Naukratis: Greeks in Egypt

Alexandra Villing, Marianne Bergeron, Giorgos Bourogiannis, Alan Johnston, François Leclère, Aurélia Masson and Ross Thomas

With Daniel von Recklinghausen, Jeffrey Spencer, Valerie Smallwood, Virginia Webb and Susan Woodford

http://www.britishmuseum.org/naukratis

Corinthian pottery

Marianne Bergeron
1. Introduction

The Corinthian fine ware pottery from Naukratis is a small yet interesting group. It represents only about 4% of the entire corpus of Greek fine wares found at the site during the early fieldwork campaigns and the vast majority of it dates to the Archaic period. Despite the low proportion, the range of shapes is varied and several different styles are represented.

Corinthian fine ware has been extensively studied and its development is well known. This is the result not least because of its wide distribution throughout the Mediterranean region between the 7th and 6th century BC, appearing in a broad range of contexts, often as votive offerings. It is also a major source of evidence for dating during the period; several authors have developed chronologies largely based on the correlation of the foundation dates of Greek colonies, as offered by various ancient authors, especially Thucydides (The History of the Peloponnesian War VI, 3–5), along with the archaeological evidence found at these sites. Other chronologies, including that by Hopper, are oriented more on the styles of Corinthian fine ware compared with those of early Attic vases.

Corinthian fabric is easily recognizable. The fabric is usually very well levigated (although that of household ware and amphorae can be coarser or more heavily tempered); the colour of the clay tends to range from light yellow, tan, beige to somewhat pinkish. Once fired, the core of the fabric can take on a pink, orange or greenish hue. The black slip used is usually fired to a matt dark brownish black but it can over-fire to red. The added colours used to accentuate the decorative motifs are usually purple and white.

The number of known Corinthian fine ware sherds from Naukratis totals over 300, almost half of which are located in the British Museum. With the exception of a few small vessels, all were found in a fragmentary state. In only a few cases has it been possible to reconstruct at least in part some of the vessels; we are thus probably dealing with an actual number of some 250 Corinthian vessels. The preserved material probably does not represent the complete assemblage as found by the excavators, nor is it necessarily representative: we know that only a selection of pottery was kept by them, in particular decorated and inscribed sherds. With fewer than 10% of the extant Corinthian sherds bearing inscriptions (some of them dedications and others ‘labels’ for painted figures), more of the ‘regular’ figured sherds appear to have been kept than is the case for many other pottery groups.

Very few of the excavated Corinthian vessels have a precise provenance. The majority come from the sanctuary of Apollo with one lekane (made up of 37 sherds), one lekanis or lekane, one phiale mesomphalos, one tripod pyxis, two alabastra, two aryballoi, three pyxis lids, three kotylai and 12

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1 My thanks go to Professor Cornelius W. Neeft, whose notes on the individual sherds from Naukratis were an invaluable tool for the production of this catalogue; my thanks also to Professor Neeft for granting us access to his then unpublished article, Neeft 2012. All images are © Trustees of the British Museum, unless otherwise indicated.

2 For the development and styles of Corinthian fine ware, see Johansen 1923; Payne 1931; Neeft 1987; Amyx 1988; Benson 1989; Neeft 1991. The excavations in Corinth, and in particular those in the Potter’s Quarter, have also produced a wealth of information regarding the development of different Corinthian pottery styles. See Weinberg 1943; Stillwell 1948; Edwards 1975; Amyx and Lawrence 1975; Herbert 1977; Stillwell and Benson 1984; Risser 2001.

3 For a summary of the different chronological studies and bibliography, see Amyx 1988, 397–434. Johansen 1923; Payne 1931; Hopper 1949. On problems of dating see also Morris 1996.

4 The chronology used here is that of Amyx, who largely follows Payne’s chronology but also relies on comparisons and associations with Attic fine ware to provide dates for the Middle to Late Corinthian I periods, see Amyx 1988, 428.
kraters. A column-krater (made up of 11 joining sherds) was found in the sanctuary of the Dioskouroi alongside a fragment from another krater and one more from a kylix; two reconstructed vases, a column-krater and kotyle, as well as one sherd from another kotyle are recorded as having been found in the sanctuary of Aphrodite. One column-krater sherd came from the sanctuary of Hera and a single plastic unguent jar is recorded as coming from the region of the cemetery. No Corinthian pottery is recorded from the Hellenion, although the most recent fieldwork (2014) beside the Hellenion did produce a small number of Corinthian black-figure sherds. Of the pieces with dedicatory inscriptions the majority (mostly column-kraters and kotylai) comes from the sanctuary of Apollo, but there are also finds from the sanctuaries of the Dioskouroi and Aphrodite (see the chapter on Ceramic inscriptions).

2. Corinthian pottery at Naukratis – chronological development and functions

The earliest Corinthian pottery at Naukratis dates from the Transitional period, between 630 and 620/615 BC, but only one kotyle can be securely dated to this period (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, AN1896-1908-G.121.14). A second vessel, a lekane in Boston (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 09.210), is not assuredly from Naukratis as it was acquired from a private collection; the fragment was published by Arthur Fairbanks as possibly from the sanctuary of Aphrodite, but it is not clear on the basis of what information this find-spot was assigned.5 While Corinthian fine wares continued to arrive at Naukratis until c. 350 BC the vast majority are dated no later than c. 550 BC. Thus Corinthian fine wares had already reached Naukratis during the site’s earliest period and reached its peak, even with modest numbers, during the Middle Corinthian period and had dwindled significantly by c. 550 BC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chronological Period</th>
<th>Abbreviations</th>
<th># of Sherds (Total 318)</th>
<th>Percentage of Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transitional (630-620/615BC)</td>
<td>TR</td>
<td>1*</td>
<td>&gt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Corinthian (620-595/550BC)</td>
<td>EC</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early/Middle Corinthian</td>
<td></td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Corinthian (595-575/570BC)</td>
<td>MC</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>54.71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle/Late Corinthian I</td>
<td></td>
<td>24</td>
<td>7.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Corinthian I (575-550BC)</td>
<td>LC I</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>18.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Corinthian II (550-500BC)</td>
<td>LC II</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&gt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classical Corinthian (500-323BC)</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hellenistic Corinthian (323-250BC)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&gt;1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 Chronological periods for Corinthian fine ware pottery represented at Naukratis

Corinthian vessels at Naukratis can be separated into five different functional groups, although two are only minimally attested.6 The first and largest group consists of vases related to drinking activities (Fig. 2); accounting for 60% of the Corinthian material preserved from Naukratis. The earliest such specimen, and indeed the earliest Corinthian vase at

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5 Fairbanks 1928, 120–1, no. 340. Unlike most Naukratis sherds, which were sent to the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, by the Egypt Exploration Fund (EEF) in 1885, 1886 and 1887, this sherd was a gift from Joseph Lindon Smith in 1909 (see Schlotzhauer 2012, 32). Because of its uncertain provenance, the piece is not included in the statistical calculations presented in this chapter.

6 With the exception of two sherds, all Corinthian fragments from Naukratis could be attributed to specific shapes.
Naukratis is the kotyle; it is the most common Corinthian drinking cup at the site, but not the most common shape overall, unlike at many other Greek sanctuary sites. Alongside kotylai, kylikes have also been found at Naukratis, but in far fewer numbers. The most common Corinthian shape overall is the column-krater, which is also the most frequently found drinking related Corinthian shape. It first appears in small numbers during the earliest phase of the site and becomes increasingly common during the Middle Corinthian period. Its disappearance from Naukratis after c. 550 BC coincides with the cessation of its production as evidenced at numerous other Greek sites. Very few Corinthian fine ware pouring and storage vessels, oinochoai and amphorae are known from Naukratis.

The second largest group (some 25%) of Corinthian vessels found at Naukratis is related to personal use (Fig. 3). They include primarily unguent jars such as aryballoi and alabastra, but a few pyxides have been found as well. The earliest examples of this group belong to the Early Corinthian period and they reached the height of their popularity in the Middle Corinthian period. A few such vases continued to appear well into the 4th century BC.

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7 See for instance Kocybala 1999, 3; Boardman and Hayes 1966, 24–5.
Figure 3 Personal use Corinthian pottery by period (total sherd count: 78)

Figure 4 Dining-related Corinthian pottery by period (total sherd count: 28)
Fewer than 10% of Corinthian vessels at Naukratis can be assigned to the third group associated with solid foods and eating (Fig. 4). Vases with a purely votive function are even fewer (some 2.5%), consisting of miniature kotylai or kotyliskoi and a miniature alabastron, all of the Late Corinthian I and II periods, although it is possible that the alabastron originally also had a utilitarian purpose. As miniature vases have been found in large numbers in sanctuary settings elsewhere, their numbers in Naukratis seem surprisingly low. 8

Finally, a single Corinthian phiale is preserved. The shape is found across Greece and most commonly was used in religious rituals for pouring libations (liquid offerings to the gods). 9

3. Iconography, styles and painters

A number of different styles can be observed within the Corinthian pottery repertoire at Naukratis, whose quality might overall be termed ‘average’. There are a number of unexceptional pieces and very few of high quality and the works of only a small number of painters have been identified.

As noted above, the earliest Corinthian sherd preserved from the site is a Transitional style kotyle. 10 All that remains are the wide rising rays above the ring base, a pattern already found on earlier Protocorinthian vases that continued into the Corinthian period.

Most vases are decorated in the black-figure technique, with the exception of the miniature vessels. Animal friezes are most common, depicting the usual menagerie of panthers, grazing goats, lions and birds as well as mythological creatures including sirens, sphinxes and occasionally griffins. Examples include four sherds belonging to a single lekane attributed to the Painter of Athens 931 (two further sherds attributed to the same painter might belong to the same vase). 11 An alabastron, probably decorated by the Scale Painter, also features in this group. 12 Five sherds, two of which belong to the same vase, might belong to the Scale Pattern Group since they display the group’s typical incised scale pattern (Fig. 8). 13 Animals and mythological creatures also typically decorate the handle plates of column-kraters, including one near the Hippolytos Painter. 14

A number of battle scenes are found in the repertoire, mainly on aryballoi of the Warrior Group, which depict hoplites in phalanx formation. 15 Mounted horsemen appear on a column-krater attributed by Amyx to the Detroit Painter (Fig. 6). 16 One ring aryballos with mounted horsemen has been attributed to the Blaricum Painter 17 and two other ring aryballoi with similar decoration may be the work of the same artist. 18

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8 Boardman and Hayes 1966, 26; Boardman and Hayes 1973, 9; Neeft 2012, 190; Kocybala 1999, 81.
9 On the phiale and its uses, see Luschey 1939; Hölscher 2005, 208–9. Phialai also may have had a function in symposia.
11 British Museum, 1886,0401.1054; 1886,0401.1043.a; 1886,0401.1043.b; 1886,0401.1009; probably 1886,0401.994 and possibly 1886,0401.1008. C.W. Neeft (pers. comm.).
12 British Museum, 1886,0401.1143. C.W. Neeft (pers. comm.).
17 Museum of Classical Archaeology, Cambridge, NA183. C.W. Neeft (pers. comm.).
18 Ure Museum, Reading, 26.2.3 and 26.2.4.
Komast scenes attributed to the Klyka Group appear on a number of column-krater sherds that belong to two separate vessels. Another column-krater sherd, depicting an erotic encounter involving a man, woman and swan, was attributed by Payne to the Ophelandros Painter on the basis of its similarities with two other vases, although Seeberg preferred to see it belonging to the Klyka Group.

As is the case in general with Corinthian pottery, scenes from Greek myths are relatively uncommon. A kotyle fragment possibly depicting Herakles was attributed by Amandry and Amyx to the Gorgoneion Group or near the Otterlo Painter. A krater sherd represents a variation of the Embassy to Troy, best exemplified by the ex-Astarita krater in the Vatican.

Fragments of one krater are intriguing (Fig. 5). The quality of the incision is average and one might be tempted to see parallels with the ‘penguin ladies’ on Attic black-figure vases decorated by Lydos, but the direction of the feet suggests that rather than holding their mantles out before them, the ladies on this Corinthian column-krater stretch it out backwards.

Finally, there are a small number of vases with black-figure floral decoration, although most floral vases were decorated in reserved style, typically lotus flowers on aryballoi.

The Linear style is represented by only a few sherds at Naukratis; it appears only on alabastra, pyxides and kotyliskoi (see below, Figs 17, 23). The most typical patterns are series of lines and wide bands of staggered dots. At Naukratis we find the style beginning in the Early Corinthian period and lasting until the Late Corinthian I period.

The Black Polychrome style is represented by a few oinochoe sherds and a single intact globular aryballos (see below, Figs 10, 16). They are glazed black with incised pattern decoration (usually tongues) with added purple and white colour. The style first appeared during the Early Corinthian period but did not last long into the Middle Corinthian period. A number of black-glazed kotylai were also found (below, Fig. 11). The earliest date to the Middle Corinthian period and they continue into Late Corinthian I. The decoration is kept to a minimum: the interior of the kotyle is usually glazed black and the decoration on the exterior consists mostly of wide concentric bands and rising rays around the ring foot; later examples see simple vertical strokes replacing the rays.

The Silhouette style is represented by a small number of kotylai, kotyliskoi, plates and a single tripod pyxis lid (below, Fig. 15). It is easily recognizable with its silhouette animal friezes (usually lions, panthers, goats, hounds and birds) and hailstorm filling ornament. The majority of pieces at Naukratis date to the Middle Corinthian period, but a few later examples have also been found.

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20 British Museum, 1886,0401.789; see Payne 1931, 119, fig. 44e, 163, no. 16, cat. no. 1179, and most recently Johnston 2014a, 120 fig. 1. Payne compared the sherd with a vase in the Musée du Louvre, Paris, E632 and British Museum, 1867,0808.860; see also Seeberg 1971, 65.
21 Akademisches Kunstmuseum, Bonn, 697.82; Piekarski p. 34, B3; Amandry and Amyx 1982, 109, no. 11.
22 See Johnston 2014a, 120–2, figs 2 and 3; cf. also Ioizzo 2012, 27–40.
23 Louvre, Paris, AM1360 (12); AM1360 (18); AM1360 (19); AM1360 (7); AM1360 (20), AM1360 (9) and AM1362 (6).
A small number of red-ground kraters from Naukratis include one of Chalcidian type (Fig. 8). There is also a single fragment from a red-ground lid. The technique is found in the Late Corinthian I period.

Three sherds from a convex pyxis decorated in the Conventionalizing style date to between 450 and 425 BC, well into the Classical period.\(^{24}\) They feature the style’s typical reserved palmette pattern decoration.

Finally, the latest Corinthian vessel in the sequence is a Hellenistic blister ware squat aryballos. Although slipped, its appearance is coarse and looks over-fired. The ware takes its name from the blisters on the vessel surface that develop during the firing process when lime inclusions in the fabric erupt from the heat of the kiln.\(^{25}\)

### 4. Shapes of Corinthian pottery at Naukratis

The following section provides an overview of the Corinthian shape repertoire found at Naukratis and the functions of these vessels.

#### 4.1 Amphorae

Corinthian fine ware amphorae are rare at Naukratis. Only one sherd has been identified as coming from a black-figure amphora (Fig. 6), late in the series of Corinthian black-figure vases at Naukratis. Four other black-figure sherds have been tentatively identified as coming from either an amphora or an oinochoe; they cover a broad time span, but are mostly earlier than the above-mentioned sherd.

Decorated amphorae, in general, do not appear very frequently at Greek sanctuary sites and few Corinthian examples have been published from the excavations at the sanctuaries of Demeter and Kore/Persephone at Taucheira and Cyrene.\(^{26}\)

#### 4.2 Kraters

Corinthian column-kraters appear at Naukratis from the Early Corinthian period, reaching the height of their popularity during the Middle Corinthian period and disappearing from the assemblage by c. 550 BC (Fig. 7). Over 100 sherds belonging to over 70 different kraters have been counted. Whilst kraters are typical drinking related shapes that find their place in sanctuaries, the high number of Corinthian examples sets Naukratis apart from other sites such as Taucheira and Cyrene, where Corinthian kraters are among the rarest Corinthian shapes; for example, none appear to have been found in the sanctuary of Aphaia on Aigina.\(^{27}\)

At least one fragment belongs to a Late Corinthian I red-ground krater of Chalcidian type (Fig. 8); two further red-ground sherds may come from similar kraters or from column-kraters; all sherds can be dated to between 575 and 500 BC. A fragmentary black-glazed krater base, possibly dating to the Early Corinthian period, does not allow for a determination of the type of krater to which it once belonged.\(^{28}\)

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\(^{24}\) Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, AN1896-1908-G.1245; Unnumbered 41 and Unnumbered 42.

\(^{25}\) Rotroff, 2006, 135.

\(^{26}\) Boardman and Hayes 1966, 28; Kocybala 1999, 68–9.

\(^{27}\) Bergeron forthcoming c; Kocybala 1999, 73; Boardman and Hayes 1966, 23, 33; Williams 1993, 589.

\(^{28}\) For a discussion on Early Corinthian black-glazed kraters decorated with added coloured bands, see Weinberg 1943, 63, no. 233.
4.3 Olpai

Only three sherds have been tentatively identified as from olpai, although one might equally come from a large alabastron (Fig. 9). In general, body sherds belonging to large alabastra are not easy to identify as they can be mistaken for oinochoai or amphorae. Olpai do not appear frequently at Greek sanctuary sites; at least one Middle Corinthian olpe was found at Taucheira, but none have been recorded at Cyrene. 29

4.4 Oinochoai

With over 15 likely examples, the oinochoe is the most common decorated Corinthian pouring vase found at Naukratis (Fig. 10), although one must grant that in some instances the small size of the sherd prevents secure identification as either an oinochoe or amphora. Four of the sherds belong to two different broad-bottomed trefoil oinochoai. No oinochoe lids are preserved.

These vases first appear at Naukratis during the Early Corinthian period, but are most common during Middle Corinthian. Only one sherd has been positively identified as Late Corinthian.

Corinthian oinochoai of various types have also been found in sanctuaries at other sites. Although large closed vessels were not particularly common at Taucheira, a few conical and broad-bottomed oinochoai were recorded there early in the Corinthian sequence starting in the Middle Protocorinthian period. 30 Oinochoai appeared in the earliest layers at Cyrene, beginning in the Middle Corinthian period and lasted until the Late Corinthian II period. The range of shapes is more varied there than at Taucheira and Naukratis. 31

In the sanctuaries of Athena and Apollo at Emporio and that of Apollo at Phana on the island of Chios, Corinthian fine wares — along with fine ware imports in general — are rare. 32 Nonetheless, at least two Early Corinthian oinochoe sherds have been found on the island. 33

4.5 Kotylai

Several full-sized Corinthian kotylai have been found in the sanctuaries of Naukratis, but the preserved number in no way matches that for column-kraters (Fig. 11). Thirty-seven sherds belonging to 32 different kotylai are preserved, including one sherd that might belong to either a kotyle or kylix. The earliest, belonging to the Transitional period, is the earliest attested piece of Corinthian pottery at the site, roughly contemporary with the earliest Chian pottery. Very few Early Corinthian kotylai are preserved; most examples are Middle Corinthian and only a few are Late Corinthian. Kotylai are usually the most frequent Corinthian shape at Greek sanctuary sites. At Cyrene, they make up almost 50% of the entire Corinthian repertoire, but did not begin to arrive at the site until the Middle Corinthian period. 34 At Taucheira, the kotyle is also among the most common Corinthian shapes, attested from the Early Corinthian until the Late Corinthian periods. 35

29 Boardman and Hayes 1966, 22, 27.
30 Ibid., 21–2, 26–8. Given that the earliest such vessel, a conical oinochoe, predates the foundation of the site, the excavators suspected that it was a prized possession or an heirloom brought to Taucheira by a founding colonist.
31 Kocybala 1999, 63.
32 Boardman 1967; Rougou 2012; Lamb 1934/5, 162–3. The more recent published fieldwork reports at Kato Phana by L. Beaumont make very little mention of Corinthian or other imported Archaic Greek pottery: Beaumont and Archontidou-Argyri 1999, 269.
4.6 Kylikes and other cups

Several kylikes are preserved amongst the Corinthian fine ware pottery from Naukratis (Fig. 12), with nearly 30 sherds belonging to 12 separate vessels. Although the earliest examples are Early Corinthian, most are Middle Corinthian; the shape disappears from Naukratis after the Late Corinthian I period. A further Middle Corinthian sherd features rising rays on a wide body similar to kylikes, but its simple ring foot suggests it belongs to a black-glazed cup (Fig. 13). Since no kylikes have been published from Taucheira and very few from Cyrene, it appears that the kylix was more frequent at Naukratis than in Cyrenaica.\(^{36}\)

4.7 Lekanai and lekanides

Only a small number of lekane and possibly lekanis sherds of Corinthian origin are preserved from Naukratis, some 11 sherds belonging to five different vessels (Fig. 14). Lidded lekanides can be differentiated from their unlied lekanai counterparts by the presence of an inset lip used to hold the lid in place. Therefore, body sherds that do not include a rim may belong to either a lekanis or a lekane; there are only two sherds with rims that identify them as coming from lekanai. None of the sherds from Naukratis appear to come from the stemmed variety, but two different handle types (spurred-ribbon and lug handles) are attested. The earliest example of the shape is dated to the Transitional period, but its provenance from Naukratis is not assured.\(^{37}\) The main series appears to have arrived during the Early Corinthian period. Several sherds belong to a single Middle Corinthian lekane and the latest example is late Middle Corinthian or Late Corinthian I.

Corinthian lekanai and lekanides have been found also at other Greek sanctuary sites. At Cyrene, a few examples appear later than at Naukratis during the Middle Corinthian period; they continue to arrive well into the 4th century BC.\(^{38}\) From Taucheira, only one single black-glazed lekane has been published.\(^{39}\)

4.8 Plates

Seventeen sherds belonging to 12 different plates have been recorded at Naukratis, all from the Middle Corinthian period (Fig. 15). Where rims are preserved, they are flaring. Elsewhere, Corinthian plates are frequently observed in sanctuary contexts. At Cyrene and Taucheira, plates appear earlier than at Naukratis, continuing to arrive into the mid-6th century BC and in a greater variety of styles.\(^{40}\)

4.9 Aryballoi

Aryballoi, small unguent jars, are attested by just over 40 sherds at Naukratis. The earliest examples belong to the Early Corinthian period, but the majority are Middle Corinthian. Most are of the globular type (Fig. 16), but there are also at least three ring aryballoi and one later blister ware squat aryballos of the 4th century BC. Corinthian aryballoi are found in large numbers in Greek sanctuaries. Although they may not be as frequent at Naukratis as they are at Cyrene or Taucheira or on Thasos or Aigina or at Emporio on Chios, they are nevertheless among the most common Corinthian fine ware shapes associated with personal use preserved from the site.\(^{41}\)

\(^{36}\) Kocybala 1999, 48.
\(^{37}\) See above note 6.
\(^{38}\) Kocybala 1999, 50.
\(^{39}\) Boardman and Hayes 1966, 34.
\(^{40}\) Kocybala 1999, 52; Boardman and Hayes 1966, 24, 37.

Figure 12. Middle Corinthian black-figure kylix. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 88.1075. Photograph © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Figure 13. Middle Corinthian black-glazed cup. British Museum, 1924,1201.1164

Figure 14. Late Middle Corinthian lekane. British Museum, 1924,1201.1263

Figure 15. Late Middle Corinthian silhouette style plate. Leiden University, Faculty of Archaeology, T.2913. Photograph © Faculty of Archaeology – Leiden University

Figure 16. Early or Middle Corinthian black polychrome globular aryballos. City Art Gallery and Museum, Bristol, H6034. Photograph © Bristol Museums, Galleries & Archives. Photography by British Museum staff
4.10 Alabastra

There are fewer Corinthian alabastra at Naukratis than aryballoi (Fig. 17). Some 19 sherds probably belong to 18 alabastra (although one might equally belong to an aryballos and another to an olpe) and range in date from Early to Late Corinthian I. Like aryballoi, alabastra were frequent votive offerings in Greek sanctuaries. For example, Early Corinthian alabastra are numerous in the Artemision at Thasos.\(^{42}\) Several were also found at Aigina, Emporio (sanctuary of Apollo) and at Cyrene, but few at Taucheira.\(^{43}\)

4.11 Amphoriskoi

Despite their frequent appearance in Greek sanctuaries including those of Taucheira and Cyrene where they were probably imported in batches, amphoriskoi, probably unguent jars, were rare at Naukratis (Fig. 18).\(^{44}\) Only two sherds have been identified, belonging to a single Middle Corinthian black-figure vessel.

4.12 Kothons (exaleiptra)

Only one Corinthian kothon sherd is preserved despite the fact that the shape, perhaps a perfume container or unguent jar, was a popular votive offering in Greek sanctuaries during the 6th century BC (Fig. 19).\(^{45}\) Several examples have been found at Cyrene and many at Taucheira and Thasos.\(^{46}\)

4.13 Pyxides, pyxis lids and other lids

Corinthian pyxides are not particularly common at Naukratis (Fig. 20). The earliest pyxides belonging to a single concave pyxis date to the Early or Middle Corinthian period, soon followed by possibly three convex pyxides and two tripod pyxides, probably of Late Corinthian I date. Finally, three convex pyxides sherds, all from the same vessel, belong to the third quarter of the 5th century BC.

In addition to body sherds there are also lids, and the majority of lids, few as they are, come from pyxides; six sherds can thus be identified. The earliest date to the Early Corinthian period, thus making the pyxides one of the earliest Corinthian shapes at Naukratis (Fig. 21). The remaining lids come from concave, tripod and convex pyxides of the Middle and Late Corinthian I periods. Two further lid sherds are larger and may belong to lekanides; one is a Late Corinthian I red-ground fragment and the other a possibly Corinthian black-glazed sherd, dating to the 3rd century BC.

\(^{42}\) Neeft 2012, 189.
\(^{44}\) Kocybala 1999, 3; Boardman and Hayes 1966, 22.
\(^{46}\) Kocybala 1999, 3, 60–1; Boardman and Hayes 1966, 24; Boardman and Hayes 1973, 12; Neeft 2012, 190.
Pyxides are frequently found as votive offerings in Greek sanctuaries. At Cyrene, there is not only a great variety of shapes, but the numbers are also considerable.\(^47\) A similar pattern can be observed at Taucheira\(^48\) and Thasos also produced numerous late examples.\(^49\) Very few, however, have been found at Emporio on Chios.\(^50\)

### 4.14 Phialai

A single sherd from a Corinthian phiale mesomphalos – a shallow bowl used mainly in ritual but also symptic contexts – has been found at Naukratis in the sanctuary of Apollo (Fig. 22). It is interesting to note that the Corinthian version of the shape is less common than its Chian counterpart at the site. Similarly, the Corinthian phiale has not been found in large numbers at Taucheira and Cyrene; from both sites only miniature versions have been published.\(^51\)

### 4.15 Kotyliskoi and other miniature vessels

Miniature vases in general are rare at Naukratis and this is also true for Corinthian vessels. Seven kotyliskoi are preserved (Fig. 23), dating to the Middle to Late Corinthian I periods. In addition, one miniature alabastron decorated with horizontal bands of Late Corinthian II date is preserved, late in the series of Corinthian imports at Naukratis (Fig. 24).

The picture at Naukratis contrasts significantly with those at other Greek sanctuary sites. As typical votive offerings, miniature vases were the most popular Corinthian votive shape at Cyrene and Taucheira and many were also found at Thasos.\(^52\) Miniature unguent jars are not as frequent as their kotyle counterparts. At Cyrene, only three miniature aryballoi have been identified and none have been published from Taucheira.\(^53\)

### 4.16 Plastic vases

Corinthian plastic vases are rare at Naukratis; only one, a hare-shaped aryballos, has been identified (Fig. 25). It is almost complete; only the face is missing.

Plastic vases were equally rare at Cyrene, from where only three have been published.\(^54\) A small number of plastic vases were found at Taucheira, including a hare similar to the one from Naukratis.\(^55\)

\(^{48}\) Boardman and Hayes 1966, 23; Boardman and Hayes 1973, 11–12.
\(^{49}\) Neef 2012, 190.
\(^{50}\) Boardman 1967, 154.
\(^{51}\) Kocybala 1999, 85; Boardman and Hayes 1966, 26; Boardman and Hayes 1973, 9–10; Neef 2012, 190.
\(^{52}\) Kocybala 1999, 79.
\(^{53}\) Ibid., 94–5.
\(^{54}\) Boardman and Hayes 1966, 155, no. 85. For the type see now Böhm 2014, 83–98.
5. The Corinthian pottery of Naukratis in context – traders and trade routes

The early excavations at Naukratis have yielded only a relatively small amount of Corinthian fine ware and the total number of extant sherds represents only a small proportion of the preserved fine ware pottery assemblage. During the period when Corinthian pottery was widespread across much of the Greek world and was a favoured ware for use in sanctuaries, the picture emerging of its presence in the sanctuaries at Naukratis is very different. Here, the majority of the fine ware is East Greek, reflecting the presence of dedicants from the different (East) Greek centres involved in the foundation of the Greek emporion. The presence of Corinthian fine wares cannot be explained in quite the same manner and there is no direct evidence for the presence of Corinthians at Naukratis during the Archaic period. That links between Corinth and Naukratis nevertheless existed from an early period is suggested by finds of Corinthian transport amphorae in Egypt from the early 6th down to the 4th centuries BC, including at Kom Firin, a site near Naukratis. At Naukratis itself, Corinthian transport amphorae are attested by one sherd of the 6th century (of likely Corinthian type) and another of the 5th century BC; more were presumably found by early excavators but were not kept (for more details, see the chapter on Greek transport amphorae). Finds of several sherds of Classical Corinthian ‘tile fabric’ mortaria and perirrhantieria are further evidence for links between Naukratis and Corinth through the centuries.

Rather than seeing Archaic Corinthians themselves involved in trade with the Egyptian Nile Delta, it has been suggested that it was merchants from the island of Aigina, a major trading island and one of the key players in the early history of the emporion, who were responsible for bringing Attic, Corinthian and perhaps some Laconian goods to Naukratis. With Aigina seemingly not producing any noteworthy fine wares of its own during this period, Aiginetans probably both consumed and traded fine wares from other regions, including those from Corinth, Attica and Laconia. Some evidence for Aiginetan traders at Naukratis comes in the form of votive inscriptions on Chian kantharoi dated to the second quarter of the 6th century BC (see the chapters on Chian pottery and Ceramic inscriptions).

However, this is not necessarily the only possible scenario and there are reasons for thinking that East Greeks may have also played a role in the transport of Corinthian pottery, as has also recently been suggested in relation to Thasos by C.W. Neef. This becomes clear when considering the pattern of Corinthian fine ware at other Greek sanctuary sites besides Naukratis. On the North African coast Corinthian pottery constitutes the largest group of imported fine wares excavated in the sanctuaries of Demeter and Kore/Persephone at Taucheira and Cyrene. At Cyrene, the earliest pottery is Early Corinthian although it is found in small numbers only. Imports pick up during the Middle Corinthian period and especially

57 British Museum, 1910,0222.35 and 1910,0222.250.
58 Möller 2000a, 76; Schaus 2006, 179.
59 Williams 1983, 155; Möller 2000a, 76. Sarah P. Morris argues that at least some Middle Proto-Attic pottery (dated to the first half of the 7th century BC) was produced on Aigina; Morris 1984, 19–36. An Aiginetan pottery industry did, of course, exist, but it appears that cooking wares were its most popular exports; on the relevant literary testimony of ancient authors see recently Weilhartner 2012.
60 See also Johnston 2013, 107.
during the Late Corinthian I and Late Corinthian II periods, before dropping significantly in the Classical period.\(^\text{62}\)

With the exception of a very small number of Protocorinthian vessels and a Transitional oinochoe, the pattern of Corinthian imports at Taucherra is very similar.\(^\text{63}\) At both Cyrene and Taucherra, products from a number of workshops have been found in large quantities, suggesting that they arrived in Cyrenaica as part of large batches.\(^\text{64}\) Interestingly, these are not from the same workshops that are represented at Naukratis, nor is there evidence for batch imports of Corinthian fine ware at Naukratis. Aryballoi and alabastra are common at all three sites, but whereas at Naukratis few kothons, amphoriskoi and pyxides are preserved, these shapes are frequent in Cyrenaica.

For the sanctuary of Aphaia on Aigina, Neeft notes the presence of Corinthian cups, closed shapes, pyxides, kothons, kalathoi, plates and kraters, but only the aryballoi and alabastra have so far been published.\(^\text{65}\) Nonetheless, we can see some similarities primarily with Cyrenaica, but also with Naukratis. As at Taucherra and Cyrene, Corinthian makes up the majority of the fine wares from Aphaia’s sanctuary, notably aryballoi and alabastra. They first appear early in the Early Corinthian period and continue until at least c. 570 BC as they also do at Naukratis. Several workshops have been identified, but whether or not their products arrived in batches remains unclear. There is little evidence to suggest that the same painters and workshops are represented on Aigina as at Cyrene and Taucherra, but pieces from Aigina by certain painters (i.e. the Blaricum and Kalauria painters) find parallels with vases at Naukratis, as well as of course numerous Greek sites.\(^\text{66}\)

Different patterns emerge from the Corinthian pottery assemblage at East Greek sanctuary sites. At the sanctuary of Aphrodite Oikous at Miletus, for instance, the earliest Corinthian imports date to c. 690 BC, comprising mainly Protocorinthian aryballoi.\(^\text{67}\) Corinthian pottery votive offerings appear to cease by c. 600 BC, but there is evidence for later Corinthian pottery in the nearby settlement, albeit on a much smaller scale.\(^\text{68}\) A similar drop in numbers has also been observed at other East Greek sanctuaries, including the Heraion on Samos, the sanctuary of Athena at Lindos, as well as the sanctuary of Artemis on Thasos in the northern Aegean, whereas Corinthian pottery continues to appear in 6th century BC tombs and settlement contexts, for instance, on Rhodes and at Smyrna.\(^\text{69}\) These observations led Neeft to conclude that the decrease in Corinthian fine ware in sanctuaries in East Greece (and Thasos) must be due primarily to a change in religious customs.\(^\text{70}\) It is interesting to note in this context that at least one Corinthian vessel at Naukratis, a column-krater found in the sanctuary of Apollo, bears an inscription by a Milesian dedicant.\(^\text{71}\) Evidence for Archaic tombs and houses at Naukratis, unfortunately, is too slim to allow further comparisons.

The situation is different at Emporio on the island of Chios. Here, only a very small number of imports were recorded, with locals seeming to prefer their own pottery to imports. A very small number of Corinthian fine vessels

\(^{63}\) Boardman and Hayes 1966, 21–6.
\(^{64}\) Ibid.: Kocybala 1999, 99.
\(^{65}\) Neeft 1993. Dyfri Williams, in his catalogue of the Laconian imports found at the sanctuary of Aphaia on Aigina, notes that no Corinthian kraters are attested: Williams 1993, 589.
\(^{66}\) British Museum, 1888,0601.194; Museum of Classical Archaeology, Cambridge, NA183; Ure Museum, Reading, 26.2.3 and 26.2.4; Neeft 2012, 189.
\(^{67}\) Neeft 2012, 190; Pfisterer-Haas 1999, 263–7. The complete results from the excavations still await publication.
\(^{68}\) Neeft 2012, 190–2.
\(^{69}\) Ibid.; Blinkenberg 1931; Walter 1959, 28, 57–8.
\(^{70}\) Neeft 2012, 192.
\(^{71}\) British Museum, 1924,1201.1306; 1886,0401.672 and 1886,0401.673. See the chapter on Ceramic inscriptions.
have been found at Emporio in the harbour sanctuary dedicated to Apollo, mostly aryballoi and alabastra, but none in the sanctuary of Athena.\textsuperscript{72} No mention is made of Corinthian fine wares in the settlement area of the site. Elsewhere on Chios Corinthian pottery is also rare; only a few sherds, mainly globular aryballoi, were excavated at the sanctuary of Apollo at Kato Phana.\textsuperscript{72} Likewise, in the settlement context at Kofina Ridge in Chios Town very little Corinthian fine ware was recorded.\textsuperscript{74} If all or perhaps some of the Corinthian unguent jars found in the sanctuary of Apollo at Emporio were left by travelling merchants, the lack of Corinthian and other imports in the sanctuary of Athena suggests that the sanctuary at least in part was frequented by a different worshipping community.

6. Consuming Corinthian pottery at Naukratis: pots and people

Comparing Corinthian pottery assemblages at different Greek sites raises some interesting points about the Corinthian finds from Naukratis, the routes by which they travelled, their consumption by the Greek community of Naukratis, both passing and resident, and the presence and role of women at the site (about which very little is known).\textsuperscript{75}

Many of the Corinthian vessels, such as the aryballoi, alabastra and amphoriskoi, are perfume containers, often associated with women but used by men as well – certainly as regards aryballoi, the use of which by Greek athletes is well attested.\textsuperscript{76} As Vladimir Stissi recently suggested, while unguent jars and pyxides were popular dedications in Greek sanctuaries, particularly in the early 6th century BC, they had no obvious specific use in ritual activities in the sanctuary; presumably it was their contents that were the primary offering.\textsuperscript{77} Most recently, Katerina Volioti, in her doctoral thesis, has suggested the possibility that oil was used to polish metalwork, arguing from a Haimonian lekythos found within the area of Phidias’s workshop at Olympia, as well as from the presence of similar lekythoi in warriors’ burials, placed alongside weapons.\textsuperscript{78} Perhaps some of the aryballoi at Naukratis – most frequent in the earliest period of the site – might thus be explained as offerings left behind by mercenaries, attested in the Egyptian army since the time of Psamtik I. The iconography on some of them, featuring warriors, may lend some support to this hypothesis.

Pyxides by contrast, are cosmetic or jewellery containers more strongly associated with women, even if a use by men cannot be excluded.\textsuperscript{79} The same also applies to the kothon, which is frequently found in burials and sanctuaries. There has been much debate over the function of this shape, with some scholars favouring a use as a perfume container, exclusively by women, others as an unguent jar in symposia, and thus an association with men.\textsuperscript{80} Their low numbers at Naukratis might indicate that there were fewer women here who could have used the vessels first and then offered them as gifts to the Greek gods.

\textsuperscript{72} Boardman 1967, 153-4
\textsuperscript{73} Lamb 1934-5, 162–3.
\textsuperscript{74} Anderson, Hood and Boardman 1954, 131, 135, 140.
\textsuperscript{75} For an analysis on the presence of women at Naukratis and a discussion on intermarriage, see Bergeron forthcoming a.
\textsuperscript{76} As attested by numerous representations. For textual evidence discussing the importance of coating an athlete’s body in oil, see Lucian, Anarcharsis, 24; Pliny, Natural History, 15.4–5. See also Bergeron forthcoming a.
\textsuperscript{77} Stissi 2003, 78; Stissi 2009, 29.
\textsuperscript{78} Volioti 2012, 48.
\textsuperscript{79} Oakley 2009, 63; Bergeron forthcoming a.
\textsuperscript{80} Kreuzer 2009, 27–8; Pernice 1899, 60–72; Burrows and Ure 1911, 72–99; de la Genière 1980, 31–62.
By the late 7th century BC, when the earliest Corinthian material arrived at Naukratis, Corinthian wares were common at sites throughout much of the Greek world. Those found at Naukratis could have arrived via a number of different trade routes, including that from mainland Greece southwards to Cyrenaica, where large amounts of Corinthian wares have been uncovered. However, the fact that there are only a few parallels between this region and Naukratis regarding the products of specific workshops makes this seem less likely. By contrast, the presence in Cyrenaica of East Greek pottery as well as amulets produced at Naukratis suggests the existence of trade routes between East Greece and North Africa via the Nile Delta and further westwards to Cyrene. Given the continued, albeit reduced, presence into the 6th century BC of Corinthian fine wares in East Greece, including Miletus, this route may be a more likely candidate to explain how Corinthian fine wares arrived at Naukratis. The character of the assemblage at Naukratis suggests that the wares arrived, especially between 595 and 570 BC, not so much as trade items imported in batches for sale, but more as individual objects, probably acquired somewhere along a trade route with the specific intent to be offered as dedications possibly by merchants, Aiginetan or otherwise.

It is tempting to explain also the numerous Corinthian column-kraters in this way. Several ancient authors describe ritual practices on the bow of ships that involved the mixing of wine and the pouring of libations into the sea, performed by traders and warriors in the hope of safe and profitable travels. Perhaps the large number of Corinthian kraters at Naukratis, more numerous than at other Greek sanctuaries, can be explained as offerings by merchants upon their arrival at Naukratis or following a profitable transaction, thanking the gods during a ritual banquet and offering the ship’s krater used to make offerings before setting off for Egypt.

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81 Schaus 1985a, 107.
82 Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War, 6.32 ff.; Pindar, Pythian Odes. 4.193–200.