

The banquet set of the ancient Thracians as revealed by ceramic finds (Abstract)

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The article aims to present the ceramic sets that were used for the Thracian banquet at the height of the Thracian culture that was contemporary with the Classical and Early Hellenistic periods in the Mediterranean. Earlier imported Archaic cups are also discussed, as they were probably used during feasts, as well as the earliest examples of sets of imported and local wheel-made vases, also from the Archaic Period. The article presents pottery assemblages from settlements that could be associated with places for organizing banquets (*symposia*), and certain regularities in the composition of the ceramic set are emphasized. It could be established that for the banquets in the Early Classical Period, imported painted kraters were used for serving wine, as well as black-figure stemless *cup-skyphoi*, black glazed stemmed and stemless cups, and black glazed *skyphoi*. The set comprised also monochrome vases such as kraters, cups with S-shaped profile, jugs with high handles, and most probably table amphorae and *lekanai*. This tradition continued in the Late Classical Period, when red-figure bell-kraters were introduced, along with

painted *skyphoi* and various black-glazed drinking vessels: *kantharoi*, *cup-kantharoi*, *cup-skyphoi*, *Pheidias shape mugs*, *bolsals*. The monochrome repertoire preserves the shapes known from the previous period: amphorae, kraters, cups, and jugs. Interesting observations could be offered about the composition of the “funerary” sets from the necropoleis. In the Early Classical Period, a lasting tradition emerged to include in the set, along various metal vases, also pairs of imported ceramic vases: a large painted vase for keeping and serving wine and a black-glazed cup, usually stemless, which in the Late Classical Period was replaced by a black-glazed *kantharos* or a painted *skyphos*. Curiously, the Thracian set from the Early Classical Period did not include shapes for pouring wine, such as *oenochoi* and *olpai*, and local ceramic jugs and metal vases served this function in the Late Classical and Early Hellenistic times. The analysis leads to the conclusion that imported vessels were used for consumption of wine, while food was served mainly in local grayware monochrome vases.

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