The “Pink Powdery Ware” at Yeronisos.
A local West Cypriot ware of the late Hellenistic period
The aim of this paper which I am privileged to dedicate to Prof. Zofia Szetetyło, is to discuss a group of Cypriot vessels apparently pertaining to regional production of western Cyprus in the 1st century B.C. The assemblage in question was uncovered at Yeronisos by the New York University team headed by J.B. Connelly. As suggested by coins and some well-dated pottery types, the occupation time-range at Yeronisos appears to be very narrow, falling between 80/75 B.C. and 30/25 B.C., which is no more than fifty years, and probably less. For instance, the Cypriot Sigillata (CS) vessels are represented by a number of forms, specifically: P 15, P 16, P 18A-B, P 22A, P 33, P 37?, P 44? and P 49, all of them of the 1st century B.C. It is noteworthy that this repertoire includes rather rare forms like P 15, P 16, and P 33, as well as the forms that made their appearance only around mid-1st century B.C. (P 33, P 44, P 49). The latest recognizable CS form is P 22A (early version). Eastern Sigillata A (ESA) vessels are represented by forms known to have occurred throughout the 1st century B.C. (forms 3, 4A and 22A), or comprised within the first half of the 1st century B.C. (forms 6, 19A-B and 23). Combining the time-span provided by the CS and the ESA examples respectively, we arrive at the 2nd and 3rd quarters of the 1st century B.C. as a plausible chronology for our assemblage. Examples of imported fine wares include, among others, an Italian thin-walled beaker, Coan/Cnidian carinated bowl and fragments of a few Egyptian vessels.

The examination of fabrics of the vessels in Cypriot Colour-Couted (CC) ware lead to the distinguishing of a large group dubbed “Pink Powdery Ware” (PPW). In this ware, the prevailing examples of which have pronounced pinkish tinge, very soft “powdery” surface contrasts with fairly hard body. The latter normally has some tiny oblong voids, the only inclusions being occasional white grits, usually very small. The paste is fired to pink or deep pink with orangeish, reddish or brownish tint (most often, Munsell: 5 YR 6/6 and 7/6, 5 YR 6/4 and 7/4, sometimes also 2.5 YR 6/4 and 6/6, 7.5 YR 7/4 and 7/6). Occasionally the break is “sandwiched” pink-to-beige (5 YR 7/6 to 10 YR 7/3 in No. 10) or with a pale grey (10 YR 7/1) core banded pink (e.g. in No. 21).

The surface, slightly paler than the break, is within the same colour range; occasionally, it is fired to beige (10 YR 7/3, 10 YR 8/4) rather than pink. It is soft and has a distinctive powdery feel; when much eroded, it may even contain secondary mineral (sand) deposits. This quality of the fabric (combined with local deposition conditions?)

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4 The Egyptian group is discussed by Młynarczyk, Egypt and Cyprus passim; some other imported objects are mentioned by Connelly, Geronisos, pp. 262, 265–266, and Connelly, Młynarczyk, Lamps from Geronisos, pp. 299–307.
5 Connelly, Młynarczyk, Lamps from Geronisos, p. 294.
results in bad state of preservation of the slip which easily gets worn out together with the surface. It is thin and matt, normally fired to an evenly red colour (usually 2.5 YR 5/6, occasionally also: 2.5 YR 4/8, 5 YR 6/6, and 10 R 5/6 and 5/8), in few cases (e.g., Nos. 10, 12, 35) it is mottled orange-brown, brown and dark brown. Very often, however, just poor traces attest to the presence of the slip. In rare examples of more hard-fired fabric, it can partly merge with the body clay. PPW corresponds to the Local Fabric B of terracotta lamps found in the islet even if their respective firing displays a slightly different colour range.6

The PPW can be considered as a local to the region of Ayios Georghios and Peyia on account of:

– its frequency,
– the high proportion of closed forms in its repertoire,
– the existence of several variants of clearly the same ware.

Another possibility is that this ware was a subject of massive importation from a place easily connected with Ayios Georghios, most probably situated in western Cyprus.

Furthermore, the bulk of the PPW material from Yeronisos can be subdivided into four variants:

– “standard” PPW,
– PPW unslipped version (although this group may in fact contain “standard” PPW vessels the slip of which has completely been worn),
– PPW painted (one example: No. 28),
– PPW/CS “transition” (refined and hard baked version of PPW). It is not excluded that this variant provides a link between the standard PPW and the CS. The fabric is very hard and clean, fired from red (2.5 YR 5/8) and deep orange-pink (5 YR 6/6) to pink-orange (5 YR 7/8) and beige-pink (7.5 YR 7/4), with the surface smooth and lighter than the break, occasionally just slightly powdery. No. 23 appears to have pink-orange self-slip merged with the body clay (5 YR 7/6 to 7/8); the other examples have more or less worn slip, reddish brown or purple-brown.

PRESENTATION OF THE REPERTOIRE OF PPW FORMS PRESENT AT YERONISOS7

I. OPEN FORMS

PLATES AND DISHES:

1. Fragment of extended rim of fish plate (P 92.73).8 PPW fabric with beige surface and traces of thin matt pale red slip. The form is attested at Paphos between 3rd (?) and late 2nd century B.C.9

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6 Ibid., Nos. 4–5, 8–10, 13–14, 16–18 and 19(?)
7 The parallels quoted refer to individual vessel forms, disregarding the fabric.
8 “P” numbers given in brackets refer to the field register of Yeronisos.
9 J. W. Hayes, Paphos III, The Hellenistic and Roman Pottery, Nicosia 1991 [= Paphos III], Fig. XLVIII:
2. Fragment of extended/grooved rim of plate (P 96.64), standard PPW. Apparently a Cypriot form originating in the Early Hellenistic(?) period.10

3. Fragment of infolded (rolled) rim of plate (P 92.70), standard PPW; secondary sand deposit on surface. This is one of the common forms of the Cypriot assemblages in the second half of the Hellenistic period.11 Other examples of this form in PPW found at Yeronisos are rims (not illustrated): P 92.86 (fired to beige at the surface), P 93.110 and P 93.111.

4. Fragment of plate with rolled rim (P 93.158), standard PPW.12

5. Rim fragment of dish (P 93.113), standard PPW. This CC form appears to be a direct descendant of plain ware big bowls of the Cypro-Classical to Early Hellenistic periods.13

“ECHINUS” BOWLS (INVERTED/INCURVED RIM)

6. Fragmentary echinus bowl (full profile, P 92.05); standard PPW.14

7. Rim fragment of echinus bowl with a mend(?) hole (P 92.78), standard PPW.15

BOWLS WITH EVERTED/THICKENED RIM

8. Rim fragment (P 93.159); standard PPW. This form of a Cypro-Classical origin occasionally occurs in Paphos during the Hellenistic period.16


46 and 49 (fish-plates from a late 2nd century B.C. deposit); E. Papuci-Wladyka, Nea Pafos. Studia nad ceramicą hellenistyczną z polskich wykopališ, Kraków 1995 [= Nea Pafos ], Nos. 266 and 323 (assigned to 3rd and 2nd century B.C. respectively).


12 For parallel profile, see Papuci-Wladyka, Nea Pafos, No. 88 (assigned to 3rd–2nd century B.C.).


14 For similar profile, see Hayes, Paphos III, Fig. LVII:32 (deposit of mid-2nd century B.C. or slightly later); also Salles, KB IV, Nos. 211 and 344; Papuci-Wladyka, Nea Paphos, No. 195 (assigned to earlier 3rd century B.C.); Raptou et al., Tomb in Pegeia, Fig. 2:22.

15 For similar profile, see Hayes, Paphos III, Fig. LVII: 35 and 37 (deposit of mid-2nd century B.C. or slightly later).

16 Cf. Papuci-Wladyka, Nea Pafos, Nos. 140 and 192, dated to late 4th century B.C.; for a related Late Hellenistic example, see Hayes, Paphos III, Fig. XV:2.

17 Ibid., p. 42, Fig. LII:19.
HEMISPHERICAL BOWLS CORRESPONDING TO ESA FORM 19A

10. Non-joining parts of rim and lower body with bottom (P 93.114). PPW “sandwiched” in break, pink outside to beige inside; slip worn off the rim, matt, fired unevenly from brownish orange through red-brown to very dark brown.

11. Non-joining parts of rim and lower body, missing bottom (P 93.132); PPW, with outer surface discoloured to pale beige in places, remains of slip discoloured to orange-brown(?). Another example of the same form is rim fragment P 93.87 in standard PPW (not illustrated).

HEMISPHERICAL BOWLS CORRESPONDING TO ESA FORM 19B

12. Fragmentary bowl, missing bottom (P 93.13); PPW with worn red slip mottled brown to dark brown.19

13. Rim fragment (P 96.46); standard PPW. Other similar fragments (not illustrated) are P 92.68, P 93.84, P 93.148 and P 93.160.

HEMISPHERICAL RELIEF-DECORATED BOWLS (“Megarian”)

Body sherd P 93.46 (not illustrated).

BOWLS WITH ROUNDED BODY AND INSET/FLARING RIM

14. Fragment of rim and upper body (P 93.142); standard PPW. Resembling a Kition bowl in Plain White ware, assigned to late 3rd century B.C.,20 or possibly modelled on a “Megarian” bowl type of mid-2nd century B.C.21

15. Fragmentary bowl, full profile (P 94.17); standard PPW. Shallow version of CS form P 18(?).

A body sherd P 92.27 (not illustrated) apparently belongs to a carinated bowl corresponding to CS form P 18A.22 Its fabric stands mid-way between the PPW and the CS: it is fine red (2.5 YR 5/8), its surface smooth and just slightly powdery, fired to 2.5 YR 6/6; slip slightly worn, fired to reddish brown (2.5 YR 4/4 to 3/3). The same form in standard CS is represented at Yeronisos by P 93.30 (not illustrated).

HANDLED BOWLS

16. Handle of bowl reused as a ring, with a rectangular plain “bezel” (P 92.08); PPW/CS transition: fabric 5 YR 6/6, surface 2.5 Y R 6/6; remains of brownish red slip. Form corresponding to CS P 33 of ca. mid-1st century B.C.23

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18 Dated to the first half of 1st century B.C.: ibid., Fig. XVII:8.
19 For an example of this form in CC ware close to the ESA, cf. ibid., Fig. XX:2.
20 Salles, KB IV, No. 355.
21 Cf. Hayes, Paphos III, Fig. III:6 (Cnidian?).
22 Ibid., Fig. XVIII:18.1.
23 Ibid., Fig. LII:A 10.
17. Fragment of rim and of handle (P 93.31), CS ware: fabric 5 YR 6/6 with fine voids and medium-size white grits; interior smooth and glossy (self-slip merged with body clay), exterior ranging from smooth to rough; both surfaces fired unevenly from 5 YR 5/6 to 5 YR 3/2. CS form P 33 of c. mid-1st century B.C.

**BASES OF UNIDENTIFIED OPEN FORMS**

18. Fragmentary ring base of shallow bowl or dish (P 93.85). Standard PPW with remains of bright red slip inside only.

19. Heavy ring base of bowl (P 93.97), PPW/CS transition: pinkish beige fabric (7.5 YR 7/4), very hard and clean; remains of matt purple-brown slip inside only.

**KRATER?**

Fragment of large deep body with slight carination and horizontal bow-shaped handle, P 92.74 (not illustrated); standard PPW with pale grey core. It probably represents a CC ware form known from a 1st century B.C. context in the House of Dionysos, Nea Paphos.24

**KYATHOS**

20. Fragment of rim with handle of kyathos (P 93.58); PPW discoloured to pale beige (7.5 YR 8/2) at break, beige (10 YR 7/4) at surface, with greyish brown spot (10 YR 5/2: secondary burning?). Fragment of another similar kyathos (P 92.29, not illustrated) represents a different fabric of the Cypriot CC ware. A prototype of our kyathoi appears to be a vessel from Well 11 at the House of Dionysos dated to c. 150–140/30 B.C.25

**II. CLOSED FORMS**

**STRAINER-JUG**

21. Spouted juglet missing strainer (P 94.03); standard PPW with pale grey break banded pink. The form is fairly close to a Cypriot (?) vessel classified with the “Hellenistic I pottery”26 on one hand, and to a CS vessel from Well 4 in the House of Dionysos on the other.27 Comparable form was being manufactured at a Cnidian workshop dated to 2nd–1st centuries B.C.28

**AMPHORISKOS**

22. Base and lower part of body (P 93.133); PPW unslipped? with pale pink surface.

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24 *Ibid.*, Fig. LIII:36 (krater, c. 40–10 B.C.).
25 *Ibid.*, Fig. LVI:46.
26 A. Westholm, Pottery, in: O. Vessberg and A. Westholm, Swedish Cyprus Expedition IV:3. The Hellenistic and Roman Periods in Cyprus, Stockholm 1956 [= SCE IV:3], Fig. 23:17.
27 Hayes, Paphos III, p. 47, Fig. LXVI:36 (form P54, with much shallower rim and differently sectioned handle), of Flavian date.
28 Kassab Tezgör, Atelier Cnide, p. 37, Pl. XXXII:3.
LAGYNOS

23. Lagynos (P 92.06); PPW/CS transition: smooth orange-pink self-slip(?) merged with the body clay? (5 YR 7/6 to 7/8). CS form P 44 of c. mid-1st century B.C. For profile, see a CS lagynos from the House of Dionysos, but also a lagynos in “Glazed Ware”, classified by Westholm with the “Hellenistic I Pottery”. The shape, common in Cyprus, occurs also in Egypt.

24. Fragment of rim/neck with a part of handle (P 96.40); PPW unslipped? Form attested both in Cyprus and in Egypt.

Base fragments of another lagynos in standard PPW is P 97.14 (not illustrated).

TREFOIL-MOUTH OINOCHOE

25. Rim and upper body with handle of juglet (P 92.16); standard PPW. This appears to be a fairly long-lived traditional Cypriot form of jug.

26. Non joining fragments of shoulder, rim and ring base (P 93.79); standard PPW. The form has been attested in Cyprus since the Early Hellenistic period.

27. Fragment of rim and neck of juglet (P 93.103); PPW unslipped? surface fired to deep pink (7.5 YR 8/4) with abundant fine sand (secondary deposit?).

OTHER JUGS: SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED

28. Non-joining parts of lagynoid jug, missing rim (P 94.49). PPW painted: band in faded brown painted on shoulder against deep pink-coloured (5 YR 6/6) surface. The form has been known since the Early Hellenistic period.

29. Fragment of body of small juglet (olpe?) with root of a strap handle (P 94.44); standard PPW. The form has many parallels in Hellenistic Cyprus.

30. Base of olpe(? ) juglet (P 93.112); PPW unslipped? with surface fired to deep pink (7.5 YR 8/4). Cypriot parallels are in plain ware and CC ware.
31. Fragment of rim of jug (P 94.62); PPW unslipped: pink fabric (5 YR 7/6) with thin yellowish core and soil incrustations on surface.

32. Upper part of jug with cylindrical neck and cupped rim (P 92.30); standard PPW, and duplicate P 93.141 (unillustrated).38

33. Fragment of rim and neck of jug (P 94.48); standard PPW. Larger version of the previous, with slightly flaring neck.39

**LARGE-SIZED JUGS AND TABLE AMPHORAE**

34. Rim and neck fragment (P 93.104); PPW(?): pink fabric, hard fired, with tiny voids and white eruptions to the surface; interior pink with dark red slip, exterior beige with matt slip, fired orange to brown.

35. Rim and neck with root of handle (P 93.68), form as precedent. PPW(?): pink fabric (5 YR 6/6), hard baked, with fine oblong voids and some tiny white grits. Surface beige to pink (5 YR 7/6) with some white eruptions and powdery feel; slip red, mottled dark brown inside (2.5 YR 5/6) and reddish brown outside (5 YR 5/6). Similar rim fragment P 92.67 (not illustrated) in standard PPW possibly belonged to amphora? Paralleled by a vessel of mid- to third quarter of 1st century B.C.40

36. Fragments of rim and neck of jug or table amphora (P 92.63)? PPW unslipped? beige-pink fabric (7.5 YR 7/4) with fine lime eruptions to pale buff surface (10 YR 7/3). Similar to a large jug in plain ware from a Late Augustan deposit at the House of Dionysos.41

37. Upper part of large table amphora (P 94.24). PPW: fabric grey at break, banded orange/pink, with fine oblong voids and small white inclusions. Red slip discoloured(?) to brown (2.5 YR 4/8), matt and thin, worn in places. Possibly predecessor of a 1st century A.D. table amphora in CC ware from the House of Dionysos.42

38 Cf. in CC ware: HAYES, Paphos III, Fig. XVI:3 (deposit of c. 150 – 140/30 B.C.); PAPUCI-WLADYKA, Nea Pafos, No. 67.

39 To parallels quoted in previous note, one should add HAYES, Paphos III, Fig. LIV:27 (second half of 1st century B.C.?), and MEYZA, PAPUCI-WLADYKA, Nea Paphos cistern, Fig. 4:H (in CC ware) of late 2nd? and 1st century B.C.

40 HAYES, Paphos III, Fig. LXIX:10.

41 *Ibid.*, Fig. LXIII:53 (“local cream ware”); for another similar example in plain ware, see H.W. CATLING, An Early Byzantine Pottery Factory at Dhiorios in Cyprus, *Levant* IV, 1972, Fig. 17:P 514 (in Plain White ware, Period I: Late Hellenistic to Early Roman).

42 HAYES, Paphos III, Fig. XXIII:1.
FORMS REPRESENTED IN INDIVIDUAL VARIANTS OF PPW

STANDARD PPW

Plates and dishes: 1 (P 92.73), 2 (P 96.64), 3 (P 92.70), 4 (P 93.158), 5 (P 93.113), and other examples, not illustrated (P 92.86, P 93.110 and P 93.111).
Echinus bowls: 6 (P 92.05) and 7 (P 92.78).
Bowl with everted rim: 8 (P 93.159).
Hemispherical bowls: 10 (P 93.114), 11 (P 93.132), 12 (P 93.13) 13 P (P 96.46), and several other fragments not illustrated: P 92.68, P 93.87, P 93.84, P 93.148, P 93.160 and P 93.46 (body sherd of a relief bowl).
Depressed hemispherical bowl: 14 (P 93.142) and 15 (P 94.17).
Other bowl fragments: 18 (P 93.85) and not illustrated P 92.74.
Kyathos: 20 (P 93.58, discoloured).
Strainer jug: 21 (P 94.03).
Lagynos: 24 (P 96.40) and not illustrated P 97.14.
Oinochoe: 25 (P 92.16), 26 (P 93.79).
Other jugs, small and medium-sized: 29 (P 94.44), 32 (P 92.30), 33 (P 94.48).
Other jugs, large-sized: 34 (P 93.104), 35 (P 93.68), and not illustrated: P 92.66, P 92.67, P 93.141.
Table amphora, large: 37 (P 94.24).

PPW/CS TRANSITION

Handled bowl: 16 (P 92.08).
Other bowl fragments: 19 (P 93.97) and not illustrated P 92.27 (hemispherical with offset flaring rim: CS form P 18A).
Bowl CS form P 22A: 9 (P 93.170).
Lagynos: 23 (P 92.06).

PPW UNSLIPPED(?)

Amphoriskos: 22 (P 93.133).
Lagynos: 24 (P 96.40).
Oinochoe: 27 (P 93.103).
Other jugs: 30 (P 93.112), 31 (P 94.62).
Jug, large-sized: 36 (P 92.63).

PPW PAINTED

Jug: 28 (P 94.49).
CONCLUSIONS

The above-discussed group of the PPW examples from Yeronisos displays a remarkably varied repertoire of table vessels. It includes a number of forms attested in Cypriot pottery since the Late Classical/Early Hellenistic period. On the other hand, it includes counterparts of some forms of ESA and CS wares attributed to 1st century BC; striking is the very number of hemispherical bowls corresponding to ESA form 19 (A and B).

Moreover, our group seems to illustrate a close connection between the PPW and the CS, both in terms of the repertoire of forms and of the fabric. This is suggested, for instance, by fragments (rim P 93.56, bottom parts P 93.47) of a CS bowl form P18A. Its fabric, very hard, is fired deep pink at break (2.5 YR 5/6), slightly paler at surface (2.5 YR 6/6). The red colour of the slip (2.5 YR 5/6, fired darker in grooves) is also typical of the CS. It is, however, largely worn on the interior, and the surface has distinctive powdery feel, characteristic of the PPW. Another example of a “transitional” fabric is a fragment of base (P 93.53) of what can be identified as cylindrical jug, CS form P 49. Its powdery surface feel, pronounced in spite of the presence of glossy slip on outer surface, brings it close to the PPW. Several other examples of such close relationship between PPW and CS make one to suppose that the explanation of this phenomenon could be the use of the same (or closely similar) raw material versus technological differences in manufacturing process. A series of scientific analyses, however, are needed to verify the true nature of the macroscopic similarity between the PPW and CS.43

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