Intimate Death:
The Brandeis Fifth-Century Athenian Lekythos Evolution of Form, Ritual Practices and Use

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in
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by
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Dedication

For YiaYia and Papou

and for Alexia

May your memory be eternal.

And for my Patroklos...thank you for your patience, love and continuous
sweet lightness of being.
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ABSTRACT

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A thesis presented to the Department of Classical Studies and MA Program in Ancient Greek and Roman Studies

Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
Brandeis University
Waltham, Massachusetts

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The Brandeis Lekythos is a fifth-century Athenian funerary vase within the teaching collection at Brandeis University. The ultimate goal of this thesis is to present the art historical and scientific analysis by which Brandeis University in collaboration with the ARCHEM project and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts were able to ascertain the vase’s authenticity. Furthermore, the intent is to show approximate date and ritualistic use of the Brandeis Lekythos. Before such a study may be performed, however, it is necessary to begin by relaying basic information about the evolution of the vase, its artistic formation, its relation to surrounding regions and ritualistic context.
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Chapter 1: Form and Function

Ich kann nicht glauben, dass der kleine Tod, dem wir doch täglich übern Scheitel schauen...

-Rainer Maria Rilke¹

1.1 Evolution of the Lekythos

In order to understand the roots of the Brandeis Lekythos, the form of the vase must be traced back to its very conception. The flourishing of the fifth-century white-ground lekythos was the fulfillment of hundreds of years of evolution, which may be inaugurated with the Mycenaean stirrup vase, circ. 1400 B.C.E.² [Fig. 1] Invented on the island of Crete, the stirrup vase was most commonly a utilitarian piece for the storage and exportation of oil and wine.³ The Cretan vase had a globular body with a double stirrup-shaped handle and false spout. From foot to head, the size range could vary between several inches to 20 inches tall.⁴

Figure 1: “Mycenaean Stirrup Vase”, Reynold Higgins, Minoan and Mycenaean Art (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997), 111.

¹ Rainier Maria Rilke. Das Stundenbuch (Köln: Anaconda Verlag GmbH, 2007), 32. (I cannot believe that little death, the one over whose head we peer daily, remains a worry and distress. Trans, Lana Georgiou and Heidi McAllister.)
³ Reynold Higgins, Minoan and Mycenaean Art (London: Thames and Hudson, 1997), 110.
⁴ Higgins, 111.
In the tenth century B.C.E., the Protogeometric *lekythos* replaced the Mycenaean stirrup vase.\(^5\) The Protogeometric *lekythos* still had a globular body, but now usually had a defined (though short) neck with a single spout. The handle was circular and wide, drawing the eye downward over the spherical body. The Protogeometric *lekythos* evolved into the Geometric small, globular *oinochoe*.\(^6\) [Fig.2] This rounded, flat-bottomed vase with a narrow neck was a common shape during the ninth and eighth centuries. The Geometric *oinochoe* is the ancestor of the *aryballos*.\(^7\) [Fig. 3]

The most common shape of the Early Protocorinthian (or Orientalizing Period) is the *aryballos*.\(^8\) This flask was slender and short at both the foot and neck, with a round body and narrow handle. The shape would also widen at the handle and lip, shorten at the neck and foot to become the “ovoid” *aryballos*.\(^9\) The *aryballos* was generally

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\(^5\) Cook, 221.
\(^6\) Ibid.
\(^7\) Cook, 216.
\(^8\) Cook, 46.
\(^9\) Cook, 47.
used as an oil or perfume flask and is the ancestor of the sixth and fifth-century *ekyllhos*. A new shape emerged in Attica in the early sixth century, which would serve as a model for the Corinthian *ekyllhos*. It was called the Deianeira *ekyllhos*, [Fig. 4] and it had a short, dipped mouth rounded on top, globular body and echinus foot. It was used until the third quarter of the century. Late versions are sometimes called “sub-Deianeira.” The next type of *ekyllhos*, the shoulder *ekyllhos*, [Fig. 4] had a scooped mouth, narrow neck, and shoulder angled away from the swollen body and echinus (meaning the foot is in one piece and is convex) foot. It became popular around 570-560 B.C.E. Approximately 530 B.C.E. the shoulder *ekyllhos* evolved into the well-known cylindrical form with an oval body and a narrow, round mouth and short neck. [Fig. 4] Eventually this vessel became more defined with an oblique shoulder and more slender

![Figure 4: Black-figure shoulder *ekyllhos* by Amiss Painter, Deianeira shaped black-figure *ekyllhos*, Red-figure cylindrical *ekyllhos* by Tithonos Painter, Red-figure squat *ekyllhos* by Kleophon Painter. John Oakley. Picturing Death in Classical Athens. (Cambridge: University Press, 2004), 5.](image)

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11 Oakley, 5-6.
12 Oakley, 6.
build.\textsuperscript{13} [Fig. 4] Smaller versions of this type of \textit{lekythos} are referred to as “secondary \textit{lekythoi}”.\textsuperscript{14} During the fifth century, the painters of red-figured pots embraced the shape of this new \textit{lekythos} and it became the distinctive shape associated with the white-ground style. This elegant, evolved shape would disappear at the end of the fifth century.\textsuperscript{15}

There are two other notable types of \textit{lekythoi}. Firstly, the squat \textit{lekythos}, recognizable by its large, flared mouth, ovoid body and ring foot [Fig. 4], dates to around 500 B.C.E. and is memorable because it replaced cylindrical \textit{lekythoi} as grave goods in Athens in the second half of the century. The squat \textit{lekythos} was replaced as a grave good by \textit{unguentaria}.\textsuperscript{16}

The other type of \textit{lekythos} worth noting is a category of truly phenomenal vases: the Group of Huge White-Ground \textit{Lekythoi}. [Fig. 6] These are the last of the \textit{lekythoi} (410-400 B.C.E.), made entirely of stone (imitating ceramics), and reaching heights of over a meter high.\textsuperscript{17} They were completely covered in white slip, unlike fifth-century \textit{lekythoi} whose bodies and shoulders only received white slip.\textsuperscript{18} These enormous vases imitated the wall-panel paintings of their time through the style of painted decoration used on them.\textsuperscript{19} One wall-panel technique in particular that found its way onto these mammoth \textit{lekythoi} was the use of \textit{skiagraphia}, that is “shadow painting” introduced by wall painter Apollodorus and also used by Pairhasios, as recounted by Pliny. This method of shading can be found on Huge White-Ground \textit{Lekythoi}.

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{13} Cook, 221.
\textsuperscript{14} Oakley, 6.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{16} Oakley, 7.
\textsuperscript{17} Oakley, 18.
\textsuperscript{18} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{19} Tom Rasmussen and Nigel Spivey, eds. \textit{Looking at Greek Vases} (Cambridge: University Press, 1991), 130.
\end{flushleft}
An exception may be seen on a unique piece associated with the Group of Huge White-Ground Lekythoi. While it is not completely white, it is oversized and lacks some of the traditional band elements of a normal-sized white-ground lekythoi. \[20\] [Fig. 5] This is the only non-traditional white-ground lekythos and non-traditional Huge White-Ground Lekythos to use shading for the figures’ flesh as was used in the now-long-lost monumental wall-panels. \[21\] Perhaps this particular vase is a kind of transitional piece between traditional lekythoi and the Huge White-Ground Lekythoi.


\[21\] Ibid.
While the fifth-century white-ground *lekythos* may be the most familiar type of Greek vase associated with funerary practices, it is, by no means, the only one. There are these notable inclusions into the funeral-ware category:

1. *Loutrophoros*: this ovoid-bodied vessel has a tall, elegant neck with two or three handles. The *loutrophoros* was used in funeral rituals at least as long ago as the Geometric period, and it was *en vogue* in fifth-century Athens for this shape to be used again as grave markers.  

2. *Volute Krater*: this was a very large, open pot with coiled handles. This type of *krater* was used in funeral ritual since the Geometric Period, and was ornately decorated for gravestones in Apulian red figure.  

3. *Amphorae*: this refers to a rounded pot with two handles that tapers at both foot and shoulder. This type of vase was used famously in the Geometric Period, as in the case of the Nessos Vase.  

In the 420s B.C.E. in Tarentum (Italy), tragic and mythological scenes were ornately painted onto vases used as grave markers, referred to as Apulian vases. Though the

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23 Cook, 219.
painting was ostentatious, the figures lacked movement and compositional technique.\textsuperscript{25} These red-figured artists, like the faces of their tragic figures, made a doleful (and ultimately unsuccessful) attempt to capture the grandeur of classicism and paint it on the pots of their departed loved ones.

During the Hellenistic era, bright polychrome pots fired over a chalky white base appeared, reminiscent of the white-ground \textit{lekythoi} of fifth-century Athens. These Hellenistic \textit{hydriai} and \textit{amphorae} were covered with images appropriate to funerary contexts.\textsuperscript{26}

Not only can the origins of \textit{lekythoi} can be traced so far back in the evolution of Greek pottery, but the tradition of the funerary vase, continues. For example, the appearance of Classical, Hellenistic and Neoclassical era graveyards are so similar, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between them. Today the tradition of the \textit{lekythos} and other funerary pots is exemplified in several ways, primarily, through the use of cremation urns. Some contemporary tombstones are shaped like vases or have a vase build into the marker. The custom of sending flowers to families of those who have lost loved ones is another act which ties the vase to mourning. Clearly, the tradition of the funeral vase and its place in burials and death ritual remains although the vase is simpler and those who use it may not decorate or imprint the same emotions and artistic designs as the humble vase’s rich heritage.

\section*{1.1.1 \textit{Creation of the fifth-century lekythos}}

The familiar form of the fifth-century white-ground \textit{lekythos} was created by the potter in excruciating detail and lengthy process that required three major steps: the throwing of the

\begin{footnote}
\textsuperscript{25} Cook, 186.
\textsuperscript{26} Cook, 194-195.
\end{footnote}
shoulder and foot in one piece, the neck and mouth in a second, and finally the handle by itself.

The process is abbreviated from Tony Schreiber’s *Athenian Vase Construction* below:

1. A ball of clay would be pressed to within centimeters of the edge of the potter’s wheel, leaving enough clay to form the foot of the vase later.
2. The concave floor of the *lekythos* was created by the potter by pulling upward with his thumbs until a cylinder began to form.
3. Next, he pressed downward on the foot of the vase, to shape the top of the flat base.
4. The potter would then work on the shape of the body by pressing in and out on the clay until the cylinder was angled correctly and proportionately.
5. At the shoulder, he rotated his fingers, pressing the clay towards the neck of the vase (the clay would be thicker here, as the second piece was to be attached at this joint).
6. The potter would use a rib tool to smooth the surface of the *lekythos*.
7. The body was raised, smoothed, cut off the wheel and set aside to firm up.
8. Next, the neck and mouth were formed by spreading a smaller ball of clay to the wheel head, and opening a hollow bottom piece. The potter would spread his thumbs, but keep his knuckles together at the wheel head to create the flared neck base.
9. With his right hand thumb and index finger, the potter pulled up a narrow, but thick-walled cylindrical neck.
10. The diameter of the neck would then be narrowed and the mouth formed at the top by creating a bowl with his thumb and index fingers, supporting the neck and mouth by cupping them.
11. The potter would flatten the rim of the mouth by straightening his right finger across his right thumb, then would push downward to make the inward turn found on the inside rim, which also gives the vase its outward flare.

12. In turning the neck wall, the potter used a scraper to cut away excess clay ribbons, forming a chamfer (ridge) above the shoulder/neck joint.

13. Next, he used calipers to measure the neck base so that it was slightly wider than the neck opening, then the piece was set aside.

14. When it was firm, the neck was set on top of the clip-covered shoulder opening, and then an extra layer of clay was added to make certain that the handle would set correctly on the neck.

15. The next step would be to create a disk foot. Shaping was achieved by turning the *lekythos* upside-down and then the foot would either be a) shaped convex cone, where it was angled inwardly leaving a small cone on the bottom or b) cut sharply towards the floor of the vase, leaving a convex cone

16. The potter usually polished the bottom of the vase with a yielding tool

17. The handle was formed and added last. A ball of clay would first be molded into a pear-shape. Keeping one hand wet, the potter would squeeze the clay with one hand while sliding his wet hand simultaneously down along the clay to elongate and shape it into the neck.

18. After pulling, the arch was perfected, then firmed and cut.
19. The potter molded the neck to fit the lekythos’ shoulder and neck angles, then attached and smoothed the area vertically with a knife.²⁷

1.2 Slip of the white-ground lekythos

After the firing process (described in a later section), the Attic white-ground lekythos was finished and ready for decoration. The white slip may hold a deeper symbolism than simply a bright area to paint. Perhaps it is a nod to the bright light of Elysium, since fifth-century white-ground lekythoi were almost exclusively funerary vessels.²⁸ Furthermore, the white may refer to the tymbos, a type of tomb in which the cadaver was buried beneath a dirt mound and then covered by bright, white lime plaster (this tomb could also refer to the bright lights of Elysium).²⁹

In spite of its beauty, the white slip did create some artistic difficulties for artists. For example, rendering the flesh of women (traditionally painted with white skin) became almost impossible.

To combat this difficulty, painters either (a) used a matte finish for the flesh over the glossy, white background or (b) made use of a new innovation called “second white” [Fig. 9] in which they painted the flesh of women (or white hair for that matter) using a pigment of cream-white that would be set off against the brighter, glossy white of the slip.

²⁸ Gregory P. Warden, ed. Greek Vase Painting: Form, Figure and Narrative (Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press), 105.
²⁹ Ibid.
The white slip could also have been intended as a surrogate for the more precious material of ivory. The shape of the white-ground lekythos does bring to mind the shape of the ivory tusk—a form which the white-ground lekythos might have been intending to evoke. [Fig. 10] Similarly, this suggests that a number of ceramic glazes and paint colors were substituted instead of more costly mason and stonework. For example, the black-glaze pottery of the fourth century so commonly distinguished by almost bluish-grey sheen, substitutes for tarnished silver, while the red of red-figure evokes the appearance of gold-foil decoration. Even purple decoration elicits the effect of copper inlay.

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30 John Boardman, *Athenian Red Figure Vases: The Classical Period* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2001), 130.
32 Ibid.
34 Vickers, 111.
Although Athens had entered, arguably, its most prosperous age post-Persian war (when the white-ground lekythoi flourished), not all Athenian families could afford to use precious metals and ivory lavishly—especially to be used in burial, which were traditionally less ostentatious gifts.\(^{35}\) Perhaps this, in part, led to such drastic evolutions in the artistic world: red-figure, the transformation of black-figure, white-ground, and panel painting. These new techniques enabled the artists to render on ceramic the colors of precious metals on pottery which the less-wealthy could afford.

### 1.3 Women and the Lekythos Form

One other theory regarding the color of the slip has more modern implications, though before proceeding an awareness of the danger of regarding ancient symbolism through contemporary eyes must be acknowledged. Still, to present this theory for consideration, regard the pure, white color of the slip and recall to mind what white paint had (and still through the use of “second white” and cream-white) been used for—primarily to color the skin of women. It was used to set off women as separate from men. If the categories of images on lekythoi are considered, the most common themes are: women in domestic settings, [Fig. 11] women visiting or on the way to the grave, scenes at the grave and the prothesis (in which women played an integral role). Occasionally there are early  

\(^{35}\) Vickers, 114.
scenes of mythological characters, but these are rare and do not figure into the *raison d’être* of the fifth-century Attic white-ground *lekythoi*. Thus, there exists a vase of pure white—a color formerly associated with depicting women—on which images are of both men and women, but in all ways focused around women, women’s space, or women’s functions.

Through fifth-century *lekythoi*, we see women within the home—not necessarily in areas designated “women’s space,” but we see them performing daily tasks, as if we are peering into a secret window into the past to see what life might have been like for these women. They stuff pillows, work with wool with *kalatatoi* (wool baskets)\(^\text{36}\), [Fig. 12] make wreaths, play with children, read, and interact with their maids. A great deal of their time seems to have been spent preparing baskets for offerings to the dead. Similarly, we see them visiting graves with baskets full of offerings, and, more importantly, they mourn. One piece by the Inscription Painter [Fig. 13] shows an unusual display of emotion on the face of a woman standing at the grave of a loved one, crying. Tears are rare on *lekythoi*, in spite of the vivid emotions they elicit from their viewers. In a piece like this one, empathy is so easily felt by anyone who has lost a loved one, even though this woman is unknown and lived so many years ago.

\(^{36}\) Oakley, 27.
Funerals, death, mourning, and remembrance all seem to have been within the realm of women—and why not the *lekythos*? In fact, the earliest use of the word λήκυθος is found in the Homeric *Odyssey* in the story of Nausicaa. Although this reference is merely to a jug which holds oil, the story of Nausicaa bears strong ideas about women’s sexuality, transitions to womanhood, and even the power of women in ancient times exhibited by her role in Odysseus’ continued journey onward and her words:

_Farewell, stranger, and hereafter even in your own native land may you remember me, for to me first you owe the price of your life..._  

The shape of the fifth-century vase itself seems to evoke a sense of womanhood. It was a pure, white vase with a slender neck, curved body and slender ankles/feet. Within the *lekythos*, there is a sexual element in the idea that the object was a receptacle, often holding sacred oils or wine for designated periods of time, mirroring the idea of pregnancy, before birthing a sacred offering. In the case of the *lekythoi*, the offering was to the deceased so that they might be remembered; for Athenian women, much in the way that marriage was only complete after the birth of the first child, giving birth was a way for her family to be remembered. Through their

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37 Oakley, 4.  
roles as keeper of rituals, women were part of a religious hierarchy, and their participation in their roles was equal to a man’s participation in his own.\textsuperscript{40} Women’s ritualistic role can be exemplified in the works of Menander, such as these lines from \textit{The Apparition}...

\begin{quotation}
\textit{Let the women circle, massage and fumigate you...}\textsuperscript{41}
\end{quotation}

…or these from \textit{the Girl from Samos}:

\begin{quotation}
\textit{Sent the (women) off to bathe, traipsed round distributing the cake...}\textsuperscript{42}
\end{quotation}

Perhaps the \textit{lekythos} was a vase intended for use primarily for women in their ritual domain. Men also partook in remembering the dead, but women held the power as keepers of the rituals of the dead. This theory is a radical one, and while the links between \textit{lekythoi} and women cannot be denied, the primary purpose of this chapter is to give background information on the \textit{lekythos}, so let us do just that.

\section*{1.4 Lekythoi Periods}

The “age of the \textit{lekythoi}” can be nicely divided into three primary sections, thanks to scholar John Oakley: Early (470-450), Middle (450-425) and Late (425-400).\textsuperscript{43} All dates are to be understood as B.C.E. Only a few major painters whose impact on style, technique or subject will be pointed out, keeping in mind that these are only a few of many \textit{lekythoi} painters who worked within a few workshops in Athens.

\textsuperscript{40} Lewis, 47.


\textsuperscript{42} Menander 262. \texttt{(ἐπὶ λούτρ' ἔπεμπον τὰς γυναίκας,) περιπατῶντιν σησαμῆν διένεμον}, trans. W. Geoffrey Arnott.

\textsuperscript{43} Oakley, 13.
1.4.1 Examples of Early Period Painters (470-450)

1.4.1.1 The Inscription Painter

This painter was prominent around 470-460, rather late among the Early artists. He was the first painter to show a true interest in painting scenes at the grave. He worked from the Beldam Wokshop, and his name comes from some of the actual strokes he made on the graves on his fifteen or so white lekythoi, which were meant to indicate inscriptions. He was also the first to represent the deceased at the tomb.⁴⁴ All of his lekythoi’s iconography are funerary, as most have false interiors⁴⁵ to hold only small amounts of oil, suggesting non-utilitarian use.

1.4.1.2 The Tymbos Painter

Named for his prolific depictions of the tymbos grave (τύμβος), this painter flourished around 470-440. The Tymbos Painter was actually a Group, therefore, many painters are actually attributed to him.⁴⁶ He is known as the first white lekythos painter to create imagery of Charon [Fig. 14] in his work—a long-standing lekythoi tradition.⁴⁷ Even though the quality of this painter’s work is poor, he was quite innovative. For example, his earliest works have glaze outlines, then later, glaze mixed with matt, and finally only matt outlines.

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⁴⁴ Oakley, 14-15.
⁴⁶ Kurtz, 82-83.
⁴⁷ Oakley15.
1.4.2 Example of Early to Middle Period Painters

1.4.2.1 The Achilles Painter

Arguably the most famous Attic white-group *lekythoi* artist, the Achilles Painter straddled the Early and Middle periods in both time and artistic excellence from circ. 470-430/425. His Early Period domestic works tend to be stiff, but during the Middle Period, his true talent was absolutely kindled and a mini-*Belle époque* of Athenian white-ground *lekythoi* began. Grave scenes show up on his vases, he discards second white, experiments with fresh, new color—and his drawing seems to transcends anything seen before in white ground *lekythoi*. His work is symmetrical; his figures calm and emotionless—as one would expect a politically correct fifth-century Athenian to be at a funeral—and becomes famous for a golden glaze.\(^{48}\) The Achilles Painter, much like the leader of any truly great artistic movement proved just how beautiful *lekythoi* could be.\(^{49}\) After all, death is a painful and sorrowful subject to make beautiful. The Achilles Painter mastered elegant three-patterned heart palmettes for the shoulders, combined matt and glaze outlines, and managed to create a true dignity to the figures standing graveside, through the use of his calm, never unsymmetrical or emotional-stricken faces. Painters would learn and copy his techniques for years to come.\(^{50}\)

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\(^{48}\) Oakley, 15.
\(^{49}\) Kurtz, 42.
\(^{50}\) Kurtz, 43, 47-48.
1.4.3 Examples of Middle Period Painters (450-425)

1.4.3.1 The Sabouroff Painter

Named for a Russian who owned a lebes gamikoi by this painter, the Sabouroff was an extremely prolific white-ground lekythoi artist from around 470-430, who worked for a while in the same workshop as the Achilles Painter. It was the Sabouroff Painter who introduced matt painting on white lekythoi, making him a distinguished innovator in the lekythoi world. He was also known for the amount of emotion that he was able to capture on his subject’s faces. Painting primarily tomb scenes, he was one of the first artists to favor both prothesis and Charon scenes. [Fig. 15] He also worked for a time in the Tymbos Workshop.\textsuperscript{51} His shoulder patterns favored lotus buds added to palmettes, and he preferred the use of glaze for his meanders, but, peculiarly, he began his strokes for this pattern with a horizontal movement instead of vertically—something quite rare.\textsuperscript{52}

1.4.3.2 The Thanatos Painter

This painter also seems to have worked in the same workshop as the Achilles Painter, and is known for around fifty white-ground lekythoi from the early third quarter of the fifth century.\textsuperscript{53} Although he did not have a massive range (he is only known for his work on lekythoi), this painter had a huge realm of subject material: domestic scenes, Charon, Hypnos and Thanatos (whence his name is derived) [Fig. 16] and even iconographic scenes such

\textsuperscript{51} Oakley, 15-16.
\textsuperscript{52} Kurtz, 35-37.
\textsuperscript{53} Kurz, 43.
as the Persians and the hunt. Technically, he generally preferred a dilute glaze and put more emotion into the faces of the people he painted than the Achilles Painter. Although his meander, scene set-up and the shape of the shoulder/body connection is very akin to the Achilles Painter, the Thanatos Painter was also clearly influenced by the Sabouroff Painter, evidenced by the type of stele on his lekythoi, the open mourning depicted on his subjects and his “type-cast” borrowing of scene types. These scenes might include a set-up, for example, in a domestic setting of “mistress and maid” (one used frequently by the Sabouroff and Thanatos Painters) or a graveside set-up involving “warrior and woman at tomb” (again, both painters favored this scene).

1.4.3.3 The Painter of Munich 2335

This artist moved around between workshops, including the Achilles Workshop and the quality of his work is not consistent. He thrived sometime around 440-420/410. He is probably best known for emotional renderings of people at gravesites. His style of work is quite comparable to the Bird Group and the Thanatos Painter. He preferred the use of matt outlines for pattern work on his lekythoi and often used color variations when decorating the palmettes and petals on the shoulders. Although his work showed emotion and

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54 Oakley, 16-17.0
55 Kurtz, 39-40.
56 Oakley, 17.
grief in mourning, he often did so by relying heavily on gesture—a commonality with the Bird Group.\textsuperscript{57}

1.4.3.4 The Bird Group

This group of painters included the Bird Painter, the Carlsberg Painter, Painter of Athens 1934 and many others\textsuperscript{58}, and their painted pots mark the end of the Middle Period: 435-425. Their \textit{lekythoi} often used glaze for scenes at the grave, [Fig. 17] and relied heavily on the influence of the Achilles Painter, Thanatos Painter and Painter of Munich 2335. Due to the number of artists within this group as well as the influence of so many other artists, it is almost impossible to connect a vase to a particular artist’s name.\textsuperscript{59}

The Bird Group’s shoulder palmettes and meander tend to be matt, even if the figures are in glaze. The palmette pattern and figure work are a variation on Achillean patterns, though the figures of the Bird Group lack the sophistication of the Achilles Painter. They are often childish-looking and gangly.\textsuperscript{60} As we will see, the Brandeis \textit{Lekythos} is thought to come from some painter among the Bird Group, due to the Achillean influences on the palmette patterns, as well as the Thanatos/Painter of Munich 2335 influence on figure and grave construction, and most importantly the way in which the two figures are drawn in a childlike, unsophisticated manner.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{bird-painter-boy-with-bird}
\caption{Bird Painter “Boy with Bird”, Oakley, 209}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{57} Kurtz, 55-56.  
\textsuperscript{58} Kurtz, 53.  
\textsuperscript{59} Oakley, 17.  
\textsuperscript{60} Kurtz, 53.
1.4.4 Examples of Late Period Painters (425-400)

1.4.4.1 The Woman Painter

Named for the perceived beauty of the many women depicted on his vases, this painter thrived around 430-420/15. Drawing on the Painter of Munich 2335, the Woman Painter served as a link between the Middle and the Late Periods. Much like the Painter of Munich 2335 was known for portraying images of emotion, the Woman Painter became famous for his ability to show the utter sadness and desolation felt by grieving women.\(^{61}\) His matt patterns and figures were simple, curved and known for their colorful look.\(^{62}\)

1.4.4.2 The Reed Painter

This painter was the most prolific artist of the Late Period, creating around 170 lekythoi.\(^{63}\) This is due to the fact that the Reed Painter worked out of the Reed Workshop, which included himself, and all painters commonly “clumped” into a group known simply as “R”. Though the workshop was Attic, vases created by the Reed Workshop have been found all over the Mediterranean and Eastern Europe.\(^{64}\) Matt paint is now \textit{en vogue} with black paint for the patterns and red for figures. [Fig. 18] Glaze is used simply to frame bands. Red is the predominant color, though the vases are polychrome. A new feature is

\(^{61}\) Oakley, 17.
\(^{62}\) Kurtz, 57.
\(^{63}\) Oakley, 18.
\(^{64}\) Kutz, 59.
introduced to the lekythoi: the presence of sketching before painting. The Reed Painter derives his name from a penchant for depicting patches of reeds on his work.

Though this overview of the evolution and formation of lekythoi is brief, one may see that, as the chapter’s initial quotation indicates, the subject of burial goods and ritual objects has been, ostensibly, a serious subject for both Greek artists and those who commissioned Greek art. Even today, as the quotation says, “little death” continues to be a “worry and distress” for us—yet the Greeks used objects like vases to alleviate some of that worry through ritual and even simply through the remembrance of loved ones in their depictions on lekythoi. In the process, they created magnificent pieces the beauty of which may serve to take away some of our own “worry and distress” over “little death”.

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65 Kurtz, 59-60.
66 Oakley, 18.
67 Rilke, trans. Lana Georgiou and Heide McAllister.
Chapter 2: Exploration and Importation

When we think of the splendid form and decoration of white-ground *lekythoi*, it is often difficult to separate the words “Attic white-ground” from “white-ground” (due to the most famous and illustrious vases of Attic origin). [Fig. 19] It is, however, absolutely necessary to distinguish Attic white-ground *lekythoi* from white-ground *lekythoi* because *lekythoi* were both exported and imported between cities throughout Greece.\(^{68}\) During the fifth century, the *lekythos* experienced a kind of renaissance: its shape evolved into a more slender and sleek vase, decoration became more narrative and attempted to appeal to the viewer’s *pathos* rather than knowledge. The *lekythos* also began being exported to some of the most important trade and commerce centers in the fifth-century world.\(^{69}\)

Around 470 BCE, when the major motif of the *lekythos* changed from mythological and domestic to almost exclusively funerary, some of Athens’ neighbors imitated the immaculate

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\(^{69}\) John Oakley. *Picturing Death in Fifth-century Athens*. (NY: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 5-6, 8
polychrome white lekythoi by creating their own versions of an “Attic” white-ground lekythos.\textsuperscript{70} This motif change occurred approximately the same time that a new material from Melos began to be used as slip for the white-ground base, a pseudomorph of metakaolinite, (minerals found in porcelains).\textsuperscript{71} Due to the heavily funerary context now on Attic white-ground lekythoi, many areas of the Greek world that were unfamiliar with Athenian burial and death rituals and beliefs frequently copied the vases, choosing to decorate them with a simple figured or patterned motif.\textsuperscript{72}

Eretria and Euboea, the area directly to the east of Athens, was probably the largest importer of Attic white-ground lekythos. This is conceivably due to its proximity to Attica for two principal reasons: first, since the areas were so close, at least some of the inhabitants were likely to understand the iconography on the vases (even the funerary motifs). Second, again, due to range and Attic influence on Euboean pottery, perhaps some Attic artists set up local shops within the confines of Eretria.\textsuperscript{73} Eretria was the only location whose large-scale importation of Attic white-ground lekythoi did not stop or lesson when the iconography motif changed to completely funerary scenes instead of myth, figure or pattern-based art. Eretrian artists did, however, while continuing to import, create their own local variations of white-ground lekythoi that were distinctly not Attic. Two particularly notable Eretrian vase painters are the Torch and Bern Painters.\textsuperscript{74}

The white-ground lekythos in figure twenty, for example, is a vase with characteristics uniquely Euboean. Though difficult to see in a picture, Euboean lekythoi have a yellowish hue to

\textsuperscript{70} Ibid, 10.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid, 6.
\textsuperscript{72} Kurtz, 136.
\textsuperscript{73} Kurtz, 137.
\textsuperscript{74} Ibid.
them, which is explained by the soft, yellow clay of Euboea. Furthermore, there is a very pronounced “tongue” brush stroke of the black glaze near the foot of the vase. This is a result of the painter letting the brush run off the course before lifting it off the vase. Many similar “tongues” have been found on other vases indigenous to Euboea. This vase also shows a pale band running along the top of the course of the foot’s black decoration—a distinctive Euboean characteristic, along with the style of lotus blossoms depicted on each side near the vase’s shoulder. Finally, the himation held by the left onlooker is decorated in a pattern that places its origin in Euboea.75

Euboean artists are also famous for their production of patterned white-ground lekythoi. 76

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76 Kurtz, 143.
created their own figured and patterned white-ground lekythoi. The patterned lekythoi were cheaply mass-produced, and Euboea is particularly noted for a patterned style known as the “Dolphin Group” of marine-decorated vases with lotus buds and blossoms. These vases have been found as far away from Euboea as Rhodes.\textsuperscript{77} Thus, while the peoples of Eretria understood and even might have practiced some of the same religious beliefs, especially regarding the afterlife (due to the high volume of imported funerary vases), they also respected their own local traditions and cultural beliefs (perhaps evidenced by the figured and patterned lekythoi).

Corinth was another trade mecca to import Athenian white-ground lekythoi, as well as to copy the white-ground technique. For the most part, Corinth imported patterned white-ground lekythoi from Athens, though they did import a smaller amount of the funerary-motivated style—especially those from the Tymbos and Reed painters.\textsuperscript{78} Finding vases by the Tymbos and Reed painters could be a consequence of those two painters being from Attic workshops with the greatest geographic distribution in the Mediterranean world.\textsuperscript{79} Corinth did have painters of their own, such as the Painter of Corinth,\textsuperscript{80} though their white-ground were remarkably crude in shape.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure21.png}
\caption{Lekythoi from Corinth (artists unknown) Kurtz, Plate 70.8 Image 3.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{77} Kurtz, 144.
\textsuperscript{78} Kurtz, 138-139.
\textsuperscript{79} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{80} Ibid.
and decoration. Their base shade had an unmistakable dull, often greenish tinge, and the shape of the body was often crooked and the patterns poorly executed. [Fig. 21]

The quite prosperous and trade-friendly island of Sicily was known for both its import of fifth-century Attic white-ground lekythoi and its local copies of white-ground lekythoi. The ample number of Attic imports is evidenced by findings of lekythoi all over the island, including many by some of the greatest painters like the Berlin, Pan, Sabouroff and Reed Painters. The city of Gela was a major trade center for lekythoi, and many funerary pieces from Athens were excavated here. [Fig. 23] Gela was so well-known for lekythoi and local attempts to copy Athens’ vases that a painter has been named the “Gela Painter”, known for his preference for distinctive flower and shoulder palmettes. [Fig. 22]

82 Ibid.
83 Kurtz, 139-140.
84 John Boardman. Athenian Black-Figure Vases (NY: Thames and Hudson, 1985), 147.
In Southern Italy, Attic white-ground lekythoi have been found in fifth-century graves in several cities, most notably, Locri, Metaponto and Tarentum. In Locri, yellowish vases without a funerary motif were widely distributed. These vases were found by French scholars in the nineteenth century and assumed to be locally manufactured, thus given the name “Locrian” lekythoi. Although some of the lekythoi might have been locally produced, the vases were established to be Attic in manufacture due to distinct artistic characteristics, such as physiological details compared to contemporary Southern Italian vases and palmette and molding patterns. "Locrian" lekythoi tended to be a dirty-white color with a heavy yellow glaze. They also had black or brown line decoration instead of the standard Attic red or yellow. Furthermore, the subject of the vases from Locri was mythological.

Fifth-century pit graves from the Western Macedonian necropolis of Aiani also yielded both Attic white-ground lekythoi as well other types of commonly offered fifth-century grave goods, such as black-glazed lekythoi and aryballoi. [Fig. 24] Aiani was an ideal location for trade, as it was situated near the Haliacmon river, mountain passes and was in communication with both Upper and Lower Macedonia, Epirus and both Central and Southern

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85 Kurtz, 144.
86 Fairbanks, 77.
Eurydice Kefalidou. “Late Archaic Polychrome Pottery from Aiani.” The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, Vol. 70, No. 2 (Apr. – Jun., 2001), p 211, Fig. 11.
Greece. It also possessed rich natural resources in the form of wood and minerals—including gold deposits.\textsuperscript{88} Excavations of the necropolis have unearthed vast quantities of pottery—both local and imported.\textsuperscript{89} No imitation or localized form of white-ground \textit{lekythoi} have been found, though the presence of the fifth-century Attic pieces have helped archaeologists in the dating of other grave goods as well as to establish the northern trade routes of which the \textit{lekythoi} were a part.\textsuperscript{90} One of the \textit{lekythoi} found in the pit graves has even been attributed to the Beldam Workshop, partly through the motif of upright lyre palmettes.\textsuperscript{91}

As presented, white-ground \textit{lekythoi} are not only Attic, but also Corinthian, Eretrian, Sicilian, Locrian, etc. Long before Attic white-ground funerary vases were used in Athenian burial rituals, when they were still covered in patterns and myths, they were used in trade beyond Athens. While some cultures continued to use the vases after they became objects associated strictly with burial and death (such as the Eretrians), others chose to try and create the beautiful pots they had come to love without the attachment of death and funerary associations (like the Corinthians).

\textit{Lekythoi} were created without a funerary context in mind. Their link with burial was an association that occurred during or as a result of the evolution of the pot. Perhaps to the Athenians, the white color that somehow associated the vase with the light and purity that they felt was necessary for death ritual. For others, \textit{lekythoi} were completely utilitarian, as they poured oil and perfume, as they had since Homeric days.

\textsuperscript{88} Kefalidou, 184.
\textsuperscript{89} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{90} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{91} Ibid.
The Athenians, however, took the *lekythoi* to new personal, religious and intimate levels that enable us to learn a great deal about their daily lives as well as the rituals and mourning they experienced at death. In a sense, through their art, we can grieve with them, thousands of years later. Looking at a *lekythos* is not merely looking at a piece of art or a ritualistic tool; it is taking a journey with the artists and with the commissioner into a private realm created to honor the deposed as they crossed the barrier from being a part of this world into being a part of whatever comes next.
Chapter 3: Ritual and Funeral

La tombe attend; elle est avide! Ah! laissez-moi, mon front posé sur vos genoux, goûter, en regrettant l'été blanc et torride, de l'arrière-saison le rayon jaune et doux!

-Charles Baudelaire

Figure 25: Vouni Painter: "Visit to Grave" John Oakley, Picturing Death in Classical Athens (Cambridge: University Press, 2004), Plate VII: A & B

92 Cambridge: University Press, 1999
Charles Baudelaire, ed. and trans. Wallace Fowlie, Les Fleurs du Mau et Oeuvres Choisi, “Chant D’automne” (NY: Dover Publications, 1964, 64). (“The grave is waiting; it is eager! Ah! My head resting on your knees, let me appreciate, mourning, for the white, torrid summer, the yellow, sweet ray of the earlier season.” Trans. Lana Georgiou.)
3.1 Death—the Human Condition

These brief lines from Baudelaire’s *Chant D’automne* reveal four simple things about the human perception of death and dying: death is imminent, humans innately long for association with other humans during/around death, the need for the grieving process, and wishful thoughts and associations of youth in later years or with mourners of their loved one’s earlier years. Death is a universal thing that connects all humans together—it has no reservations or inhibitions about race, culture, sexuality, politics or any of the diversity that might otherwise drive humans apart. Death is the destiny of all men and women, and as such that daunting unknown of what lies beyond gnaws at us as our loved ones—whom we accepted before simply in a state of being—pass on and are extinguished from life.\(^{93}\) Perhaps it is this sharp lack of being that frightens the living into creating new ideas about a continuation of being for the departed: an afterlife, endurance of the soul,\(^ {94}\) and to create rituals surrounding death and funerals. Many remnants of such rituals involving *lekythoi* live on in the archaeological record, exemplified by the Brandeis *Lekythos*, used for death rituals in fifth-century Athens.

The body of a human spends only a tiny fragment of its time on earth as a living being—most of the time is spent underground, in a crypt, in an urn, or some other burial place, where it lies alongside our material culture. Studying the graves of the departed can reveal the social status, gender or formality of the burial.\(^ {95}\) Death and burial in fifth-century Athens was a formal, polis-ruled process that took place in stages. Most of these stages were carried out by or led by women. In a sense, females were the “undertakers” of the Greek world. [Fig. 25]

\(^{94}\) Ibid.
\(^{95}\) Mike Parker Pearson, *Archaeology of Death and Ritual* (College Station: Texas A & M, 1999), 5.
3.2 Funerary Practices in the Greek World

While some scholars hold that women took on this pollution-ridden role of corpse-preparer due to a natural state of pollution linked with menstruation and childbirth,\(^96\) this is not the case. Menstrual blood did not “pollute” a woman in fifth-century Athens, as evidenced by their continuing ability to enter sanctuaries, hold their priestessships and continue having sex while menstruating.\(^97\) Women were continuing an age-old tradition, dating to at least the Archaic Age, of caring for the dead and participating in public funerary rituals—such traditions still continue in many communities around the modern Mediterranean. The root for such funeral cults seems to lie in women’s desire to care for their families and to continue to venerate their ancestors after they have passed.\(^98\)

The funerary process took place in three major parts: prothesis (πρόθεσις), ekphora (ἐκφορά), and interment (κηδεία).\(^99\) To prepare the corpse for the laying out of the body (πρόθεσις), [Fig. 26] women would wash the body of the deceased, a ritual that symbolized its purification from the pollution of death. The body would be anointed with oils and perfumes and a coin would be placed in the mouth (for Charon, the ferryman).\(^100\) The remains would be wrapped in a shroud (ἐνδυμα) and placed on a special bed.

\(^98\) Blundell, 22.
\(^100\) Blundell, 23.
κλίνη) with the feet facing the door to symbolize the departed person’s impeding journey.\textsuperscript{101} If it was needed, the deceased’s jaws would be held together with a strap tied around the head. Sweet-smelling herbs, branches, wreaths, and lekythoi with oils and perfumes would decorate the bedside, along with ribbons and flowers. The deceased would also be fanned to keep away unseemly bugs or foul odors. A water jar was provided at the front door of the home so that the visiting mourners could purify themselves upon leaving. The πρόθεσις would last for twenty-four hours, during which women would sing laments, both γόος and θρῆνος (informal and formal types of laments).\textsuperscript{102}

The second stage of the funeral process was the ‘εκφορά, a formal funeral procession to the gravesite.\textsuperscript{103} Such processions were standardized by civic laws dating back to the time of Solon, when women in such processions were deemed too emotional and displays of mourning, ostentatious. Traditionally, like the body wrapped in a white shroud, pallbearers would wear white and mourners grey.\textsuperscript{104} Yet, note the bright colors on lekythoi which seem to contradict such color-coordination. [Fig. 25] Laws for the ‘εκφορά were so rigid that women’s clothes, the ritual items that they carried and even the size of their baskets (pannier) were regulated. Plutarch recounts that women were not allowed:

\textit{"He also subjected the public appearances of the women, their mourning and festivals to a law which did away with disorder and licence. When they went out, they were not to wear more than three garments, they were not to carry more than an obol's worth of food or drink, nor a pannier more than a cubit high..."}\textsuperscript{105}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{101} Oakley, 11.
\item \textsuperscript{102} Oakley, 12.
\item \textsuperscript{103} Blundell, 23.
\end{itemize}
Solon had created such austere laws regarding funeral processes not only to regulate the behavior of women, but also to limit what he deemed as excessive use of items like oils, fruits, wines and honey on the dead.\textsuperscript{106}

His ultimate goal was to terminate (or at least scale back) the grandiose behavioral displays for the dead and, instead, reinforce familial and civic bonds through focusing on the living. Thus, men led the procession, which took place on the third day after death, at dawn.\textsuperscript{107} Laws existed regarding the age of women allowed to be present, the number and types of musicians permitted and even the number and specifications of offerings restricted to by mourners.\textsuperscript{108}

At the gravesite, women performed a lament to the dead and offered food and libations. [Fig. 27] Such rituals were believed to raise the spirit of the dead from their grave.\textsuperscript{109} \textit{Kηδεία} involved either cremation or inhumation at the gravesite (both types of burials were acceptable and practiced all over Greece), and grave goods, including \textit{lekythoi}, were buried with the deceased. [Fig. 28] Rituals performed at the grave did not necessarily serve as an indication of a belief in an afterlife, although some element of existence of a part of the deceased, whether it be as a ghost or as an \textit{εἰδωλός} (a phantom-like mirror image of the dead commonly found depicted

\textsuperscript{106} Sarah Iles Johnston. \textit{Restless Dead: Encounters between the Living and the Dead in Ancient Greece} (LA: Berkley, 1999), 40-42.
\textsuperscript{107} Oakley, 12.
\textsuperscript{108} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{109} Blundell, 24.
on lekythoi), does seem to have been acknowledged. For example, Homer describes the dead in terms of physicality, such as lacking strength (μένος) and being without their faculties or wits (φρένες).\(^{110}\) The dead are also generally represented as being able to sense friendly or hostile forces nearby their resting place, while whatever element of them remains seems to have been thought of as disagreeable, but certainly not malevolent.\(^{111}\)

Rituals performed at the graveside were not to establish a connection with the dead. Instead, they were to make certain that the deceased would be remembered, that the survivors would “feel” the continued presence of the departed (this was a small way to find peace during a difficult liminal period), and the life of the dead would be praised—something most important to the Greeks.\(^{112}\) This idea of seeking remembrance and praise is evidenced by many epitaphs found on fifth-century gravestones, such as:

- **Grieve for this, then go on and prosper.**\(^{113}\)
- **Callisto, earth has hidden your body in her embrace, but you have left to your friends the memory of your virtue.**\(^{114}\)

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\(^{110}\) Garland, 3.

\(^{111}\) Garland, 4-6.

\(^{112}\) Ibid.


\(^{114}\) Lattimore, 243. (Εὕλωκα σ’ ὑμνὴν κόλποις, Καλλιστοί, γάτα καλόπτετε, σης δ’ (ἄ) ρετής μνήμην σωτὶ φίλοις ἐλπίς, trans. Richmond Lattimore.)
• Stop for a little, stranger, and then go on your way; do not leave the stele at once, but first see what it says.\textsuperscript{115}

After the κηδεία, the family would observe a ritual funerary meal called the perideipnon (περιδείπνον), at the house of the deceased.\textsuperscript{116} Rites were held at the grave on the third day (τὰ τρίτα), and ninth days (τὰ ἑνατά) after death, as well as on the thirtieth day (τριακόστια), which likely marked the official end of the mourning period. Families would, of course, continue to observe special occasions at the grave such as anniversaries, birthdays, and Genesia (Γενέσια)\textsuperscript{117}

Women were the primary keepers and ritual-observers of gravesites, as evidenced by the many lekythoi depicting woman either in domestic settings preparing to go to the tomb, or women taking offerings to the tomb. Some of the many grave offerings that would have been provided for the dead and appear on lekythoi include:

- Food Offerings (ἐνάγισμα): pomegranates, grapes, eggs, wreaths, sprigs, cakes, kolliva

- Drink Offerings (ξοαί): milk, honey, oil, wine, water

- Pottery: lekythoi, aryballoi, kantharoi, oinochoai, pyxides, phoromiskoi cups

- Personal Items: mirrors, chests, sakkoi (headcoverings), dolls, halteres (pieces of iron or stone used by athletes), writing slates, strigils, hair, shells, armor, stringed instruments

\textsuperscript{115} Lattimore, 232. (βιαῦν μείνων, ζεῖνε, καὶ ἄστρουν ἐνθα πορεύσῃ, μή προλιπών στῆλην, ἄλλα μαθών (τ)ὶ ἄγεις. Trans, Richmond Lattimore.)

\textsuperscript{116} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{117} Oakley, 13.

\textsuperscript{118} Garland, 110.

\textsuperscript{119} Garland, 113.
• Pets: birds, hares, dogs, bird cages

Burnt offerings, referred to also as ενάγισματα, are known to have been practiced, sometimes a simple fish burned on a gravesite, others a more complex offering. The idea was that the fumes would help dispatch the dead to the next world. These are the types of offerings that, ultimately, the Brandeis Lekythos is believed to have carried to the gravesite—particularly xoai, as will be seen.

3.3 Ritual

With all of these named “ritual” observances and processes, it is advantageous to take a moment to consider the nature of the word “ritual” and its implied meaning. Anthropologist Roy Rappaport defines ritual as the “performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not entirely encoded by the performers.” While women did perform the formal act of graveside offerings and burials in a way that was not hidden, it did not, necessarily, require words, nor did it require the exact same sequence of actions and materials each time the grave was visited.

Though certain defined ritualistic elements were absent, this does not mean that these women were not performing a ritual with the lekythoi. In fact, the only thing common about rituals seems to be that there are as many definitions. Again, the use of the lekythos in a ritual does not appear to have required formal words, which is not to say that loved ones did not utter any prayer-like phrases of remembrance to the departed. Some definitions of ritual suggest that a

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120 Fairbanks, 217.
122 Oakley, 208-211.
123 Garland, 113.
ritual “performance” requires an audience. Lekythoi could be carried to the gravesite alone.

Like the deeply personal depictions on the vases, the “ritual” of the lekythoi was also profoundly intimate. This relationship was concerned with the concept of remembrance and the affinity of the departed and bereaved. For the purposes of the lekythoi, a small variation on Rappaport’s definition would go something like this: “a performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts not entirely encoded by the performers, performed primarily for the benefit of the performers and to ensure the memory of the deceased.”

What makes a sacred object sacred is its separation from the profane, and with lekythoi there seems to have been an evolutionary sacred significance given to the containers, beginning with the Minoans. The peak sanctuaries of the Minoans used jars to store the oils for their rituals. Over time, these jars became associated with the peak-top rituals themselves. Perhaps this connection of mundane oil containers becoming linked with the sacred evolved into the concept of the oil-bearing lekythoi becoming sacred, ritual items.

3.4 The Intimacy of the Lekythoi

Like no other Greek vases, the Attic white-ground lekythoi produced from circa. 470-400 B.C.E. reveal a deeply intimate and at times somber illustration of the personal lives of the men, women and children in Athens. In spite of sometimes crude painting skills, these vases are like peering into the diaries of Athenian families. The images enable us to mourn with them as they suffer loss, learn with them as they practice ritual, and feel their anguish as they move on without the dear loved one for whom the vase was constructed. As we place our own loved ones’

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126 Kyriakides, 18.
127 Oakley, 13.
favorite items in their caskets or niches, the Athenians did the same, as shown on the paintings of lekythoi—a musical instrument, a bird, a shield, even a child’s toy. [Figs, 30, 32] On the Brandeis Lekythos, we see a beautiful woman carrying offerings to a departed loved one and we can only imagine the type of caring and loving relationship she had with the deceased.

Through the lekythoi, we learn that former Archaic practices of female hair-pulling during mourning have been replaced by simply cropping the hair short to indicate a death in the family.\textsuperscript{128} (This hair cutting ritual is how it is known that the images on Brandeis Lekythos represent a scene well after the initial death). Also, we see the stages of preparing both ενάγισματα and \textit{xooi}.\textsuperscript{129} We see mythological representations of Hermes taking the dead to Charon, as well as beautiful renderings of Hypnos and Thanatos lifting the dead and placing them at their final resting place. [Fig. 29] Evidence of belief in sentience beyond the grave can be seen all over lekythoi in the form of εἰδωλα, those mirror-images of the departed that lack any essence of the soul or even the knowledge of their being.\textsuperscript{130}

\textsuperscript{129} Garland, 110,113.
\textsuperscript{130} Lattimore, 22.
In Attic white-ground lekythoi, εἰδωλα are represented in three ways: stick-like creatures flying around tombs, miniaturized humans atop tombstones, or normal-sized figures with blank stares.  

[Figs. 30, 31] Εἰδωλα are artistic examples of another Cretan evolutionary concept: the Mycenaean soul bird. This soul bird is actually straight out of Egyptian mythology in which it is referred to as “ba”. Thus, the εἰδωλα of Attic white-ground lekythoi essentially have their root in Egyptian myth.

Understanding fifth-century white-ground lekythoi is not like understanding iconographic black-figure mythological pottery. Yes, lekythoi do tell stories, but the story is subtle, nuanced, and often involves individuals not pictured. If we consider a standard image of a man and woman at a tomb, we must also consider that there are numerous other family members who are

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131 Oakley, 212.
not represented, yet are surely invested in the grief and feeling of loss—and perhaps even the
cost of commissioning the *lekythos*. *Lekythoi* were true expressions of love, devotion and even a
type of ritualistic contract that the departed would not be forgotten. The colorful images so often
seen on the body of the vases were symbolic of how the dead would always be remembered in
the minds of the loved ones. For the *lekythoi* which show scenes at the grave, like the Brandeis
*Lekythos*, they promise the dead through pictures that say “look and see, this is my vow to you to
visit your grave, decorate and provide offerings so that you will never be forgotten.”

The *lekythoi*, like other pieces of utilitarian art (for example, the chancel screen found in
Jewish synagogues), takes on an element of liminality. In other words, it crosses boundaries
between two spaces; in this case, it bridges the worlds of the dead and of the living. *Lekythoi*
often depict the departed as they were in life or represent the dead with aspects of life
(instruments, pets, armor, etc.). [Fig. 32] At the same time, the vases are used in ritual
ceremonies that, in essence, solidify the death of the departed while at the same time continue
their memory through the act of ritual. The ritual act is a rather oblique practice that seems to
hover around the realms of both life and death. This idea of liminality also parallels the realms of
women, as was touched upon in the previous chapter. Women were the ultimate holders of
liminal spaces in the fifth-century Athenian world, as they not only were the ones to care for and
carry out funerary tasks, but they also held the power of life through their ability to give birth.
This is, once again, a connection between *lekythoi* and women.
3.5 Liminality

The act of dying was a ritual of sorts for the Athenians. Perhaps best described anthropologically as a “rite of passage” from this world into whatever the departed believed awaited him or her. This again speaks of a liminal state between being here, among the living and there, among the dead. The social structure in fifth-century Athens also meant that those left behind would also be locked in a liminal state until certain rites and rituals were performed so that they could learn to re-integrate themselves into society and learn their new roles without the presence of the deceased. The lekythoi also reveal the juxtaposition of two journeys: a journey of uncertainty embarked upon by the dead as they enter the afterlife, and a journey of reintegration as loved ones must reestablish their own identities and places in society after experiencing loss. Their journeys are reflected on the vases with the symbols indicative of travel: Charon's boat, Hermes' winged feet, ceremonially cropped hair indicating a woman's transitional state, baskets filled for the journey to the graveyard, and women in the stages of preparation for the trip to the cemetery.

Community is also largely represented on the vases, even in death. The dead are shown not facing their uncertain futures alone, but with the help of kindly figures and even hosts of previously departed souls; likewise, mourners are often shown in groups. Even on the Brandeis

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135 Ibid.
136 Mirto, 73.
Lekythos, the deceased is depicted with a devoted loved one. This evidences the basic anthropological laws which tell us that funerary ritual serves as a social transformation through burial and re-integration into society after the release of emotion. In Athenian society, such rites were performed with the support of the social group, whether out of affection for the deceased, fear of repercussion from the unknown, or simply out of devotion for the living one who had lost.

Perhaps the colorful clothes worn on lekythoi by the mourners instead of the traditional Athenian funerary garb was a family's way of letting their departed loved ones know that they have been able to re-establish themselves with the help of community. The bright colors could also indicate that they are happy, and, by bringing offerings and illustrated messages, the loved one hoped the departed might be able to re-integrate into whatever comes next and, eventually find happiness as well.

\[137\] Morris, 10.  
\[138\] Ibid.  
\[139\] Garland, 24.
3.6 Why Lekythoi?

Historical motivations that ultimately enabled the initial creation of these vases are three-fold:

1. The founding of the Delian League in 478 B.C.E.: while this venture was not created for Athens’ use alone, it eventually brought a great deal of money into Athens’ economy which was used towards the arts.

2. In the fifth century, many funerary restrictions became relaxed, perhaps making it easier for mourners to express their loss through the artwork of the lekythos.

3. Statesmen who were not only friendly to the arts, but known for their artistic endeavors came to power, such as Pericles and Nicias.

Perhaps a combination of these circumstances enabled lekythoi production to flourish. Furthermore, since such conditions were unique to Athens, would explain why lekythoi production at such a high level as the Attic lekythos did not spread to the rest of the Greek world. After all, Athens’ neighbors did not have as much funding, since they were putting their money into the Delian League, which Athens controlled. Due to this growth of wealth and culture (to name two major contributing factors) Athens experienced a kind of democratization of art in the fifth-century. For the regions surrounding Attica, however, there was a growth for the regional taste of Attic pottery (as seen in Chapter Two), and the desire for Attic white-ground lekythoi became international.

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142 Plutarch, 177 & 210.
Lekythoi production ended around the time that Athens surrendered to Sparta during the Peloponnesian Wars,\textsuperscript{143} which might suggest that funds were, once again, not available for such artistic endeavors, nor were such statesmen as Pericles. Thus, even as Baudelaire suggested in his poem, though Athenians desperately needed a grieving process like the one with rituals revolving around the white-ground lekythoi had afforded them, there was no champion of the state or vast treasury of funds for them to make their burden of mourning easier. Now, they were forced to find cheaper, new ways in which to mourn their dead, and the age of the fifth-century white-ground lekythoi came to an end. The importance of ritual and the continual attempts to make death rituals a part of art, however, would not cease.

\textsuperscript{143} Strassler, 549.
Chapter 4: Brandeis Lekythos

The Brandeis Lekythos is a fifth-century cylindrical Attic white-ground lekythos that exists within the teaching collection of Brandeis University. The lekythos has been badly damaged and there is visual evidence of at least two major restorations; however, the vase has not been conserved to the point of completion. The first restoration was decently conserved with an adherence matching the clay fabric, while the second restoration occurred much later and appears quite haphazardly put together with thick, white putty. The breakage points have left the vase in five pieces: base, handle, neck, rim and body. [Fig. 33] Although much of the painting has faded, some original paint (along with later touch-ups) remains. It was through both an art historical method and a scientific method that this lekythos has been verified as an authentic fifth-century vase from the region of Attica. Before a description of such analyses begins, a basic overview of the fabric of the ceramic slip and artistic intentions will be given.
While techniques such as Raman spectroscopy and other spectroscopic technologies as well as those involving high-resolution surface imaging, such as the one utilized in the study of the Brandeis Lekythos, are becoming more widely used in the understanding of the creation of pottery, it is useful first to understand basic information about the ceramics to be studied. Such information would include the temperatures at which the vase was believed to have been fired and how or when restoration took place.\textsuperscript{144}

Before the process of preparing clay for firing, the proper type of clay had to be found. In the case of lekythoi, this was usually a clay rich in lime (to give the white color), but also contained “filler” materials (as will be seen later on Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM) photos) such as quartz sand, feldspars, pebbles or even shells. Water would then be added to the mixture to make sure the clay would have the proper elasticity before the diluting began.\textsuperscript{145}

Ceramics were fired in a domed chamber set apart from heating chamber fed by a fire box.\textsuperscript{146} Clay to be used in firing was diluted of particles by mixing the clay with sodium silicate and soda ash and then shaking the mixture and suspending it, then letting the impurities sink. Next, the mixture was boiled and applied to pots, and then the surface was covered with a yellow ocher.\textsuperscript{147} The pots were likely put into a saggar box or a larger pot before being placed into the kiln, to protect them from firing marks.\textsuperscript{148} The kiln would first fire up to 850 degrees in an oxidizing atmosphere, then the temperature would rise up to 940 degrees—at which point the


\textsuperscript{147} Kahn and Wissinger, 130.

\textsuperscript{148} Kahn and Wissinger, 132.
slip would melt, sealing the surface so that the slip would not be able to reabsorb oxygen in the next phase. After new combustion materials were added and all openings closed, thirty minutes were given for temperature reduction and the kiln cooled to 750 degrees. The kiln would cool for 15-20 hours.149

The use of a white slip was not new in the fifth century, white slip had been used as surface decoration since the seventh century B.C.E.150 Around 530 B.C.E. a white slip made from calcareous (lime-rich) clay began to be used in Athens and approximately in 510, Psiax was responsible for painting the earliest preserved white-ground lekythos. After Psiax, painters used black-figure, semi-outline or outline drawing quite prolifically until after the Persian Wars when red-figure drawing began to flourish.151 New colors started to be seen against the white background—reds, (iron oxide, mercuric sulfide), Egyptian blue (mineral cuprorivaite), green (malachite), orange (iron earths) and yellow ochre.152 These colors and painting techniques closely followed the colors and techniques of Greek wall panel paintings.153 Since many of the colors’ chemical compounds were fugitive, they were added post-firing. As in the case of the Brandeis Lekythos, many lekythoi have figures with outlined clothing that would likely have been filled in with bright colors, which have faded over time.154 The appeals of the new look for the lekythoi in the post-Persian war period was that the silhouette principles of red-figured vase painting (which the new generation artists would likely be learning as it became more popular)

149 Ibid.
151 Oakley, 6-7.
153 Oakley, 7-8.
154 Ibid.
and the style of wall panels were combined.\textsuperscript{155} The more narrative, colorful looks of the panels paired with the structure and golden yellows and reds of new pots enabled the painters to begin to understand how they might relay a feeling through their art, and \textit{lekythoi} became the ultimate platform to do so. Colors may be used to express feeling, and now artists had a new weapon in their artistic arsenal: color. Bright reds, blues, yellows, purples and greens could be seen beautifully over a crisp, white background. With the aftermath of the Persian Wars still lingering in the air, emotions were high and stories needed to be told…and people remembered. By mid-century, the polychrome \textit{lekythos}' slip had a makeover: it was now comprised of hydrous aluminum silicate, or “kaolinite” or “China clay”, making it even brighter, smooth and white.\textsuperscript{156} Furthermore, the \textit{lekythos} became thoroughly established as a vase known not only for its exclusivity due to its link to Attica, but also because of the nature of its completely funerary subject matter.\textsuperscript{157}

The inspiration of wall paintings on white-ground \textit{lekythoi} and other white-ground pots is unparalleled in red and black figured pottery. On such white-ground pieces, attempts to mimic the gigantic-sized canvas afforded panel artists can be seen in early experimentation with shading and through the use of an entire small space to depict a monumental scene in

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{figure34.png}
\caption{Kleomelos Cup, Martin Robertson, \textit{The Art of Vase-Painting in Classical Athens} (Cambridge: University Press, 1992), 134.}
\end{figure}

\begin{smallnotes}
\textsuperscript{155} Martin Robertson, \textit{The Art of Vase-Painting in Classical Athens} (Cambridge: University Press, 1992), 51.
\textsuperscript{156} Tony Schreiber, \textit{Athenian Vase Construction} (Malibu: J.Paul Getty Museum, 1999), 3.
\textsuperscript{157} Oakley, 8.
\end{smallnotes}
narrative. This can be exemplified in a cup painted by the Kleomelos Painter, [Fig. 34] which shows a city under attack with both defenders and attackers engaging with spears. While there is definitely no true sense of perspective, there is a slight attempt to show distance through smaller figures on the wall, with larger figures in the foreground.

*Lekythoi* scenes may also provide evidence for large-scale paintings now long-lost. Evidence for such paintings may be found on the occasional painted Roman copy of a Greek original tombstone, as well as in descriptions by Pliny of the painter Pairhasios’ work. According to Pliny, Pairhasios’ style was very linear, with no shading, and was able to achieve three-dimensionality through the use of the line. Such techniques can be found in one particular *lekythoi* painter, the Reed Painter. The group referred to as the Reed Painter was quite prolific, creating nearly 170 white *lekythoi* sometime between 425-400 B.C.E.

The category of *lekythoi* known as the Group of Huge *Lekythoi* (410-400 B.C.E.), named for their size of up to a meter high, are covered entirely in white slip to mimic stone. The decoration for this group of *lekythoi* appears to have scenes simulating the styles of the monumental paintings of Greece. For example, even if a burial scene indicative of *lekythoi* were to be shown, it would be shown with the use of *skiagraphia* (light and shadow painting), a technique employed by panel artists. Perhaps the new, larger size of the *lekythoi* reflected the cultural change in Greece, as the use of *lekythoi* in a funerary context ceased and the use of large,

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158 Robertson, 134-135.  
159 Ibid.  
161 Oakley, 18.  
162 Ibid.  
163 Rasmussen and Spivey, 130.  
164 Oakley, 18.
stone pot-shaped grave markers continued. Huge *Lekythoi* were, just maybe, an artistic evolutionary step between the use and the extinction of the small white-ground *lekythoi*.

### 4.1 Art Historical Analysis

The Brandeis *Lekythos* does, of course, fall into the small *lekythos* category. Before beginning a scientific analysis of the vase, an artistic consideration of the patterns, decorations, shape, and stylized elements was completed. Former Museum of Fine Arts in Boston curator Arthur Fairbanks created a classification system for types of *lekythoi* in his book *Athenian Lekythoi*.165 Adhering to this classification, the Brandeis *Lekythos* likely falls under the class “D VIII”. That is to say, the vase is distinguished by outlines in glaze with a dull color used for the garments and/or meander instead of the classic black. This dull color should be (and

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is in the case of the Brandeis *Lekythos*) a reddish brown.\textsuperscript{166} This series of *leythoi* is also almost without exception known for its depiction of scenes at the grave/visitation to the grave, which is also consistent with the Brandeis *Lekythos*.\textsuperscript{167}

The primary focus on the Brandeis *Lekythos* is the scene on the body of the vase, depicting an apparent visit to the grave. In the scene a woman carries a basket of offerings towards a *stele*, which is decorated with ribbons and *tania*. [Fig. 35] The clothes, basket and outline of the stepped gravestone are almost too faded to see with the naked eye. The woman’s hair, nose, chin, eyes, and the grave decorations appear to have been touched up at a later date because they are a deep, rich, reddish brown and clearly visible. The style of the woman’s hair, which is piled neatly up in a bun, tells us that she is bringing an offering to someone who has been deceased for at least long enough for her hair to grow out, because it was customary for women to crop their hair as a sign of mourning. Thus, if the woman had just lost a loved one, her hair would be depicted as very short.\textsuperscript{168}

\textsuperscript{166} Fairbanks, 325.  
\textsuperscript{167} Fairbanks, 326.  
\textsuperscript{168} Oakley, 152.
The man’s image is much more visible than the woman’s, thanks to contemporary touch-ups that are extremely noticeable, and especially on the man’s robe, nose and oddly-shaped hand and arm. [Fig. 36] He is gesturing towards the stele, and his feet face towards the viewer of the vase—possible indications that this *lekythos* was made either as an offering for this deceased man or to use to carry offerings to his grave. Deciphering the dead on *lekythoi* can be quite difficult, but noticing repeated patterns of gestures used for known deceased is a helpful tool in understanding the story on the vase. Perhaps the man and woman on the Brandeis *Lekythos* were husband and wife or brother and sister. Then again, as we tend to use the most idealized pictures of our dead at funerals, perhaps this is an image of the man in his younger years, and in reality he died at a much older age.\(^\text{169}\)

The faces of both the man and the woman possess the quiet calm that is reminiscent of the Achilles painter, yet they lack the masterful artistry of that great painter. Instead, the bodies of these figures are rendered in an almost childlike way, with awkward, flat faces, and the man’s arm seems almost detached, flailing and disproportionate. The childlike look of the figures could indicate that they were drawn by painters from the Bird

\(^{169}\) Oakley, 171.
Group (435-425 B.C.E.)\textsuperscript{170}, a group that worked closely and possibly in the same workshop as the Painter of Munich 2335.\textsuperscript{171} Their influence on each other can be seen in the profiles of their figures, set-up of scenes and types of gravestones. Both painters are known for a pattern of two persons separated by a gravestone. The Painter of Munich 2335, however, is known for using more emotion in the faces of his subjects.\textsuperscript{172}

Another connection with the Brandeis *Lekythos* and the Bird Painter Group can be found in the shoulder palmettes of the vase. [Fig. 37] The five-petal, Achillean-influenced style is

\textsuperscript{170} Oakley, 17.
\textsuperscript{172} Kurtz, 56.
indicative of a lekythos produced by the Bird Painter. The specific pattern found on the Brandeis Lekythos can be found catalogued under “Bird Painter” in Donna Kurtz’s “Shoulder Pattern” catalogue as 23:a.\textsuperscript{173} Furthermore, the meander pattern, [Fig. 38] found only above the characters painted in the scene on the body— not wrapped around the entire vase—is a pattern often used by the Bird Painter, a “broken, stopt meander”.\textsuperscript{174} [Fig. 40] This meander is reminiscent of the Achillean meander with the exception that the Achillean meander usually is not broken, but a continuous meander. Still, the influence of the Achilles Painter on the Bird Painter cannot be denied.

While the influence of the Achilles Painter is quite evident, traces of the impact of other Achillean-inspired artists may also be found. For example, the stepped stele [Fig. 41] on the Brandeis Lekythos is a feature common to lekythoi painted by the Thanatos Painter, who was also greatly influenced by the Achilles Painter.\textsuperscript{175} The Sabouroff is another artist whose work was very influential on the Bird Group, as evidenced by grouping, gesture and tomb structure. Incidentally, the Sabouroff Painter is known to have worked at least for some time in the same workshop as the Achilles Painter.\textsuperscript{176}

After studying the Brandeis Lekythos with the naked eye, the next step was to study the vase under ultraviolet light. While it was known that the vase had undergone extensive

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{173} Kurtz, index: 23.
\footnote{174} Kurtz, index: 4.
\footnote{175} Oakley, 17.
\footnote{176} Oakley, 16.
\end{footnotes}
remodeling, the shock of what truly was revealed underneath the ultraviolet light was almost unbelievable. The lekythos had, at some point been completely shattered and put back together—once rather nicely and once absolutely horrifically with white putty. Under the light, the lekythos now appeared like a series of cracks mapped out all over the vase. Another thing that was not expected was that some of the pieces were not actually a part of the vase. One or two seem to have come from entirely different vases, evident by their disparate fabrics and still one or two other pieces were not clay fabrics at all, but rather pieces of plaster that had been made to fill in gaps where missing pieces of clay had been lost. Perhaps the most dramatic find of this type was that the entire foot of the lekythos was plaster made to take the place of a long-lost or long-broken piece of original black glazed clay piece.

Figure 42: “Map Showing Major Flaws on Flat Rendering of Brandeis Lekythos”, Jennifer Stern Photographer, Lana Georgiou Map Creation.
In order to make sense of these findings and to help understand where and perhaps why certain areas of the vase had such heavy touch-up paints while others did not, a map was created, to map out the entire structure of the pieces of the lekythos, marking which ones were plaster, where the most noticeable touch-ups had been done, etc. [Figs. 42, 43] In this way, it enabled a two-dimensional version of the lekythos, also making consideration of the image and meander much easier. From this image, it was determined that the most likely place that the original breakage occurred was at a point now rendered by a plaster piece in the right center of the man’s himation. The laid-out image also showed a pattern of blackened marks around and even away from the shattered areas, leading to the hypothesis that perhaps this lekythos was burned and broken. The blackened marks sometimes have irregular patterns compared with the breakage patterns, suggesting that the vase was broken and subsequently burned. It could be that the vase
was part of a rare “break and burn” ceremony by the burial site.\textsuperscript{177} As we will see, however, the vase did (at one point) have olive oil in the bottom, which could also indicate ritualistic libations.

### 4.2 Scientific Analysis

The scientific methods utilized to study the Brandeis Lekythos were: Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry (GC-MS), thanks to the Archaeochemistry Research in the Eastern Mediterranean (ARCHEM) Project located in Crete, and Scanning Electron Microscope (SEM) analysis, thanks to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. In order to obtain a sample for the GC-MS study, the white putty first had to be removed from the bottom of the vase. The hope was that any organic residue such as oil, honey or wine used in a libation might have left trace amounts in the bottom of the lekythos, but now the base was covered with improper restoration materials. Thus, using dichlormethane and ethanol, the putty was extracted, along with sample residues for testing.

This initial test was performed in the Brandeis University Shapiro Science Center through the cooperation of the Chemistry Department. Dr. Andrew Koh then utilized the GC-MS at the ARCHEM institute in Crete to analyze any biological materials from the putty and residue extraction. The GC-MS combined the material isolation potential of gas chromatography with the characterization ability of mass spectrometry.\textsuperscript{178} While there is an acknowledgment of the possibility of modern contaminates from cleaning, the GC-MS revealed the presence of oleic acid and ethyl oleate, with very little else. [Fig. 44] This would suggest that the Brandeis Lekythos contained, at least at some point, olive oil without the additives of perfumes. While


scented olive oil might be considered the best choice for a libation, olive oil was itself a gift and would have been completely adequate.

For the SEM analysis, a thin slice was created out of a section cut from near the base (not the plaster, but a higher, clay portion). This slice was given to Dr. Richard Newman, who ran the test using an SEM, model JEOL JSM-6460LV. Cross sections of glaze and clay were examined using back-scattered electrons, a common imaging mode. Focused beams then interacted with the electrons within the sample and sent back information about the composition and topography of the sample. The images with shades of grey [Fig. 45] indicate the atomic weight of elements present; for example, the darker the color, the heavier the atomic weight. The SEM analysis images were intended to be used in comparison with other images of fifth-century Attic ware to find out if the Brandeis Lekythos was, indeed, an original vase from fifth-century Attica and not a copy of a vase from another region of the world.

Image “A” from the SEM depicts the black glaze of the Brandeis Lekythos under the SEM. On the top, a small layer of restoration is visible containing lead-based pigment. The lead-based pigment is a clue that the restoration took place pre-late 1970s, and, while it was possible that the restoration was performed overseas, it was likely done in the US. In image “A” the white specks are tiny iron oxide grains. Images “B” and “C” are the same image—one in black and white, one in color. These images show the fabric of the ceramic body. It should be mentioned that through the SEM, calcareous-rich clay appears quite porous and marks the appearance of vitrification that exhibits at higher temperatures. The clay literally appears to be fractured under the microscope. The smooth, angular grey grains are quartz. Blue color indicates high potassium levels, which shows that these are crystals of potassium feldspar. Red areas contain high amounts of calcium and are likely calcium carbonate grains (broken down by firing). Green regions denote aluminum (a major element of the clay and an important component of ceramic). The data for the body of the Brandeis Lekythos falls within the published analyses of Attic ceramics.

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180 Maniatis, 6.
For example, one of the markers of Attic pottery is its low calcium oxide (CaO) in Attic black glaze.\footnote{Eleni Aloupi-Siotis, 114.} This can be seen on graphs from John Boardman [Fig. 46] and, more recently, Eleni Aloupi-Siotis. On Aloupi-Siotis’ graph, however, the results from the SEM analysis of the Brandeis \textit{Lekythos} have been included for comparison. [Table] The Brandeis results found by Dr. Richard Newman through the SEM analysis are in pink above the blue results published by Aloupi-Siotis. Results for both the ceramic body and the black glaze are given, though it is noticeable that the Brandeis \textit{Lekythos}’ black glaze results are outside of the parameters of what is normal for the Attic-constructed vase. This deviation could have the simplest explanation in that the sherds were exposed to open flame.\footnote{Lisa C. Kahn. \textit{Interview by author}. Conversation. Seattle, WA., January 4, 2013.} This exposure might have occurred during a rare “break and burn ritual,” though it is more likely that the \textit{lekythos} was used for libations. One hypothesis is that since \textit{lekythoi} were expensive and a rare commodity—and there were limited

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families of means in Athens\textsuperscript{183}—the vase was reused at a later a cremation ceremony, possibly by the same family, where it would have been broken and burned. This would account for the oil, artistic indications of a later ceremony, and the breaks and evidence of burning.

Table 1: Brandeis *Lekythos* thin section data analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Na₂O</th>
<th>MgO</th>
<th>Al₂O₃</th>
<th>SiO₂</th>
<th>P₂O₅</th>
<th>SO₃</th>
<th>K₂O</th>
<th>CaO</th>
<th>TiO₂</th>
<th>FeO</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Body (average of six areas)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>55.9</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. deviation</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Published analyses of Attic ceramics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>52.4</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. deviation</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Slip (average of five areas)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>1.6</td>
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<td>24.6</td>
<td>44.5</td>
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<td>10.4</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. deviation</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Published analyses of Attic ceramics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>46.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. deviation</td>
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<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


SEM, GC-MS, Raman spectroscopy and X-ray fluorescence (XRF) are not new techniques in the study of artifacts (the idea for X-ray fluorescence images began to become
feasible around 1991\(^{184}\). Through the use of XRF, vases—including *lekythoi*—have been scanned and studied.\(^{185}\) While these tried and true analysis techniques have become pillars of conservation science, new techniques, such as terahertz (THz) spectroscopy and imaging, offer revolutionary ways to study delicate, irreplaceable pieces of our past. In fact, the future of scientific analysis for century-old, delicate ceramics could very well lie within the rapidly growing THz industry.

THz spectroscopy and imaging utilizes electromagnetic radiation between microwave and infrared frequencies\(^{186}\) that has low photon energies which cannot harm the operator or the samples (which could suffer microscopic damage from XRF, SEM or GC-MS).\(^{187}\) THz spectroscopy may allow for the identification of the chemical composition of paint pigments or the ceramic clay through spectroscopic fingerprinting.\(^{188}\) THz imaging is a non-invasive, non-destructive way to look inside ceramics.\(^{189}\) Perhaps even more importantly, THz imaging might be able to study beneath the pigment layers, as it has been used to study rust beneath paint,\(^{190}\) therefore, it is promising that THz imaging could detect, for example, lead-based “conservation” paints over original pigments. In this way THz imaging would be able to show what lies beneath the surface of painted *lekythoi* and even detect the original outline of a painter’s vision (contrary to Raman spectroscopy’s surface analysis limitations).

That said, THz is still achieving market penetration due to newness and cost of the technology. While the THz system cost is similar to that of other technologies discussed herein,

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\(^{185}\) Scott, 476.

\(^{186}\) X.-C. Zhang and Jingzhou Xu, *Introduction to THz Wave Photonics* (NY: Springer, 2010), 1.

\(^{187}\) Zhang, 3.

\(^{188}\) Zhang, 4.

\(^{189}\) Zhang, 3.

\(^{190}\) Zhang, 193.
it is still expensive. THz does have its own limitations, such as its inability to penetrate metal (reflects THz radiation) or water (absorbs THz radiation). Also, THz image resolution is limited to sub-millimeter feature sizes (it cannot see microscopic objects, like an SEM is able to see).\textsuperscript{191}

As recently as March, 2013, THz imaging was used by the Louvre and Gérard Mourou, Julien Labaune and Bianca Johnson from the École Polytechnique to study the insides of mummified Egyptian birds. They speak about how the new technique could revolutionize analysis of delicate pieces of controversial art:

\textit{Cette technique ouvre un champ d'expérimentation considérable : des peintures cachées dans les lieux de culte au Moyen-Orient et en Russie — recouvertes par d'autres peintures au cours des siècles — aux manuscrits en rouleaux de la mer morte — trop fragiles pour être déroulés... la liste est longue!}\textsuperscript{192}

If the Brandeis Lekythos continues to be studied—as it should be—this author’s hope is that (1) the vase is given a proper and complete restoration and (2) the vase be studied through the use of a terahertz imaging and spectroscopy system, to show how this new frontier of science is kindred to the profound duty we have as historians, anthropologists, and archaeologists to use the newest techniques to get the most comprehensive analysis possible with minimal damage to the object. This not only protects the artifact from further harm, but also enables us to learn from it in order to increase our knowledge of the past. The Brandeis Lekythos has completed an arduous journey to us from fifth-century Athens, and it would be phenomenal to explore this new scientific frontier and also to see what lies beneath the paint and within the clay.

\textsuperscript{191} Zhang, 61.
\textsuperscript{192} Rozenn Bailleul-Le Suer, ed. “La recette du passé-murraille: Comment observer l'interior d'une oiseau momifié?” le Mars 5 2013. École Polytechnique: http://www.polytechnique.edu/accueil/actualites/la-recette-du-passe-murraille-comment-observer-l-interieur-d-un-oiseau-momifie--281328.kjsp. accessed 24 July 2013 (“This technology opens the field of experimentation considerably: paintings hidden in places of worship in the Middle East and in Russia—covered by other paintings in the course of the centuries—in manuscripts of Dead Sea scrolls—too fragile to be unrolled...the list is long!” trans., Lana Georgiou).
Bibliography


