

One Amphora, Different Contents - the Multiple Purposes of Byzantine Amphorae According to Written and Archaeological Data

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Although scarce, historical sources contain hints about what bulk goods in high demand were most probably transported with amphorae, with wine being most common. Supplementary data from archaeobotanical analyses of amphorae's content and epigraphic evidence, such as graffiti and dipinti, confirm that and allow a larger variety of products to be identified, sometimes pointing to secondary uses of amphorae. Additional light on the primary use of Byzantine amphorae is shed by the fact that Günsenin type I amphorae were produced according to specific metric standards depending on the product that they were supposed to transport originally - red wine, white wine or wheat. In conclusion, it should be pointed out that, similarly to Early Byzantine specimens, amphorae from the 9th to the mid-15th century were containers with multiple purposes and it is still difficult to establish a definitive link between certain vessel types and the corresponding products they carried.