

Evrychou-Phoenikas Tomb V in the Karkotis Valley, Cyprus: *The Ceramics*

KRISTINA WINTHER-JACOBSEN

Abstract

The article presents and discusses the ceramics and associated burial customs from Evrychou-Phoenikas Tomb V, a large chamber tomb of the Hellenistic-Roman period in the Karkotis Valley in the hinterland of Skouriotissa excavated by Dr. Giorgos Georgiou of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus. The tomb belongs at the end of a long Cypriot tradition of depositing rich gifts including multiple ceramic vessels with the burials and reusing tombs for multiple burials over a long period. The ceramics are mostly of local production and the functions reflect the customs of depositing food and drinks as well as the need to treat the bodies with unguents and the need to light the way into the tomb. A single ink pot is the only ceramic vessel that can be categorized as a personal object. The proportional distribution of vessels of different functions is explored to understand the potential changes in the associated burial customs during the Hellenistic and Early Roman periods.

Keywords: Archaeology, Cyprus, ceramics, Hellenistic, Roman, burial customs

Introduction

In 2000, Evrychou-Phoenikas Tomb V was discovered by construction work and excavated by Dr. Giorgos Georgiou of the Department of Antiquities Cyprus.¹ At the time *The Troodos Archaeological and Environmental Survey* was just starting the survey of the area, and Dr. Georgiou invited me to study and publish the ceramics from this tomb. The full publication of Evrychou V became delayed for many different reasons, not least the death in 2007 of Dr. Danielle Parks, who studied the extraordinary glassware and metal objects. The loss of this extraordinary person was felt deeply among her friends and colleagues in Cyprus and abroad. It has been some years since a tomb in this region of Cyprus was published, and since then the synthetic pottery study of John Lund has appeared, which covers almost the same period as the use of the tomb.² I therefore believe it is important to make the material available even if conclusions await the publication of the architecture, remains of furniture, and additional artefacts.³

Evrychou-Phoenikas Tomb V is located in the northern foothills of the Troodos Mountains on the eastern side of the Karkotis Valley. According to the excavation report of Dr. Georgiou, the main chamber of the tomb is almost 10 m long and it has five loculi, two of which

¹ Protocol 72/38/7, 10/5/200 (K49-46). Inv. 2001/XII-3/1. I am very grateful to Dr. Georgiou for his understanding and support for me to publish the ceramics and the discussion as a separate part of the publication of this important tomb.

² Lund 2015.

³ The same situation applies to the study of Ambeli tou Englezou, MP3339, also published in this volume (Winther-Jacobsen 2022), and I apologize to readers of both articles for the repetitions. The size of the assemblages alone supports the choice to publish the tombs separately, but there are also important differences in the regional distribution patterns of specific types, which would be obscured by a unified publication. This article focuses more specifically on the regional aspect of the north-western Troodos. For comparison of Evrychou V and MP3339 see Winther-Jacobsen 2022.

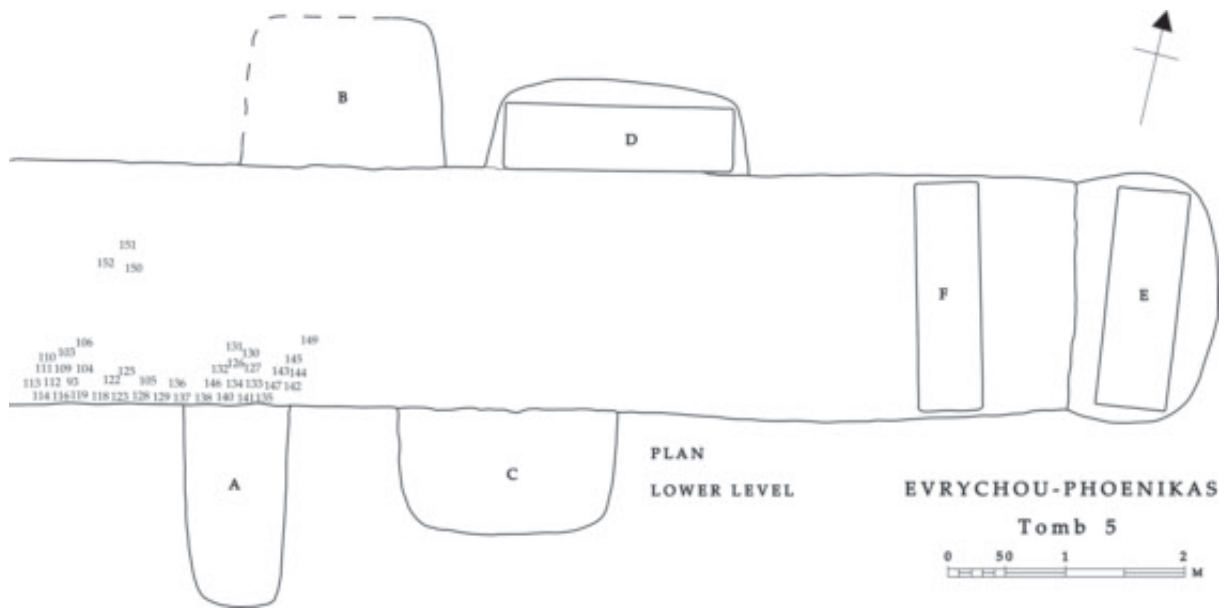


Fig. 1. Plan of Evrychou Tomb V, lower level (Copyright Giorgios Georgiou).

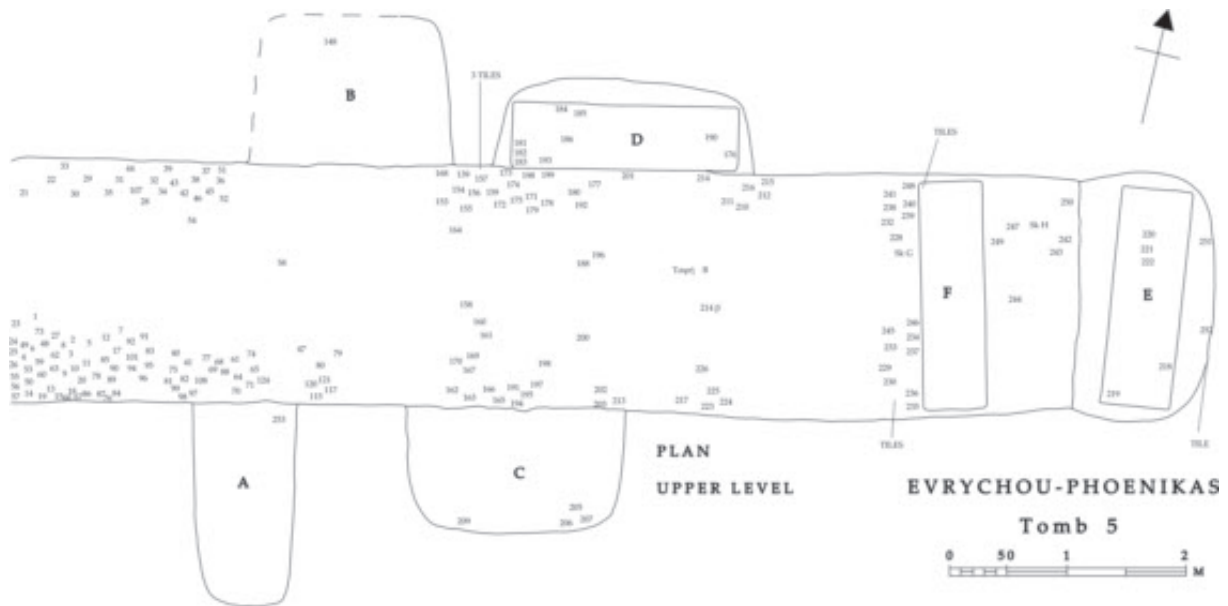


Fig. 2. Plan of Evrychou Tomb V, Upper level (Copyright Giorgios Georgiou).

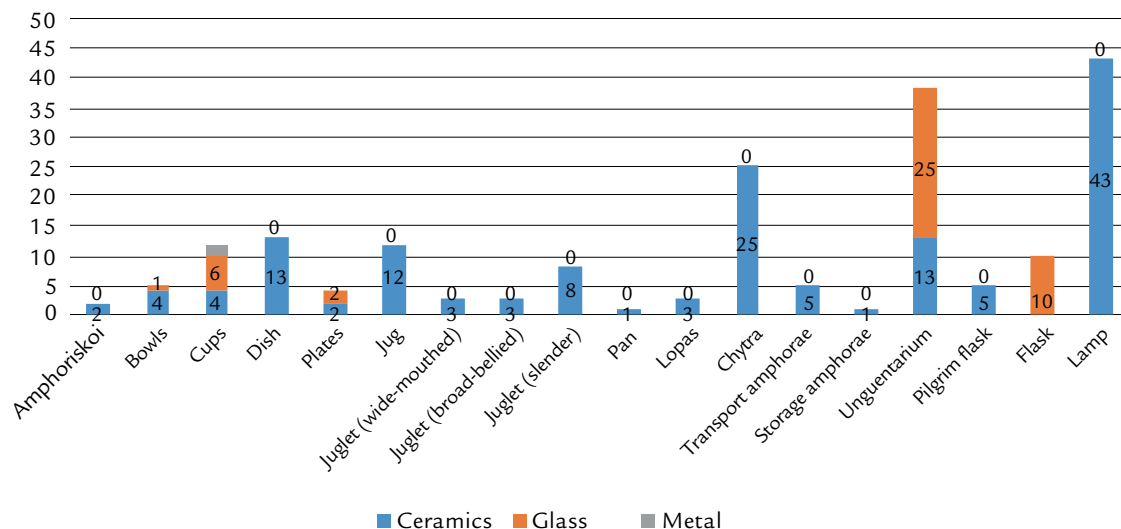


Fig. 3. Distribution of vessels by shape including ceramic, glass, and metals (total number of vessels 191).

are occupied by plain stone sarcophagi originally covered with tiles (Figs 1-2). A third sarcophagus was placed in the main chamber, blocking the loculus behind. The dromos is not preserved. The majority of objects in the tomb were deposited along the walls just inside the presumed entrance, where one of the earliest burials, as well as the offerings related to one of the latest burials, were both located in different strata.

Burial context and rites

At the time of its excavation, Evrychou V had collapsed. Two basic strata could be discerned, but the stratigraphy was much disturbed as suggested by, for instance, the location of pilgrim flask, no. 122, dated to the 1st to 3rd centuries AD in the lower stratum, although the tomb did not appear to have been looted. The disturbance makes it difficult to reconstruct individual burials deposited at intervals in the tomb over the period of 600-650 years of use. In that period of time, a wide range of vessels of ceramics, glass, and metal was deposited in the tomb, as well as personal objects such as jewellery, pins and needles, mirrors, pyxides, strigils, spindle whorls, an inkpot, and of course coins (see Figs. 3-4 for the vessels).

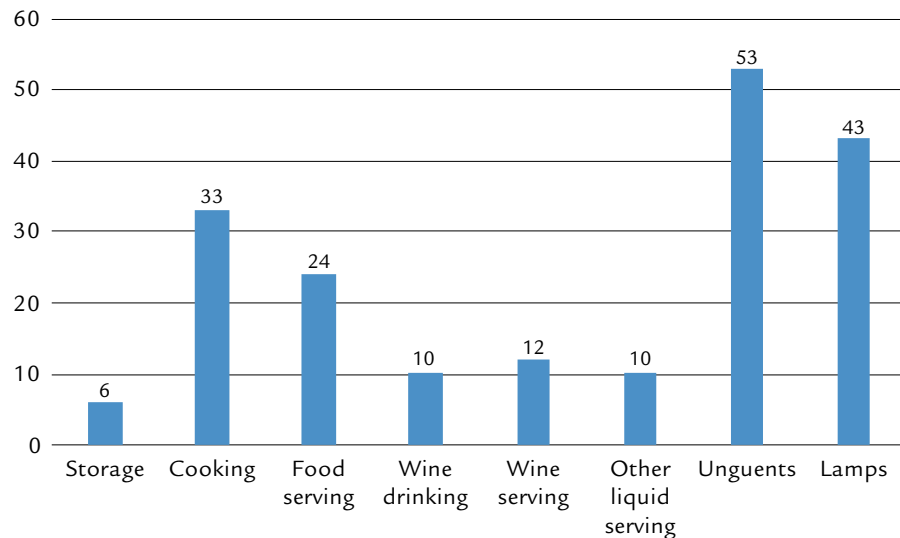
Altogether, the tomb comprised 193 vessels, of which 147 were ceramics. The widest range of vessel shapes and functions is represented by ceramics. Glass and metal were reserved for smaller vessel types such as bowls, cups, plates, and unguentaria of various kinds.⁴ The pyxis is of course also a vessel, but the metal pyxides are more likely to belong to the sphere of personal objects than with the food-related grave goods. Gender- and status- specific artefacts also belong to the sphere of personal objects rather than the sphere of food-related objects, although the number of vessels is believed to reflect status in a general way.⁵ The only finds in the ceramics category of personal objects are an ink pot (no. 48) and a spindle whorl (no. 46). The finds from the tomb also included nine ceramic tiles (nos. 284-292). All the ceramic artefacts are included in the catalogue below according to their original inventory number.

Surprisingly the highest number of any vessel type represented is the forty-three lamps, of which twenty reveal clear evidence of use, while the use of another twelve is insecure due to the state of preservation. The vast majority of lamps are dated to the Roman period, and indeed, lamps represent the latest datable ceramics in the tomb. Together with the unguentaria, the lamps may be the only vessels related to the rituals surrounding the actual burials

⁴ The glassware and metals as well as the tomb architecture will be published by different authors.

⁵ Parks 1999, 318.

Fig. 4. *Distribution of vessels by function including ceramic and glass (total number of vessels 191).*



in the sense that they provided the light and at least some of the unguentaria provided the scented air for the entering of the tomb.⁶ The fact that the entire Hellenistic period is represented by only two lamps suggests that lamps were probably taken away when the tomb was closed during this period.

There are four occurrences of lamps probably made from the same moulds: nos. 156 and 198 of the Augustan to the Flavian period were found between chamber B and sarcophagus D and to the west, in front of sarcophagus D. Nos. 214 and 252 of the last third of the 1st century AD were found to the east in front of sarcophagus D and behind sarcophagus E. Nos. 101 and 199 of the second half of the 2nd and first quarter of the 3rd century AD were found on the south side of the entrance (upper level) and to the west, in front of sarcophagus D. Nos. 215 and 245 of the 3rd and first half of the 4th century AD were found to the east in front of sarcophagus D and by the southwest corner of sarcophagus F. The distribution highlights the question of reuse, but also pertains to the original fitting of the sarcophagi. Lamps nos. 156 and 198 of the Augustan to the Flavian period may predate the sarcophagi and be related to burials directly in the niches, and the same applies to nos. 214 and 252 of the last third of the 1st century AD. On the other

hand, they may all four have been associated with the burials in the sarcophagi. The tiles used to cover the sarcophagi are dated to the Roman period. Nos. 215 and 245 are clearly related to the use of sarcophagus F, and probably reflect what appears to be the last phase of the tomb in the second quarter of the 3rd AD at the earliest. Of course, the tomb may have been used after this period, when burials became increasingly unaccompanied by grave goods.

In terms of function, lamps also make up the largest group of finds (28%), and unguents make up 23%. The remaining 49% cannot entirely be associated with food customs, as some of the glass juglets (“Other liquid serving”) are relatively small, and they could have been used for oils for personal use rather than consumption or lighting lamps (see below). Ancient authors and archaeological sources testify to the importance of oil in the diet as well as the hygiene of classical antiquity.⁷

During the period of use of Evrychou V, the part of the burial customs relating to the deposition of vessels associated with the cooking, consumption, and storage of food as grave goods changed (Fig. 5).⁸ Some of those changes are caused not by a change in ritual behaviour but by changing fashions in ceramics, such as plates replacing dishes, and the introduction of pilgrim flasks.⁹

⁶ For other possible uses of lamps, see Şöforoğlu & Summerer 2016.

⁷ E.g. Pliny HN XV.1-19; for use, see especially 5; Mattingly 1996.

⁸ Parks 1999.

⁹ Winther Jacobsen 2007, 393.

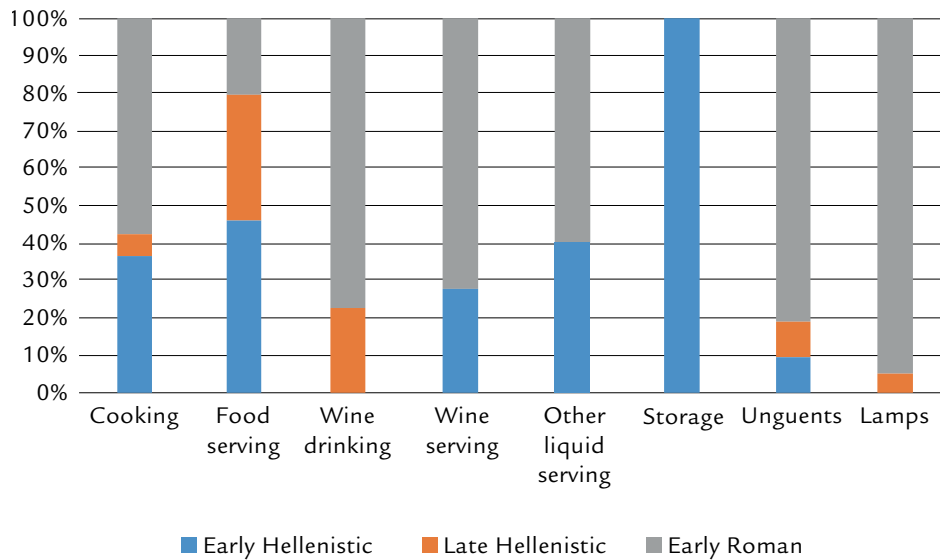


Fig. 5. Proportional distribution of ceramic and glass vessels during the Hellenistic-Roman period (total number of vessels 191).

The pilgrim flasks belong to a large group of vessels morphologically characterized by a combination of small volume and narrow neck and mouth indicating the high priority of control when pouring. Within this category, the flasks and the unguentaria are interpreted as containers of unguents for ritual cleansing of the deceased and odour management. The three types of slender juglets share the characteristics, but may have been used for other types of oils. The high proportional quantity of Early Roman unguentaria supports the patterns observed at Evrychou IV (see below). Compared to the Hellenistic period, the number of unguent containers increased dramatically during the Early Roman period although many of the glass vessels could contain very small amounts.

The custom of depositing amphorae changed in Early Roman times, where instead jugs became more numerous, a pattern also suggested at Kambi and Ayios Theodoros, also in the Troodos Mountains, and Ambeli tou Englezou.¹⁰ According to the study by Danielle Parks, jugs are in fact the most common artefact found in Cypriot Hellenistic-Roman tombs including ceramic, glass and metal.¹¹ The predominance of jugs is part of the ritual development of the Early Roman period, when the fo-

cus shifts from vessels broadly related to the preparation, consumption and storage of food to vessels related more specifically to wine drinking, the jugs and cups. The number of cooking vessels is still high at Evrychou V, which suggests a certain conservatism, but it is largely unaccompanied by serving vessels to go with the cups. Consequently, the cooking vessels may have been used to store food rather than to provide a set table. This is supported by the rare occurrence of casseroles and frying pans.¹² In domestic contexts the ratio is dramatically different. The casseroles make up 50% of the cooking vessels, the chytrai 41%, and the pans 9%, among the inventoried sample at the Athenian Agora.¹³ At Agios Georgios, Nicosia, the ratio is approximately 1:1, and in “bassin 417” at Kition the casseroles outnumber the pots by two to one,¹⁴ even if none of these contexts is a domestic context in the strict sense of the word.

Eustathios Raptou and Antigone Marangou suggested a tendency to deposit vessels in pairs, as in the case of the deposition of Rhodian amphorae at Paphos.¹⁵ The two amphoriskoi, nos. 232 and 238, make an obvious example of a pair, as do juglets nos. 33 and 44, and jugs nos. 79-80, 90, and 100. At Ambeli tou Englezou, a few sets of pairs were

¹⁰ Hadjisavvas 1987; Plat Taylor 1940-48; Winther-Jacobsen 2022.

¹¹ Parks 1999, 323.

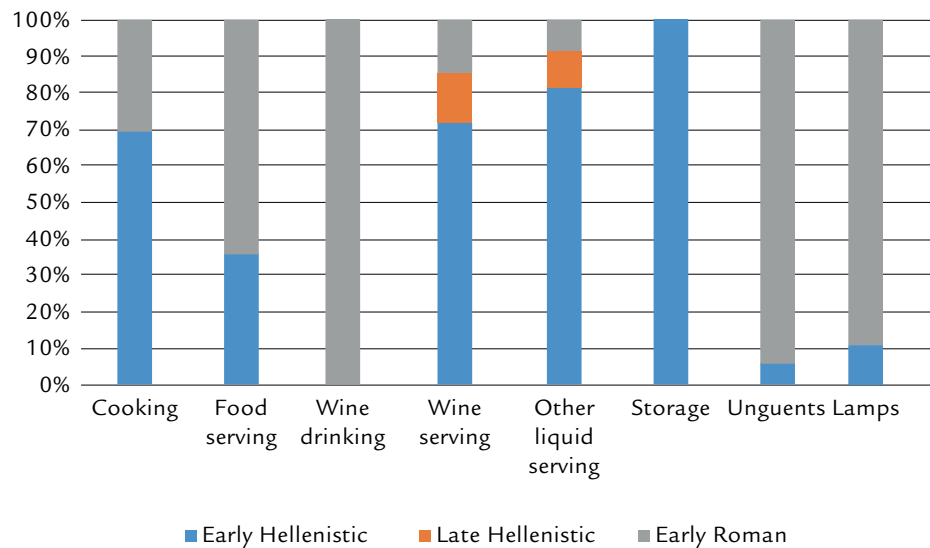
¹² Parks 1999, 343.

¹³ Rotroff 2006, 16, chart 16.

¹⁴ Berlin & Pilacinski 2003, 205-6; Salles & Rey 1993, 227-8.

¹⁵ Raptou & Marangou 2008, 377; for Paphos see Barker 2002, 78.

Fig. 6. Evrychou IV.
Proportional distribution of functions from Early Hellenistic to Early Roman times. The vessels that overlap any two periods were divided equally (total number of vessels 186).



observed, but also sets of triplets,¹⁶ and the same phenomenon occurs in Evrychou V where juglets nos. 43 and 51-52 were found together. Unfortunately, the disturbed stratigraphy hinders the deeper understanding of this trend.

Evrychou V is located in relatively close proximity to Evrychou Tomb IV, published by Ino Nicolaou in 1984, and the two tombs share many similarities including design, architecture, period of use, and depositional practice. Many of the vessels found in Evrychou V have their closest – some, indeed, their only – parallels in Evrychou IV. This is consistent with the results of John Lund's study of discrete circulation patterns of different types of ceramics, indicating that north-western Cyprus was a discrete zone of circulation.¹⁷

Overall, the range of artefacts appears quite similar, and there are similarities in the proportional distribution of functions as well, but mainly if the almost absent Late Hellenistic phase of Evrychou IV is subsumed under the Early Roman period (Figs. 3-4). There is a predominance of wine drinking vessels, unguents, and lamps during the Early Roman period, and the deposition of storage vessels is entirely a phenomenon of the Hellenistic periods.

However, the high proportion of Early Hellenistic jugs and juglets for wine and oil in Evrychou IV is very unusual. Proportionally, the finds from both tombs share a rare occurrence of transport amphorae, which they share with the surface finds of the general region investigated by the Troodos Archaeological and Environmental Survey Project.¹⁸ This is also a trend that sets the Evrychou tombs apart from similar tombs in the coastal areas of Cyprus, for instance Paphos and Polis.¹⁹ On the other hand, the high proportion of lamps in Evrychou V is unusual. Chronology may be a factor at Evrychou since ten of the lamps found in Evrychou V postdate the use of Evrychou IV.²⁰ Each Evrychou tomb only contained two lamps of the Hellenistic period, and the majority of lamps are dated in the first 150 years AD. This trend is corroborated by Parks's survey of Cypriot tombs of the Hellenistic and Roman period, which indicates that the number of lamps increases with the advent of mould-made lamps in the late Hellenistic period and continues to increase from the Hellenistic to the Roman period.²¹

Only three other Cypriot tombs appear to share the very high proportion of lamps, one of which is a tomb

¹⁶ Winther-Jacobsen 2015a, 487-9.

¹⁷ Lund 2015, 154, 159-60.

¹⁸ Winther-Jacobsen 2013a, 64; 2013b, 330.

¹⁹ Winther-Jacobsen 2007, 391-2; Winther-Jacobsen 2015a.

²⁰ Nicolaou 1984, 254.

²¹ Parks 1999, 356.

in Palaipaphos briefly mentioned by Parks.²² Thirty-nine lamps were recorded out of 111 ceramic artefacts in a Hellenistic-Roman tomb southwest of Kormakiti, which is roughly proportional to the Evrychou find.²³ In the so-called “Paleokastro Tomb” at Ayia Irini, 165 lamps were recorded.²⁴ However, this is a very large and looted tomb; even more unique are the dating of the majority of the lamps to the 4th–5th century AD and the use of the tomb into the 7th century AD.²⁵ Unfortunately, only preliminary studies of these two tombs have been published.

During the Hellenistic and Roman periods, cooking wares in Cyprus, vessels for braising, boiling, or frying food, came to be made in specialized fabrics, with a high percentage of heat-resistant temper increasing the vessels’ resistance to thermal stress, as is also the case with the cooking wares from Evrychou.²⁶ In Evrychou Tomb V, vessels such as bowls, cups, dishes, and jugs traditionally made in plain and fine ware were also made in a cooking ware-like fabric, coarse grained and fired reddish-brown (see below). This fabric appears to be closely related to the fabric used for the tiles (nos. 284-292), which petrographic analyses revealed to be made in the Troodos Foothills.²⁷ Some of the vessel types appear in both plain ware and cooking ware-like fabrics e.g. nos. 1 and 66, and the traditional plain ware vessels made in cooking-like ware may be a local production. However, the fact that many of these vessels have rounded bases, which is characteristic of cooking vessels, suggests a more complex relationship. It is possible that these vessels were made by potters specializing in cooking vessels. The absence of cooking wares among the wide range of pottery donated by their potters to the Nymphs at Kafizin at the end of the 3rd century BC suggests that cooking wares were already a specialized production during this period.²⁸ Certainly, the lesser degree of specialization witnessed at Evrychou

suggests a simpler production system, possibly similar to the Traditional Cypriot pottery where predominantly female potters used the same type of fabric for a wide range of shapes and purposes.²⁹ Another indication of local manufacture is the occurrence of coil built/slow-wheel-made cooking pots (nos. 82, 123, 128, 135, and 83) at an age when highly specialized, super thin-walled cooking vessels were becoming dominant.³⁰ Finally, vessels such as nos. 15, 26, 83, and 111 appear to be local cooking ware-like imitations of or variations on more widely distributed types of vessels.

Among the plain and coarse wares, the closest and sometimes only parallels come from nearby Evrychou Tomb IV, which is yet another indication of a restricted pattern of distribution. This is consistent with the Hellenistic-Roman distribution pattern produced by Troodos Archaeological and Environmental Survey Project.³¹

Apart from the slender juglets, slipped vessels, colour-coated or sigillatas are relatively rare in Evrychou V and the same applies to Tomb IV. This is less surprising concerning sigillatas, which are generally rare even in rich tombs in Cyprus, but colour-coated bowls, dishes, and jugs are very common in Hellenistic tombs, certainly in the Paphos and Polis area, and this may be another regional characteristic possibly to do with the strong Alexandrian influence in Western Cyprus.³² In a few cases, parallels have been identified at Amathous and Kourion (nos. 55, 57, and 136), but nowhere else, which may support the existence of a route travelling across the mountains from Soloi to Kourion past Evrychou.³³

The users of both Evrychou tombs appear comparatively wealthy as suggested by the number of grave goods, the glass and metals, and the personal objects, and it is tempting to associate this wealth with the Skouriotissa mine. According to an early Roman inscription from the

22 Parks 1999, 357.

23 Şöforoğlu & Summerer 2016, 261.

24 Öznergiz 2016, 246.

25 Öznergiz 2016, 245, fig. 11b–c.

26 Winther-Jacobsen 2015b.

27 Winther-Jacobsen 2015b.

28 Mitford 1980b.

29 Ionas 1998.

30 Winther-Jacobsen 2015b.

31 Winther-Jacobsen 2013b.

32 Ballet 2009.

33 Bekker-Nielsen 2004, 147.

Skouriotissa area, a local company of contractors from possibly three mining villages, one of which was Phlasou, worked the Soli copper mines.³⁴ The name of Phlasou is reconstructed in two additional cases, providing historical evidence for the hinterland settlements: Terrence Bruce Mitford restored the name Phlasou on a late 3rd century BC graffito from Kafizin and on a fragmented inscription from Soli collected by Alfred Westholm.³⁵ Today a village by the name of Phlasou is located three kilometres south of Skouriotissa, and a little more than one kilometre north of Evrychou V. If Mitford was correct in his identification of Phlasou,³⁶ the association is not unlikely. The two Evrychou tombs are certainly well equipped with ceramic vessels, although there is a much lower focus on imported food products compared to tombs in the coastal areas.³⁷ However, long-lived old-fashioned styles, unfussy local imitations of more widely distributed table and plain wares, and the local origin of individual vessels indicate the existence of a community less directly affected by changing fashions as may be expected from its hinterland location.

Ceramics analysis

Introduction

The fabric is very difficult to study on intact artefacts. However, many of the vessels in Evrychou V appear to be made of the same cooking ware-like fabric, coarse grained and fired reddish-brown. The range of production includes cooking wares as well as vessels such as bowls, cups, dishes, and jugs traditionally made in plain and fine ware (nos. 21, 26, 30, 42, 50, 56, 59, 67, 82, 84, 86, 94, 103,

105, 110, 110a, 111-4, 123, 125, 128 and 135-6). This fabric appears to be closely related to the fabric used for the tiles (nos. 284-292), which petrographic analyses revealed to be made in the Troodos Foothills.³⁸

All types and unique pieces are presented by a drawing (80).³⁹

Amphoriskoi

Two amphoriskoi of the same type were found by the northwest corner of sarcophagus F (nos. 232 and 238). A similar vessel of unknown provenance was dated to the Early Hellenistic period.⁴⁰ The vessels from Evrychou V are very slender and the lines of the profiles very straight, almost metal-like. At Paphos and Polis it appears in an ovoid version with a bulging rim.⁴¹

Bowls

The four bowls found in tomb V are all variations of the hemispherical echinus bowls. The range of sizes is homogeneous with a diameter around 12-13 cm. One of the bowls is a black-slipped echinus bowl with ring base (no. 283). The slip covers the interior completely and was allowed to spill over to the upper part of the exterior vessel in a random fashion. Parallels have come from western Cyprus mostly.⁴² No. 283 is similar to the almost hemispherical vessels from Well 11 at the House of Dionysos, Paphos, dated to the mid-2nd century BC or slightly later.⁴³

Two plain echinus bowls with offset string-cut bases were found on the south side of the entrance (nos. 55 and 57). This type is less common than the “classical” type discussed above, and the closest parallels have come

34 Markides 1915, 17, no. 7; Mitford 1950, 12-13, note 2; 1980a, 1298, 1327, note 177; Michaelides 1996, 144. The name Phlasou is preserved in its entirety; the name of another village begins with La..., and depending on its length there would be room for one more name according to Mitford's reading. Mitford also suggests the possible reconstructions of the Latin word *patron* written in Greek letters and the title *epitropon*.

35 Mitford 1980b, 254; 1950, 12-13, note 2.

36 Mitford 1980b, 254.

37 Winther-Jacobsen 2007.

38 Winther-Jacobsen 2015b.

39 Drawings are presented in order of the typology. Drawings by Emilia Dina Vassiliou (Copyright Kristina Winther-Jacobsen). All catalogue numbers are photographed except nos. 16, 20, 22, 29, 32, 55, 67, 116, 124, 144, 150, 156, 162, 285-289 and 291-292 and presented in numerical order. Photos by Chris Parks, Torben Jacobsen, and Kristina Winther-Jacobsen (Copyright Kristina Winther-Jacobsen).

40 SCE IV,3 fig. 26:1.

41 Hayes 1991, fig. 25:4 (Room X inv. BZ 43); Papuci-Władyka 2000, fig. 6.1; Winther-Jacobsen 2022, no. 1024.

42 E.g. Dray & Plat Taylor 1951, fig. 40:6 (T10/18); Hayes 1991, 26-27, fig. 14; Öznergiz 2016, fig. 4f; Raptou, Stylianou, & Vassiliou 2002, fig. 2:1-2, 13-14, 20, 22-23, and 52; Winther-Jacobsen 2022, 17, 1284, 1443* and 1453* and possibly 351*.

43 Hayes 1991, 27, fig. 57.