

KÜTAHYA BETWEEN THE LINES: POST-MEDIEVAL CERAMICS AS HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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Interest in post-medieval ceramics in Greece from a purely archaeological perspective began in the first half of the 20th century with the pioneering articles of Frederick Waagé and Allison Frantz in *Hesperia* (1933 and 1942, respectively). Although useful publications have appeared since then, much remains to be accomplished in the field of post-medieval archaeology in this part of the Mediterranean. It should be noted that until 1950 the archaeological legislation in Greece protected only antiquities dating before 1453, the year of the “fall” of Constantinople.

The designation “post-medieval ceramics” used in this chapter refers to pottery of the mid-15th century through the 18th, when most of the Greek lands were part of the Ottoman Empire or under Venetian domination. Note that the designation “Ottoman pottery” is not used here, although this term is sometimes associated with the production of fine wares in 16th- to 19th-century Turkey (e.g., in İznik, Kütahya, and Çanakkale). Instead, I prefer the more neutral term “post-medieval ceramics” as a general designation for pottery finds from about the mid-15th through the 18th centuries. Here I focus on these centuries, omitting ceramic finds of the 19th and 20th centuries, which are, of course, interesting in their own right.

In the first part of this chapter I present an overview of the history of research concerning post-medieval ceramic finds from excavations in the Aegean area (by which I mean the Greek mainland and islands, Cyprus, and parts of western Turkey). I briefly discuss the publications that have been most important for the study of post-medieval pottery, with emphasis on studies relating to excavations on the Greek mainland, in Constantinople/Istanbul, and in the Greek islands and Cyprus. Furthermore, I try as much as possible to refer to the most recent publications on this subject.

Next, I discuss some recent pottery finds from current archaeological projects (excavations and surveys) in the Aegean. At these projects the ceramics were approached strictly from an archaeological point of view and studied from the perspective of type, date, and quantity.¹ On the basis of that information, I explore the possibilities of acquiring historical information from post-medieval ceramics in general. Work remains in progress, however, and the subject is still riddled with uncertainties. It should be noted that I do not focus attention here on the relationship between changing pottery

1. I thank the following people for allowing me to study and publish the post-medieval material from their excavations and surveys: Richard Hodges of the Butrint Project in southern Albania; Vassilis Aravantinos, Director of the 9th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities; John Bintliff and Anthony Snodgrass of the Boiotia Project; Cyprian Broodbank and Evangelia Kiriatzi of the Kythera Island Project; Bernard Knapp and Michael Given of the Troodos Archaeological and Environmental Survey Project on Cyprus; and Peter Doorn and Sebastiaan Bommeljé of the Aetolia Project. Furthermore, I thank Machiel Kiel, John Hayes, Jack Davis, and Siriol Davies for their valuable suggestions. My research was supported financially by the Packard Humanities Institute.

shapes and the history of dining habits during post-medieval times, a topic that I have explored elsewhere and that presents an excellent opportunity to combine evidence from the analysis of archaeological artifacts, from written sources, and from the pictorial representation of dining scenes.² Instead, I concentrate more on the fundamental practice of studying post-medieval ceramics as a part of field research, carefully considering the possible but problematic relationship between archaeology and text.

RESEARCH ON POST-MEDIEVAL CERAMICS IN THE AEGEAN

THE FIRST PIONEERS: WAAGÉ AND FRANTZ

The first “archaeological” study of post-medieval pottery in Greece was the publication by Frederick Waagé of ceramic finds from the first season of work by the American School of Classical Studies in the Athenian Agora in 1933.³ The study embraced the wares used in Athens from about the 1st century B.C. (Late Hellenistic times) through the 18th century (Late Ottoman times), and included, therefore, discussion of a number of new wares not previously described by excavators. Waagé introduced, for instance, the general term “Turkish painted ware.” Information about the stratigraphy of the excavation was minimal, however, and as a result, no attention could be given by Waagé to unglazed coarse wares; all the published vessels were glazed.

More valuable was an article written nine years later by Allison Frantz on other post-medieval pottery finds from the Athenian Agora excavations.⁴ Here, for the first time, archaeological attention was paid solely to the centuries following the conquest of Greek lands by the Ottomans. However, the 16th- to 18th-century levels at Athens had been so severely disturbed that the material (from 10 different deposits in the Agora) was presented by Frantz with only tentative suggestions for dating. The groups she discussed offered only a few indications of absolute dates, but the coincidence of different wares allowed her to determine their relative chronology. Most important was Frantz’s recognition of a locally made type of tin-glazed majolica that she called “blue and white painted ware,” but which today is known as local “majolica from Greece” (discussed in more detail later in this chapter).⁵

MORE RECENT CERAMIC FINDS OF THE POST-MEDIEVAL PERIOD ON THE GREEK MAINLAND

After the pioneering articles of Waagé and Frantz there ensued a long period of apparent lack of interest by archaeologists in post-medieval pottery in Greece. This relative silence lasted 30 years, until 1977. At that time, excavations by the Greek archaeologist Charalambos Bakirtzis in Macedonia and Thrace provided a new stimulus to the study of pottery from this period on the Greek mainland. In particular, his publications of

2. See Vroom 1996; 1997, pp. 210–211; 1998b, pp. 540–545; 2000; 2003, pp. 229–239, 303–357.

3. Waagé 1933.

4. Frantz 1942.

5. See also Vroom 2003, p. 173.



Figure 4.1. Thebes: Fragments of a slip-painted dish from Didymoteichon found during excavations in the city center. J. Vroom. Scale 1:2

ceramics from Didymoteichon, an important Thracian production center during the post-medieval period, were groundbreaking.⁶

Here, for the first time, previously unknown locally produced wares dating from the 15th century to the 19th century were presented. Most vessels found at Didymoteichon were made in a “Byzantine” style, using traditional decorative techniques from the Byzantine period in Greece, such as sgraffito and slip-painting (Fig. 4.1). Previously unknown wares in Bakirtzis’s publications included monochrome green-glazed vessels in various shapes and unglazed domestic vessels, such as chamber pots and jugs with spouts on the shoulder. Two glazed jugs with rosettes in relief on the outside looked similar to types produced at Çanakkale in western Turkey. An unfinished jug of this type demonstrated, however, that these wares also must have been made at Didymoteichon. Local production at Didymoteichon was confirmed by the discovery of two kilns, several potter’s tools, and much kiln waste datable to the early 19th century in a building site just outside the town walls.

Bakirtzis’s article on “post-Byzantine” wares from Didymoteichon spawned a group of articles published in Greek in the 1980s, mainly in popular periodicals such as *Αρχαιολογία* and *Εθνογραφικά*. Pottery production centers of fine and domestic wares were located, for instance, in 16th- to 18th-century Larissa, in 17th- to 19th-century Athens, and in 17th- to 18th-century Arta.⁷

These publications showed that the production centers of glazed wares in post-medieval Greece did not change their pottery repertoire and decoration methods radically from those of Byzantine and medieval times. In fact, the two main decorative techniques employed by the Greek potters during the post-medieval period were painting and incision (sgraffito), and they closely followed the conservative Byzantine color palette of green and ochre-yellow brushstrokes (Fig. 4.2). Decoration was limited to winding lines and circles and the wares were covered with a transparent lead glaze, as in the medieval period.

6. Bakirtzis 1980, 1984; see also Vroom 2003, p. 184, with further literature.

7. Vroom 2003, p. 71, with further literature.



Figure 4.2. Athens: Brown and green sgraffito bowl from the Dimitris Oikonomopoulos Collection. Reproduced with the permission of the Greek Ministry of Culture

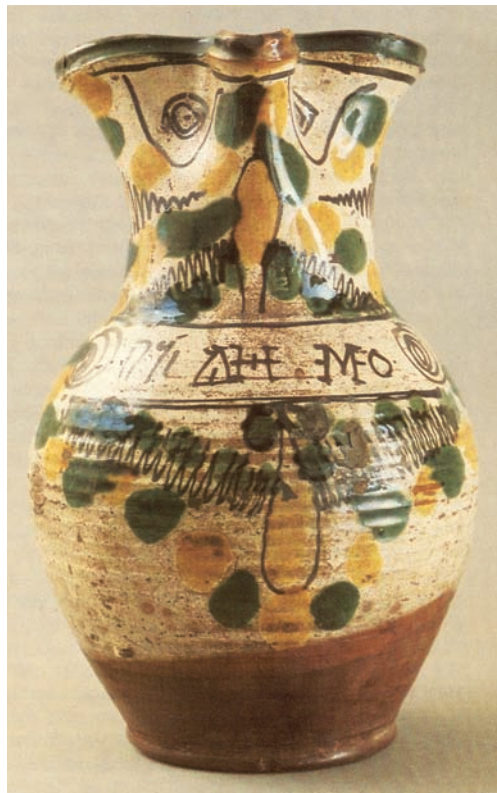


Figure 4.3. Arta: Locally produced jug with the year of production, 1791, painted on the shoulder. Reproduced with the permission of the Benaki Museum

Arta was one such production center of glazed wares where traditional methods managed to survive in post-medieval times. Its red-bodied, lead-glazed products included slip-painted ware, colored sgraffito ware, and brown and green painted ware.⁸ Noteworthy is a locally produced jug from Arta in brown and green painted colors with the exact production year, 1791, and the Greek letters ΔΗ and ΜΟ, probably the initials or the beginning of the potter's name, painted on the shoulder of the vessel (Fig. 4.3).

8. Vavylopoulou-Charitonidou 1981–1982, 1984.



Figure 4.4 (*above*). Athens: Local imitation of a majolica trefoil-mouth jug (Athenian Agora P 1902). Courtesy of the Trustees of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens

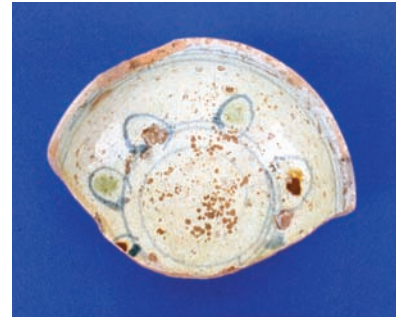


Figure 4.5 (*upper right*). Thebes: Locally produced majolica bowl found during excavations at Pelopidou Street. J. Vroom. Scale 1:3



Figure 4.6 (*lower right*). Boiotia: Locally produced majolica fragments from rural sites, recovered by the Boeotia Project. J. Vroom. Scale 1:4

Other production centers in Greece using Byzantine and medieval techniques included Thessaloniki, Veroia, and Trikala, where unfinished products, potter's tools, and wasters of the post-medieval period were found during rescue excavations in the city centers.⁹

In most of the locally produced post-medieval ceramics in Greece, one can distinguish the influence of Italian pottery technology of the Renaissance period (such as tin-glazed majolica from northern Italy or polychrome sgraffito ware from the region around Venice). The Italian majolica even appears to be imitated in Greece. Finds of imitations of Italian blue-and-white majolica in Athens, published by Frantz in 1942, were found together with two potter's kilns, wasters, and potter's stilts (Fig. 4.4).¹⁰ The most characteristic shapes of this locally produced majolica from Greece are small bowls, plates, and trefoil-mouth jugs. Fragments of this local majolica were found during excavations at Corinth and at Thebes (Fig. 4.5), as well as on rural sites in Boiotia (Fig. 4.6).¹¹

In all, two main types of locally produced ceramics of the post-medieval period have been found during excavations on the Greek mainland: painted and sgraffito wares in a traditional Byzantine style, and imitations of Italian majolica. Archaeologists working in northwestern Greece published these two main types of post-medieval wares that were found during excavations at the castle of Rogon near Arta, and during excavations at the Castle of Ioannina in Epirus.¹² The stratigraphy of these excavations, however, is not always clear.

9. See Papanikola-Bakirtzi 1999, pp. 249–265.

10. Frantz 1942, p. 2.

11. See Vroom 2003, p. 173 (ware 28), figs. 6.33 and 6.44, for the Boiotian examples; see Vroom (forthcoming) for the Theban examples.

12. Vavyloupoulou-Charitonidou 1986–1987; Tsouris 1982.

CERAMIC FINDS OF THE POST-MEDIEVAL PERIOD IN CONSTANTINOPLE/ISTANBUL

The modern standard for defining and dating glazed and domestic wares of the post-medieval period from stratigraphical excavations at Constantinople/Istanbul was set more recently by John Hayes. His first preliminary report on these wares concerned finds from excavations of the Bodrum Camii (or the Myrelaion), followed by a more detailed publication of material from the Saraçhane excavations 11 years later.¹³

In excavations of the Bodrum Camii, a 16th-century fill overlying a Late Byzantine tiled floor yielded some 90% of the finds. The great bulk of the material was uniform, comprising fragments of İznik ware (and other fine sherds) as well as local domestic pottery prevalent during the first half of the 16th century. In addition, a small amount of 18th-century pottery was recovered, of types characteristic of a higher fill. The date of this later fill was provided by fragments of well-dated 18th-century Kütahya ware. In addition, a few pieces of modern china came from the surface of this deposit.

In the excavations at Saraçhane, most of the post-medieval finds came from 15 groups from pits and wells; these provided an excellent range of pottery types prevalent between 1500 and 1650. The period from 1700 to 1850 was poorly represented. This phase, however, provided a convenient break between the earlier ceramic finds (late 15th to mid-17th centuries) and the later ceramic finds (18th to early 20th centuries).

In the absence of numismatic evidence, it was mainly the fine wares (e.g., porcelain, İznik ware, and majolica) that served as a dating tool for the coarse wares of the late 15th to 17th centuries. Some 20 wares of the latter, glazed as well as unglazed, were identified by Hayes. According to him, most were locally produced in Istanbul. About 190 types of vessels were listed in a preliminary conspectus of those used in Istanbul during Early Ottoman times (ca. late 15th to mid-17th centuries). Unfortunately, transitional shapes of the late 17th and early 18th centuries were under-represented in these samples.

Post-medieval coarse wares produced and used in Istanbul appear not to have differed significantly from their medieval predecessors, displaying no markedly new technical features in fabric and manufacture. Nevertheless, one of the most striking new features in the post-medieval deposits was the total absence of large amphoras, which were probably replaced by wooden barrels. Noteworthy also was the replacement of thin-walled, unglazed cooking pots by simple lead-glazed types. As a result, the proportion of glazed wares in the later assemblages increased substantially, to around 35%–40% of finds in Early Ottoman contexts of the late 15th to mid-17th centuries, with a further rise in the 18th–19th centuries, when glazed wares came to predominate (ca. 60%–80% of finds). The glazes of the local wares were generally dark-toned and applied directly to the clay body (though a white slip occurs on some wares). Decoration was not common on the domestic wares.

A breakdown of the chief classes present in late 15th- to early 17th-century deposits at Saraçhane shows the following pattern: (1) fine wares (İznik, porcelain, etc.), some 1%–10% of total sherds; (2) plain glazed

13. Hayes 1981, 1992.



Figure 4.7. Iraklion: Polychrome sgraffito bowl from Italy; rim Diam. 0.24 m, base Diam. 0.10 m, H. 0.09 m (lower left is profile view). Reproduced with the permission of the Greek Ministry of Culture

wares, about 25%–35%; (3) unglazed tablewares, about 15%–20%; and (4) unglazed coarse wares (mainly drinking cups and spouted jugs), about 50%, and declining in the 17th century.¹⁴

The 18th-century increase in the proportion of glazed wares from the Saraçhane excavations is largely explained by the partial glazing of formerly unglazed spouted jugs from this time onward. New shapes, however, were mostly unglazed: for example, high-stemmed drinking bowls (goblets), spouted jugs (the so-called *ibrik*), and tall, two-handled flagons.

CERAMIC FINDS OF THE POST-MEDIEVAL PERIOD IN THE GREEK ISLANDS AND ON CYPRUS

Little is known about the pottery used in southern Greece and in the Greek islands from the late 14th century to the 17th, when these parts of Greece were under Venetian rule. One might expect to find imported pottery from Italy in these Venetian outposts and colonies of this period. Very few Renaissance ceramics from the West have been published until now, however, although one can suspect that ceramics of the Renaissance period were exported from Italy to the Aegean. Exceptions are publications of some occasional pieces of 15th- to 16th-century *graffita arcaica* and 16th-century majolica found on Rhodes and on Crete (for instance, at Malia, Chania, and Iraklion; Fig. 4.7), as well as two recent publications on fortresses in the Cyclades (e.g., Kos and Andros) that include imported post-medieval pottery finds from Italy and Turkey.¹⁵

14. Hayes 1992, p. 233.

15. Vroom 2003, p. 73, with further literature. See also Kontoyiannis 2002 for the post-medieval pottery finds on the island of Kos (e.g., majolica, İznik ware, marbled ware, Kütahta ware, Çanakkale ware); and Deliyianni-Dori, Velissariou, and Michailidis 2003 for the post-medieval pottery finds on the island of Andros (e.g., majolica, Miletus ware, İznik ware, marbled ware, Çanakkale ware).

On Crete, the Greek-Swedish Kastelli excavations at Chania provided good stratified layers and sealed deposits of post-Byzantine finds (including kitchenware as well as imported tableware from Italy and Turkey), but the material was unfortunately very fragmentary.¹⁶ A helpful addition was the publication of six well-preserved 15th- to 16th-century tin-glazed jugs found in western Crete, now in the collection of the Archaeological Museum of Chania.¹⁷ Although these jugs were all stray finds from villages near Chania, and information about exact provenance and context was scarce, they provided the excavators of Chania with entire profiles to help them in their study of the smaller fragments.

Another 15th- to 16th-century group of published material was recovered in the course of public works in Iraklion.¹⁸ The finds, which are now stored in the Iraklion Historical Museum, included a lustre bowl from Spain (Valencia), majolica from northern Italy, and one piece of a polychrome painted ware, the so-called RMR (for the colors *ramina*, *manganese*, *rosso*) ware from southern Italy, as well as undecorated glazed wares and unglazed wares (cooking pots). Unfortunately, the photographs are not well reproduced in the publication of the finds and there is no information about the find circumstances of these vessels.

With regard to Cyprus, the only serious publication dealing with 14th- to 16th-century imports from Italy is Peter Megaw's pre-World War II (but published in 1951) article concerning three closed deposits of tableware and kitchenware from rubbish pits excavated in Nikosia.¹⁹ These finds were the result of random discoveries during building operations. The pits contained majolica from Faenza, Padua, and Venice, as well as Italian polychrome sgraffito ware from the Veneto. Apart from these Italian imports, some pieces from the East, such as İznik ware from Turkey, Chinese porcelain, and painted bowls from Syria, also were found in the pits. According to Megaw, the Syrian finds illustrated the flourishing trade between Cyprus and the Near East, "when Syrian merchants, circumventing the Papal Edicts which prohibited Christians from trading in the ports of the Saracen enemy, transported their merchandise to Cyprus for re-shipment in Christian vessels to the West."²⁰

More recently, the archaeologist Marie-Louise von Wartburg-Maier published additional imported tablewares of the Ottoman period found on Cyprus, this time in Swiss excavations at Kouklia.²¹ She distinguished 15 groups of imported wares, among them pottery from Italy (Pisa, Montelupo, Albisola), as well as imports from Thrace, western Turkey, and China.

In summary, we can conclude, even from this preliminary survey of publications, that the main archaeological projects in the Aegean have yielded little knowledge about the types and dates of post-medieval ceramics in the Aegean. Until now, most publications of excavated pottery finds have focused exclusively on glazed wares (mainly imports and usually complete pots). Little attention has been paid to the fragmentary unglazed coarse wares, which constitute the main body of ceramic evidence of surface surveys (see, e.g., Fig. 4.8). This particularly limits the usefulness of previous published work for the interpretation of finds from surveys. When there are no easily recognizable fragments of İznik ware or Kütahya ware in surface pottery assemblages of post-medieval material, we simply cannot closely

16. Hahn 1989, 1997.

17. Hahn 1991.

18. MacKay 1996.

19. Megaw 1951.

20. Megaw 1951, p. 145.

21. Von Wartburg-Maier 2001. See also Gabrieli 2001; Cook and Green 2002 for a few post-medieval ceramic finds from excavations at the theater site at Nea Paphos in western Cyprus; as well as François and Vallauri 2001, pp. 539–546, for post-medieval ceramic finds from a survey around Potamia-Ayios Sozomenos in central Cyprus.



Figure 4.8. Kythera: Fragment of a post-medieval storage jar in a local fabric, recovered by the Kythera Island Project. J. Vroom. Scale 1:3

date the remainder of the ceramics. It is therefore very difficult—if not quite premature—to speak with any certainty about the distribution and the quantities of pottery finds of the 15th–18th centuries in the Aegean area, let alone to compare the results from various survey projects in Greece.

In addition, hardly any attention has been paid until now to ceramics that were imported during the post-medieval period into the Aegean region from other parts of the Mediterranean, such as majolica from Italy. We know that Italian majolica probably reached the Aegean in large quantities, but because of lack of publication we do not have insight into its distribution.

Nevertheless, recently I have made an effort to classify the most commonly found post-medieval wares in the Aegean that exhibit clear stylistic and technological similarities. These wares have been categorized on the basis of their fabric, surface treatment, decoration, shape, origin, distribution, and date range.²² Also, I have argued that within this preliminary classification system it is preferable to date post-medieval pottery finds in the Aegean only by century, and abandon traditional designations such as “Early Ottoman” or “Late Ottoman.” In fact, dates lack the historical and cultural connotations attached to conventional periodization and provide a clearer basis for discussion.

POST-MEDIEVAL CERAMICS AS A SOURCE OF HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Literature dealing with post-medieval ceramics from Turkey in general, and in particular with the famous colorful tablewares produced in İznik (Fig. 4.9), Kütahya, and Çanakkale in western Turkey, is, of course, quite extensive. Research into these wares, however, was until recently not conducted from an archaeological perspective, and it strongly emphasized variations in decorative styles, which were often influenced by styles from the East, especially from Syria, Iran, and China. The technical aspects of the production processes of these wares or their distribution and use throughout the Ottoman empire were hardly examined.²³ The publication of the excavation of some pottery kilns at İznik (with emphasis on kiln equipment and deformed or unfinished products) appears until now to be the only example of a different approach to post-medieval ceramics in the eastern Mediterranean.²⁴

Another consequence of a concentration of scholarship on the well-known wares from the large-scale production centers in İznik, Kütahya, and Çanakkale is that other types of decorated ware or domestic wares, which were produced throughout the Ottoman empire at medium-sized centers or in small local workshops, have remained unpublished and therefore are unknown. As has been demonstrated in the first part of this chapter, we now have evidence for pottery production during Ottoman times in Athens, Didymoteichon, Arta, Thessaloniki, Veroia, and Trikala, but this distribution, of course, only hints of the places where we may find evidence of production in the future.

The picture is not entirely gloomy, however. Post-medieval ceramics have been and can be successfully used as a source of historical information.

22. Vroom 2005, pp. 138–177.

23. Laudable exceptions are Tite 1989; Atasoy and Raby 1994; and Carroll 2000. See also Baram and Carroll 2000a for the multiple pathways to an Ottoman archaeology.

24. Aslanapa, Yetkin, and Altun 1989.

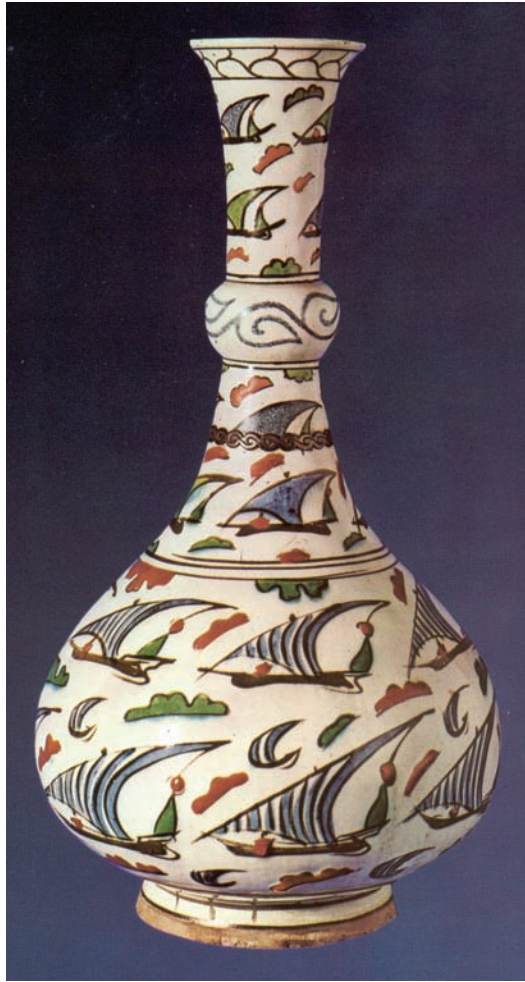


Figure 4.9. Athens: Polychrome painted vessel from İznik, second half of the 16th century. Reproduced with the permission of the Benaki Museum

When properly analyzed and dated they may offer us new views on the material culture of the post-medieval past. Taken a step further, they may also shed light on aspects of life such as trade, dining habits, and the symbolism of consumption.

In the remainder of this section I will introduce three examples of such an approach. First, I discuss two sherds of pottery from the University of East Anglia and the Institute of Archaeology in Tirana excavations at Butrint in southern Albania.²⁵ Found there were two body fragments of a majolica jug of the early 16th century that were decorated on the outside with an image of a lion, probably the Lion of St. Mark representing the Venetian Republic (Fig. 4.10). We already know from ample documentary evidence that Butrint was at that time in Venetian hands, but these pieces seem to suggest something more—namely, that the political and military expansion of the Venetian Republic was explicitly symbolized through the distribution of its material culture.²⁶ The Lion of St. Mark is widely found as a symbol of the Venetian Republic in various parts of the Mediterranean that were under Venetian domination. These lions are normally incorporated into gateways and conspicuous parts of Venetian fortifications and public buildings, their purpose being to denote the authority of Venice.

25. See, e.g., Hodges et al. 2000; Gilkes et al. 2002.

26. Soustal 2004.



Figure 4.10 (above, left). Butrint: Two fragments of a majolica jug with an image of a lion, found during excavations in the lower city. J. Vroom



Figure 4.11 (above, right). Serres: *Bacini* from Ottoman and early modern (20th century) times in a wall of the 13th-century Monastery of Timios Prodromos (St. John the Baptist). J. Vroom

It is therefore interesting to note that other post-medieval ceramics include depictions of the Lion of St. Mark as well (among various examples, one might note a majolica plate from Stari Bar in Montenegro and two sgraffito fragments, which are now in the Ca' d'Oro in Venice and in the Museo dei Grandi Fiumi di Rovigo in the Veneto region). Consequently, what we see here may very well be the archaeological and iconographical side of an expanding mercantile power. We know from written sources that during the 16th century the production and distribution of majolica was organized in an early capitalistic manner, and it seems that the expansion of this system did not leave Greek lands untouched.²⁷

A second example of the potential that ceramics hold as a source of historical information is provided by the so-called *bacini*. These are often colorful, decorated bowls that were embedded in the facades and walls of churches or other buildings from the 11th century onward. In the Aegean, the custom remained popular through Ottoman and even modern times (Fig. 4.11). *Bacini* of the 16th–20th centuries were, for instance, set into the walls of several churches in Attica and on the islands of Salamis and Hydra, in Methana, on Mt. Pelion, on the island of Euboea, and in the Cyclades.²⁸ Since the 1960s these *bacini* have been recognized as a tool for establishing the chronology of these buildings, and therefore may function as a sort of control for the written sources that refer to them. Machiel Kiel, however, is one of the few who has written about *bacini* of the post-medieval period in Greek churches.²⁹

A third way that pottery can be used as a source of historical information is illustrated by the results of an excavation in 1993 and 1994 in the city center of Thebes. The excavation was conducted by the Archaeological Museum of Thebes under the direction of Vassilis Aravantinos. During this excavation, 14 rubbish pits and 1 well were discovered. Three of the pits contained closed deposits of the Ottoman period.³⁰

27. See, e.g., Goldthwaite 1989; Vroom 2003, pp. 293–295.

28. Vroom 2003, p. 45, with further literature; see also Korre-Zographou

1995, pp. 69–76, for some examples of *bacini* of the post-medieval period in Greece.

29. Kiel 1991.

30. E.g., Aravantinos, Godart, and Sacconi 1995, 2001, 2002; Vroom 2006.



Figure 4.12. Thebes: Fragments of İznik ware found during excavations at Pelopidou Street. J. Vroom. Scale 1:3



Figure 4.13. Thebes: Fragments of Kütahya coffee cups found during excavations at Pelopidou Street. J. Vroom. Scale 1:3

Present in all three rubbish pits were brightly colored tin-glazed tablewares. The majority of the sherds came from İznik and Kütahya in western Turkey (Figs. 4.12, 4.13). These high-quality imported wares were the result of improved ceramic technology, leading to better durability and better glaze techniques, and were designed for the table or status display.

Imports from more eastern regions also are among the finds. One is a blue-and-white painted bowl with Chinese-inspired designs on the exterior and interior (Fig. 4.14). A Chinese calligraphic mark painted on the bottom of the bowl suggests that it is a late-16th-century porcelain bowl from the Ming period, or at least a very good imitation of Ming porcelain manufactured in Turkey or Persia. Whatever the case, the variety of imported vessels in these rubbish pits suggests that Thebes thrived economically during Ottoman times.

The relatively rich and varied contents of these rubbish pits contrast sharply with earlier observations about the material culture of Thebes during Ottoman times. The Greek archaeologist Sarantis Symeonoglou, for instance, wrote that the Turkish period in Thebes “is recognizable through the poor quality of its pottery, which rarely includes glazed examples.”³¹

Census and tax registers for 15th- and 16th-century Boiotia that have been translated and studied by Machiel Kiel (described in part in Table 4.1), however, offer a picture that is more in line with the finds from the rubbish pits. According to these registers, Thebes appears to have been one of the largest and most densely populated cities in central Greece at the time.³² The Theban economy was based on the production of wheat, wine, cotton, wool, and silk, and on the breeding of sheep. From about 1506 to

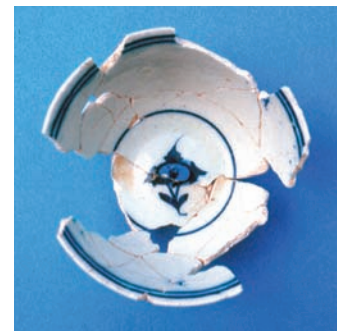


Figure 4.14. Thebes: Blue-and-white Ming porcelain bowl (or imitation) found during excavations at Pelopidou Street. J. Vroom. Scale 1:3

31. Symeonoglou 1985, p. 170.

32. Kiel 1992, p. 406 and table 3; 1999a, p. 226.

TABLE 4.1. CITY OF THEBES: OTTOMAN REVENUE IN THE 15TH AND 16TH CENTURIES

HOUSEHOLDS			
1466	487		
Ca. 1506	900		
1540	1,467		
1570	1,497		
WHEAT PRODUCTION (PER HOUSEHOLD)			
1540	660 kg	229 <i>akçe</i>	
1570	666 kg	296 <i>akçe</i>	
SHEEP			
1506	1,100	22,000 <i>akçe</i>	24 per household
1540	2,100	50,400 <i>akçe</i>	34 per household
1570	12,000	336,000 <i>akçe</i>	224 per household
COTTON PRODUCTION			
1540	2,460 bales	12,300 <i>akçe</i>	9 bales per household
1570	4,060 bales	24,360 <i>akçe</i>	16 bales per household
SILK PRODUCTION			
1540	361 <i>ledre</i>	11,200 <i>akçe</i>	
1570	770 <i>ledre</i>	35,000 <i>akçe</i>	
MILLS			
1505	17 mills		
1540	22 mills		
1570	31 mills (of which 20 were wool presses)		
MARKET DUES AND REVENUE OF PUBLIC WEIGHING-HOUSE			
1506		14,000 <i>akçe</i>	
1540		19,000 <i>akçe</i>	
1570		30,000 <i>akçe</i>	

Source: After Kiel 1991, p. 446.

1570, cotton production increased enormously and production of wine and silk doubled, as did the number of water mills, and market dues and the revenue from the public weighing-house.³³ At the same time, Thebes produced its own school of icon and fresco painters, whose surviving works can be found all over Greece.³⁴

The excavated pottery from the three rubbish pits offers an important perspective on the apparently rich material culture of Thebes during Ottoman times. It would be interesting to discover the extent to which İznik and Kütahya wares were used in normal households and in well-to-do households in towns and in the countryside. (References to household objects, especially pottery, in documentary evidence such as notarial documents or inventory lists also will be of great assistance to research in post-medieval ceramics in the future.)

33. Kiel 1991, p. 433, n. 8, and p. 446; 1992, table 5b.

34. Kiel 1991, pp. 431–433.

DATING POST-MEDIEVAL CERAMICS BY TOBACCO PIPES AND COFFEE CUPS

Apart from finds of tin-glazed pottery fragments, clay tobacco pipes of the *chibouk* style have become a new dating tool in the Aegean since the 1980s. Such pipes consist of a mouthpiece, a long wooden stem, and a molded ceramic bowl (Fig. 4.15).

Today it is acknowledged that the study of clay tobacco pipes may contribute to the resolution of the problems encountered in excavations and surface surveys in establishing a tentative type chronology for the “difficult” ceramics of post-medieval times.³⁵ According to Rebecca Robinson in her publications of tobacco pipes from Athens and Corinth, these pipes may have been used in the Aegean after 1605 (subsequent to the introduction of pipe smoking to the Ottoman empire—an event that may have occurred as early as 1599). Their development can be followed with some accuracy through the following centuries.³⁶ Women, as well as men, smoked this type of pipe in Ottoman times (Fig. 4.16).

John Hayes’s preliminary report on post-medieval clay pipes from the Saraçhane excavations, published in 1980, first established a chronology for pipe bowls of the *chibouk* style.³⁷ Based on associated finds, he constructed a provisional typology and chronology that divided them into 27 types, which became vital for dating other materials from the Aegean. Hayes’s report inspired other articles about post-medieval clay pipes, specifically those published by Rebecca Robinson and Uzi Baram concerning examples found in Athens and Corinth in Greece, on Cyprus, and in Palestine.³⁸

Coffee cups are also easily identifiable in ceramic assemblages from surface surveys and excavations; their production typologies offer another valuable chronological tool.³⁹ Toward the end of the post-medieval period (probably in the 18th century), a new type of glazed tableware made its way to Greece—namely, small thin-walled cups from Kütahya in Turkey, made of a fine, buff-colored fabric (Fig. 4.13). Polychrome painted designs in blue, green, red, purple, and yellow were usually geometrical, floral, or figural. This tableware from Kütahya was strongly influenced by Chinese porcelain, and is therefore sometimes described as a cheap substitute for real porcelain or as “peasant-porcelain.”⁴⁰ The small Kütahya cups are clearly related to the spread of coffee consumption, and their shape was probably

35. See Simpson 1990, p. 10, and 1998, p. 17; Ziadeh 1995, pp. 210–211; and Ziadeh-Seely 2000, p. 86, for such an approach in the Near East (although Ziadeh’s dating and interpretation of the pottery finds from Tî’innik are questionable: the Early Ottoman pottery finds from stratum 6 might also be of the 14th–15th centuries and, therefore, Mamluk).

36. Robinson 1985, p. 151. See Robinson 1983, p. 266 and n. 7 on Thomas Dallam’s diary regarding the exchange of tobacco and tobacco pipes

between an English ship and a Turkish galley at the Dardanelles. Simpson (1998, p. 15) suggests that smoking was introduced to the Middle East by English sailors docking at Istanbul or at Egyptian ports between 1599 and 1606. Baram (2000, p. 149) refers to a text about tobacco use in Istanbul in the 1590s, and states that the Dutch used a treaty from 1612 as an opportunity to launch tobacco into Turkish social life.

37. Hayes 1980; see Hayes 1992, pp. 391–395 for his revisions to the

chronology. See also Simpson’s review (1993) of these publications, with critical comments on Hayes’s typology.

38. Robinson 1983, 1985; Baram 1995, 2002.

39. Vroom 1996, with further literature; see also Ward 2000, pp. 189–191, fig. 7.1, for a more archaeological approach to the study of 18th-century coffee cups found on the Sadana Island shipwreck off the coast of Egypt.

40. Lane 1957, p. 65; see Vroom 2003, p. 178 (ware 36).



Figure 4.15 (*above*). Athens: Ceramic pipe bowl of the *chibouk* style (Athenian Agora MC 1279). Courtesy of the Trustees of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens. Scale 1:1



Figure 4.16 (*above, right*). Antalya: Kütahya plate of the second half of the 18th century painted with the figure of a woman smoking a pipe of the *chibouk* style. Reproduced with the permission of the Suna and İnan Kırış Research Institute on Mediterranean Civilizations



Figure 4.17 (*right*). Istanbul: Kütahya coffee cup and saucer and Kütahya coffeepot, all of the 18th century. Reproduced with the permission of the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism

derived from that of porcelain coffee cups made in Vienna and Meissen (Germany) ca. 1730–1740 (Fig. 4.17).⁴¹

According to the archaeologist and anthropologist Uzi Baram, in the Ottoman empire of the 17th and 18th centuries, coffee cups and tobacco pipes embodied “the new, the modern, the rebellion against the social order.” He suggests that by the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, these items had become old-fashioned or, in his words, “the vestiges of an old empire,” and were eventually to be “replaced by tea, cigarettes, and nationalism” arriving from the West.⁴² Smoking cigarettes indeed became much more convenient than pipe-smoking for all social classes at the

41. Lane 1939, p. 236; 1957, p. 65.

42. Baram 1999, p. 151; these ideas are further developed in Baram 2000, in which tobacco pipes are regarded as “entangled objects” that show patterns of material changes in the Ottoman past.

beginning of the 20th century, and this change in consumption manners had far-reaching effects on the tobacco pipe industry in the East. Although tobacco was still grown in Turkey and in Palestine, pipes were replaced by Western-styled and -produced cigarettes. According to Simpson, “the last pipe-maker in Istanbul died in A.D. 1928, although others appear to have lingered on as late as the 1950s in other parts of the Middle East.”⁴³

Apart from providing Kütahya coffee cups and tobacco pipes as dating tools, examination of the history of consumption patterns (such as those of coffee drinking and smoking) has the potential to shed further light on the origins, spread, and social acceptance of the use of these stimulants. This point is illustrated by a map that shows the density and spread of coffeehouses in Anatolian villages between 1945 and 1960 (Fig. 4.18).⁴⁴

OTHER MEANS OF DATING POST-MEDIEVAL CERAMICS

In the dating of post-medieval ceramics found in excavations and surveys, important chronological anchors can also be provided by the detailed tax records (*defters*) from the Ottoman Imperial Archives.⁴⁵ These registers range in date from the 15th century to the 18th and provide all kinds of information. The interaction between these historical sources and archaeological finds can operate in more than one way. Archaeological discoveries may help to identify place-names mentioned in the *defters*, and the textual information can sometimes aid in dating the post-medieval ceramics found in such places by providing archaeologists with their history. Several archaeological projects in the Mediterranean have indeed benefited enormously from the work of Ottomanists such as Machiel Kiel, Fariba Zarinebaf, Thurstan Robinson, and Marios Hadjianastassi. This has allowed information from the Ottoman archives to be linked to archaeological data.⁴⁶

Still, the data from the Ottoman registers provide no easy or straightforward solution to the many problems we face in post-medieval archaeology. The Ottomanist Suraiya Faroqhi has warned scholars to be careful in the interpretation of these tax registers. She suggests that one must take into account distorting factors such as the conditions of transportation and communication during the 16th century, as certain taxpayers may well have hidden and thus avoided registration. Other problems are connected with the fact that in most parts of the Ottoman empire the tax registers of the 16th century record very high rates of population growth. Some of these increases, she argues, may simply reflect more effective counting procedures. Finally, historians trying to arrive at estimates of rural population for the 17th and 18th centuries—a period in which the registers seem much less detailed than before—are obliged to work “with a rather intractable documentation.”⁴⁷

Although Faroqhi’s warnings are perhaps too pessimistic,⁴⁸ it is a challenge to combine the information obtained from the Ottoman tax registers with actual archaeological data from the sites recorded in them. In this regard, the information provided by the tax registers sometimes can be amplified and verified by accounts of Western travelers who regularly passed through Greece from the late 15th century onward. Some of these

43. Simpson 1998, p. 17.

44. Beeley 1970, fig. 1. Hattox (1985) introduces the Ottoman coffeehouse as a new type of place in the Near East, where people come together to engage in social activities. See also Given 2000, p. 214, for the importance of the coffeehouse in the social organization of villages on Ottoman Cyprus.

45. Kiel 1997.

46. Cf. Kiel’s studies on behalf of various projects in the Aegean (Kiel 1991, 1992, 1999a, 1999b); see also Zarinebaf’s contribution to the historical and economic geography of Messenia in the early 18th century in Zarinebaf, Bennet, and Davis 2005. Unpublished yet are Robinson’s work in Turkey (e.g., Pisidia) and in Albania (e.g., for the British-Albanian excavations at Butrint and for the Mallakstra Regional Archaeological Project around Apollonia), as well as Hadjianastassi’s work on Cyprus (e.g., for the Troodos Archaeological and Environmental Survey Project).

47. Cf. Faroqhi (1999, p. 89) versus Kiel (1999b), who recognizes the dangers but also the potential profits in using the tax registers.

48. In fact, the registers for Crete at the end of the 17th century, as those for the Morea in 1715, are among the most detailed ever compiled by the Ottomans, as is shown in Greene 2000 and in Zarinebaf, Bennet, and Davis 2005.

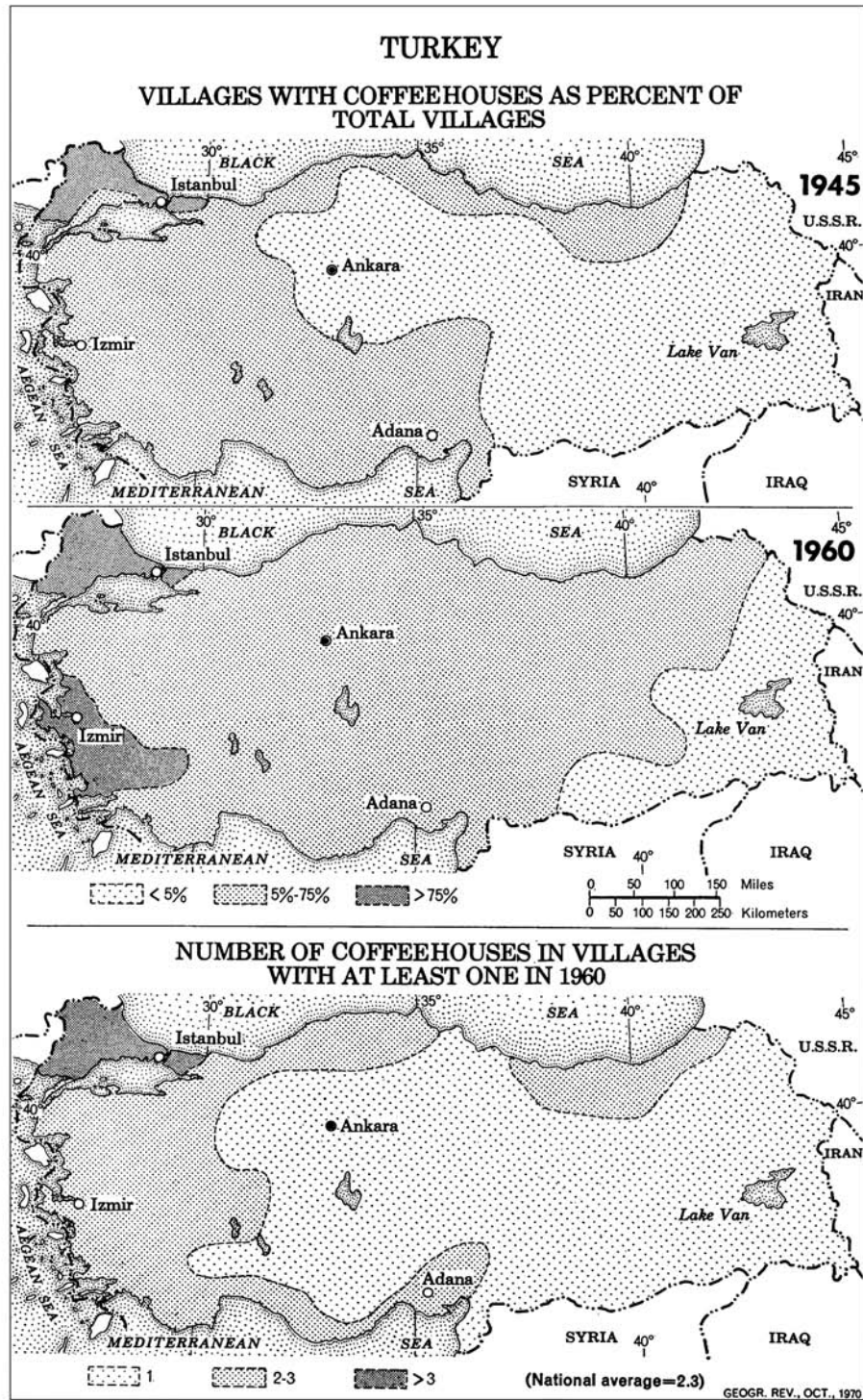


Figure 4.18. Spread of coffeehouses in Anatolian villages, 1945–1960. Beeley 1970, p. 477; reproduced with permission of the American Geographical Society

49. See Constantine 1984, pp. 7–33, with further literature.

travelers were trained scholars and antiquarians visiting the ancient sites and classical monuments of Greece; others were more casual travelers and observers. The antiquarian perspective was expressed, for instance, by the canon of Durham Cathedral, George Wheler, who traveled with his companion, the French physician Jacob Spon, through Greece in 1676.⁴⁹ Where relevant, general observations about the Greek landscape and sites

TABLE 4.2. IDENTIFIED AND UNIDENTIFIED VILLAGES IN TAX REGISTERS FOR THE DISTRICTS OF LIDORIKI AND VITRINITSA, EASTERN AITOLIA

<i>Villages</i>	<i>1466</i>	<i>1506</i>	<i>1521</i>	<i>1540</i>	<i>1570</i>	<i>ca. 1780</i>
Identified	38	38	38	38	41	55
Unidentified	14	14	15	11	16	8
Problematic	4	4	3	5	6	3
Total	56	56	56	54	63	66

Source: After Doorn 1989, table 2.

by such travelers, as well as their specific comments on contemporary villages and settlements, can be used to support the dating and interpretation of the sherds we now find in the fields.⁵⁰

We must also face, however, the difficult practical problems of relating ceramics to these written sources. Do we just stop asking questions after we think we have “identified” a place-name that is mentioned in the *defters*? And if we “identify” an Ottoman site in the landscape, how can we judge the relationship between a broad spectrum of post-medieval pottery finds and a written source describing conditions at one specific point in time? How much pottery of what period should we find in order to be certain of “identifying” a settlement mentioned in the sources? In the end, we try to merge two very different types of sources in one argument.

Furthermore, the problem of identification varies substantially from one region to another. This point may be illustrated by the case of Aitolia, a Greek mountain landscape that forms quite a contrast to the low-lying, easily accessible regions in which most surface surveys have been conducted.⁵¹ Although there are, thanks to Machiel Kiel, detailed Ottoman *defters* available for Aitolia from about the mid-15th century onward, it proves quite another matter to identify the listed settlements archaeologically in the landscape or to associate the 15th- and 16th-century toponyms with currently existing villages or surviving toponyms.⁵² In general, virtually no post-medieval pottery is to be found in the Aitolian mountains, and identification of the many listed settlements is possible only by recourse to toponyms on old maps, to names mentioned in travel accounts, or to oral information provided by locals. About one-third of the settlements mentioned in the *defters* remain without certain identification (see Table 4.2).

Another problem, this one not exclusive to Aitolia, is the contrast between the great detail provided in census lists of the late 15th and 16th centuries and the more summary character of those of the 17th and 18th centuries. All kinds of changes can be observed in the lists that are apparently not reflected in the material finds recovered by archaeologists in the field.

Yet another elusive problem is posed by the many new Albanian settlements that are listed in the *defters* of the 15th century. Can we see social and ethnic differences reflected in the pottery finds from these villages and those described as “Greek”?



Figure 4.19. Kythera: Fragment of a 19th-century transfer-printed plate from England with willow tree design, recovered by the Kythera Island Project. J. Vroom. Scale 1:1

50. Studies using Western travelers' accounts in combination with contemporary archaeological approaches are, e.g., Bennet and Voutsaki 1991; Davis, Zarinebaf, and Bennet 2000; Vroom 2003; Broodbank, Bennet, and Davis 2004.

51. E.g., Bommeljé et al. 1987; see also Vroom 1998a, pp. 147–158, with further literature.

52. See Doorn 1989 for the possibilities and difficulties of processing data from Ottoman *defters* and identifying settlements in the districts of Lidoriki and Vitrinitsa (in the eastern part of the research area investigated by Doorn's team in Aitolia) that were recorded in 15th- and 16th-century Ottoman registers. See also Kiel 1999b, fig. 15.8, for settlements recorded in the district of Agrafa (in the northern part of the research area).

In general, we cannot explain the contrast between the relative abundance of the easily recognized glazed post-medieval ceramics of the 15th and 16th centuries and the scarcity of later finds, even in settlements that, according to the *defters*, remained inhabited. We have seen such scarcity in Timothy Gregory's surveys in the Corinthia and on Kythera, and apparently there is also a lack of post-medieval pottery on sites in Palestine.⁵³

Several hypotheses that might explain this lack of pottery were discussed during the workshop in Cincinnati: shifts in site use, shifts in land use, population movements, and relocations of villages. This absence of archaeological artifacts perhaps can also be explained by the phenomenon of the "sherdless site," a term I introduced in a previous article on early modern ceramics in Greece. There I noted that in some parts of the Mediterranean, and in some periods, people used in their households nonceramic objects made of materials such as wood, stone, basketry, and metal.⁵⁴ This could also have been the practice in some parts of Greece (particularly in rural areas) during Ottoman times, especially in the 17th and 18th centuries, reflecting poorer standards of living. In Aitolia, for instance, we know from village interviews and from written sources that transporting ceramics into the mountains was difficult and expensive.⁵⁵ People therefore ate from wooden bowls with wooden spoons. Furthermore, metal objects were very much in favor (especially in transhumant households). Over time they were cheaper because, when broken, they could be repaired easily and reused several times.

It is only with the introduction of industrially manufactured wares in the 19th century, which were cheaper and mass-produced in the West, that consumption patterns in Greece began to change.⁵⁶ A 19th-century transfer-printed plate with a willow tree design from England, found on the island of Kythera by the Kythera Island Project (Fig. 4.19), is typical of this type of pottery.⁵⁷ The introduction of these industrially manufactured wares was accompanied by socioeconomic changes (e.g., by an increase in consumer purchasing power, and by new means of distribution such as steamships), as well as by changes in dining habits. Today these changes are reflected in the large quantities of early modern ceramics (mainly of the 19th and 20th centuries) that archaeological survey teams discover on the surface.

CONCLUSION: THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS AND FUTURE PROSPECTS

Interest in post-medieval pottery in the Aegean is a fairly recent phenomenon. In fact, excavations in the Aegean have yielded more systematically collected stratigraphical information on medieval and post-medieval ceramics during the past 10 years than was produced in the previous century.

John Hayes's 1992 publication of the pottery from the Saraçhane excavations in Istanbul is a landmark for the study of post-Roman pottery in the eastern Mediterranean for several reasons: (1) the multiperiod nature of the excavation; (2) the comprehensive and detailed presentation of the finds; and (3) the exhaustive comparisons with material from other excavations.

53. For the Corinthia and Kythera, see Chap. 9 in this volume; see Ziadeh 1995, p. 223, and Baram 2002, pp. 20–21, for the Palestinian sites.

54. Vroom 1998a, pp. 151–158.

55. See Bommeljé and Doorn 1996 on the intricate network of roads and khans that existed for the transportation of goods across the Aitolian landscape.

56. Vroom 2003, pp. 236–237.

57. E.g., Broodbank 1999.

We must not cheer too early, however. With regard to post-medieval pottery, the situation is still far from ideal. Although there now exists a basic chronology for fine wares, there is still much uncertainty about the relative dating of many ceramic types. For example, little is known about the local production and dating of glazed wares, and especially of unglazed domestic wares, from parts of the eastern Mediterranean outside Istanbul.

Most recent publications of post-medieval pottery offer few new type-series for the material examined, and little progress has been made in understanding patterns of exchange. The emphasis in most publications continues to be the presentation of complete pots from private or museum collections, and these almost always lack stratigraphical context. As far as post-medieval ceramics in the Aegean are concerned, it seems that the more recent the pottery, the more art-historical and ethnographic the study of it has been. For pottery from the post-medieval period, systematic archaeological research has been done in northern Greece (Macedonia and Thrace), but pottery from excavations in the large urban centers in Greece (e.g., Athens, Corinth, and Thessaloniki) has not been thoroughly studied and little has been published with its stratigraphical context. Studies of the distribution and use of ceramics of the Ottoman and Venetian periods in the Aegean area are lacking altogether.

We need more information about production centers and kilns in the Aegean area. We need more examinations of closed deposits from excavations in the large urban centers, including all excavated material (fine wares as well as cooking wares). In short, we need more scholars pursuing archaeological approaches to research concerning pottery of the Ottoman and Venetian periods in Greece and the Aegean.

In addition, as I have argued before, translations of the Ottoman tax registers have opened up a world of new possibilities, but also a host of new problems. This is because, in the end, one has to admit that it remains difficult to make the jump from the sherd on the surface to the written text in the archives. It is a stimulating, but perhaps also questionable, characteristic of some archaeological projects in Greece that theory building tends to advance far more rapidly than the slow, tedious, less spectacular work of establishing solid typologies and chronologies for ceramic types (not least for coarse wares). So, far from advocating less theory, I believe that the main task of post-medieval archaeology remains the fundamental work of further refining the analysis and documentation of pottery finds. Every new text that becomes available demonstrates the urgency of that task.

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