Pottery to the people. The production, distribution and consumption of decorated pottery in the Greek world in the Archaic period (650-480 BC)

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Preface

Writing a thesis is a long and solitary task, but happily for me it has not been a lonely one. Many people have helped me arriving where I am now, by offering their support, discussing about general archaeological themes or more specific issues treated in this study, and, of course, simply by being friends. Here, I can thank only few of them individually.

First, my parents. It goes beyond my memory, but it must have been them who lured me into archaeology when they brought me – at first still a child – first to the wonderful temples of Sicily and museums all over Europe, later to less well-known, even quite hidden places of archaeological interest. Also back home, in Amsterdam and on Sicily, their support, in practical matters but also in keeping up the spirits, has always remained strong, and without their help and hospitality this thesis could never have been written.

My brother is the next to be mentioned with gratitude here. Even after sharing many of the just mentioned voyages, he has continued to assist me in my archaeological hobby. Particularly his help in providing the IT and his patience in answering my questions on computer matters have formed a crucial contribution to the completion of this work.

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Besides the support from home and friends, a thesis also needs the helping hands of fellow researchers, colleagues and institutions that make your work more comfortable. In the last category, I particularly want to thank the staff of the libraries of the American School of Classical Studies in Athens, the British School in Athens, the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut in Rome, the Universiteit Leiden and above all the people of our own faculty library for their patience and help. My gratitude also goes to the students and staff of the British School in Athens for the pleasant time they gave me during my stays in Athens, and to those of the American excavation house in Corinth for their generous hospitality during an all too short study visit there. Nancy Bookidis, secretary of the Corinth excavations, offered invaluable help by allowing me to see some items from the store rooms and the library there, and by introducing me to these places and some of their contents. The Nederlands Instituut in Athene, and especially its former director Margriet Haagsma and its secretary Willem Ledeboer also deserve being mentioned here for their friendly and efficient assistance, without which my research in Greece would have been much less pleasant. Another important contribution to my work, of a very different nature, came from the financial support offered by the Allard Pierson Stichting, NWO, and above all the research department of our faculty, where particularly Kees Ostendorf was always very helpful.

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Then, last but certainly not least, I come to my close ’context’ at the Universiteit van Amsterdam. As we all now, archaeology is nothing without contexts. First as my teachers, than as colleagues, I have always enjoyed the presence of Herman Brijder, Joost Crouwel, Joop Derksen, Marijke Gnade, Patricia Lulof, Eric Moormann, Kees Neeft and, only slightly further away, Fik Meijer. Our younger researchers Jan-Paul Crielaard, Roald Docter, Demetrius Waarsenburg, Gert-Jan van Wijngaarden and, more recently, Lucinda Dirven have been no less important by offering themselves as ‘sparring partners’ in many a stimulating discussion; Roald Docter, moreover, gave much practical help and moral support during many shared meals and evenings. My youngest colleagues, fellow PhD students Anneke Aarts, Olaf Borgers, Helle Hochscheid and Hendrienneke Maas have all seen a large part of my text and commented on it, while they shared their own writings with me. I am very grateful for their suggestions and hope that we can continue to support each other in this fruitful way for many years to come. You all were and are always ready to answer my questions, to give me support and advice of all kinds, but the many hours spent together in lively discussion or in cheerful drinking were at least as pleasant and useful.

Finally, two people need a special mention. Kees Neeft is the one who has started all this, by letting me ask a few questions about Corinthian pottery which resulted in an MA-thesis that left some open ends to be explored and led to new questions remaining to be asked... I have to thank him for that, but even more for his continuous moral support, friendly advice, the generous sharing of his data and expertise on Greek pottery (and much more), lots of after dinner teas and his willingness to listen to my often premature hypotheses. Although you were far away for many months, your helpful suggestions were always close by when I was writing. I hope to enjoy many more of them.

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