

Archaeometric Analyses of Euboean and Euboean Related Pottery:

New Results and their Interpretations

Proceedings of the Round Table Conference held at the Austrian Archaeological Institute in Athens,  
15 and 16 April 2011

M. Kerschner – I. S. Lemos (eds.)

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**ÖAI**

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## Abbreviations

The abbreviations used in this volume follow the guidelines of the Austrian Archaeological Institute: < <http://www.oeai.at>>

### Further abbreviations used in this volume

AAS	atomic absorption spectrometry	MG	Middle Geometric
BA	Bronze Age	MH	Middle Helladic
DA	discriminant analysis	MPG	Middle Protogeometric
D.	diameter	NAA	neutron activation analysis
EG	Early Geometric	PG	Protogeometric
EH	Early Helladic	pres.	preserved
EIA	Early Iron Age	PSC	pendent semicircle
GM	Géométrie Moyen	SPG	Subprotogeometric
GR	Géométrie Récent	SubG	Subgeometric
H.	height	SubMyc	Submycenaean
Inv.	inventory number	Th.	thickness of the wall of a vessel
LBA	Late Bronze Age	Ul	unlocated provenance group
LG	Late Geometric	W.	width
LH	Late Helladic	XRF	X-ray fluorescence spectrometry
LPG	Late Protogeometric		



Alessandro Naso

## Pendent Semicircle Skyphoi from Central Italy in the Light of the Archaeometric Results

### Find contexts of the PSC1 skyphoi from Italy

In the 1980's R. Kearsley recorded just five pendent semicircle skyphoi from four find spots in modern-day Italy, i.e. two exemplars from Veii in Etruria, one sherd from Rome (possibly belonging to a skyphos) and one skyphos from Villasmundo in Sicily. A skyphos from Pontecagnano in Campania is mentioned in the appendix, but it is not included on the distribution map<sup>1</sup>. Recent archaeological research has in the meanwhile increased the number of skyphoi to at least 17 examples from at least seven find spots (Fig. 1).

PSC skyphoi have been recovered from both Sicily and Sardinia, as well as in the central and southern regions of the Italian peninsula. Pontecagnano in the gulf of Salerno is the main find-place in Italy with nine examples (see B. d'Agostino, this volume). Another skyphos has been found in Campania in the valley of the river Sarno at the settlement of Poggiomarino<sup>2</sup>. The other vases have been found either in coastal localities like Sant'Imbenia near Alghero in Northern Sardinia or in places not directly on the sea, but near it, like Etruscan Veii, where two skyphoi and the sherd of a possible third have been found, and again at Caere with one example. Two more skyphoi can be mentioned: the first from Villasmundo near Megara Hyblaea in Sicily and the second probably from Bojano, a hinterland site near Campobasso in Molise. Two sherds, only perhaps deriving from PSC skyphoi, have been found in the Latium region, at Rome and Ficana<sup>3</sup>. All of them come from tombs, except the cups from Sardinia and from Poggiomarino, which came to light in indigenous settlement contexts. It has been already noted that the chronology of the Italian locations, particularly the tomb groups from Pontecagnano, allow one to date type 6 of Kearsley to the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. (from the associated finds, like bronze fibulae of the ›Sicilian‹ type) rather than to the second half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C., as originally suggested by Kearsley.

One PSC skyphos of the type Kearsley 5, from tomb 7392 at Pontecagnano, was associated with this same type of fibula. As a result the late Gianni Bailo Modesti argued that at Pontecagnano the PSC skyphoi of Kearsley types 5 and 6 are contemporary<sup>4</sup>. This idea may be supported by the tomb 7739, where two PSC skyphoi have been found: the first one is of the type 5 and the second, unfortunately fragmentary, probably belonging to the type 6.

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<sup>1</sup> Kearsley 1989, 67–68 nos. 229, 230 (Veii); 69–70 no. 237 (Villasmundo); 193 A 9 (Pontecagnano, grave 4697). The chronology suggested by Kearsley for her later types has been criticized in the review by Popham – Lemos 1992.

<sup>2</sup> Albore Livadie 2012, 125 figs. 241, 1; 243 (type Kearsley 6).

<sup>3</sup> An overview of the Italian finds is sketched by Bartoloni 2005 and Nizzo 2005; an up-dated review of the latest finds has been carried out by Rizzo 2005. The sherds from Rome have been published by La Rocca 1982 (uncertain), the one from Ficana by Rasmus Brandt et al. 1997 (uncertain).

<sup>4</sup> Bailo Modesti 1998.



Fig. 1 Distribution map of PSC skyphoi in Italy (Drawing A. Blaickner, Innsbruck)

The new finds from Italy were included in the programme of the NAA analysis carried out at Bonn. In April 2005 it was possible for M. Kerschner and myself to take samples from four skyphoi out of the total of 17 from Italy, thanks to the kind collaboration of many colleagues in several museums<sup>5</sup>. A further four samples from Pontecagnano, taken by M. Cuozzo, are discussed by B. d'Agostino in this volume.

<sup>5</sup> Here I wish to thank F. Boitani, formerly Director of the Villa Giulia Museum in Rome (two samples from Veii, sample from Caere); A. Iacoe, Director of the Pontecagnano Museum (four samples from Pontecagnano); M. Pagano, formerly Soprintendente Archeologo per il Molise (sample in the Museum of Bojano). Their help and support were invaluable.

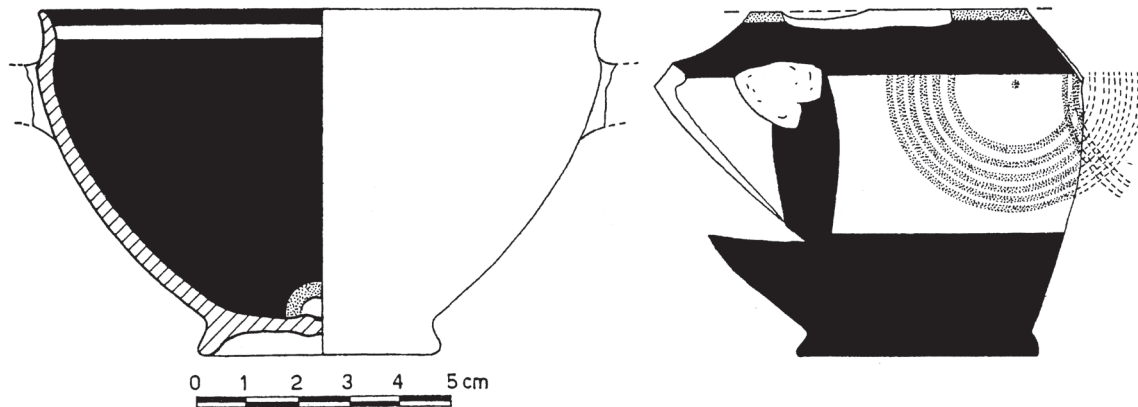


Fig. 2 PSC skyphos from Sant'Imbenia (from Oristano 1997, 50 f.)

### Sardinia: Sant'Imbenia (comune Alghero, province of Sassari)

The earliest skyphos from Italy is that from Sant'Imbenia near Alghero, belonging to Kearsley's type 5 (Fig. 2). It was found in a domestic context, in the fill layer between two floors. A trade amphora was found with each floor: they are of different types, but both contained 42 kg of copper ingots. Phoenician vases, such as a Samaria-ware cup and a cooking pot, and Greek imports, such as a bird skyphos and a chevron skyphos from Euboea, date the filling layer not later than the first quarter of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. D. Ridgway and other scholars emphasised the connection between Euboean pots and copper finds in Sant'Imbenia, linking them to the metal-trade supply and to the early development of a local metal industry in Sardinia<sup>6</sup>.

### Southern Etruria: Veii and Caere (province of Rome)

In the 1960's in the Quattro Fontanili cemetery at Veii two PSC skyphoi were found: one without context and one from a disturbed tomb, both belonging to Kearsley type 6 (Fig. 3). Thanks to F. Boitani it was possible to obtain a sample (Veii 01) from the skyphos found in the grave AABγ

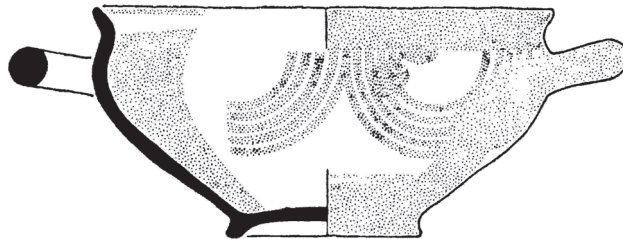


Fig. 3 PSC skyphos from Veii, grave AABγ (from Boitani 2005, pl. 1.4)

<sup>6</sup> For the skyphos from Sant'Imbenia: Oristano 1997; Ridgway 1989 for a sherd from Tharros at first attributed to a PSC skyphos. For a general overview about the relationship between Sardinia and Euboea, see Rendeli 2005, with previous literature. For the site of Sant'Imbenia: Rendeli – De Rosa 2010 and now Depalmas – Fundoni – Luongo 2011.

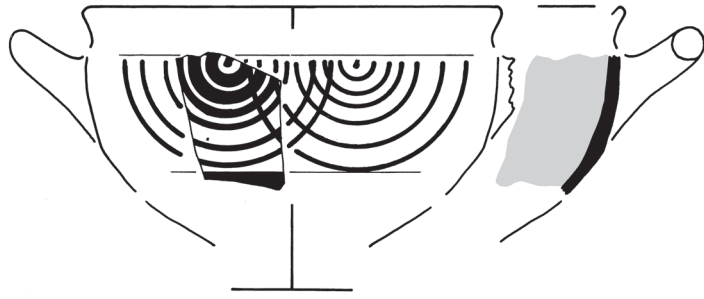


Fig. 4 Fragment of a PSC skyphos from Veii (from Toms 1997, fig. 2)

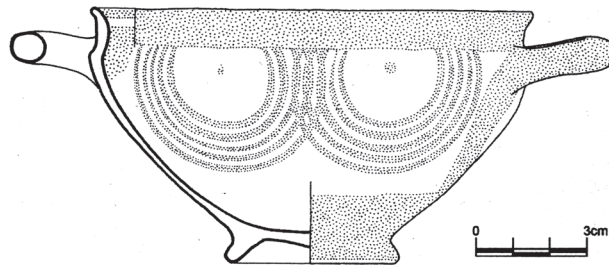


Fig. 5 PSC skyphos from Caere (from Rizzo 2005, pl. 1)

together with a local vase dating to the phase IIB 1 of the chronological sequence of Veii. According to Boitani, who recently re-published this grave, a date before 750 B.C. is secure<sup>7</sup>.

A third example (Veii 02) can now be added to the two skyphoi from Veii. The sherd was found on the surface of the Quattro Fontanili cemetery in 1995 by J. Toms together with M. Pacciarelli (Fig. 4). I. Lemos ascribed it to an Euboean PSC skyphos. According to the NAA analysis of H. Mommsen it is a chemical singleton.

A grave from Caere, unfortunately disturbed, contained one askos from Cyprus, one PSC skyphos (Cerv 01) and an Etruscan bronze fibula (Fig. 5). The grave group has been dated by M. A. Rizzo to the phase Veii IIA, in the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C. In her paper Rizzo offers an overview of all the known PSC skyphoi, not only for those from Italy: here she suggests assigning the skyphoi from Sardinia and from the Pontecagnano grave 7392 to the latest stage of Kearsley type 5. The scholar noted a similarity between the skyphos from Caere and that from Veii AABγ: both have a ring-base and not a flat bottom. Rizzo suggested that both skyphoi belonged to a transitional form between Kearsley's type 5 and type 6. The NAA analysis confirmed this suggestion: the skyphos from Caere together with that from Veii form the couple 167, which have no match with any other known provenance group in the Bonn data base<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> Veii: Toms 1997, 85–88 for the sherd, with previous literature; Boitani 2001; Boitani 2005, 319–320 figs. 1–4. The analysis, carried out with the Mössbauer method, of a sample from the skyphos (inv. VG 60255) found on the surface (and so with no context) in the Quattro Fontanili cemetery, square F13, did not arrive at any clear results (Ridgway et al. 1985, 142 no. 18; 148 for the results' discussion). A sample from the skyphos found in the Pontecagnano grave 4697, analyzed with the Mössbauer method, has been classified in his group A 2 by A. Deriu and assigned to a Euboean workshop (d'Agostino 1989, 76–77).

<sup>8</sup> Caere: Rizzo 2005, 334–338 tav. 1. The skyphos from Pontecagnano 7392 has been published by Bailo Modesti – Gastaldi 1999, 30 pl. 1, 6.

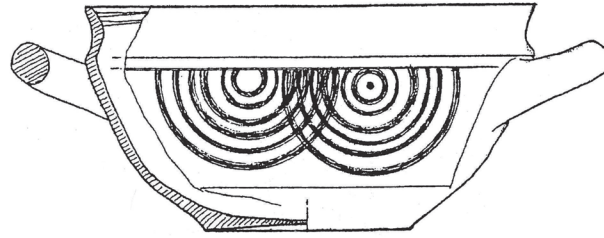


Fig. 6 PSC skyphos from Villasmundo, grave 65 (from Voza 1999, fig. 51, 1a)

### Sicily: Villasmundo (province of Syracuse)

The skyphos from Villasmundo near Megara Hyblaea in Sicily was retrieved from grave 65 of an indigenous cemetery composed of little chamber tombs, dug out from the rock along the valley of the river Marcellino. The cemetery, which had been already used during the Bronze Age, flourished in the EIA, during the phase of the local Pantalica Sud culture.

The skyphos, assigned to Kearsley type 6 (Fig. 6), together with other Greek imports such as chevron and Thapsos skyphoi, all testify to the relationships of the local community in Sicily with the Greeks before the foundation of Syracuse and Megara Hyblaea<sup>9</sup>.

### Samnium or Northern Campania: Bojano or Capua?

In the 1970's and 1980's fossa graves dating from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. have been found in at least four places on the Bojano plain (province of Campobasso). These have been destroyed by the gravel quarries. The former commander of the Carabinieri in Bojano, maresciallo Goffredo Anacleto Del Pinto, rescued from destruction many vases and bronze objects, approximately 250 pieces in total. He gave them to the local Soprintendenza. For these reasons the provenance of the artefacts, no longer assignable to specific tomb groups, is not certain. This detail is quite important, as we will see. The finds include also a PSC skyphos (Boja 01). The form and the decoration are quite unusual, so justifying the hypothesis of local production (Fig. 7). I. Lemos, when she saw the photographs, agreed immediately with me that the fabric of the vase was not Greek. H. Mommsen was able to classify the Bojano skyphos sample as a singleton. The form of the skyphos also supports the hypothesis of local production.

The late W. Johannowsky expressed verbally some doubts about the actual provenance of these objects from Bojano, suggesting that they were rather found in Capua<sup>10</sup>. Other finds of the material now held at Bojano do indeed show similarities with typical products from Capua: I will briefly mention some of them. Among the bronze objects are two birds and three ornaments in the form of flowers that belonged to spectacle fibulae: typical high rank grave goods of Capua and Suessula in Northern Campania and dated around the middle of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C., perhaps in the third quarter<sup>11</sup>. Bronze ornaments for clothes now at Bojano find good comparisons with similar pieces from female-connected deposits at Veii, dating to the third quarter of the 8<sup>th</sup> century

<sup>9</sup> Leighton 1993; Albanese Procelli 2003, 133 and Voza 2003, both with previous bibliography.

<sup>10</sup> In the public discussion during the conference «I Samniti e Roma» (Isernia, 7.–11. 11. 2006). The conference proceedings are not published.

<sup>11</sup> De Benedittis 2005, 29. 35 nn. 39–40 (birds); 38; 43 nn. 73–75 (flowers). For the spectacle fibulae from Capua, Suessula and Pithecusa: Johannowsky 1994, 93–98, phase IIB; Cerchiai 2002, with further bibliography. Other isolated pieces (*disiecta membra*) have been published by Aigner Foresti 1986, 38; Jurgeit 1999, 593 n. 1012 (from Suessula, formerly in the Spinelli collection).

B.C., and again in Capua, where they are associated to vitreous *Vogelperlen*<sup>12</sup>. Such *Vogelperlen* have been found in Bojano, too<sup>13</sup>. The affinities of the Bojano finds with Iron-Age Campania is further underlined by eight ceramic kyathoi, characterized by their heavy baroque handles. Until now such vases are only documented in ancient Capua<sup>14</sup>.

The real provenance of this PSC skyphos has no primary role in this study; it is an Italian question, probably destined to remain open. In my opinion it is more important to stress the similarities with the finds from Capua, a centre where, according to Johannowsky, MG and LG Greek pottery has been already found<sup>15</sup>.

### Conclusions

In terms of chronology it is important to stress once again that all exemplars belonging to closed contexts can be dated not later than the middle of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

According to M. A. Rizzo, we have skyphoi of the late stages of Kearsley 5 in Sardinia and at Pontecagnano; of a transitional type from Kearsley type 5 to 6 in Southern Etruria, of type 6 in Pontecagnano, Sicily. Now we can add one more from Bojano or Capua, i.e. Samnium or Northern Campania. The shape of the skyphos from Poggiomarino is unknown; it seems quite probable that it came from Pontecagnano, which is not far off.

Three of the analysed skyphoi from Pontecagnano are of Euboean origin, i.e. the pair 110 with the elemental pattern EuA, and the one belonging to the provenance group EuA. The chemical couple 167 from Southern Etruria do not match any known group within the Bonn data base. I would prefer to place it in an unidentified Greek workshop, because according to its fabric and typology it does not look like a local product.

An Italian production could be assumed for the chemical singletons like the irregular skyphos from Bojano or Capua (Boja 1) and again for the quite large skyphos from Pontecagnano now in a private collection (Pont 03). These, according to H. Mommsen, show similarities with vases from Sicily. On the other hand a local production seems more than likely for the skyphos from Pontecagnano grave 4697, defined here by B. d'Agostino as an experimental attempt, for which we have no NAA analysis at the moment.

### Catalogue

**Boja 1** (Fig. 7) Lip not offset; flat bottom. The form of the body and of one handle are quite irregular. On the exterior the lip, the lower part, the foot and Bojano, Municipio, inv. BJ/D/93. H 6,4; D. lip 13,6 cm

<sup>12</sup> Bojano: De Benedittis 2005, 30 nn. 43–44. Veii: Berardinetti Insam 2001, 101 n. I.G.5.27 from the tomb Quattro Fontanili HH 11–12. Capua: Johannowsky 1994, fig. 3, from the tomb 200 dating to the local phase IIB.

<sup>13</sup> De Benedittis 2005, 26 n. 25, belonging to a type examined by Martelli (1991, 1051–1052 fig. 2 c for the distribution in Central Italy), to which one can add at least Pontecagnano (d'Agostino – Gastaldi 1988, 69 n. 42E4) and Capua (s. previous footnote). The distribution throughout the whole Mediterranean has been outlined by S. Huber (Huber 1998, 128–130 fig. 18) and L. Koch (Koch 2010, fig. 5).

<sup>14</sup> Bojano: De Benedittis 2005, 19–21 nn. 1–3. 5–9. Capua: Cerchiai 1995, 46; Chiamonte Trerè 1999, 107 figg. 16–22; 121, both with references.

<sup>15</sup> The finds from Capua are not systematically published, but one can use information from Johannowsky 1983; Johannowsky 1989; Johannowsky 1992, 257–276; Johannowsky 1994; Johannowsky 1996. An overview is in Museo 1995. For MG and LG Greek imports at Capua: Johannowsky 1994, 105. The Etruscan origin of Capua is stressed by Chiamonte Trerè 1999. Minoja 2006 examines the funerary rituals of Capua during the Orientalizing period. For the present article I was not able to use the new contributions regarding the Iron Age finds from Capua (Melandri 2011 and Capua 2011).



Fig. 7 PSC skyphos from Bojano or Capua (Boja 01)  
(Drawing after De Benedittis 2005, n. 10; photos: M. Kerschner)



Fig. 8 PSC skyphos from Caere (Caerv 01) (Photos: M. Kerschner)

the handles are painted. On the exterior there are two sets of five PSC. On the interior it is painted, except for a reserved band on lip. Complete, except a small part on the lip. Naso 2008, 149 fig. 5 with previous bibliography.

**Cerv 01** (Fig. 8)

Grave 2138. Rome, Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia, inv. 132829.

H 7 cm; D. lip 12 cm; D. base 4,6 cm.

Lip not offset; low ring-base. On the exterior the lip, the lower part, the foot and the handles are painted; there are two sets of five PSC, intersecting; at the centre is the impression left by the compasses used to trace the circles. The

interior is painted, except for a reserved band on lip. Reconstructed with small parts missing. Rizzo 2005, 334–338 tav. 1.

**Veii 01** (Fig. 9)

Grave QF 68 AA Bγ. Rome, Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia, inv. QF 68 AA Bγ 2.

H 6,3 cm; D. lip 12,3 cm; D. base 5,3 cm.

Lip, not offset; low ring-base. On the exterior the lip, the lower part, the foot and the handles are painted. On the exterior there are two sets of five PSC, intersecting. The interior is painted, except for a reserved band on lip. Complete.

Boitani 2005, 319–320 figs. 2–4, with previous bibliography.



Fig. 9 PSC skyphos from Veii (Ve 01) (Photos: M. Kerschner)



Fig. 10 Fragment of a PSC skyphos from Veii (Ve 02) (Photo: M. Kerschner)



- Veii 02** (Fig. 10) Body sherd. On the exterior there is one set of six PSC and traces of two other semicircles, intersecting. The interior is painted.  
 Surface find in the Quattro Fontanili area. Rome, Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia, without inv. Toms 1997, 85–88 figs. 1–2; Boitani 2005, 319–320 fig. 1.  
 H 3,6 cm; L 2,5 cm.

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