

Bridging the Gap: Local Pottery Production in Corinth 146-44 BC

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Ancient literary sources record that in 146 BC, the Roman general Mummius and his troops destroyed the city of Corinth, killed the male inhabitants and sold the women and children into slavery.¹ In the aftermath, according to most authors, the city lay uninhabited until 44 BC when Corinth was officially re-founded as a Roman colony. This gap in the life of the city, which lasted more than 100 years, is referred to by modern scholars as the interim period. While the accuracy of literary sources which describe the destruction of Corinth can be called into question on various grounds,² the potential unreliability of these ancient accounts did not discourage generations of archaeologists from using them as an interpretive tool. This has meant, in the absence of significant archaeological evidence to the contrary, that 146 BC was believed to mark the end of life in Hellenistic Corinth.³

The assumption that all activity stopped with Mummius' sack has led to the adoption of 146 BC as a fixed chronological point in Corinthian Hellenistic pottery. This position was perpetuated by G.R. Edwards, who, in establishing the absolute chronology of Corinthian Hellenistic pottery, used 146 BC as the end point for many shapes.⁴ Since Corinth was a major importer and exporter of goods in the Hellenistic period, Edwards' chronology has also influenced the dating of material from other parts of Greece and the Mediterranean. For instance, V. Grace used finds of Knidian stamped amphora handles from Corinthian deposits dated to ca. 150 BC to help build a dated list of Knidian eponyms.⁵ This type of work was possible because the presence of Corinthian Hellenistic pottery was believed to provide a *terminus ante quem* of 146 BC for certain deposits.

Since absolute ceramic chronologies often rely on such fixed points as 146 BC, it is necessary to reassess these crucial dates as new information comes to light. Yet, despite abundant archaeological evidence attesting to activity in the interim period, the question of whether pottery production in Corinth resumed after 146 BC has never been fully considered. However, a unique opportunity to re-examine this issue was provided in 2006, when a sealed floor deposit was discovered in the Panayia Field, just southeast of the Forum. This primary deposit contained coarse and cooking wares, as well as substantial

quantities of local fine ware, together with imported pottery dated to the late 2nd to early 1st century BC. The contents of the Panayia Field floor deposit and its archaeological context suggest that much of the material, including the local fine ware, is contemporary with the latest objects. It is the presence of locally made Hellenistic pottery in this floor deposit that has compelled a re-assessment of whether a ceramic industry of some scale existed in Corinth during the interim period.

Past research on the interim period

Archaeological evidence for activity in Corinth during the interim period was first detected in the early 1930s and continued to grow through the 20th century as imported objects were found in various deposits throughout the city.⁶ These objects include Attic and Italian fine wares, amphorae from the eastern and western Mediterranean, East Greek mouldmade bowls and Athenian and Roman coins of the 1st century BC.⁷ Various explanations were advanced to account for these imports, whose presence at a time when the city was thought to be uninhabited was difficult to explain. Since it is known that the neighboring city of Sikyon controlled the territory of Corinth and took over the Isthmian Games during the interim period (Paus. 2.2.2), one suggestion is that Sikyonians were responsible for these imported goods.⁸ Another possibility was raised by I. Romano, who argued that the imported objects may have been left behind by Italian surveyors preparing for the new colony.⁹ The most comprehensive interpretation, however, was proposed by J. Wiseman, based on the archaeological evidence for interim occupation in the later Roman Forum area and a passage in Cicero, that Corinthians may have returned to the city after the sack in 146 BC.¹⁰ This third option is lent support by the description of the end of the city by Pausanias, who tells us that three days elapsed between the defeat of the Achaeans on the Isthmus and the entry of the victorious Roman army into Corinth (Paus. 7.16.7-8). He notes that during this interval, many Corinthians left the city. Since Pausanias' account suggests that not all of the Corinthians were killed or enslaved, it is possible that once the Romans left, parts of the city and its hinterland were reoccupied either by returning Corinthians or peoples from the immediate vicinity.¹¹

Scholarly discussions of interim Corinth have also occasionally included brief examinations of the issue of continued local ceramic production. Based on finds of Corinthian-made type X and XVII lamps in the House of the Comedians on Delos, P. Russell suggested that these continued to be produced in Corinth during the interim period.¹² In her volume on the Greek pottery from the Sanctuary of Demeter and Kore, E. G. Pemberton proposed that there may have been a ceramic industry, albeit at a much reduced scale, after 146 BC to explain the seemingly large number of very late Hellenistic mouldmade bowls in Corinth.¹³ However, both Russell and Pemberton admit that there may be other explanations for the patterns they perceive, namely that these objects

may have been made in Sikyon. Edwards, who thought that the possibility of local pottery production after 146 BC was very slight, also believed that some Sikyonian pottery may have made its way into the Mummian destruction fills in the South Stoa wells.¹⁴ Sikyon was producing pottery in the later 2nd century BC and in fabrics that are similar, but not the same, as those used in Corinth.¹⁵ In my recent re-study of the early colony clean-up fills of the South Stoa wells, I have identified a small number of fine-ware vessels that are clearly Sikyonian products made in the 2nd c. BC. This, however, is not sufficient evidence at present to argue that Sikyonians were responsible for all of the activities in the Forum area during the interim period. In general, it can be said that those who study Corinth have been very hesitant to accept the possibility of local Corinthian ceramic production after 146 BC.

The Panayia Field floor deposit

In 2006, excavations in the Panayia Field discovered a floor deposit within a Hellenistic building (Fig. 1). As excavated, this long rectangular structure consists of a suite of six rooms. We can date the construction of the building to the early 3rd century BC on the basis of finds from its foundation trenches and a foundation deposit containing miniature vessels found under a pebble mosaic floor in one of the rear rooms. On the basis of material from secondary deposits in the immediate area and architectural parallels to other sites, it is likely that this structure may have had a double function as a workshop and private residence before 146 BC.¹⁶



Fig. 1: Plan of Hellenistic building in the Panayia Field (drawn by James Herbst).

In the southwest room of the building, a stratum of roof tiles covered a roughly rectangular (2.5 × 2 meters), packed earth floor. On top of this floor, numerous broken pots and other finds formed a layer approximately 20 centimeters thick. Artifacts were found across the entire floor surface, with a greater concentration on the eastern side of the room. Most of the large sherds were lying flat, presumably crushed when the tile roof collapsed.

The floor and its material had been disturbed on all four sides by the foundations of a Roman structure in the 1st century AD. This Roman building reused the Hellenistic foundations, and on the south side, one earlier wall had its orientation changed to suit the new structure. This later activity resulted in some of the original material from the floor being re-deposited, but it was possible through joins to identify and re-associate much of the displaced material. Stratigraphically, the *terminus ante quem* for the deposit is provided both by the layer of Roman fill that covered the collapsed roof tiles on top of the floor, and by material found in the construction trenches for the re-use of the Hellenistic walls. Roman fine wares date this upper fill and the realignment of the walls to the first half of the 1st century AD.

The floor deposit contained a range of local fine and cooking wares, as well as some imported amphorae and imported fine ware. Other artefacts included a lead weight, nine loomweights, an iron scythe, a bronze spade, a hopper mill and a terracotta mould for a linear leaf bowl. Only a very small amount of fine ware (no more than 5 % by weight and even less by number) can be identified as Classical or earlier indicating that this is a chronologically discrete deposit. It is clear from the number of complete or almost complete vessels and the nature of their deposition that this is not a mixed fill, but rather an occupational level. The pottery and the other finds from the floor imply that in its final phase of occupation, the building may have had a largely domestic function and perhaps served a single household. Furthermore, the concentration of finds in such a small room suggests that it was a storage space.

The datable material from the floor deposit included coins and ceramics. Four coins were found: two of Ptolemy III (247-222 BC), one of Megara (c. 250-150 BC) and one of Boiotia (c. 220-197 BC),¹⁷ which provide a *terminus post quem* of ca. 220 BC for the deposition. Two Knidian stamped amphora handles were also among the material on the floor. One names the phrouarch Timotheos, who belongs in Grace's period IVA (188-167 BC).¹⁸ The other can be plausibly restored with the name of the eponym Aristogeneus next to the symbol of an anchor pointed up and may also belong in Grace's period IVA.¹⁹

All of the drinking vessels in the deposit are mouldmade bowls. Of the seven identifiable styles of mouldmade bowls in local fabrics, three are figural, three are foliage bowls and one is a linear leaf type. The seven mouldmade bowls are more fragmentary than the local serving vessels discussed below, although substantial portions of the figural and linear leaf bowls are preserved. In addition, a complete mould for making linear leaf bowls was found. New research on the absolute ceramic chronology of local mouldmade bowls has

shown that they were not made in Corinth until the early 2nd century BC and only became popular after ca. 175 BC.²⁰ Figural mouldmade bowls are one of the earliest types, but linear leaf bowls do not begin production until ca. 150 BC.²¹ Overall, the mouldmade bowls support a date for the floor deposit of later than 150 BC.

A mid-2nd century or later date is also suggested by the nine terracotta loomweights found on the eastern side of the room. Most of these are made of coarse tile fabric and are characterized by a squared profile with a circular depression in the center of the base. This type of loomweight is known in Corinth as a type XII.²² All 28 inventoried examples of type XII loomweights are from interim period or Early Roman deposits suggesting that this is a very late type.²³

Other post-146 BC deposits from Corinth also provide parallels to objects found on the floor, including a type XIV lamp. This type of lamp is very rare in Corinth, but one other example was found in an ancient manhole published in 1994.²⁴ Material from that deposit was dated to the late 2nd to early 1st century BC, on the basis of Italian imports and a Macedonian coin.²⁵ Type XIV lamps are also found in Athens, where they are known as Howland type 39 lamps, and recently have been re-dated to 120-100 BC.²⁶ Thus the presence of this lamp brings the *terminus post quem* for the closing of the floor deposit down to the last quarter of the 2nd century BC.

Additional evidence dating the floor deposit to the interim period comes from an Eastern Sigillata A (ESA) bowl and an ESA plate. The ESA bowl was nearly complete and may have a date of the mid-2nd century BC or later (Fig. 2).²⁷ The ESA plate is more problematic, since it is incomplete, but has a general date of the late 2nd century to the first quarter of the 1st century BC.²⁸

As a group, these finds point to a date for the floor deposit of between the late 2nd century BC and the beginning of the 1st century BC. The absence of any Roman pottery in the deposit, including Arretine and dot barbotine wares – the most common types found in early colony deposits – points to a *terminus ante quem* of ca. 40 BC.²⁹ We should therefore conservatively assign the deposit to the period from the last quarter of the 2nd century to the first quarter of the 1st century BC.

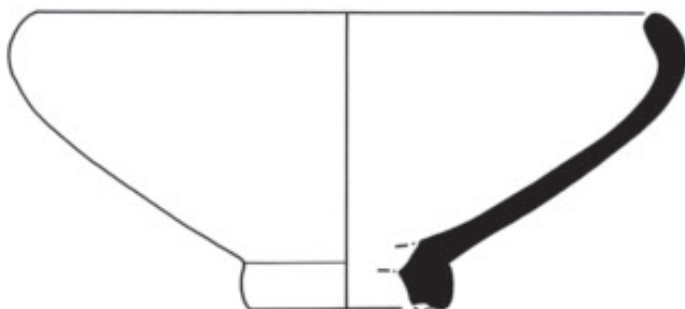


Fig. 2: C 2006-37
ESA bowl (drawn by
Christina Kolb).

*Post-146 BC local pottery in the floor deposit?*³⁰

Corinth had a thriving ceramic industry during the 3rd and early 2nd century BC as attested by the thousands of vessels found both in the city and at other sites in this period.³¹ An analysis of local fine wares show that Corinthian potters had developed a fully Hellenistic assemblage by the mid-3rd century BC and were responding to changes in the wider Hellenistic ceramic koine through the 2nd century BC.³²

All of the locally made fine ware found in the floor deposit are shapes known from the mid-2nd century assemblage.³³ The most complete local vessels are 15 plates and bowls. There are four flat rim plates, three of which are virtually identical in size, profile, fabric and decoration. Of the six bowls with outturned rims, two are nearly complete and all are the same size and have very similar rim profiles. The five saucers in the floor deposit also form a cohesive group of the same size and shape. The uniformity in size and profile within each shape class argues that each set of vessels is a contemporary group. Further similarities in the fabric, glaze and firing seem to indicate that all of these vessels were made in related local workshops. It is the intrinsic properties of these vessels, therefore, that suggest they were produced, acquired and deposited in the storeroom within a relatively short period of time in the later 2nd century BC.

At the same time, this group of serving vessels from the Panayia Field floor deposit was clearly made in the same tradition and using the same clay beds as earlier 3rd and 2nd century Corinthian Hellenistic pottery. In other words, this pottery, in terms of type and fabric, is entirely consistent with the pre-146 BC Corinthian pottery industry.³⁴ It is therefore its archaeological context and the late 2nd to early 1st century depositional date provided by the imported pottery that compels a discussion of how this local pottery can occur in a floor deposit at a time when ceramic production is thought to have stopped.

One explanation is that the pottery was made before the sack and abandoned in the room that was then re-used in the interim period. Since there is no evidence that the room was ever cleaned out, we must assume that the later occupants either used its contents for their own purposes or they ignored the local pottery and simply added the lamp and three vessels to the room. This situation, however, is rather unlikely given the proximity of the Panayia Field to the Forum area and the abundant evidence of activity in city center in the interim period.³⁵ Ethnographic and archaeological studies have shown that even over a short period of time, objects in an abandoned room can be disturbed by a variety of processes, including scavenging.³⁶ Indeed, there were almost certainly scavengers who scoured the city after it was abandoned. Since the Panayia Field is so close to the city center, it therefore would be remarkable if so much of the local pottery remained largely intact and *in situ* in the storeroom for 20 years or more.³⁷

An alternative interpretation is that the latest occupants came upon a us-

able space with some scattered refuse and decided to use it as a storeroom. We can argue that the room was relatively empty when it was reoccupied, based on analogy to abandoned pueblo sites in the American Southwest, because of the small quantity of fragmentary Hellenistic pottery that was present.³⁸ The limited amount residual pottery, which can be dated as late as ca. 150 BC, is what we would expect in a room that had been abandoned during the sack and then experienced various disturbances before its eventual reoccupation. In this more plausible scenario, the local vessels were obtained at about the same time the new occupants began to use the room.

The question is then raised, what was the source of the local pottery? One explanation is that the inhabitants of the interim community were scavenging in the remains of the city and acquiring pottery produced before 146 BC. This situation is quite likely for the earliest years of the interim period. However, if we suppose that portions of the city were reoccupied within a decade of the sack and conservatively estimate a population of a few hundred people, then we have to consider how long the inhabitants could have obtained the necessary pottery through scavenging alone.³⁹ Data from use-life studies may be pertinent, since ethnoarchaeological research on modern ceramic-using cultures has shown that the average life span of a thin-walled serving vessel is between three months and three years.⁴⁰ Assuming a similar breakage rate is also the case for Hellenistic Greece, then large quantities of intact pottery made before 146 BC must have survived the destruction of the city – enough to maintain a community for as many as two or three generations or up to the period of the floor deposit. Additionally, if pottery was being scavenged from various places it would be a fairly heterogeneous group, unlike much of the material from the floor deposit.

In a third and most plausible scenario, pottery production resumed in Corinth within a generation after 146 BC to supply the new interim period settlement. Evidence for the existence of a small, but permanent, interim period community in and around the Forum area is considerable. Among the most compelling are the modifications to earlier structures, for example, the removal of a stairway on the west wall of the South Stoa,⁴¹ and the construction of new buildings in the Forum area.⁴² One ethnographic study of cultures that are primarily dependent on ceramics has shown that even quite small communities usually have part-time potters at a ratio of one for every ten households.⁴³ The fact that there was a demand or desire for new pottery is amply demonstrated by the presence of hundreds of imported fine wares found throughout Corinth, which date to the interim period. It therefore seems highly likely that the community would have supported potters who supplied the local market.

Trends in Late Hellenistic Corinthian pottery

One method of determining the nature of the post-146 BC assemblage is to compare it to products of the pre-146 BC ceramic industry. Theoretically, if pottery production was resumed by local craftsmen after 146 BC, then the shapes produced should continue the trends of the second quarter of the 2nd century BC, yet the assemblage should also vary from that of the mid-2nd century BC. By comparing the pottery from 2nd century deposits to the actual material in the floor deposit, we can see that the local fine wares are in fact shapes that logically fit in a hypothetical late 2nd century or early 1st century Hellenistic assemblage. Although one could argue that the material from an isolated floor deposit could not fully represent the complete range of interim shapes, there are good reasons to believe that this is not an anomalous group (see below).⁴⁴

For example, serving vessels are the largest class of fine ware in most Panayia Field deposits. Bowls with outturned rims first appear in the mid-3rd century and slowly increase in popularity, relative to other types of bowls, through the first half of the 2nd century BC. In Manhole 1986-1,⁴⁵ dated to ca. 160-150 BC, bowls with outturned rims are the third most common bowl and make up 21 % of the serving vessels.⁴⁶ By the period of the floor deposit, 31 % of the serving vessels were bowls with outturned rims and they were the dominant type of bowl.⁴⁷ Also in this category are saucers and echinus bowls which form a consistent part of the assemblage throughout the 3rd and 2nd century BC.⁴⁸ These two shapes occur in the floor deposit in similar relative proportions as in earlier periods.

One significant difference between the serving vessels in an assemblage of ca. 160-150 BC and the floor deposit are the shapes that are absent. The new Panayia Field chronology shows that by the end of the 3rd century BC, the dominant type of plate is the beveled-rim fish plate.⁴⁹ This type of plate begins to decline about 175 BC, presumably in relation to the appearance at the end of the 3rd or beginning of the 2nd century BC of three new types of plates: rolled-rim plates, plates with offset rims and flat-rim plates.⁵⁰ In Manhole 1986-1, three types of plates are present: beveled-rim fish plates, though in decline, still represent 20 %, while flat-rim plates and rolled-rim plates which had both been increasing in popularity since 175 BC and made up 58 % and 12.5 % of the plates respectively. By the period of the floor deposit, beveled-rim fish plates are completely absent suggesting that their earlier decline continued. Similarly the flat rim plates from the floor deposit, which were growing in popularity through the first half of the 2nd century BC, make up 100 % of the plates.

These trends illustrate that the fine ware in the floor deposit is not an unusual or chronologically disparate group. At the same time, a comparison between the assemblages in Manhole 1986-1 and the floor deposit illustrates that they are significantly different. On the basis of these differences, if the local pottery in the floor deposit had been made in 146 BC, then we would have to argue that rapid and substantial changes occurred over a very short

period from 160-150 to 146 BC; uncharacteristically quick considering the usual rate of change in the Hellenistic period is about a generation.⁵¹ A better explanation of the differences between the assemblages is that the local fine wares in the floor deposit reflect changes that could have reasonably occurred over a period of 25 years or longer.

Interim material from the South Stoa wells

An interim period date for the local pottery from the floor deposit can also be argued using other deposits at Corinth. To date, I have examined 13 deposits from the South Stoa and Forum area that contain significant amounts of interim period material, specifically amphorae, imported pottery and coins.⁵² Broneer and Edwards interpreted many of the upper fills in the South Stoa wells as the cleanup of debris that was produced during the Mummian sack in 146 BC in the early years of the Roman colony.⁵³ These Mummian destruction fills were identified by the presence of large amounts of architectural fragments, including pieces of the South Stoa entablature and roof tiles; some of which showed signs of having been burnt. In addition, these Mummian fills usually contain a few Roman sherds that date their deposition to the period of the new colony. By re-interpreting these Mummian fills more broadly as containing material that accumulated for more than 100 years during the interim period rather than specifically as debris from 146 BC, the local pottery within these fills is re-contextualized.⁵⁴ When viewed from this new perspective, the local fine wares in the Mummian fills of the South Stoa wells can be compared to the material of the Panayia Field floor deposit to support the argument that ceramic production resumed after 146 BC.

Two examples of how these Mummian fills can be re-interpreted are South Stoa wells X and XXII. South Stoa well XXII was initially interpreted as having three separate fills: a small Hellenistic use fill, Mummian destruction debris and finally 2nd century AD construction fill.⁵⁵ However, an examination of the excavation notebook reveals that there are only two periods of fill – the bottom eight meters contain Mummian fill and early colony material and the top three meters later Roman fill.⁵⁶ The lower filling of South Stoa well XXII occurred in the late 1st century BC, a date based on the presence of Roman thin-walled wares⁵⁷ and late 1st century BC coins.⁵⁸ There is also considerable material within the well that dates to the interim period, such as a Rhodian stamped amphora handle,⁵⁹ a Maña C2 amphora⁶⁰ and a Campana A bowl.⁶¹ A large portion of the fill consists of local fine wares, including complete vessels.⁶² Traditionally, the local Hellenistic fine ware in this and other destruction fills is interpreted as having been left behind when the city was abandoned and then deposited roughly 100 years later. The shapes are predominantly mouldmade bowls (of late types), bowls with outturned rims, saucers and flat-rim plates. All shapes that are directly paralleled by the assemblage from the Panayia Field floor deposit.

A similar deposit comes from South Stoa well X,⁶³ which contained a large Mummian fill deposited in the late 1st century BC or perhaps the early 1st century AD based on the presence of a dot barbotine beaker and several Augustan sherds.⁶⁴ Objects dated to the interim period include an early 1st century coin of the Delian cleruchy, an Attic bowl with a vertical upper wall⁶⁵ and a Knidian stamped amphora handle.⁶⁶ The local Hellenistic fine wares again are dominated by mouldmade bowls, bowls with outturned rims and flat rim plates, including complete inventoried examples.⁶⁷ In addition, there are 18 Type XII loomweights, the same type as the nine found in the floor deposit.

Although it is true that both of these well fills have material dated to the late 1st century BC that dates their deposition, the presence of definite imported interim period objects within them makes it very likely that the local fine ware shapes were made and used after 146 BC. The sheer number of complete vessels and the quantity of local pottery found throughout the wells mixed with interim period objects is reason to suspect that the pottery is contemporary. Otherwise, it is difficult to explain how so much local pottery, which presumably lay around in the Forum area for more than a century, could have survived intact to be deposited down the wells. Certainly if we were not burdened by the theory that pottery production stopped in 146 BC, there would be no reason to think that the locally made Hellenistic shapes within these wells were not closer in date to the latest coins and other objects.

Deposit	Flat-rim plate	Bowl with outturned rim	Mould-made bowl	Saucer	Echinus bowl	Semi-glazed bowl	Type XII loom-weight
Floor Deposit	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Manhole 1947-3	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
South Stoa well V (fill 2)	X	X	X	X	X		
South Stoa well X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
South Stoa well XII	X	X	X	X	X		X
South Stoa well XV	X	X	X	X	X		
South Stoa well XXII	X	X	X	X	X	X	
South Stoa well XIX (fill 3)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Table 1: Presence/absence chart for Hellenistic shapes in selected early colony clean-up fills.

Table 1 shows the shapes that are present or absent in eight selected deposits containing imported interim period objects. Flat-rim plates, bowls with outturned rims and mouldmade bowls are the most common shapes found in these deposits, both in the form of complete or inventoried examples and dozens of context sherds. Saucers and echinus bowls also appear in sufficient numbers to suggest that they continued to be produced. Type XII loomweights are also well represented; this is especially significant considering that loomweights are very uncommon in the pre-146 BC fills of the South Stoa wells.⁶⁸ Overall, the same range of shapes present in the occupational level of the Panayia Field floor deposit is represented in these seven wells, and, together, these deposits provide a compelling picture of a Late Hellenistic Corinthian fine ware assemblage. In addition, the large number of complete, inventoried, locally made vessels suggests a fairly active post-146 BC ceramic industry.⁶⁹

Linear Leaf mouldmade bowls

Arguably one of the more suggestive finds from the Panayia Field floor deposit is a terracotta mould for a linear leaf bowl (Fig. 3).⁷⁰ This wheelmade mould is almost complete and made in the typical Corinthian buff fabric. Its interior is incised with series of long, independent, single-veined leaves that run from the medallion to the rim. Two parallel bands mark the rim zone. The surfaces of the mould are smoothed but not slipped or glazed.

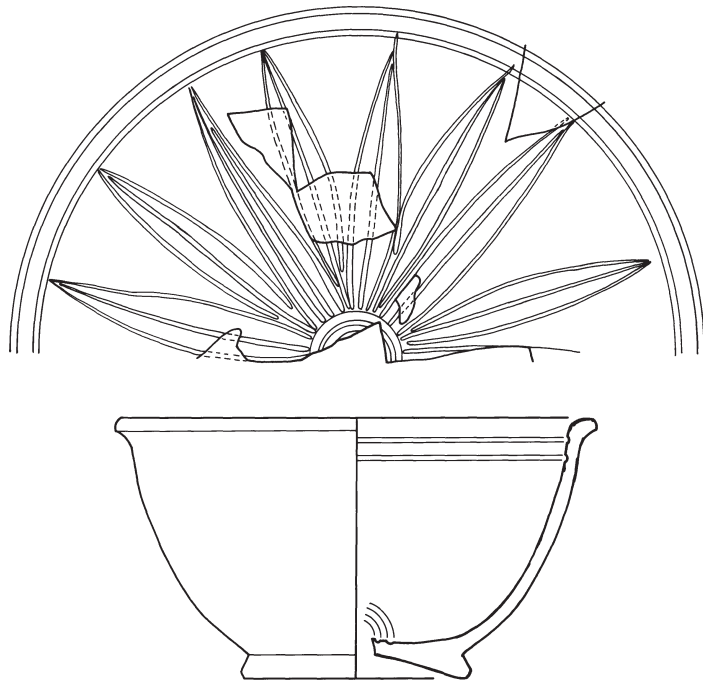


Fig. 3: MF 2005-32
Linear leaf mold-
made bowl mold
(drawn by Christina
Kolb).

Even if the mould was manufactured before 146 BC, its presence in a later occupational level has to be explained. The mould could not have been used as vessel itself since it has no surface treatment and the interior grooves would have trapped food residue; in practical terms, it is unsuited to serve any other purpose than as a ceramic mould. Since the mould cannot be used as a bowl, its presence in a storeroom with pottery and other functional items suggests that it was being used to produce bowls.

Evidence that linear leaf mouldmade bowls continued to be manufactured after 146 BC is found in their presence in the floor deposit, in the South Stoa wells X and XXII, as well as in other interim deposits in the Forum area.⁷¹ That linear leaf type bowls may have been produced after 146 BC is a possibility already raised by Pemberton, who noted that, for a type believed to have been made for only four years (from 150-146 BC), such bowls were unusually well represented in the material record.⁷² In combination, the finds of linear leaf bowls in post-146 BC deposits and the presence of the mould in the floor deposit strongly argue that this type continued to be produced. Moreover, if mouldmade bowls were made in the interim period, along with lamps as Russell has argued,⁷³ then a very strong argument can be made that potters were producing other shapes as well.

Conclusion

The floor deposit from the Panayia Field provides the best evidence yet to challenge the long-held belief that the sack of Corinth in 146 BC marked the end of Hellenistic pottery production in the city. The presence of numerous locally made vessels along with interim period imports in a storeroom strongly suggests that they are contemporary. The shapes represented are almost exclusively types that were most popular or gaining in popularity by the middle of the 2nd century BC, and therefore the assemblage from the floor deposit fits very well into the broader trends of the period. At the same time, the complete absence of certain 2nd century shapes and significant changes in the proportions those vessels present suggests some chronological distance between the mid-2nd century assemblage and the material from the floor deposit. The picture of a very late Hellenistic assemblage represented by the floor deposit is paralleled by the fine ware of other interim period deposits in Corinth, specifically those from the Mummian or early colony clean-up fills of the South Stoa. Finally, the existence of a mould for a linear leaf mouldmade bowl in the floor deposit offers additional evidence that pottery production resumed after 146 BC.

The presence of a ceramic industry of some scale in Corinth after 146 BC has several implications. Firstly, it extends the production life of various shapes which impacts the Hellenistic pottery chronology of Corinth.⁷⁴ Subsequently, we can reconsider other deposits conventionally dated to 146 BC and continue to broaden our understanding of the interim period in Corinth. Additionally,

it means that the presence of Corinthian Hellenistic pottery does not provide a solid 146 BC *terminus ante quem* for any given deposit. This has particular significance for the dating of imported objects, such as amphora stamps, found in the fills of the South Stoa wells. From a historical perspective, the production of Corinthian shapes after 146 BC suggests that there was a strong local or regional presence in the interim community. Evidence that Corinthians or perhaps Sikyonians lived in Corinth after 146 BC contributes to discussions about the identity of the early colonists and the issue of continuity from Greek to Roman Corinth.⁷⁵ In sum, the Panayia Field floor deposit attests not only to the continuity of local ceramic production and its nature after 146 BC, but also provides a glimpse into the individuals who populated interim-period Corinth.

Notes

- 1 Ancient sources on the destruction of Corinth in 146 BC include Paus. 7.15.1-16.8; Liv., *Per.* 52; Just. 34.2.1-6; Str. 8.6.23 [= Plb. 39.2]; Oros. 5.3; Aur. Vict., *De Vir. Ill.* 60.
- 2 On the unreliability of the accounts of ancient epigrammists for the destruction of Corinth, see most recently Gebhard & Dickie 2003, 263-264.
- 3 Although imported objects dating to the interim period were found throughout the 20th century, it was not until the 1970s that scholars began to seriously consider the existence of an interim community in Corinth. For recent discussions of evidence for interim period activity in Corinth, see Gebhard & Dickie 2003, Bookidis 2005 and Millis 2006.
- 4 At the time when Edwards wrote his volume there was little archaeological evidence of activity in the interim period and therefore he did not question the use of 146 BC as a terminus point (1975, 189-191).
- 5 Grace 1985, 13-14; 31.
- 6 For a list of interim period objects and their findspots, see Gebhard & Dickie 2003, 266-270.
- 7 To date, most of these objects come from what have been interpreted as mixed contexts (i.e., well deposits and leveling fills) so that any local Corinthian pottery found with them was disregarded as residual.
- 8 For a detailed discussion of the relationship between Corinth and Sikyon during the interim period, see James 2013.
- 9 Romano 1994, 62-63.
- 10 Wiseman 1979, 494-496.
- 11 Millis has documented the epigraphic evidence of people using the Corinthian ethnic as an identifier on grave markers between 146-44 BC in Athens, Egypt and Delos. He notes that the continued use of a polis identifier, even after the destruction of that city has parallels elsewhere, and implies that the individual has some intention of returning home (Millis 2010).
- 12 Williams & Russell 1981, 42-43.
- 13 Pemberton 1989, 4.
- 14 Edwards 1975, 190 n. 7.
- 15 In 2010, I began studying the Hellenistic pottery from rescue excavations at Sikyon

- under the directorship of Y. Lolos. I have identified clear and distinct differences between Hellenistic Corinthian and Sikyonian shapes and fabrics. A full typology and chronology of the Greek pottery from Sikyon is currently in preparation.
- 16 For a full discussion of this building and the Panayia Field during the Hellenistic period, see Sanders et al. forthcoming.
- 17 The coins were studied by O. Zervos. He identified all of the Panayia Field coins and also re-examined the coins from the South Stoa wells.
- 18 Grace 1985, 34.
- 19 I am grateful to M. Lawall for his assistance in identifying this stamp.
- 20 James 2010, 77-78.
- 21 James 2010, 78-83. On the basis of evidence from early colony clean-up fills, both figural and linear motif mouldmade bowls appear to have continued to be made after 146 BC.
- 22 Davidson 1952, 160-161.
- 23 On the basis of the datable deposits in which they were found, Davidson (1952, 161) suggested that they were a type manufactured before 146 BC but may have continued to be used after the foundation of the Roman colony. The actual number of type XII loomweights from post-146 BC is closer to 50 when the uninventoried loomweights are included.
- 24 Romano 1994, 90, no. 75. The term manhole is used in Corinth to refer to a well-like hole with a deep shaft that accesses a channel of flowing water below, a situation somewhat analogous to modern manholes.
- 25 Additionally, there are fragments of a greyware mouldmade oinochoe in the floor deposit which has its only parallel in C 47-852 from Manhole 1947-3 (Romano 1994, 68-69 no. 15).
- 26 Rotroff 1997, 504.
- 27 Waagé 1948, 24 (Form 157); Hayes 1986, 22-23 (Form 20); Slane 1997, 278, 309 (TA Type 24). I am grateful to K. Slane, who was the first to identify the ESA vessels from the Panayia Field floor deposit.
- 28 Waagé 1948, 23, 27-28, 38; Crowfoot et al. 1957, 309-312 and 316 (Form 1); Johansen 1971, 57-65 (Form 1a and b); Hayes 1986, 14-16, 31-32 (Form 2-4); Slane 1997, 288-295 (TA Type 13c).
- 29 Romano 1994, 61; cf. Slane Wright & Jones 1980.
- 30 For the full publication of the local fine ware from this deposit, see James 2010, Deposit 7.
- 31 The author's dissertation (James 2010) re-examined Corinthian Hellenistic fine wares and developed a new absolute chronology for them based in part on deposits from the Panayia Field.
- 32 James 2010, 27-31.
- 33 For a discussion of the mouldmade bowls in the floor deposit, see above.
- 34 The cooking ware from the floor deposit is also very similar to earlier Hellenistic and 1st c. AD types in terms of both shape and fabric. Petrographic analysis is underway that will compare earlier Hellenistic and early Roman cooking fabrics to cooking ware from the floor deposit.
- 35 Gebhard & Dickie 2003, 266-270; Millis 2006.
- 36 Schiffer 1985, 26-27.
- 37 The fine ware in the floor deposit was arguably broken when the tile roof collapsed on top of it at some point in the 1st c. BC. Eighteen nearly complete vessels were mended from this material and the similarities between the shapes (noted

above) indicate that the assemblage was not disturbed prior to this event which probably occurred shortly after the room was initially abandoned.

38 Schiffer 1985, 22-25. Schiffer uses data from various sites in the American Southwest as a basis for his discussion of abandonment processes.

39 Admittedly, a population of 300-400 people is very conservative. Most recently, G. Sanders estimated that 2000-3000 people would have been necessary to cultivate the land of Corinth during the interim period (Sanders 2013).

40 David 1972, 141; Nelson 1991, 174; DeBoer 1985, 351. On Roman fine ware, see Peña 2007, 329.

41 Williams 1980, 130.

42 Structures in the remains of the West Shops (most recently Millis 2006) and a foundation for a building constructed over the Sacred Spring and south of the Roman Captive's Façade (Williams 1978, 21-22).

43 This figure is based on Nelson's study of the Highland Maya in Mexico and Guatemala (Nelson 1991, 165). Other studies have shown that where household ceramic production is the norm, every house has at least one or two active potters (DeBoer 1985, 354; Longacre 1985, 336). An Old World analogy can be drawn to a study Radolivos, where in the early 14th century AD the settlement, which had a population of 200 households, had two potters' workshops (Lefort 1993, 111). Overall, it is very rare to find a community dependent on ceramics that does not have at least one potter. These analogies are relevant here because, although pre-146 BC Corinth had a highly developed market economy, there is strong evidence that ceramic production remained a relatively small-scale decentralized industry (James 2010, 42-46). I suggest that at least a few of these dispersed craftspeople either remained in the area or returned quickly after the Mummian sack and resumed work to supply the interim period community; a community that would have been somewhat analogous to those mentioned here.

44 Data from ten other deposits were used to develop the complete picture of the interim fine ware assemblage at Corinth (James 2010, 27-31, 365-366, Appendix III).

45 The deposit that is closest in date to 146 BC at Corinth is Manhole 1986-1 from the area East of Theater. For its initial publication, see Williams & Zervos 1987, 7-9. I am very grateful to C.K. Williams for his permission to work on this deposit. I have conservatively re-dated Manhole 1986-1 to ca. 160-150 BC (James 2010, 272-273). The lowest fill of Manhole 1986-1, which was used in this study, was deposited in a single episode. It is, however, a deposit that is best characterized as semi-specialized as it contains both public drinking debris and some domestic refuse. In comparison to the floor deposit, it has a different range of types but should still be representative of the overall ceramic assemblage at this time of its deposition.

46 All of the percentages given in the following section are the percent by weight of each vessel type in each shape class.

47 See also James 2010, 95-100.

48 James 2010, 94-95 and 88-92 respectively.

49 James 2010, 105-108.

50 James 2010, 110-112 and 116-118 respectively.

51 James 2010, 27-31.

52 These deposits are manhole/well 1947-3 in the Southeast Building (Romano 1994),

- the “Mummian” fills from South Stoa wells II, V, VII, IX, X, XII, XV, XVIII, XIX and XXII, and two fills from excavations in the Forum in 1980.
- 53 Broneer 1954, 100; Edwards 1975, 190.
- 54 The re-interpretation of these fills is based on analysis of the stratigraphy of the well fills and recorded joining fragments between 10 cm passes, which indicate that they slowly accumulated within the South Stoa wells and were not single dumped fills. The findspots of numerous objects (imported pottery and coins) that date to the interim period clearly show that some, if not most, of the material in these early colony clean-up fills dates to the late 2nd to early 1st century BC (James 2013). For the discussion of two individual wells, see below.
- 55 Previously published in Weinberg 1949, 151; Edwards 1975, 233.
- 56 Notebook 199 contains a chart of the pottery joins between baskets in the well, which clearly shows that the “use fill” actually belongs with the fill above it. In addition, there was no difference detected in the soil of the well during excavation or in the types of vessels between the two fills to mark the bottommost meter as distinct. For similar re-examinations of South Stoa well deposits, see Sanders et al. in this volume.
- 57 K. Slane has debated whether thin-walled wares first appear in Corinth between 146 and 44 BC or after 44 BC (Slane 1990, 89-90; Slane 1997, 350). The most common type of thin-walled ware in the South Stoa wells are beakers with dot barbotine festoons, a shape which has a date range of the second quarter of the 2nd century to the first half to third quarter of the 1st century BC (Slane 1990, 90). The same type of beaker first occurs in Athens in the mid-2nd century BC (Rotroff 1997, 221), while Italian thin-walled wares as a group become common in Athenian assemblages beginning in the mid-1st century BC (Rotroff 2006a, 96). Therefore, it is possible that the thin-walled beakers from the Mummian destruction or early colony clean-up fills at Corinth date to before 44 BC.
- 58 There are seven 1st century BC coins in the interim fill of well XXII: one from Nicopolis dated to after 31 BC, four Corinth *duoviri* coins dated to after 30 BC, and two from Athens, one dated to 85-30 BC and the other ca. 50 BC.
- 59 C 48-5 and C 48-6 Rhodian with fabricant stamp of Attalos newly dated by Finkiel-sztejn to the second half of the 2nd century BC (Finkiel-sztejn 2001, 172 n.36).
- 60 C 48-230, a type dated to the 2nd or 1st century BC (Wolff 2004, 454).
- 61 C 48-22 Campana A cup with convex-concave sides similar to Morel 3221b1 (140/130 BC) (Morel 1981, 256).
- 62 Some of these vessels were published by G.R. Edwards (1975, nos. 11 and 78) and re-published by the author (James 2010, nos. 112 and 134).
- 63 Edwards 1975, 228.
- 64 Unfortunately, the excavation records for well X are less detailed than for some of the other South Stoa wells. Three episodes of filling were identified: use fill, Mummian destruction debris and later Roman construction fill related to the South Basilica.
- 65 C 34-1606: similar to Rotroff 1997, no. 963 (150-125 BC).
- 66 C 34-164 with a stamp appearing to name the fabricant Euphron and the eponym Agathokles dated to Grace’s Period V (146-108 BC). I am grateful to M. Lawall for his assistance in identifying this stamp.
- 67 One example is a bowl with outturned rim (Edwards 1975, no. 85; James 2010, no. 135).
- 68 I have argued elsewhere (James 2013) that there is a significant difference between

the range of pottery present in the fills of the South Stoa wells that were deposited before 146 BC and those dated to after 146 BC. Before 146 BC, the local pottery in these fills consists primarily of drinking vessels, lamps, transport amphorae and notably little cooking ware, in other words it is a very specialized assemblage. The local assemblage in the Mummian or early colony clean-up fills includes a much wider range of fine ware, cooking ware and loomweights. The striking differences between local pottery found in pre-146 and post-146 BC deposits argues for a change in function in the South Stoa after 146 BC and household level occupation in the area that was supplied by local potters.

69 116 complete or intact local Corinthian fine wares and cooking wares were found in the fills of the seven wells listed in Table 1.

70 James 2010, no. 91.

71 James 2010, 81-82.

72 Pemberton 1989, 4. A preliminary search of inventoried mouldmade bowls reveals six complete examples and dozens of fragments of linear leaf mouldmade bowls in context pottery from the South Stoa wells and the Panayia Field.

73 Williams & Russell 1981, 42-43.

74 The argument that ceramic production resumed after 146 BC has been taken into account in the revised Panayia Field chronology, see James 2010.

75 See James 2013.