries, such as the Rhitsona graves excavated by Percy Ure, is that kantharoi occur in relatively large quantities at this type of site. The Thespian Polyandron near the city of Thespieae is a case in point. This was the communal state burial for the men who had lost their lives in the battle of Delion in 424 BC (Schilardi 1977, i). Schilardi describes the enormous amount of kantharoi in the pottery assemblage from this site. Furthermore, the large presence of kantharoi in the pottery assemblage from several sanctuaries confirms the significant role of kantharoi in religious settings. The same goes for its special significance in religious iconography (Schilardi 1977, 304). This large amount of kantharoi is in compliance with the ancient Greek custom of dedicating vases to the gods. These vases were used for consuming drinks in honor of the gods in rituals (Schilardi 1977, 304).

The kantharos, along with other drinking cups such as the phiale and skyphos were also used to make libations to the gods (See Fig. 6). The vessels which were used for mixing the wine could not be used for this purpose, since the intention of the libation was to offer a share of the beverage to the gods. The gods, just as men, could only consume this drink out of drinking cups and certainly not from vessels where one could not drink from (Schilardi 1977, 305).

Another interesting result that emerged from the excavations of the Thespian Polyandron is the presence of kantharoi in the remains of the large funeral pyre erected for the deceased men. According to Schilardi, it is not very likely that they were placed there as part of some hero-cult, but rather that they were put in the fire while cremating the deceased (Schilardi 1977, 309). These finds might point to a specific function the kantharos had as part of funerary rites.



Fig. 7 Maenads surrounding a masked pole of Dionysos behind a so-called 'libation table'. The kantharos, viewed from the side is marked by the red square (Alroth 1992, 41).

1.4.3 Kabeirion pottery and mythology

The name Kabeirion alludes to several things, such as the sanctuary with multiple graves nearby ancient Thebes, as well as the typical style of vase painting on the pottery found there. Among this pottery assemblage, a large sample of kantharoi is present. An interesting aspect of the vase paintings on these kantharoi is the collection of deities depicted, one of which is a deity called Kabiros who is holding a kantharos (Schachter 2003, 122). According to Schachter, the Kabiros (deities) were not originally Greek, but could have been introduced by Greeks in the eighth or seventh century BC along with a migration wave (Schachter 2003, 112). Until late in the fourth century, this sanctuary had a very private or local identity, even when the ground was annexed by neighbouring Thebes, who had a much wider territorial range. According to certain passages in Pausanias, this sanctuary was used for its own mysteries (Schachter 2003, 114).

What Schachter mentions and what is important for the similarities in iconography between Dionysos and Kabiros, is that there was actually no fixed iconography for the Kabiros throughout Greece. The Kabiros took on characteristics which were known from the more widely known gods in

the area. In Boeotia therefore, Kabiros as a deity of vegetation was paralleled with Dionysos and thus took several characteristics from this model, including the kantharos.

Another theory suggests that the kantharos could be used in ritual feasting or some type of social drinking. The handles of the cup are an argument for this suggestion. The handles can be practical for holding it with both hands and passing it on to the next person. This could also explain the appearance of kantharoi in sanctuaries, if that was the location where this drinking and feasting would have taken place.

The cup could be handed from one person to the next with everybody taking a sip. There are a few problems with this theory however. All the images of people holding kantharoi are images with the human holding the cup with one hand only. There is no clear scene showing that it was passed along to the next person in line, and not even scenes of people (or deities) drinking from the cup.

Besides, the activity of drinking and feasting at sanctuaries would not explain the positioning of kantharoi in graves and cemeteries.

Therefore we should keep in mind to make a distinction between usage in rituals and religious activities. Rituals do not necessarily need to be religious. However, when a cup is strongly linked to a specific god, as mentioned above, and is placed or left behind in sanctuaries which can be connected to deities, it would suggest some type of religious activity in which the kantharos was involved.

Nevertheless, we must be careful with calling these possible activities to be religious. The placing of the cups in cemeteries for example, could just as well occur due to the superstition or habits of the people.

When taking all the above into account, what can we possibly state about the function the kantharos?

There is no denying that a strong link to ritual and mythology existed, and the link to death and burials seems striking as well. However, we also need to ask whether the kantharos was not used at all as a regular domestic drinking cup? When looking at the above, one should imagine not, however, the domestic aspects or contexts have not yet been taken into account. These aspects will be elaborated further below in Chapter 3.

1.5 A brief history of Boeotia

This short introduction to Boeotia will offer some information on the history of the area to provide a wider historical framework into which the research presented by this thesis can be placed.

Boeotia is a province in the centre of the Greek mainland. Boeotia has an impressive archaeological record, and has a number of famous sites (such as Thebes and Tanagra) but does not rank very high as a tourist destination. However, it has a very rich historical background and archaeologically speaking it is a very interesting province. Its main cities are Thebes which is serving as the current capital and is located in the centre, and Levadia, which is situated more to the west of Thebes.

In archaic times this province consisted of several communities; these transformed into poleis or city-states by the end of the ninth century BC. Some districts did not have an official polis, but they may have had a centre of cult formed by a place of refuges. The smaller villages in these districts, in lack of a larger, dominant town, were practically independent unofficial city-states. Levadia is a good example of such a village in Archaic times, although in Classical times this too became a polis. The Boeotian League, founded around 550 BC to strengthen the region of Boeotia against the province of Thessaly, was also a marker in the history of Boeotia (Buck 1979). In the Classical period many battles were fought on the Boeotian plains and these became known as 'The Dancefloor of Ares' (Buck 1979). Two of the most well-known battles in Boeotian history are the battle of Plataea in 479 BC, between the Persian Empire, led by Xerxes I against an alliance of Greek city-states (among these

city-states were Sparta, Athens, Corinth and Megara) and the second battle which is well-known is the battle of Chaeronea in 338 BC between King Philip II of Macedon, and again an alliance of Greek city-states, including Athens and Thebes (Buck 1979). In Roman times

the population declined dramatically and remained so until medieval times.

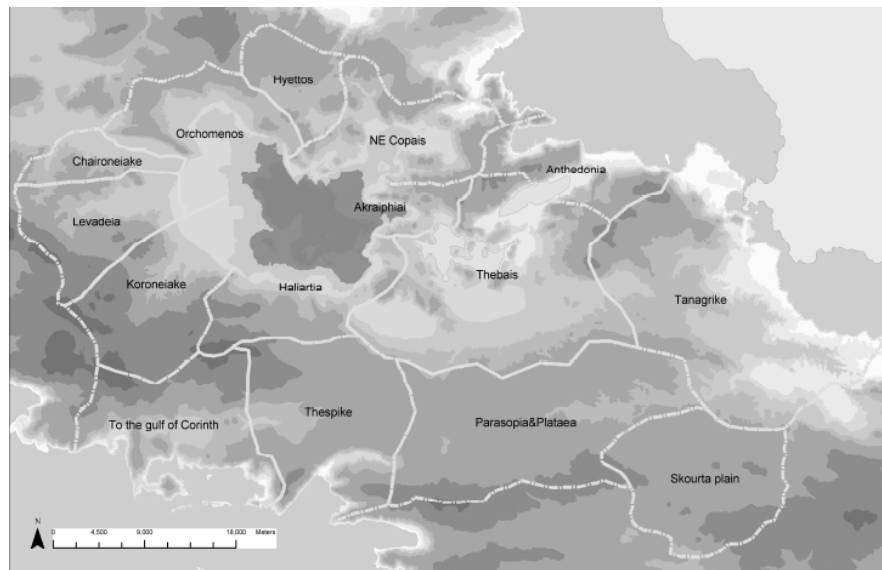


Fig. 8 Map of ancient chorai in ancient Boeotia (E. Farinetti 2009)

2. My research

The reasons why the kantharos was widely used in the province of Boeotia are not known. This thesis will investigate possible explanations for this phenomenon. The timeframe in which this study is set are in the Greek Archaic and the Classical periods. The Archaic period saw the introduction of the Protocorinthian style pottery, roughly starting at 700 BC. This period ended around 480 BC, when the Classical period starts off. With the death of Alexander the Great (Mee 2005, 4-5) in 323 BC the Classical period came to an end.

To get a good overview of all the aims, questions and objectives of this research, these will be explained in detail below.

2.1 Research question

The research question of my thesis will be concerned with finding possible explanations for the popularity of the kantharos in Archaic and Classical Boeotia. In order to get an answer to this question however, one must first ask and answer a few related questions:

- Was Boeotia really the only area in which the kantharos was popular in this period?
- What was the particular function of this cup?
- Is the function linkable to popularity?

These queries can give some guidance in the research for the popularity of this type of pottery, and will ultimately lead towards the answering of the general research question.

2.2 Methodology

This section will explain the methods used in this research. In order to answer questions related to the popularity of the kantharos in Boeotia, the main sources available are the pottery datasets of the Boeotia Survey Project. This is a project that started in the 1970's, led by John Bintliff and Anthony Snodgrass (Bintliff et al. 2007, 139), and is still in progress today (Bintliff 2010). In this thirty or even almost forty years of work, a large amount of archaeological data have been assembled. These datasets, which include the found kantharoi, are still largely unpublished, and it is quite a privilege to be allowed to access the data for this research. The sites which have been surveyed, documented and used in this thesis are shown in Fig. 9. The green dots mark the sites of the Boeotia survey datasets, while the purple sites (Rhitsona and the Thespian Polyandrion) mark the sites from where the material published by Ure and Schilardi originated.

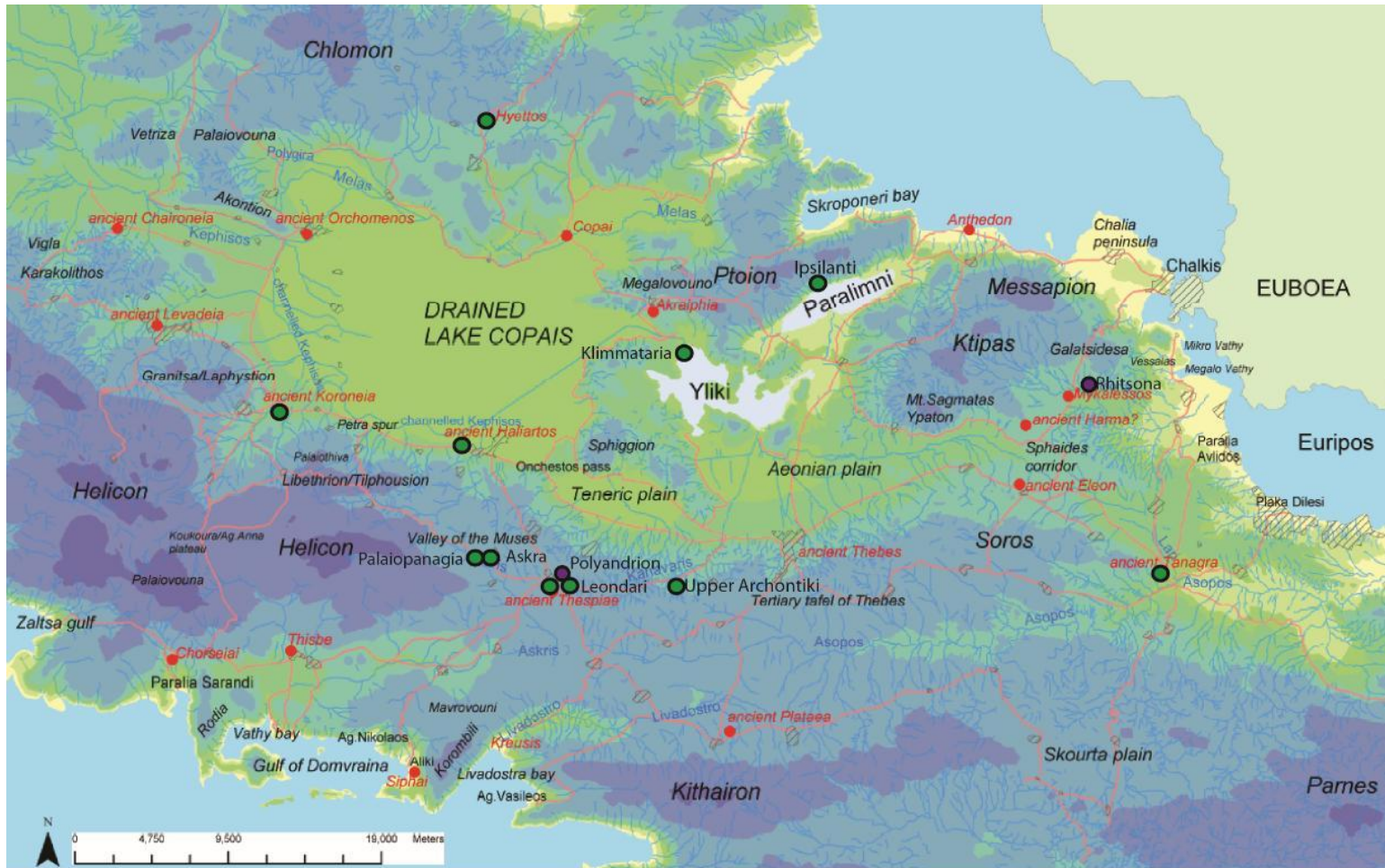


Fig. 9 Map with used sites highlighted. The green sites are sites from the Boeotia Survey Project. The green sites mark the datasets from the Boeotia survey, while the purple sites mark already published material (After Farinetti 2009).

Not only will these datasets give information on the quantity and date of the found kantharoi for many sites, they will be most helpful when trying to locate the original context of the vessels. Additional literature on surveys conducted in other parts of Greece is useful for comparing the high numbers of kantharoi in Boeotia with these other areas. To find out whether Boeotia was indeed the only area where the kantharos enjoyed such popularity, datasets from Boeotia will be compared with results from surveys conducted in Methana, Lakonia, Keos and Asea.

Furthermore, the excavation and pottery data from The Athenian Agora (Sparkes and Talcott, vol. 12) will be used for comparing Boeotia to the city of Athens. The extensive publication by Sparkes and Talcott (1970) provides information on the pottery found on the agora from the sixth, fifth and fourth centuries BC (Sparkes and Rotroff 1970).

Although the question of the possible function of this cup was discussed briefly by some scholars, the datasets from the Boeotia survey provide us with the information on the context where the kantharoi were found. When trying to investigate the function of an object, it is of great importance that one must look at the context of the object. As Voigt has written in her article about Neolithic figurines in the Levant:

“Questions of function must always be concerned with context. Interpretation of one without the other is extremely limiting and problematic” (Voigt in Kuijt and Chesson 2005, 172)

While acknowledging the importance of context and typology for archaeological research, one must also bear in mind that our research needs to incorporate the mythological and/or ideological aspects of such objects as the kantharos. These have already been discussed above and some aspects of this discussion will be incorporated in the final discussion and conclusion.

2.3 Aims and Theoretical Framework

The objective of this Bachelor thesis is threefold: first of all this research aims to give an overview of the kantharos and what scholars have suggested about its function. The second aim is to shed light on the usage of the kantharos in the Archaic and Classical periods, by using the datasets from the Boeotia survey and other published materials. The third aim is to attempt to answer the research question, as to why it was used to a larger extent in the province of Boeotia than in Athens. The word ‘attempt’ is used here deliberately, for many experienced scholars have not succeeded in forming a consensus. It is therefore even more difficult to explain fully the popularity of the kantharos. I hope, and this is one of my aims as well, that by writing this thesis I have participated in the research related to the kantharos and its many mysteries.

The importance of this thesis is that it keeps the research of the kantharos going. It may not bring much new information to the table, still it can provide a summary of earlier research and can add a new view on the popularity of the kantharos. For research that is related to popularity or personal preferences, or even favoritism it is important to know more about the people behind the pots. Why did especially Boeotians choose to produce kantharoi in a larger quantity than their neighbors? Were they really used as drinking cups in domestic contexts or were they mainly used for ideological purposes? In order to learn more about the people of the past, which is actually the goal of archaeology, it is significant to take a good look at the artefacts they made as well. The kantharos can therefore help us in this search for the Archaic/Classical Boeotians.

2.4 Possible implication of the conclusion

The possible implications of the conclusions are hard to predict. It is likely that the conclusion will not so much be an innovative piece, but rather an account of possible answers. Unfortunately, in archaeology this is often the case. If indeed the conclusion is a list of possibilities, the implications will be of less consequence to the academic world. Having said that, it is still noteworthy to keep in mind that even a list of possibilities contributes to the academic research into these kantharoi.

3. The kantharoi from the Boeotia data

In this chapter the pottery datasets used in this thesis from the Boeotia Survey Project will be introduced. The data that will be discussed below is mostly from unpublished material. The findcontexts of these kantharoi mainly come from unpublished material as well. The table below (Tab. 1) shows us the numbers of the total finds from the different chora and sites, with their shares of kantharoi.

Table 1. Numbers of the total finds from the Archaic and Classical periods and the percentage that the kantharoi form from the total finds.

Chora & sites	Total Archaic/Classical finds	Found Kantharoi	Percentages
Thespike			
Askris Potamos	96	8	8,33%
Askra	621	15	2,41%
Leondari South East (LSENEW)	1749	126	7,20%
Leondari South East (LSETRS)	741	1	0,13%
Valley of the muses (VMsites)	1404	34	2,42%
Magoula	10	0	-
Thespieae (City)	4547	25	0,54%
Thespieae (TH_B79)	832	4	0,48%
Thespieae (Thes_SW)	695	54	7,77%
Thespieae (Ths_trs)	911	3	0,33%
Thespieae (Eastsite)	327	7	2,14%
Palaiopanagia (PPsort)	1060	38	3,58%
Ipsilanti (Miscel)	12	1	8,33%
Hyettia			
Hyettos (Cnsites)	4589	4	0,08%
Hyettos (CNtransects)	7030	0	-
Hyettos (city)	7394	336	4,54%
Haliartia			
Haliartos city	289	6	2,07%
Haliartos sites	588	11	1,87%
Haliartos transects	1449	4	0,27%
Thebais			
Klimmataria	1463	11	0,75%
Upper Archontiki	27	1	3,70%
Koroneiake			
Koroneia	1645	54	3,28%
Tanagrike			
Tanagra	980	31	3,16%

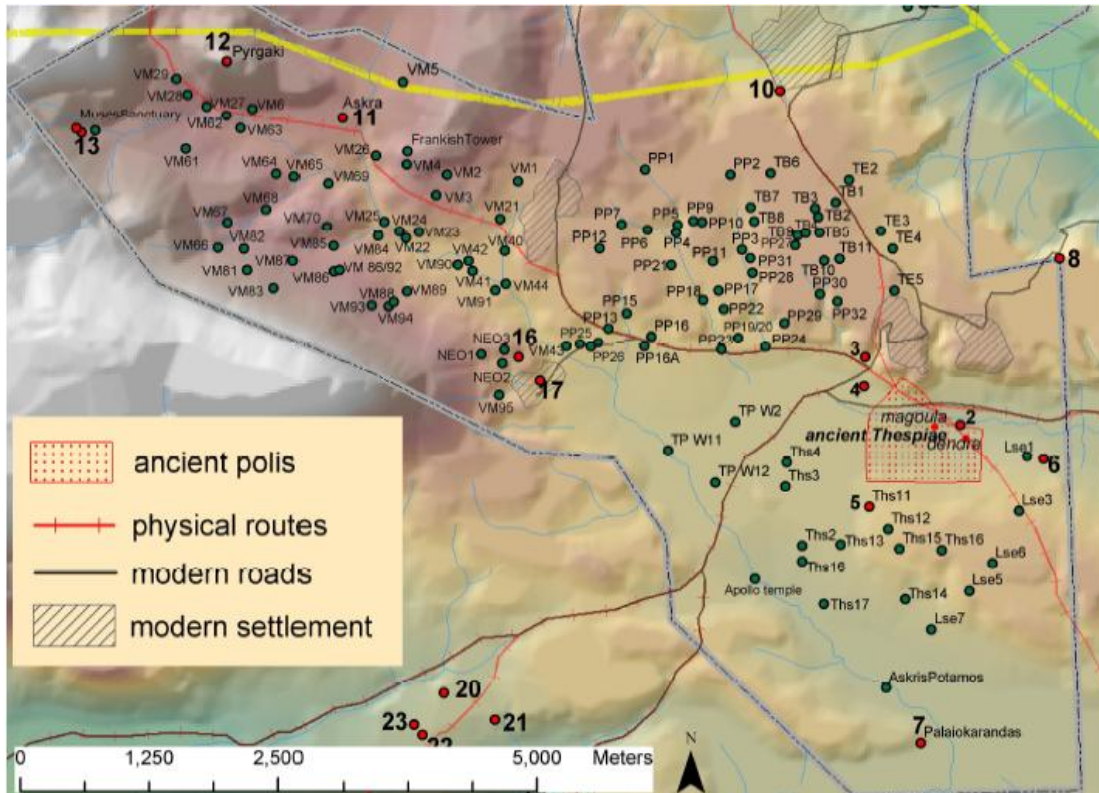


Fig. 10 Map with the sites from the Thespie chora (Farinetti, 2009).

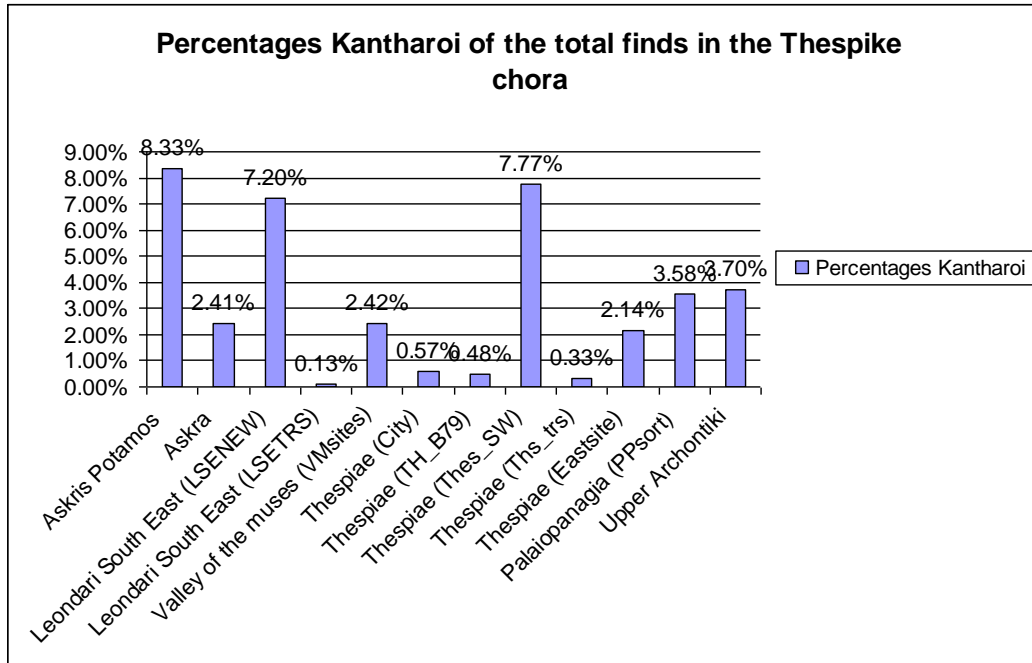
3.1 Kantharoi found in the Thespie chora

This chora owes its name to its largest city, Thespieae. The area has been subdivided into several areas, as has also been done by the Boeotia Survey Project. In the western part of the chora, the Valley of the Muses is situated. This valley was thoroughly surveyed and divided into several sites, which are named VM sites, or Valley of the Muses sites. Based on the found data, interpretations have been made on the function of these sites. When discussing the particular sites where kantharoi were found, these interpretations are significant and will provide our context. South of the VM sites lies an area with so-called NEO sites. These received their name because the modern-day town of Neochori is located nearby. Fig. 11 shows the marked area with the large 17 in it, which is the modern day village of Neochori.

In the centre of the VM sites, we find the ancient village of Askra. A few kantharoi were found at this city-site, this will be elaborated below. The empty area between the modern-day village of Askri (the marked area to the right of VM1 and VM21) and the modern-day city of Thespies (the left of the two marked areas above ancient Thespieae), is largely filled with the PP sites. The PP sites stand for the district of Palaiopanagia.

The Ths sites and Lse sites are also included in this thesis. The Ths sites are the rural sites, sanctuaries and/or cemeteries located to the southwest of the ancient city of Thespieae; the Lse sites are located

to the east of the Ths sites, to the southeast of the city and these denote rural sites, sanctuaries and cemeteries as well. For this study several databases were used, these provide the number of kantharoi finds (in percentage) for several parts of the ancient city of Thespieae (see Graph 1.). The small district of Askris Potamos is included as well. This district is located south of the Ths and Lse sites, next to the river (the name Askris Potamos literally means Askris River). Lastly, the findspot Upper Archontiki will be discussed. This findspot is not visible in Fig. 11, but still belongs to the Thespike chora. It is located to the south of the modern road to Thebes.



Graph 1. Percentages of kantharoi from the total assemblages in the Thespike chora.

3.1.1 Askra

Askra is one of the second-rank settlements from the Thespike chora (Farinetti 2009, 161). It was a proto-polis, which would have become a polis, were it not for the presence of larger and stronger Thespieae (Farinetti 2009, 161). 15 kantharoi from the total Archaic and Classical finds of 621 come from this ancient city. It therefore makes 2.41% of the total finds from these periods (see Graph 1.). These fifteen kantharoi come from several different locations in the ancient village of Askra. It is however possible that these kantharoi were located in shrines situated inside the city walls, instead of an all domestic context.

Table 2. Kantharoi from Askra

Site	Kantharos
F1	1
F19	3
F32	3
F34	1
F38	1
F51	4
F79	1

3.1.2 Neochori and Valley of the Muses

The Valley of the Muses sites are numerous, counting from VM1 to VM96, while the Neochori sites only count three. The kantharoi from these sites have been put together in the graph above, (see Graph 1.) forming 2.42% of the Archaic and Classical finds. The contexts of these sites are largely unpublished, except for some remarks by E. Farinetti in her Phd-dissertation.

The two Neochori sites where kantharoi were collected from were both small farm sites in the Classical period. The two Neo2-kantharoi are listed separately in table 3, for the Neo2.gsca was a grab sample, while the Neo2.sa10 was a regular grid walk, where multiple circumstances have been noted down, such as visibility and orientation. Nevertheless, they belonged to the same site.

Table 3. Kantharoi from Neochori

Sites	Kantharoi
Neo1.sa12	1
Neo2.gsca	1
Neo2.sa10	1

The VMsites come in large numbers, still the sites which contained kantharoi are manageable (see Table 4). The upper two do not have a site number after Vm. This means that they were found in transects walked between the several sites. These two kantharoi were thus found 'offsite'. Site Vm2 had several samples with kantharoi (1, 2 and 3) and collected in total 4 kantharos shards. This was supposed to have been a large rural site in Classical times.

Table4. Kantharoi VMsites

Site	Kantharos
Vm.tr516	1
Vm.tr476	1
Vm2.sa1,2,3	4
Vm5.gs	2
Vm5.sa1,2	2
Vm.sa6	1
Vm27.sa17	1
Vm28.sa1,2,3,5,6,10	7
Vm62.sa8	1
Vm70.sa8	1
Vm83.sa2,5,7,8	5
Vm84.sa3	1
Vm86.gsA	1
Vm87.sa4	1
Vm92.GS	1
Vm96.sa2	1

Just as the Neochori 2 sites, the Vm5 sites have also been split up due to the difference in grab sample and regular sample. Site Vm5 was possible a Classical rural cemetery or shrine. In total it contained four kantharoi. The next site from which the context is known is Vm27. This was a small rural site in the Classical period.

The site Vm28 is interesting because it has the most kantharoi of the entire table. The function of this site was possibly a Classical rural cemetery. The site Vm62 was a rural farm site, only used in the Classical period and not before or after. Vm70 was a large rural farm, also from the Classical period, with richer fineware finds than usual. The next site is Vm83 which contains 5 kantharoi. This site was a rich rural farm, focusing mostly on the fourth and third centuries BC, so late Classical and early Hellenistic periods. Site 86 is a smaller Classical rural site, just as site Vm87. They contain 2 kantharos shards when put together. Vm92's function is not known specifically, yet it lies very near to site 86, and should thus

make it a part of the small rural site. Vm96 is another fine, small Classical-Hellenistic rural farm site.

3.1.3 Palaiopanagia

The sites where kantharoi have been identified are visible in Table 5 (see Table 5). The first entry is positioned in an offsite area. PP3 is a rural site. PP7 is a rural site as well. The PP9 site also included one kantharos shard and could possibly be a Classical period farm site, only used in this particular period. The same goes for site PP10. This also seems to be a single period Classical farm. The finds of PP11 seem to point to a different function, which is also stressed by the interpretations of the Boeotia Survey Project. It seems to be a Classical rural cemetery. PP14 is another rural site, just as PP25 and PP27. The bottom two findspots are positioned in transects, which means that these two kantharos shards are found in the offsite area.

Table 5. Kantharoi PPsites

Site	Kantharos
pp.tr623	2
pp3.479	1
pp7.sa540.12b	1
pp9.gs1	1
pp10.sa607	1
pp11.gs	1
pp11.sa614	24
pp14.sa.10	1
pp25.sa4	1
pp27.sa7	1
pp_tr.14	1
pp_tr.17	1

3.1.4 City and surrounding sites of Thespieae

The findspots which make up the city and most of the surrounding sites of Thespieae are the Thespieae city itself, Magoula (an older part of the modern day city of Thespies), the East sites, the data from TH_B79, Thespieae Southwest, the Thespieae transects and the Lse sites. Their shares of kantharoi are visible in Table 6 (see Table 6.). The Magoula dataset contained no kantharoi at all and will thus not be discussed below. The specific sites where these kantharoi were recovered will be discussed further below.

Table 6. Percentages kantharoi

Site	Kantharos
Thespieae city	0.54%
Magoula	0%
TH_B79	0.48%
Thes_SW	7.77%
Thespieae Transects	0.33%
Thespieae East sites	2.14%
LSE sites	7.20%
LSE transects	0.13%

As is visible from Table 7, there are some noticeable differences between these datasets. The THES_SW findspots that lie to the Southwest of the ancient city of Thespieae contained in total 54 kantharos shards. The precise sites of these shards are discussed below (see Table 9.), but what is striking is that these shards comprise 7.77% of the total finds of the Archaic and Classical periods. These are therefore the most numerous from the Thespike chora. The Lse sites however also had a share of kantharoi above the 7%. The ancient city of Thespieae itself had a share of kantharoi less than 1% from the total amount of finds. Also the transects or the so-called offsites do not contain many kantharoi, as is visible from the Thespieae Transects and the LSE transects. Kantharoi are thus not strikingly represented in the large city itself or

on the open spaces surrounding it, yet more in its surrounding rural findspots. These findspots and the specific contexts of the kantharoi will be clarified and elaborated on below.

Starting with the ancient city of Thespieae itself, this city contained in total 25 shards of kantharoi. These are visible in Table 7. As mentioned above, these kantharoi form 0,54% of the total amount of Archaic and Classical finds from this findspot. Several samples show more than one kantharos, which may point to a somewhat different function in these grids than a solely domestic use. As described above with Askra, there are possibilities for intramural shrines and/or public feasting. Whether the kantharoi were actually located in or around shrines, is not clear.

Table 7. Kantharoi from Thespieae city

Site	Kantharos
86.th.tr12.42	1
85.th.sa15.11	1
86.th.sa38.4	1
86.th.sa86.17	2
86.th.sa87.12	1
86.th.tr91.3	2
86.th.sa100.1	1
86.th.tr102.2	2
86.th.sa102.4	1
86.th.tr113.3	1
85.th.tr114.23	1
85.th.sa128.17	1
86.th.tr177.11	1
86.th.sa200.4	1
86.th.sa215.16	1
86.th.tr249.3	1
86.th.sa269.23	1
85.th.tr2055.6	1
85.th.tr2060.9	1
85.th.sa2108.2	1
85.th.tr2125.9	1
85.th.tr2152.16	1

In Table 8 (Tab. 8), the findspots of Thespieae Southwest (TH_SW) are depicted, with their numbers of kantharoi. The findspot Ths1 which contained three kantharos shards is a Classical cemetery of small family size. The Ths3 findspot has gotten an unsettled interpretation of a small Classical cemetery. Five kantharoi were recovered from this site. The Ths11 findspot is a Late Archaic to Late Classical cemetery for probably a small family. The Ths12 findspot is interpreted as a farm or even a small estate. Three kantharos shards have been collected here.

Table 8. Kantharoi from TH_SW sites

Site	Kantharos	
Ths1.gs	2	One kantharos has been recovered from the Ths13 findspot.
Ths1.tr37	1	The context of this shard is interpreted as mere offsite scatter,
Ths3.gs	2	similar to the context of the Ths14 shard. At the Ths15 findspot
Ths3.sa9	3	14 kantharoi were found in total. This site is interpreted as a
Ths11.GS1,2	2	small Classical cemetery, probably a small family cemetery.
Ths11.tr505	1	The Thw2 entry is a findspot located more to the west and
Ths12	3	contained one kantharos shard. The nature or function of the
Ths13.sa13	1	site is not quite certain. However, the Thwcem findspot is
Ths14.sa2	1	clearly a cemetery, also in use in the Classical period and
Ths15.gs773	10	certainly linked to the city of Thespieae itself. Thus, from the
Ths15.sa1	3	kantharoi in this table and their contexts we can see that there
Ths15.tr773	1	is a focus on funerary context.
Thw2.sa12	1	
Thwcem.gs1	10	

The next table shows the kantharoi found in an North eastern district outside of Thespieae (Thespieae Eastsites – see Table 9.). The first three entries have been collected in transects, thus offsite areas. The other three kantharoi have been collected in sites. The nature or function of these sites is not exactly known, although we might suspect something like rural farmsites or small family cemeteries.

Table 9. Kantharoi from Thespieae Eastsites

Site	Kantharos
th.tr152	1
th.tr60	1
th.tr206	1
th.e1.e1.33a	1
thb10	2
thb6	1

The next dataset with the title THS_TRS contained the Thespieae Transects findings. Three kantharoi were found in this dataset and thus form 0.33% of the total finds (see Table 1 and 6.). The kantharoi were located in transects 146, 149 and 165. These are considered to be offsite findings. From the TH_B79 dataset four kantharoi were found in the same specific Thb4 findspot. This findspot was in use as a small Classical farm (after J. Bintliff, pers. comm.).

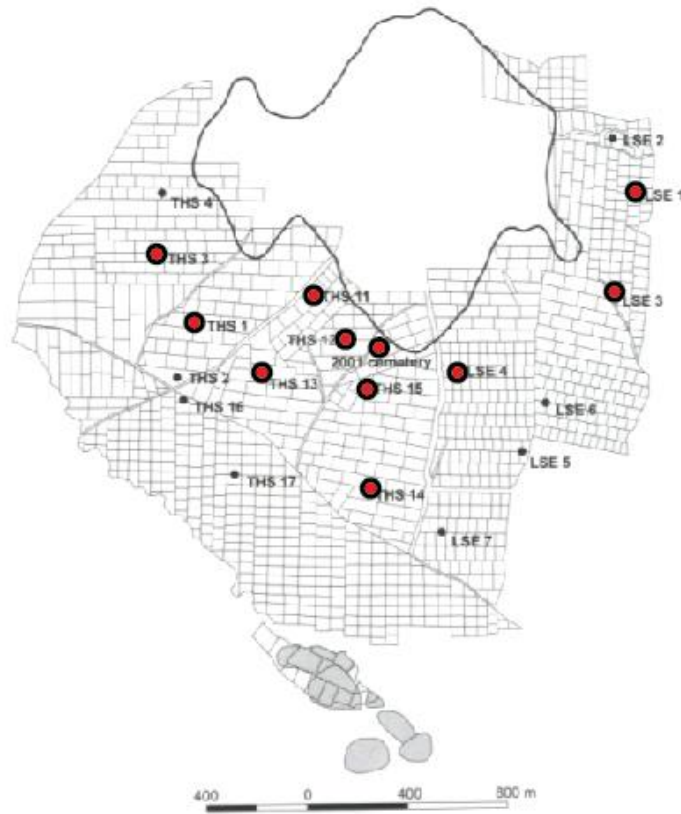


Fig. 11 Map of the sites around Thespieae, including the Leondari South East sites. Marked sites are the ones where kantharoi were found.

The village of Leondari is currently located to the east of modern day Thespies. The Leondari South East (LSE) sites however, are lying to the southeast of the ancient city of Thespieae (See Fig. 11). What is visible from the table (see Table 10.), is that many kantharoi were found in these sites, especially in the transects 123, 124 and 125 from findspot Lse4. It is therefore interesting to know what the function of these findspots was.

Table 10. Kantharoi from Lse sites

Site	Kantharos
Lse1.gs5, 7	4
Lse1.sa1,3,11,12	5
Lse3	8
Lse4.tr113	1
Lse4.tr123,124,125	108
91LSE.tr.223.1	1

The Lse1 site is again subdivided into the kantharoi which were collected with a grab sample and with a regular sample (see Table 10.). The top site therefore represents the grab samples and the second site represents the regular samples. The grab samples collected 4 kantharoi, and the regular samples have produced 5 kantharoi shards. In the Lse1 site, there are thus a total of 9 kantharos shards.

The Lse1 site was possibly a substantial rural site which reaches a maximal size in Classical times. It has a size of nearly 1.2 ha (Bintliff et al. 2007, 44). In the Archaic period, this was initially a small site of 0.4 ha. It is suggested that this is either a sanctuary with domestic debris from ritual meals (which often occurred at sanctuaries), or a sanctuary with an associated domestic site alongside it. In the Classical period the site grew to 1.2 ha and it had apparently still the sanctuary with the domestic aspects as well. It could also be a shrine on a more private estate, owned by a wealthier Thespian family (Bintliff et al. 2007, 44).

Site Lse 3 was a very large site. It is probable that this site mainly has an agricultural function, yet it might be possible that it incorporated a small, rural sanctuary and a burial usage.

The hypothesis more strongly supported by the evidence, is the funerary use of (parts of) the site (Bintliff et al. 2007, 49).

Site Lse4, with its size of ca. 1.8 ha, represents something more than a typical rural family cemetery. It either could have been used by a larger group of people, such as larger kin groups or more farms and hamlets from the area, or the time-span of the usage of the cemetery was relatively long.

The usage of this cemetery started around 500 BC, possibly earlier, and incorporated a distinct clustering in the graves (Bintliff et al. 2007, 53). This vouches for the usage of multiple kin- or farm-groups of this cemetery. The fact that 108 kantharos shards were found on this site definitely shows a preference for placing kantharoi in this type of environment by the local inhabitants.

The last entry where one kantharos was found is a transect, which means that this kantharos was located in an offsite area.

3.1.5 Askris Potamos

Askris Potamos is a site located at the southern part of the river Askris. In total, eight kantharoi were found on this site. All of these kantharoi can be traced back to areas which are interpreted as Classical cemeteries. Tr13 and Tr14 are situated on either side of a settlement of that same period.

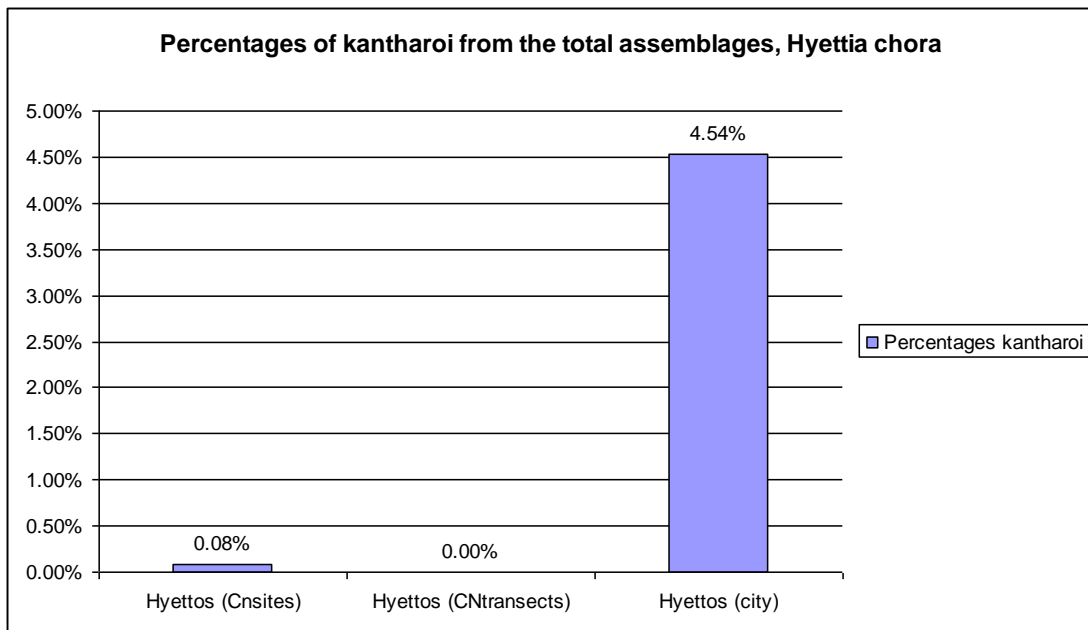
Table 11. Kantharoi from Askris Potamos

Site	Kantharos
tr5	1
tr13	1
tr14	6

3.1.6 Upper Archontiki

The findspot of Upper Archontiki is located in the most eastern part of the Thespike chora. It is situated to the south of the road from Thespieae to Thebes. This findspot mainly consists of medieval activity, even containing a medieval village. Nevertheless, earlier activity also took place here. One kantharos was located here, but the nature of the activities from these earlier periods are not known.

3.2 Kantharoi in the Hyettia chora



Graph 2. Percentages of kantharoi from the total assemblages in the Hyettia chora.

Three types of sites are distinguished in the Hyettia chora. The site in the nucleus contains the actual city, seen in Graph 2. on the far right. The radius around the city contains the rural sites or in this case called the CN sites. The transects are the areas between the sites, and are thus termed offsite area. From the graph it can be clearly seen that the city contained the most kantharoi: a number of 336 pieces from a total of 7394 for the Archaic-Classical period.

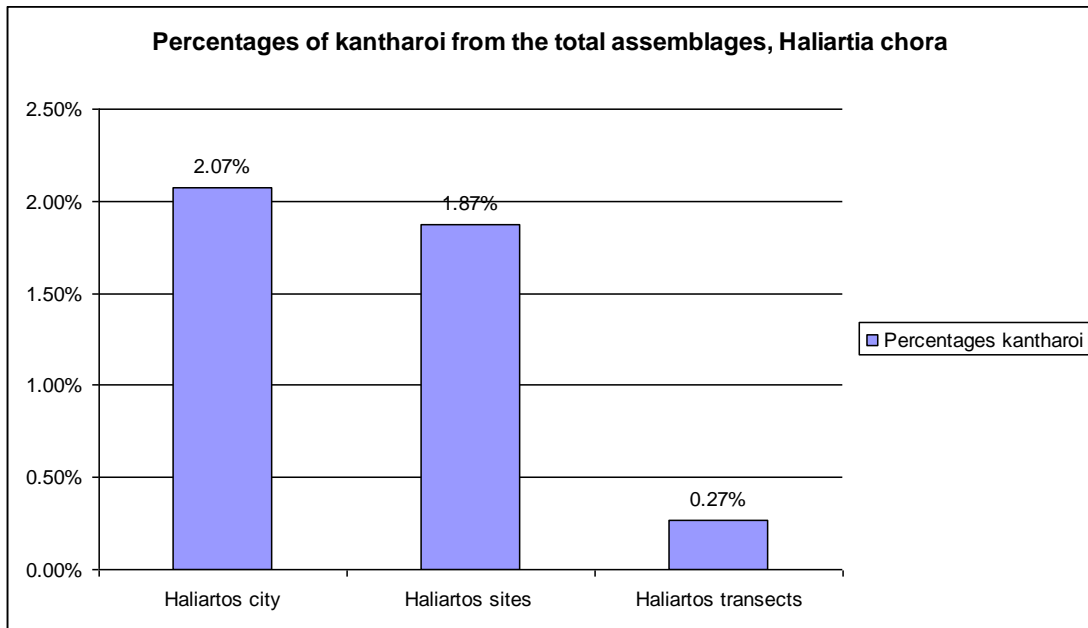
The findspots mentioned in Table 11 are the findspots which contain one kantharos or even multiple kantharoi. All of these findspots are within the city unit, so these could be used for public or even domestic purposes. When looking at the bottom of the table we see that an enormous amount of kantharoi was collected from samples 524, 525, 529 and 530. The cause for these high numbers in these grids (529 and 530) may lie in the fact that the city contained a Classical sanctuary. Architectural survey confirms this. This result certainly confirms that the function of the kantharos was of a more ritual nature.

The CN sites also contain a small number of kantharoi. One shard was collected in site CN1 and three in site CN6. CN1 was a small Classical farm site. CN6 was interpreted as a larger rural site, which was used in Greek and also in Roman times. The kantharoi were thus not found in a ritual or funerary context in these findspots. No kantharoi were discovered in the transects between the sites, so these will not be discussed here.

Table 12. Kantharoi from Hyettos

Site	Kantharos
Hy.92.CS.sa5.8	1
Hy90.21SE14	1
" " 26SE17	1
26NW14	1
26NW33	1
sample 73	1
sample 78	1
sample 83	1
sample 88	1
sample 126	1
sample 141	4
sample 143	1
sample 150	1
sample 171	1
sample 175	1
sample 195	1
sample 231	1
sample 239	1
sample 245	1
sample 266	1
sample 305.6	1
sample 306.14	1
sample 346.26	1
sample 414.2	1
5NW9	1
9NW16	1
10.NW23	1
15SE19	1
sample 505	1
sample 523	1
sample 524	43
sample 525	29
sample 529	10
sample 530	170

3.3 Kantharoi in the Haliartia chora



Graph 3. Percentages of kantharoi from the total assemblages in the Haliartia chora.

The Haliartia chora consists, just as the Hyettia chora, of three separate datasets. The Haliartos city contained 2.07% of kantharoi, of the total Archaic and Classical finds. These kantharoi are visible in Table 13 (see Table 13). The kantharoi from the Haliartos city probably had a public or domestic function. The kantharoi from the Haliartos sites, which are the rural sites surrounding the city, are visible in Table 13.

Table 13. Kantharoi from Haliartos City

Site	Kantharos
Tr45	1
Tr46	3
Sa57	1
Sa70	1

Table 14. Kantharoi from Haliartos sites

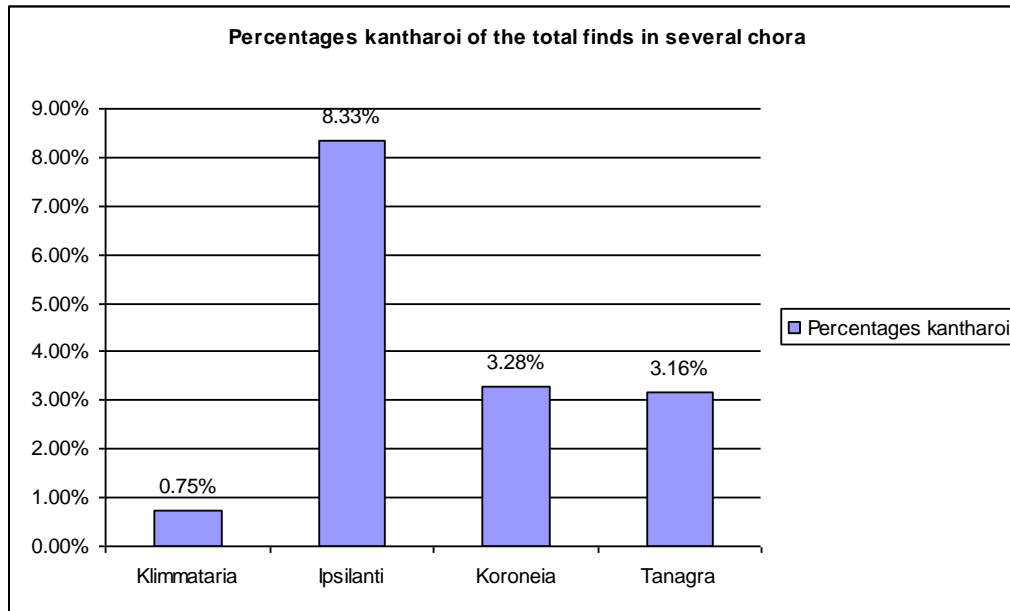
Site	Kantharos
Halb2.Tr.2054	10
Halb6.Tr.654	1

Table 15. Kantharoi from transects

Site	Kantharos
Tr.183.W	1
Tr.186.A	1
Tr.212.W	1
Tr.189.A	1

Site Hal B2 consists of a Frankish tower, yet has a large activity focus of Early Helladic times (see Table 14.). It was also occupied in Classical times, suggested by the ten kantharos shards dated to the Classical period in Hal B2. The precise function of the site is not yet clear. Hal B6 was in use as a small rural site. Then lastly, four kantharoi shards were collected from the transects. These transects (as stated above) were not part of a site, thus these kantharoi merely lay there as offsite scatters (Tab. 15).

3.4 Kantharoi in the Thebais chora



Graph 4. Percentages of kantharoi in several sites from different chora.

The sites Klimmataria and Ipsilanti, both visible in Graph 4 and Fig. 10, are both located in the Thebais chora. The Klimmataria site will be discussed first. Farinetti briefly discusses Klimmataria stating that Klimmataria was mainly a Roman settlement and had a Late Roman activity focus (Farinetti 2009, 196-197). However, the conductors of the survey considered the main activity focus to be Frankish, however with an earlier function as a Classical sanctuary site (after J. Bintliff, pers. comm.). The Classical sanctuary theory is attested by a small altar and the fact that several kantharoi from the Archaic-Classical period were found on this site makes it clear that activity from this period was certainly present. An entirely Frankish or Roman activity focus is thus too narrow for this site.

Table 16. Kantharoi from Klimmataria sites

Site	Kantharos
K1.sa27	1
K1.sa37	1
K1.sa40	1
K1.sa48A	2
K1.sa50	1
K1.sa50 S1	1
K1.sa50 S2	1
K1.sa51	1
K1.sa56	2

The site of Ipsilanti, situated in the north of the Thebais chora at lake Paralimni, had a main focus on Frankish activity. The tower from this period attests this interpretation. However, it also contained one Classical kantharos shard, collected from a grab sample.

3.5 Kantharoi in the Koroneiake chora

The Koroneiake chora is named after the ancient city of Koroneia. The data from this chora comes from the city of Koroneia itself. In Table 17 the grids are visible in which the kantharoi were found (Tab. 17). In Fig. 12 the exact location of these grids is indicated by red dots. The numbers visible in several of the dots (also Fig. 12) show the number of kantharoi found in that particular grid. What is visible from this distribution map, is that there is a cluster in a domestic area north of the agora, consisting of the 368, 373, 378 and 379 grids. Could this perhaps be a public dining place, such as the ones on the Athenian agora, or could this area have a more ritualistic function than the supposed domestic purpose?

In fact, five kantharoi were indeed found in grid 388, which contains the only sanctuary within the city known so far.

Table 17. Gridnumbers and their kantharoi of Koroneia city.

Gridnumbers	Kantharoi
106	1
122	2
126	2
132	1
141	1
147	1
177	1
193	1
358	1
366	1
367	4
368	6
372	1
373	11
376	2
378	4
379	11
380	1
383	1
385	1
388	5
389	1

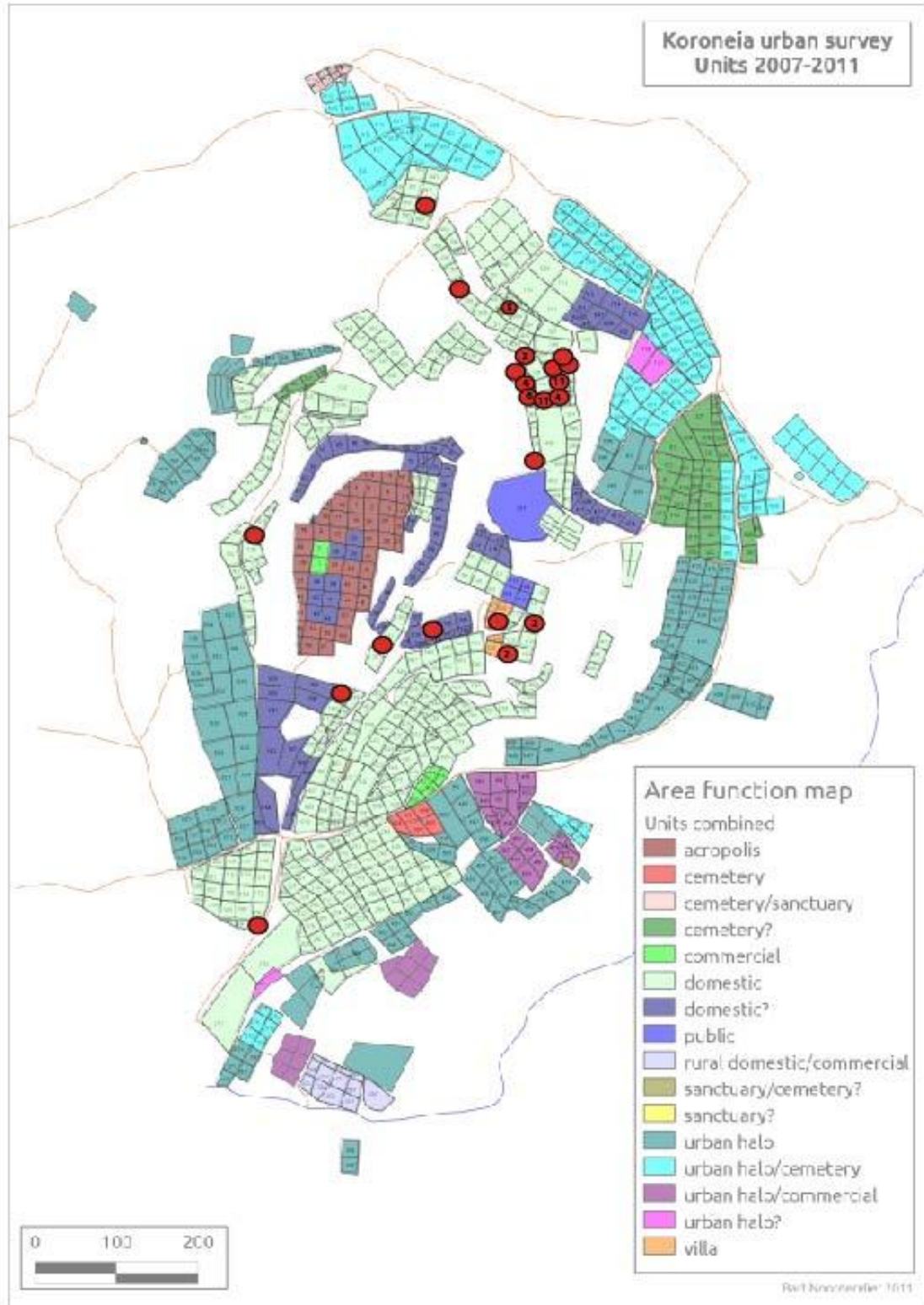


Fig. 12 Distribution map of the kantharoi from Koroneia.

3.6 Kantharoi in the Tanagrike chora

Table 18. Kantharoi from Tanagra in the Tanagrike chora.

Site	Kantharos
TA0.003	2
TA0.005	2
TA0.009	1
TA1.71.B.1	1
TA1.75.C2	1
TA1.78.B.1	1
TA1.79.B2	1
TA1.84.C1	1
TA1.84.C.1	1
TA1.86.A2	1
TA1.91.B.1	1
TA1.93.A1	1
TA2.124.B1	1
TA2.125.A1	1
TA2.130.A1	1
TA2.130.B1	1
TA2.130.D1	1
TA2.134.C1	1
TA2.102.A1	1
TA2.107.B1	1
TA2.114.A1	1
TA2.115.C.1	1
TA1_TS1.M	1
TA3.TS25	3
TA3.TS26	2
TA5.TS28	20
TA5.TS37	1

The kantharoi of the city of Tanagra and its surroundings comprised 3.16% of the total of finds from the Archaic and Classical period. The kantharos shards and their specific findspots are visible in Table 18 (see Table 18.).

The TA0 findspots which together consist of 5 kantharoi are city units, similar to the TA1 and TA2 kantharoi, which are urban units as well. The TA1_TS1 findspot consists of a small farm site, in use in the Classical period. The TS25 findspot is a rural farm site, similar to TS26. These were in use over several periods, including Archaic and Classical times. TS28, which contained the high number of 20 kantharoi, was in use as a Classical cemetery. TS37 is another rural farm site. This shows again that the kantharos was linked to funerary contexts.

3.7 Usage of other drinking vessels besides the kantharos

The numbers of the kantharoi and their contexts in the province of Boeotia have been thoroughly discussed in the previous section. Alongside the kantharoi there were other drinking vessels in use, it is therefore important to look at the other cups. Especially when a more ritual role is ascribed to the kantharos, it is important to know which cups could have been used in everyday life by the ancient Boeotians. In table 19 below the numbers of the kantharos, skyphos, kylix and normal cups are listed (Tab. 19.) for the areas covered by the Boeotia survey.

Table 19. Comparison between amount of kantharoi, skyphoi, kylikes and cups.

Site/dataset	Kantharos	Skyphos	Kylix	Cup
Askris Potamos (Askpot)	8	0	0	0
Askra (Askredit)	15	21	3	15
Thespieae City (1986+1985)	26	24	11	36
Thespieae East sites (Eastsites)	7	6	4	0
Leondari South East sites (LSENEW)	126	14	16	22
Leondari South East transects (LSETRS)	1	0	0	0
Thespieae Thb sites (TH_B79)	4	5	0	0
Thespieae Southwest sites (Thes_sw)	52	15	24	2
Thespieae transects (Ths_trs)	3	0	0	0
Valley of the muses (Vmsites)	34	20	30	22
Palaiopanagia (PPsort)	38	15	10	30
Haliartos city (Halcity)	6	4	4	10
Haliartos sites (Halsites)	11	2	1	13
Haliartos transects (Haltrs)	4	8	4	0
Hyettos city (Hyettos)	336	61	70	65
Hyettos (Cnsites)	4	6	3	4
Hyettos trs (Cntrs)	0	0	0	0
Klimmataria (Klimmat)	11	31	1	8
Koroneia (KO11)	54	2	0	52

At first glance these numbers might look very alike. The numbers presented in table 19 however also vouch for a more ritual function of the kantharos. When we take the Hyettos city site as an example, it is visible that the kantharoi far outnumber the rest of the cups. Most of the kantharoi came from the sanctuary within the city and explain this high amount. The skyphos, kylix and regular cups might then probably have been used for regular feasting and banqueting within the city, and appear thus in smaller numbers.

The LSENEW dataset containing the Lse sites surrounding Thespieae, also point to a more ritual function for the kantharos. Most of the Lse sites were linked to a funerary context. The 52 kantharos shards were certainly found in funerary context. There are some rural sites and farmsites as well in this area, and these might account for the numbers of regular cups, skyphoi and kylikes.

The two sites described are sites with mainly a ritual or funerary function. This leaves us with the question about sites that were mainly domestically occupied? Thespieae city (datasets Thespieae 1985 + Thespieae 1986) can be considered as mainly an inhabited area without large intramural shrines and sanctuaries.

This is also visible in the table. Although there is a presence of kantharoi, perhaps from small shrines inside the city, the regular cups outnumber them, and skyphoi numbers are not far behind.

This shows a preference of the regular cups, skyphoi and kylikes as the ordinary drinking cups, while the kantharos was seen to be suited for more extraordinary activities.

Furthermore, the site of Askra which can be seen as a mainly domestically occupied area also shows a preference for skyphoi and regular cups over the kantharos. The same goes for the village of Haliartos.

The trend visible in these couple of sites is that the share of 'regular' cups such as skyphoi grows larger when in a domestic area, and the share of kantharoi is larger in areas which are denoted as ritual or domestic areas. This does not rule out the usage of kantharoi in domestic environments completely, yet it is peculiar that the kantharos should appear frequently in ritual or funerary contexts. It is certainly worth thinking about this and keeping this in mind.

3.8 Preliminary conclusion, remarks on the kantharoi and the find contexts

What is visible from these datasets is that although many kantharoi were found in an urban context, probably public, also many kantharoi can be traced to findspots which have been interpreted as a sanctuary or cemetery. This view underpins the ritualistic aspects of the kantharos discussed in 1.4. Several sites can be used to exemplify this occurrence. The sample 350 of the Hyettos city data e.g., which contains 170 kantharoi, is considered to be an intramural sanctuary. This interpretation could be made not only by the massive numbers of fine ware, yet also by the architectural remains.

Cemeteries also contained many kantharoi in these datasets. An example is site TS28 of the ancient city of Tanagra, which was in use as a Classical cemetery. It contained 20 kantharoi.

The city of Thespieae contained relatively less kantharos shards than the rural sites surrounding it, while the offsite scatters also contained very few shards. The focus of the kantharoi therefore was on the rural sites which certainly contained several cemeteries. The table above also shows a trend that the regular drinking cups as skyphoi and kylikes occur as drinking vessels for ordinary banquets and feasts, while the kantharos' share is larger when it comes to funerary and ritual contexts.

As far as we can say now, the data from the Boeotia survey project underlines the function of the kantharos in sanctuaries and cemeteries. However, it was found as well in domestic areas, so maybe shrines were not calculated in the interpretation, or these cups were also used in domestic or public feasts and banquets, although the iconography normally contradicts this.

4. Comparing the data

4.1 Other Surveys in Greece

The particularity of the large presence of kantharoi in the archaeological record of Boeotia can only be appreciated and fully understood in a comparison with other areas of Greece.

By comparing and contrasting the results of the Boeotia survey to the results of four other surveys conducted by other scholars, one immediately sees that the share of kantharoi within the total number of finds is exceedingly large in Boeotia.

In this part the focus will be on the kantharoi only, and the contexts they were found in.

These contexts are also important and their comparison can allow further insights and a more nuanced understanding of the presence or absence of kantharoi.

4.1.1 Lakonia Survey

Lakonia is an area located in the south of the Peloponnesos (see Fig. 10). This survey was carried out during the years 1983 and 1989 (Alcock 1995, 35).

In the entire Lakonia survey, carried out by Cavanagh, Shipley and Crowel, only one shard was identified as a kantharos-piece. The shard was a very thick body fragment, containing black glaze on the in- and outside of the shard. It is dated to 350 – 250 BC, thus this shard belongs to the end of the classical period.

This is of course a very clear example of the difference between Boeotia and Lakonia, when looking at the presence of Archaic and Classical kantharoi. The Classical-Hellenistic shard identified as a kantharos, was found on a site identified as a villa site. The site contained finer pottery than its surroundings and could be a villa producing olive oil. Instead of the kantharos as a drinking cup, the Lakonians used mugs. The mug is one of the most characteristic pottery shapes of Lakonia and it may have served as the standard drinking vessel between the sixth and fourth centuries BC (Cavanagh et al. 1988, 171).



Fig. 13 Lakonia highlighted in red.

4.1.2 Asea Survey

The Asea survey was located around the town of Asea in the province of Arcadia on the Peloponnesos and was conducted by Jeannette and Björn Forsén. Two shards in this entire survey have been identified as part of a kantharos. They have received the numbers 184 and 185 (Forsén and Forsén 2003, 209) There is a possibility of more kantharos-shards between the unidentified body

shards of fineware. However, these shapes are too unclear to make any interpretation out of them. Number 184 can be dated to the 3rd-2nd centuries BC, so this makes the shard not usable for this study. Number 185 has been dated to the second half of the 4th century BC. The locations of these shards are S91A for 184 and S60/21/31 for 185. Only S60 will be discussed here, due to the date of shard 184 (Forsén and Forsén 2003, 209).

S60 contains the site of Asea Paleokastro. This site existed during the Early Neolithic, Middle Neolithic, Late Neolithic, Final Neolithic, Early Helladic I-III, Middle Helladic I-III, Middle Helladic to Late Helladic, Late Helladic IIB-III, Late Geometric, Archaic, Classical, Hellenistic I and Roman period. In Late Archaic or Hellenistic I times, this village was constituted as the polis centre of the area. S60/35-36 was identified as a cult place at the Northern border of the polis.

As can be seen in Fig. 11, S60 is divided into 38 different subareas. In S60/21 the visibility was 10 to 30% in the overgrown parts, while in the cornfield the visibility was 90% (Forsén and Forsén 2003, 96). The kantharos sherd was found in a total of 215 sherds, 5 tiles, 1 animal figurine, 2 loom weights, 92 chipped stones and 4 ground stone tools (Forsén and Forsén 2003, 99). Skyphoi are a more common find in this survey, so together with the couple of kantharoi that were found, they would have functioned as the main drinking vessels in this area.

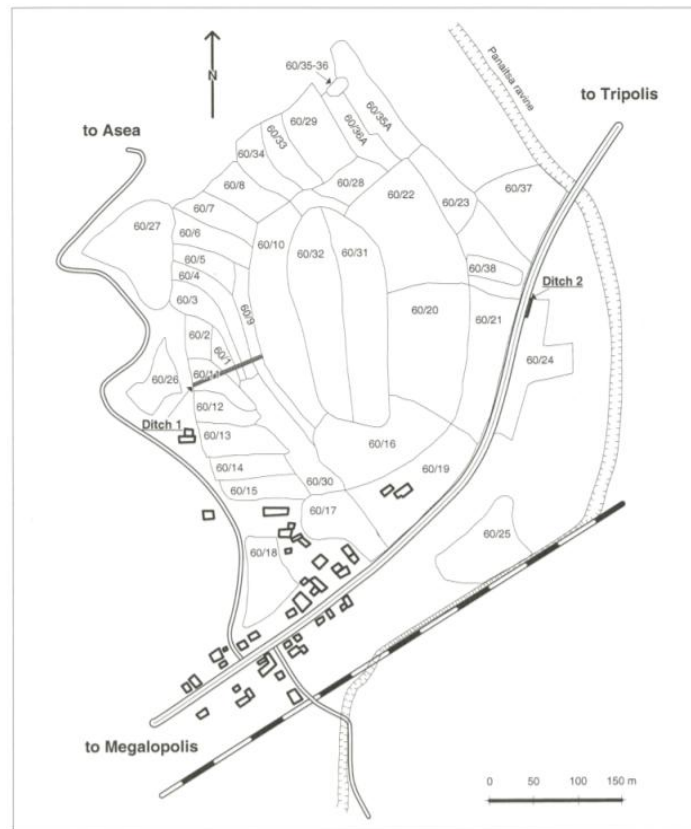


Fig. 14 Map of S60 and its 38 subareas (Forsén and Forsén 2003)

4.1.3 Methana survey

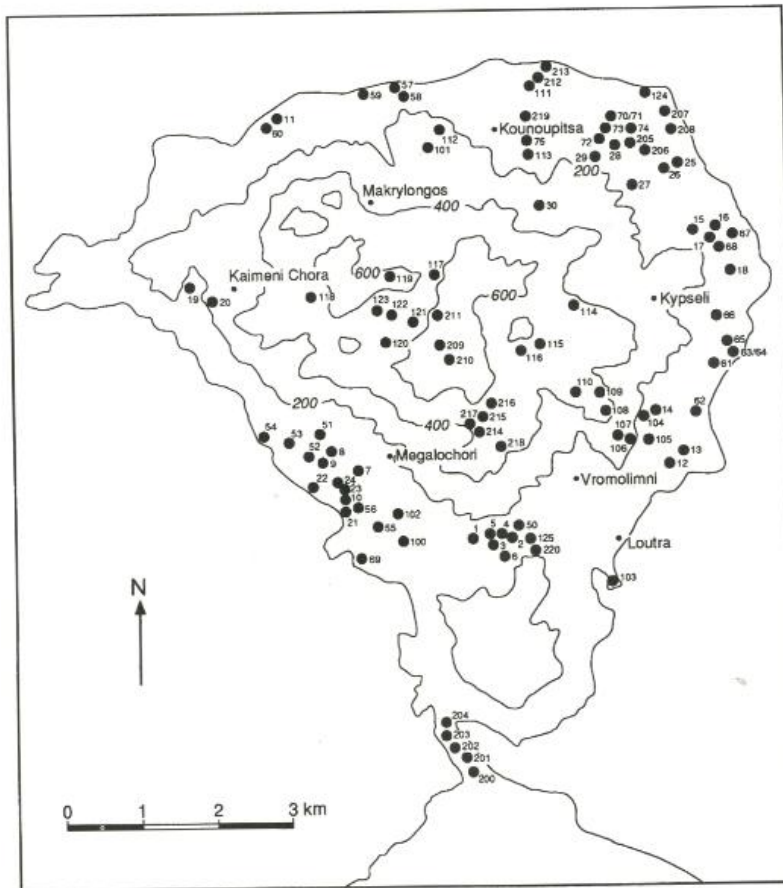


Fig. 15 Site map of the Methana Survey (Mee and Forbes 1997)

Methana is a peninsula at the north side of the Peloponnese (see Fig. 14). The survey in this area was (among others) conducted by Christopher Mee and Hamish Forbes. In total, a number of 35 kantharoi were identified. Some were only possibly identified as kantharoi, these were indicated with brackets. 23 kantharoi were classified as Classical (the rest was considered Hellenistic).

4 of these 23 are not surely identified as kantharoi, while 7 of the remaining 19 are clearly of Attic origin. The kantharoi were found in the following sites: MS005, MS007, MS010 (and the transects around this site), MS030, MS053, MS054, MS060, MS067 (and its transects), MS213 and MS220 (Mee and Forbes 1997). The interpretations of these sites are very important. These interpretations form the contexts of the kantharoi that were found.

The site MS005 was interpreted by Mee and Forbes as a mainly Classical/early Hellenistic residential area.

The site MS007 has been interpreted as a multi-period site. From the size of the scatter it would appear that the position of the centre shifted over time. It might be a farmstead.

MS010 and the transects surrounding this site were interpreted as a major settlement site, where large architectural remains have been recovered. The site is the ancient Methana polis.

MS030 is considered as an isolated Classical-Hellenistic temple. There is no evidence for an associated settlement.

MS053 is considered a settlement between the Classical period and the Late Roman period. MS054 is considered to be related to MS053. Pottery suggests that there was a settlement from the classical to the medieval period. MS060 is considered a settlement from the Early Archaic period to the Hellenistic period.

MS067 is identified as an Early Hellenistic settlement, inhabited until medieval times. There are however many shards from other periods, including the Classical kantharoi, but these have no interpretation.

MS213 was interpreted as a Classical-Hellenistic and Turkish farmstead. The Early Hellenistic pottery might have derived from a site upslope.

The last finding place for kantharoi was MS220. The scholars interpreted this site as a votive deposit area, with a farmstead positioned here in the Classical period.

The cup that was used instead of the kantharos was the skyphos. It was even found in ritualistic and funerary contexts as well, similar to the contexts of several kantharoi in Boeotia (Mee and Forbes 1997, 59).

4.1.4 Keos survey

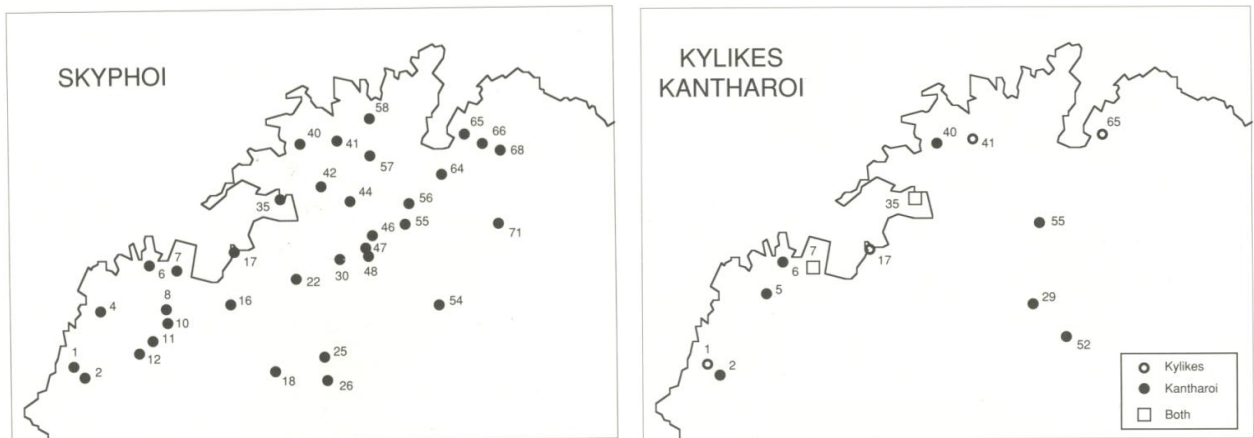


Fig. 16 and Fig. 17 distribution of skyphoi sites on Keos, and the distribution of kylikes and/or kantharoi.

The Keos survey was conducted by the scholars Cherry, Davis and Mantzourani on the Cycladic island of Keos. In the Classical period, skyphoi were certainly the most popular drinking vessel in the area and these are distributed most widely (see Fig. 13).

Most of them are dated to the mid-sixth century through to the 4th century BC. Kantharoi are diagnostic of the 4th and 3rd centuries BC (Cherry et al. 1991, 247-248). Most black glazed tableware, though certainly not all, is Attic import. The widely distributed pattern of kantharoi shows that parts of the inland of the island were still inhabited at the time (see Fig. 14). Both the kantharos and skyphos were eventually replaced by mould made Megarian bowls.

The real amount of kantharoi in the Keos survey data was not published, so this is so far only speculation, yet it seems clear that kantharoi were only a small amount of the entire archaeological survey record.

The information concerning the context from where the kantharoi pieces were found does not offer focus on the interpretations by the scholars, but focuses more on the architectural and environmental features. Although the descriptions are very accurate, the interpretation by the scholars is not often provided. There was for example a kantharos found in a collapsed building with a column, near tower foundations and with a smaller tower in the nearby area at Xyla. The kantharos was from Attic fabric. Furthermore, some kantharoi were found in Ayia Irini, one of the largest sites of the island. And at Diaseli Otzia probably an Attic kantharos was found, and the site also has a brief mentioning of a shrine of Artemis in ancient texts (Cherry et al. 1991, 114). Whether the kantharos could be linked to the shrine is perhaps a bit too hasty. At Treis Ammoudies, the scholars suggest the existence of a temple, however are not certain in this statement (Cherry et al. 1991, 101). Here was also a kantharos discovered. The authors claim that it seems most likely to them that the majority of the finds were deposited in the countryside due to agricultural events (Cherry et al. 1991, 335).

4.1.5 Remarks on these numbers and contexts

It is very clear is that kantharoi were no common feature in the archaeological data in these surveys, in contrast to the Boeotia survey project. We can conclude than, that the kantharos was indeed more popular in Boeotia than in these surveyed areas. The cup that probably took over the role of drinking cup in these areas, was the skyphos. It was more widespread, and in the Methana survey it even took over the role of votive object in ritualistic and funerary contexts. This could mean that the same ideology might have been behind these activities, although another type of cup was found more suitable by the inhabitants. The few kantharoi in these surveys have been found in city-sites, which point to a more domestic functionality. The Keos surveyors suggest that their kantharoi were probably placed in the countryside due to agricultural events, which points to no specific function at all. We can conclude by looking at these surveys that Boeotia is indeed unique when it comes to their usage of kantharoi.

4.2 Context of the kantharoi from the Athenian Agora

Large-scale excavations have resulted in a large sum of books written by several authors on different aspects of the Athenian Agora. Two of them, written by Brian Sparkes and Lucy Talcott, deal with the black and the plain pottery of the sixth, fifth and fourth centuries BC.

Out of the total of 2040 discussed shards and pottery, 99 are considered to be part of a kantharos or are interpreted as a miscellaneous sort of the kantharos. This number represents only a small fraction of the total amount of pottery. The percentage of kantharoi from these described pots is 4.85%. The kantharoi have been subdivided into the types discussed in the typology part (see above) and have been dated to the sixth, fifth and fourth centuries BC. Most of the shapes described in these books only occur once or twice in the archaeological record (Sparkes and Talcott 1970, xiii). The contexts of these pieces of pottery will be discussed below. It is important to note however that these are not all of the kantharoi found in the excavations, and the ones which were published together with a description of the context are even less.

4.2.1 Athenian Kantharoi and their context



Fig. 18 The Athenian agora and the Akropolis in the background

4.2.1.1 Kantharoi on sacrificial pyres

Nr. 683, a cup-kantharos with a squat rim, was found in a sacrificial pyre together with another black glazed kantharos. The cups probably have been thrown onto the fire when the pyre was completely burnt down (Young 1951, 115). This would then be different from the interpretations of the Thespian Polyandrion finds (see above).

The numbers 692 and 719 kantharoi, which are described to be a calyx-cup and a kantharos with special handles, were found in a sacrificial pyre as well.

The kantharos with the number 687, which is a bowl-shaped kantharos was also found on a sacrificial pyre and can be dated to the mid-fourth century BC. From the total amount of the described pottery and contexts, we can trace back four kantharoi which were found on a sacrificial pyre.

4.2.1.2 Kantharoi in wells

Two kantharoi, having the numbers 654 and 665, were found in a well called B 12:5, which had a depth of ca. 18.85 meters. The filling (or deposits) of the well was mainly from the late first to second quarter of the fourth century BC, and these kantharoi and the other deposits are therefore dated to ca. 380-350 BC. Four more kantharoi were discovered in well C 12:2, which had a depth of 18.12 meters. The deposit seemed consistent although the deposits stopped in the third century BC. The kantharoi and the other deposits were dated to approximately 375 to 325 BC (Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 386).

Well G 18:1 was 8.90 meters deep. It contained not only a kantharos from the fifth century types, it probably accumulated the debris of three households. It can be dated to 425-400 BC and earlier. The next well in which a kantharos was recovered is well N 7:3. The well was cleared by the excavators to a depth of 10 meters. The use filling however was not reached. The deposit that was recovered was heavy and homogenous of good tableware and household equipment. The well was dated to approximately 460 to 440 BC (Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 395).

Well O 7:9 also harboured a kantharos. The well could not be excavated deeper than 3.10 meters, due to the harsh rock conditions underneath. The dumped filling contained early black figure ware. These deposits were dated to 580 to 565 BC (Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 396)

Q 12:3 is another well containing a kantharos. The depth of the well was 9.70 meters, and the deposit probably represents the stock of a potter's shop near the edge of the square. The excavators ascribe this deposit to the Persian sack of Athens and therefore the potter had to discard of his broken pottery. The complete deposit is dated to ca. 520 to 490 BC.

Q 15:2 is another well which contains a kantharos (nr. 643). The depth of this well is approximately 11.50 meters. It was described as an exceptionally heavy dumped filling, including much fine tableware. The unusually good preservation of many fragile objects suggests that the main part of the filling came from close by. Some of the material was stained with red or reddish grime, which points to industrial activity perhaps (Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 397).

R 13:4 is the last well which contains kantharos number 641. This well contains a heavy dumped filling containing household and tableware. The depth to which was excavated was around 15 meters. The date of the filling is around 440 to 425 BC (Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 398).

4.2.1.3 Kantharoi in cistern shafts

Cistern shafts were used to collect the rain water in order to store it. Only two kantharoi were retrieved in this context.

B 13:1 is the first cistern shaft in which kantharoi number 696 was recovered. The lower dumped filling could be dated to the third century BC and earlier. The level above it could be dated to the first century AD. The kantharos belonged to the lower filling (Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 384).

A kantharos described by the authors as having 'strange handles', was found in cistern D 16:1. The accumulation is reckoned to be of the second half of the fourth century.

4.2.1.4 Kantharoi in (storage) pits

Five contexts could be retrieved as storage pits. Pit C9:6 contained kantharos number 640, which is a Type D (or Sotadean) kantharos (see Typology). It was a square pit in bedrock southwest of the Hephaestion (the temple of Hephaistos on the agora). It also contained marble chips from the construction of the temple. The fillings could be dated to approximately 450 BC (Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 386).

Pit D 5:1 is a stucco lined rock cut pit. It contains debris filling, among which one kantharos was recovered. The date of the pit is from 500 to 350 BC (Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 387).

The next kantharos is a cup-kantharos with a plain rim, and has number 675. It was found in pit D 15:4 and can be dated to the fourth century BC.

Storage pit J 18:4 recovered household debris providing a good variety of black and plain wares, including a kantharos. Several of this pottery has been marked with the owner's name, which was Thamneus. The pit is dated to 550 BC (Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 394).

Kantharos number 636 was found in pit Q 8:11. The filling mostly consisted of coarse wares and some disturbances were shown as late as the second quarter of the fourth century.

4.2.1.5 Kantharoi in house fillings

The house fillings start off with C 19:5. This filling contains a one-handled kantharos. The fillings are dated to the fifth and fourth centuries BC.

In house filling H 7:1 a kantharos sessile with high handles was found (See Typology). This house filling was positioned behind the retaining wall of the stoa of Zeus on the agora. The debris probably belonged to a pottery establishment which was destroyed in order to make way for the new structure. The filling is dated to 435 to 425 BC (Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 392).

Construction filling O 16:1-2 also yields a kantharos (number 646). The debris here is an earlier filling of South Stoa I. It contains a considerable deposit of black and plain wares, and is mostly an

accumulation of the third quarter of the fifth century. It was however deposited nearer the end. The complete date of the filling is ca. 420 to 400 BC.

Kantharos number 635 is found in construction filling O-R 7-10. There are construction fillings in this deposit from the fourth century BC and earlier. An investigation beneath the square Peristyle under the stoa of Attalos levels it sooner than the building of the Peristyle. It contains construction fillings of the Peristyle as well. The latter layer of fillings can be ascribed to the third quarter of the fourth century BC (Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 396).

The kantharos Type B (number 632) is found in fillings P-R 6-12. The fillings date to 150 BC, yet most of the material is earlier. The fillings come from the Stoa of Attalos (Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 397).

4.2.1.6 Kantharos in loose filling over bedrock

Last but not least, we do have one account for a kantharos found in the loose gravelly filling, which lies over the bedrock on the agora. It is marked as S 17:3. The kantharos which was found was a Type D (Sotadean) cup. It can be dated to the fourth century BC and earlier (Sparkes and Talcott 1970, 399).

4.2.2 Remarks

Although we do not have all the data of the recovered pottery, we can look at what we do have and offer some observations. The fact that only four kantharoi were found on a sacrificial pyre, from the total of 29 is not very much. The public context is shown to be important with these 'results' from the agora, due to the fact that the majority comes from public fillings. 24 out of the 29 contexts were related to public contexts such as wells, storage pits and house fillings on the agora. The agora is in itself a public area. In one well, there were four kantharoi recovered. The fact that many kantharoi were thrown away in wells and storage pits instead of finding them in a funerary context or near a sanctuary shows that maybe another function was emphasized in this area.

4.3 Brief conclusion on the comparison between Boeotia and other areas

What we can conclude with certainty is that the amount and context of kantharoi in Boeotia is relatively unique. When looking at the surveys, it is very obvious that ancient inhabitants from other regions definitely preferred another type of cup. Most of these surveys point to the skyphos as the more preferred cup.

Although Athens did produce kantharoi, it is probable that the cup was not well used in the city. The contexts from which the Athenian kantharoi were retrieved seem to give us some interesting insights. The fact that several were found on a sacrificial pyre, suggests that kantharoi were used in funerary or ritualistic events. Because of the absence of many excavations in Boeotia the number of kantharoi burnt on pyres is not known. Yet it does come back in the Rhitsona grave where several kantharoi were thrown onto the pyre which was already burnt down. Nevertheless, the amounts of kantharoi in wells, storage pits, house fillings and even occasionally cistern shafts suggest a domestic function of the kantharos. Furthermore, due to the lack of correct amounts it is not certain whether the skyphos was not also preferred by these Athenians.

The Athenians did not deposit these kantharoi in graves, or in sanctuaries, although they definitely had some sanctuaries dedicated to Dionysos. All in all this accounts for quite a difference in use and supports the view that the kantharos was perhaps more special in Boeotia, and played a more prominent role as a ritualistic cup there.

5. Conclusion

In this thesis, three questions were asked in order to help to answer the research question. The questions were:

- Was Boeotia really the only area in which the kantharos was popular in this period?
- What was the particular function of this cup?
- Is the function linkable to the popularity?

Now we can start answering them. Boeotia was indeed the only area in Greece in which the kantharos was well used and widespread. Where the kantharos originally came from is not certain, but without doubt with some influence from Athens, Boeotia made the cup part of its own culture. The inhabitants were large consumers of their own production. The cup evolved over time, with no influence from the outside. Practically no kantharoi were exported to other regions, except perhaps to Euboea. These aspects made it even more Boeotian. The deposits of kantharoi in graves and sanctuaries are typically Boeotian as well. The few kantharoi which were found in the compared surveys, were found in domestic contexts or in the countryside.

Having answered the first question, we can now focus on the particular function of the kantharos. The kantharos appeared both in domestic sites such as rural farms or cities, as well as in more ritualistic contexts, such as graves and sanctuaries. It is perhaps considered a bit too easy, seeking refuge in religious or ritualistic explanations, and when writing the introduction to my research I partially agreed with this statement. Nevertheless, the connections between mythology, iconography, ideology and the kantharos are very strong and cannot be easily ignored.

The fact that Boeotians used other cups in relatively similar quantities, except for places where more ritualistic or religious functions were practiced such as cemeteries, could support the more 'special' purpose of the kantharos.

The specific function of the kantharos is still not very clear, although the large numbers of kantharoi in sanctuaries and graves seem to shift the function towards the ritualistic usage. The mythology and iconography also claim the function to be of a more ritualistic or even religious nature. The vessel's connection to the symbolic of death and the resurrection of Dionysos with his symbol, the kantharos, should also be included in the list of possible ideological functions. However, the kantharos as grave good to provide a drinking cup for the deceased for banquets in the afterlife seems perhaps more improbable. This is, due to the lack of images of banquets including kantharoi, on, for example grave markers. At the same time, the image of normal humans feasting with kantharoi is also very rare and hence does not really support this theory.

However, the appearance of kantharoi in rural farm sites and in city sites point to a domestic usage of the cup. The conclusion on the particular function is therefore not very precise.

The third question involves the popularity of the cup, and if it is linkable to its particular function. Because the function of the kantharos is not clear, several optional functions will be used to answer this question. If the kantharos was solely used as a drinking cup, there is no specific link to the province of Boeotia in order to explain its popularity in this area. However, when including the mythological aspect of this cup, it can be explained to some extent. Dionysos was the son of Zeus and Semele, who in turn was the daughter of the founder of Thebes. This might explain the locality of the popularity of Dionysos' cup. However, for the other functional options, such as the symbol of death and the link to resurrection and fertility, there is no real argument for its sole usage in this particular area, and the cup should than be used in other areas as well.

The function is therefore not entirely linkable to the popularity. However, when combining several of these functions, it can be linked to Boeotia via Dionysos.

Coming back to the research question which stood at the beginning of this enquiry. The research question was why the kantharos appeared in large numbers in Boeotia.

Only a general answer can be given to this question due to the fact that the function of the cup is still not quite clear. The kantharos was probably a widely used cup in Boeotia due to its link with a famous and locally highly popular god. The Boeotians probably had their own ideology surrounding this deity and the cup, which makes the cup such a widespread drinking vessel. Probably this cup played a role in the regional 'cultural' identity of the Boeotian province. This should at least explain the lesser appearance of the cup in other regions.

There are still some questions left unanswered and will require further research to understand this prominent cup and the 'people behind the pots'.

6. Summary and Samenvatting

Summary

This thesis tries to account for the high amount of kantharos-shards in the archaeological context of the Greek province of Boeotia. The kantharos is a drinking cup with a distinguishable shape. High incurving handles, an upper and lower body divided by a narrow offset and a high stem and foot are some of its characteristics. There is no consensus about why this cup was so important and well used in the Archaic and Classical periods in Boeotia. This thesis tries to uncover the reasons for being used so well in this region by focusing on several viewpoints, such as the kantharos' origin, the link to mythology and several typologies.

The still largely unpublished datasets from the *Boeotia survey Project* are being used here for the amounts of kantharoi and their contexts. This information is ultimately compared to other surveys and excavations from several regions of Greece, to see whether Boeotia actually was unique in this respect.

With these viewpoints this thesis not only tries to answer the research question, but also tries to give an overall view on the research on kantharoi in general.

Samenvatting

Deze scriptie probeert de grote aantallen kantharoi in de Griekse provincie Boeotië te verantwoorden. De kantharos is een drinkbeker met een duidelijk herkenbare vorm. Enkele kenmerken zijn hoge, naar binnen gedraaide handvatten, een bodem en wand die gescheiden worden door een kleine knik en een voet met een hoge poot. Er is nog geen consensus over de reden waarom deze beker zo belangrijk was en waarom hij zo vaak voorkwam in de Archaische en Klassieke periode in dit gebied. Deze scriptie probeert deze redenen aan het licht te brengen met behulp van verschillende punten, bijvoorbeeld de oorsprong van de kantharos, zijn connectie met de Griekse mythologie en de verschillende typologieën die in de loop der tijd zijn gemaakt.

De datasets van de *Boeotia Survey Project* zijn tevens gebruikt in deze scriptie, alhoewel deze grotendeels nog niet zijn gepubliceerd. Met deze datasets worden de aantallen kantharoi en hun context onderzocht.

Deze gegevens worden uiteindelijk nog vergeleken met de data van surveys en opgravingen van verschillende andere gebieden in Griekenland, om te zien of Boeotië uniek was op dit gebied.

Met deze informatie probeert deze scriptie niet alleen een antwoord te krijgen op de onderzoeksvraag, maar is het ook de bedoeling om een algemeen beeld te geven van het onderzoek naar kantharoi.

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