

KANTHAROI PRODUCED IN THE GETO-DACIAN SETTLEMENT OF BRAD. SEVERAL OBSERVATIONS ON MODELS AND CHRONOLOGY.

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Abstract: A new drinking vessel, called *kantharos* throughout the present article, was produced in the Geto-Dacian workshops starting with the second century B.C., following direct contacts with fine pottery from Asia Minor and the Pontus. A lot of ca. 1100 such items were discovered in the settlement from Brad (Bacău County) during the archaeological excavations performed between 1963 and 1984. In the site's monograph V. Ursachi stated that Greek and then Roman shapes were imitated in the local workshops, but he made no explicit connection between the imitations and the originals presumed as models for the first. The comparative study of the Asia Minor and Pontus drinking vessels and those discovered in Brad with locally produced *kantharoi* reveals possible models and helps determine the start of local production.

Rezumat: Începând cu secolul al II-lea a. Chr., ca urmare a contactului nemijlocit cu vesela ceramică fină microasiatică și pontică, în atelierele geto-dacice este produs un nou vas pentru băut, denumit pe parcursul articolului *kantharos*. În așezarea de la Brad (jud. Bacău) a fost descoperit, în cursul săpăturilor arheologice realizate între anii 1963 și 1984, un lot de aproximativ 1100 de piese. V. Ursachi, în monografia sitului, precizează că în atelierele locale sunt imitate forme grecești și, mai apoi, romane, dar fără a face vreo legătură explicită între imitații și vase originale, prezumtive modele. Studiul comparativ al veselei de băut microasiatice și pontice descoperite la Brad cu *kantharoi* de producție locală pune în lumină posibile modele și ajută la precizarea debutului producției locale.

I. Preliminary considerations

Starting with the second century B.C., following direct contacts with fine Asia Minor and Pontic pottery, the Geto-Dacian workshops started to produce a new type of drinking vessel. In general terms it had a short body, angular or rounded, two handles inserted above the area of maximum diameter, the base straight or concave ending in a narrow ring or a short foot. Romanian specialists generally agree on the fact that this type imitates Greek (Hellenistic) and Roman *kantharoi*, but they very seldom indicate possible models.¹

A comparative reading of the items published as originating from various Geto-Dacian sites suggests the fact that the imitation of Hellenistic and Roman *kantharoi* and *skyphoi* was a dynamic process, with particularities from one production centre to the other. This process was influenced by the original products with which the indigenes came into contact, by the needs and aesthetic options of the users, by the ability of the Geto-Dacian potter masters to apply the new knowledge and, not least, by the actual production and distribution possibilities (such as clay sources, infrastructure, etc.).

The items published from the Geto-Dacian settlement of Brad (Bacău County) allow for several observations to be made on the shapes used as models and for several *post quem* terms to be identified for some of the local products. In the settlement of Brad archaeologists have discovered, between 1963 and 1984, a lot of approximately 1100 items, modelled on the potters' wheel, made of grey or red fabric, undecorated or with burnished or painted decoration. In the site's monograph V. Ursachi classifies the items from a stylistic perspective and performs a typology of the identified shapes.² As for the models, the author mentions the fact that Greek and then Roman shapes were imitated in the local workshops, but makes no explicit connection between the imitations and the originals – presumed models – discovered in Brad and other contemporary sites.³

Terminological observations.

Throughout the present article I shall use the general term *kantharoi* for all two-handle drinking vessels with ring or short foot produced locally that display obvious similarities to the Hellenistic and Roman *kantharoi* and *skyphoi* and I shall discuss about *kantharoi*.

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¹ Glodariu 1974, p. 148 and the catalogue of ceramic imitations of Greek and Roman products.

² Ursachi 1995, pp. 169, 171, 179-181.

³ Ursachi 1995, p. 179.