Athenian little-master cups
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Since this study has been announced at various occasions and in many personal contacts with colleagues, a personal note at its publication seems to be fair.

After spending nine years at the University of Amsterdam, I left the academic world in 1988. I needed to broaden my horizons, literally. So I started to work ‘temporarily’ for KLM, Royal Dutch Airlines, and visited every continent. In the first few years, with lay-overs in a week, in cities as diverse as Khartoum and Sydney, Tokyo and Rio de Janeiro, Delhi and Anchorage, Karachi and New York, I learnt more about the real world than in all those years at university.

My passion for Greek ceramics, however, never seized and I continued to update my database of Athenian little-master cups, which I had started in preparation for study-visits under supervision of Jean-Jacques Maffre at the French excavations at Limenas, Thassos, in 1986 and 1987. I realized that I had the unique opportunity of seeing material in musea and collections all over the world, which many archaeologists had not. And I was not dependent of travel stipendia for it!

During my visits, numerous people have helped me find what I was looking for. I am grateful to the anonymous library staff of many institutions, who tirelessly brought me heavy volumes from which I often only wished to see a few pages or even one photo. For their warm hospitality and assistance during these visits I wish to thank the private collectors, registrars and curators of many collections: J. Gaunt and B. Westcoat (Atlanta), H.R. Götze (Photo-Archiv DAI, Athens), V. Schöfer (Basel), U. Kästner (Berlin), J.J. Herrmann (Boston), C. Tsigit and N. Massar (Brussels), J.L. Theodor (Brussels), J. Dawson and L. Jenkins (Cambridge), B. Bungaard Rasmussen (Copenhagen), A.M. Esposito (Florence), C. Ewigleben (Hamburg), D.I.R. Williams (London), P. Cabrera (Madrid), M. Jentoft-Nilsen and M. Træe (Malibu), A.J.S. Spawforth (Newcastle upon Tyne), J.R. Mertens and D. von Bottlher (New York), M. and J. Steinhardt (New York), M. Vickers (Oxford), D.C. Kuritz and T. Mannack (Beazley Archive, Oxford), M. Denoyelle and A. Coulé (Musee du Louvre, Paris), I. Aghion (Bibliothèque National, Cabinet des Médailles, Paris), A.M. Moretti and L. Falsini (Villa Giulia, Rome), A. Cambitoglou (Sydney), J.J.V.M. Derksen and P. Smiessing (Utrecht), M. Sannibale (Vatican), G. Gischtwalter and A. Bernhard-Walcher (Vienna), W. Dobrowolsky (Warsaw), E. Mango (Zürich).

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My ever-growing database turned out to be a valuable resource when in 1996 Herman Brijder, the ‘promotor’ of this dissertation, invited me to publish the Athenian little-masters in the Allard Pierson Museum for the second volume of the CVA of Amsterdam. He also introduced me to the private collector J.L. Theodor, a contact which resulted in the publication of his collection. I thank Herman for keeping in touch over the years and for encouraging me to share my knowledge of Athenian little-master cups with the readers of this publication. His great knowledge of Siana cups, his comments on the first draft of my dissertation and his many suggestions have, no doubt, improved the final result enormously, for which I am very grateful.
I have had my doubts whether my research was perhaps too ‘old-fashioned’ and more art-historical than archaeological, primarily concentrating on the producers of the cups rather than on the users. However, I have found that without knowledge of the producers and knowledge of a very large corpus of cups, it is impossible to study consumption patterns.

A disadvantage of working outside the academic world is that one not only does not hear the latest gossips over a coffee, but often also receives news about, e.g., conferences too late; nor has one the opportunity of passing through the library weekly to glance at the new acquisitions and journals. Working outside the academic world also meant, or so I thought, that there were no possibilities for a paid sabbatical, which is essential, if one wants to finish a study like this. In 2007, however, while surfing the internet for possible grants to finance an unpaid leave from my job, I found the possibility of a replacement subsidy from NWO (the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research), designed especially for researchers working outside the academic world. KLM readily cooperated and within months, my appliance for such a subsidy was granted, so that I had six months to write the first draft of my dissertation. It took another 12 months to complete it in the way it now lies in front of the reader.

B. Kreuzer, N. Malagardis and H. Mommsen have graciously provided me with the manuscripts of forthcoming articles, which contained valuable information for my research. H. Mommsen also read the drafts of the chapters on Phrynos and Exekias, and enriched these with her meticulous insights. I wholeheartedly thank them for their help.

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