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Western Greek and Sardinian Amphorae from Punic Sites in the Southern Mediterranean (6th-3rd century B.C.E.): New Evidence from Fabric Analysis for Economic Interaction in the Carthaginian Sphere of Influence

Given the silence of the literary sources in relation to ancient trade in the southern part of the Central Mediterranean under Punic influx, the provenance identification of transport amphorae provides a means to approach commercial relations. Thus, one of the focal points of the current project on economic interactions between Punic and Greek settlements¹ is on the open access publication of a considerable high number of imported amphorae found on selected Punic sites. This kind of documentation builds upon amphorae productions previously edited on FACEM and located in the Ionian-Adriatic area, in Calabria, Lucania and in western Sardinia and expands our knowledge of distribution patterns. The bulk of the selected samples consists of diagnostic rim fragments – some from sealed archaeological contexts – therefore supplementing the morphological repertoire of our previously published fabric data. However, none of the samples presented here has undergone archaeometric analysis. In fact, our provenance studies are based on descriptions derived from binocular magnification of the freshly broken surface of the sample itself, then compared with the original reference samples of the attributed fabrics,² as well as the interpretation of digital photos of the fragments (x8, x16, and x25 magnification).³

The selection of archaeological sites has depended, as usual, upon the possibility of obtaining sampling permissions from the local authorities. For the present study we sampled a considerable number of sherds, most of all from those yielded by the survey undertaken in the suburban territory and by the excavations on the Acropolis at Pantelleria (N 71, labeled M 119/).⁴ These amphorae cover the entire span of our study from the late 7th down to the early 3rd century B.C.E., but the greatest number derive from residual or surface finds. The German, Dutch and Belgium/Tunisian excavations on the Bir Messaouda site at Carthage (N 38, labeled M 92/) also provided samples spanning the entire chronological range of our study.⁵ A still unpublished

¹ 'Economic interactions between Punic and Greek settlements in the southern Central Mediterranean (late 7th-4th B.C.E.): the evidence of the transport amphorae'. I acknowledge the support by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF: P 25046-G19). For the project, see <http://klass-archaeologie.univie.ac.at/forschung/bechtold/>.

² I am indebted to my friend and colleague K. Schmidt, for her help in defining fabrics by the use of the microscope in the laboratory of the Institute of Classical Archaeology of the University of Vienna. Without her continuous assistance the present research would not have appeared. Furthermore, I thank R. Lampl (University of Vienna) for the photographic documentation of the samples.

³ The material has been documented at the Institute of Classical Archaeology of the University of Vienna according to the standardized methods of the FACEM Database, see <http://facem.at/project/about.php#photography>.

⁴ I thank my friend and colleague M. Almonte (Direzione Generale delle Antichità a Roma), responsible for the Cossyra survey (see now Almonte 2013), Th. Schäfer (University of Tübingen) and M. Osanna (Scuola di Specializzazione di Matera), co-directors of the excavations on the acropolis of S. Teresa (campaigns 2000-2011), for allowing me to study selected materials yielded by their research. Furthermore, I owe thanks to the Soprintendenza BB.CC.AA. di Trapani for the sampling permission. For the already published amphorae from Pantelleria see Bechtold 2013a, b, c, d.

⁵ I thank the co-directors of the excavations at the Bir Messaouda site at Carthage (campaigns 2002-2005) R.F. Docter (Ghent University) and F. Chelbi (then Institut National Patrimoine) for giving me the opportunity to sample different kinds of archaeological materials. For the already published amphorae from Carthage see Bechtold 2007, 2008a.

assemblage (N 26, labeled M 149/) derives from the recent soundings at Ghizène on Jerba.⁶ These amphorae date to within the late 6th to early 3rd century B.C.E. and for the most part represent residual finds from the Roman period. For Malta, our information is still very incomplete, still we have studied one fragment from the Villa site of Żejtun (N 1, labeled M 105/),⁷ and another from the Malta Survey Project (labeled M 105/).⁸ A stratified assemblage from the American excavations at temple B at Selinus (N 21, labeled M 154/) completes the imported amphorae repertoire of the 4th-early 3rd century B.C.E.⁹ Finally, we analyzed three sherds of the same, later period from the Northern Gate at Segesta (N 3, labeled M 165/)¹⁰ and two from the Punic necropolis of Lilybaeum (N 2, labeled M 166/).¹¹

The concordance table attached below gives a precise overview of the samples added within the scope of the third release of FACEM, corresponding to previously defined fabrics. In this way, the newly defined samples can be easily distinguished from those that were previously published and had undergone archaeometric analysis. The only exception would be the two presumably western Sardinian¹² fabrics W-SARD-A-6 and W-SARD-A-7 which have been created on the basis of our analysis of materials from Pantelleria and Carthage.

The detailed scientific results of our research on imported amphorae from sites located in the sphere of influence of Carthage are discussed in *Carthage Studies 7*.¹³ For each sample published in this third release of FACEM, the precise reference to this article can be found in the concordance table below. Consequently, the following present brief treatment will only highlight some of the key points of results treated more exhaustively elsewhere.¹⁴ “For the 6th century B.C.E. our fabric studies confirm the regular, but apparently still limited occurrence of amphorae from southern and western Sardinia in Carthage as well as on Pantelleria/Cossyra. (...) The earliest western Greek wine amphorae reach Carthage and its colony around the middle of the 6th century B.C.E. or a little thereafter. (...) Among the nine identified fragments of Gassner's rim type 1 we find two different Calabrian fabrics,¹⁵ that is to say CAL-A-1 (1 item) from the area of Rhegion and CAL-A-6 (3 items) from Crotone/Sybaris, in addition to the Corkyrian production ION-ADR-A-3 (3 items).”

In Carthage as well as on Pantelleria, but apparently also on Jerba “(.) the Middle Punic I *facies* (480-430 B.C.E.) is essentially characterized by the occurrence of important quantities of wine amphorae from Corkyra, followed by a relevant number of items from south-western Calabria

⁶ I am indebted to my colleague S. Ben Tahar (Institut National Patrimoine, Jerba) for the opportunity to present here about 100 Greek amphorae from Ghizène, a port-site situated on the northern coast of Jerba, in commercial relations with Carthage from the Middle Punic period onwards at least, see Ben Tahar and Sternberg 2010 with earlier references. The imported Greek amphorae will be published by the present author in Ben Tahar (forthcoming).

⁷ Excavations of the Department of Classics and Archaeology of the University of Malta under the direction of N.C. Vella and A. Bonanno. The ceramic materials are currently studied by the author.

⁸ I thank the co-directors of this project N.C. Vella (Department of Classics and Archaeology of the University of Malta), R.F. Docter (Ghent University) and N. Cutajar (Superintendence of Cultural Heritage of Malta) for the sampling permission. For a preliminary report see Docter et al. 2012.

⁹ These excavations (campaigns 2006-2012) were undertaken by the New York University, Institute of Fine Arts, under the direction of C. Marconi. For the last preliminary report see Marconi 2012 with earlier references. The monographic edition of the excavation is planned for 2014 and will be published in the *Biblioteca di 'Sicilia Antiqua'*. For the Hellenistic materials referring to the construction phase of the temple, datable around 300 B.C.E., see Bechtold forthcoming 1. I am also indebted to C. Greco, director of the 'Parco Archeologico di Selinunte e Cave di Cusa Vincenzo Tusa', for the generous sampling permission.

¹⁰ From the excavations at the Northern Gate, for the amphorae see Bechtold 2008b.

¹¹ I am indebted to M. L. Famà, director of the 'Parco archeologico ed ambientale presso le isole dello Stagnone e delle aree archeologiche di Marsala e dei Comuni limitrofi' for the authorization to sample selected amphorae, already published in Bechtold 1999.

¹² See <http://facem.at/project/papers.php>, 'Other western Sardinian fabrics'.

¹³ Bechtold 2013e.

¹⁴ The following passage is taken from chapter 5 of Bechtold 2013e.

¹⁵ In addition to two more items attributed to still unidentified Calabrian productions.

where Rhegion stands out as a good candidate for at least one of the presumable kiln sites of this series. Our negative evidence for the documentation of CAL-A-6 during the MP I period seem to sustain Gassner's hypothesis on an identification of this fabric with the production of Sybaris destroyed in 510. More generally, previous data from Carthage and Pantelleria has now been corroborated by the analysis of the new assemblage from Ghizène (Jerba), the data from Malta and some recent publications of other other North African sites which all testify to the crucial importance of the trade route leading from Athens via Corkyra and southern Italy to Carthage's sphere of influence. At the same time, the almost complete absence of Phoenician-Punic vessels in the Ionian-Adriatic and Calabrian area underlines that Carthage's unquestionable economic power and vitality during the late 6th-4th century B.C.E. was not due to its own extra-regional amphorae export, but rather to its extraordinary role as a middleman in international oversea trade. Substantial quantities of wine imports from Corkyra, south-western Calabria, but also from eastern Greece are accompanied, among the Middle Punic I amphora repertoire of Carthage and Pantelleria, by the increasing presence of commodities imported from the hinterland of Neapolis and Tharros in western Sardinia. The amphorae under focus originate exclusively from the wider region of the Gulf of Oristano and represent about 7-10% in both the settlements.”

During the Middle Punic II (430-300 B.C.E.) “(...) Carthage and apparently also most of the coastal sites located along the shores of modern Tunisia benefited especially during the 4th century B.C.E. of an intense commercial relation with the Ionian-Adriatic area, 4th century B.C.E. Pantelleria seems to be closely linked to the western Sicilian economic system, characterized by the presence of important quantities of regional products, associated with south-western Calabrian amphorae and minor quantities of Ionian-Adriatic vessels. On the other hand, in Carthage as well as on Pantelleria and also on Jerba amphorae from Paestum and Velia appear during the first half of the 4th century B.C.E. (...) Particularly evident becomes then the arrival of Lucanian amphorae from the very late 4th century B.C.E. onwards which are abundantly attested at almost all of our sampling sites. Exactly from this point, the published amphorae data testify for a very active commercial route, connecting the Central Tyrrhenian area with the north-western Sicilian entrepôts of Palermo and Soluntum, from where the Carthaginians themselves probably organised the transport of the commodities towards the *mare clausum*. (...)”

Confirming earlier observations, the conspicuous occurrence of Sardinian amphorae originating from the Gulf of Oristano marks the Middle Punic II (430-300 B.C.E.) repertoires of both Carthage and Pantelleria. This evidence, together with the recent archaeological data from Selinus, Lilybaeum, Segesta, Malta and Jerba underline previous hypothesis on the 4th and early 3rd century B.C.E. Central Mediterranean documentation of Sardinian transport amphorae. In fact, their distribution pattern corresponds geographically to the area of Carthage's eparchia almost exactly, and has to be closely linked to the metropolis' agricultural supply system, heavily based on Sardinian commodities.”

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CONCORDANCES OF FACEM INVENTORY NUMBERS, FABRIC CODES AND REFERENCES TO BECHTOLD 2013E.

FACEM inventory no.	FACEM fabric code	Amphora type	Bechtold 2013e / Figure / plate
M 92/55	CAL-A-1	Gassner 1	5,1 / 1,1
M 149/38	CAL-A-1	Gassner 3	5,2
M 149/39	CAL-A-1	Gassner 3	5,3
M 119/157	CAL-A-1	Gassner 3	5,4
M 119/161	CAL-A-1	Gassner 3	5,5 / 1,2
M 119/166	CAL-A-1	Gassner 3	5,7
M 119/193	CAL-A-1	Gassner 3	5,8
M 92/58	CAL-A-1	Gassner 3	.5,10
M 119/156	CAL-A-1	Gassner 2	6,1 / 1,3
M 92/57	CAL-A-1	Gassner 6	6,2 / 1,4
M 119/158	CAL-A-1	Gassner 6	6,3
M 119/159	CAL-A-1	Gassner 6	6,4
M 119/160	CAL-A-1	Gassner 6	6,5
M 149/41	CAL-A-1	Gassner 6	6,6
M 149/42	CAL-A-1	Gassner 6	6,7
M 149/43	CAL-A-1	Gassner 6	6,8
M 149/48	CAL-A-1	Gassner 6	.6,10
M 149/40	CAL-A-1	Gassner 6	6,11
M 119/190	CAL-A-1	Corinthian B/MGS III-IV	7,1
M 119/163	CAL-A-1	Late Graeco-Italic	7,2
M 119/164	CAL-A-1	DR. 2/4	7,3
M 149/46	CAL-A-3	Gassner 4	7,4 / 1,5
M 119/167	CAL-A-6	Gassner 1	8,1 / 1,6
M 119/170	CAL-A-6	Gassner 1	8,2
M 119/171	CAL-A-6	Gassner 1	8,3 / 1,7
M 119/233	CAL-A-6	Gassner 5	8,4
M 119/234	CAL-A-6	MGS III	8,5
M 92/56	LOC-A-1	Gassner 2	8,8/ 1,8
M 154/36	ION-ADR-A-1	Gassner 1/2	11,1

M 119/144	ION-ADR-A-1	Gassner 3/4	11,3 / 2,1
M 119/145	ION-ADR-A-1	Gassner 3	11,4
M 149/30	ION-ADR-A-1	Gassner 5	11,5
M 149/31	ION-ADR-A-1	Gassner 5	11,6 / 2,2
M 149/45	ION-ADR-A-1	Gassner 5	11,7
M 92/36	ION-ADR-A-1	Gassner 5	11,8
M 92/39	ION-ADR-A-1	Gassner 5	11,9
M 92/40	ION-ADR-A-1	Gassner 5	.11,10
M 119/146	ION-ADR-A-1	Gassner 5	11,11
M 119/189	ION-ADR-A-1	Gassner 5	11,12
M 149/35	ION-ADR-A-1	Figure-8 shaped	12,1
M 154/66	ION-ADR-A-1	Figure-8 shaped	12,2
M 149/47	ION-ADR-A-1	Corinthian B like	12,3
M 92/38	ION-ADR-A-1	undiagnostic	
M 92/48	ION-ADR-A-1	undiagnostic	
M 92/49	ION-ADR-A-1	undiagnostic	
M 92/50	ION-ADR-A-1	undiagnostic	
M 92/60	ION-ADR-A-1	undiagnostic	
M 92/62	ION-ADR-A-1	undiagnostic	
M 119/192	ION-ADR-A-2	Gassner 3	13,1 / pl. 2,3
M 149/23	ION-ADR-A-2	Gassner 5 close to	13,2
M 149/24	ION-ADR-A-2	Gassner 5	13,3
M 149/26	ION-ADR-A-2	Gassner 5	13,4
M 149/27	ION-ADR-A-2	Gassner 5	13,5
M 149/28	ION-ADR-A-2	Gassner 5	13,6 / pl. 2,4
M 92/44	ION-ADR-A-2	Gassner 5	13,7
M 92/46	ION-ADR-A-2	Gassner 5	13,8
M 154/34	ION-ADR-A-2	Gassner 5	13,9
M 119/191	ION-ADR-A-2	Gassner 5	.13,10
M 92/47	ION-ADR-A-3	Gassner 1	14,1 / pl. 2,5
M 92/89	ION-ADR-A-3	Gassner 1	14,2
M 119/213	ION-ADR-A-3	Gassner 1	14,3
M 92/35	ION-ADR-A-3	Base Gassner 1	14,4
M 92/45	ION-ADR-A-3	Dr. 2/4 like	14,5

M 119/147	ION-ADR-A-4	Gassner 5	14,6
M 119/148	ION-ADR-A-4	Gassner 5	14,7 / pl. 2,6
M 149/52	ION-ADR-A-6	Gassner 5	15,1
M 92/61	ION-ADR-A-6	Gassner 5	15,2 / pl. 2,7
M 154/35	ION-ADR-A-6	Gassner 5	15,3
M 149/58	ION-ADR-A-6	undiagnostic	
M 119/2	ION-ADR-A-7	MGS V	15,4
M 119/3	ION-ADR-A-7	MGS V	15,5
M 119/150	ION-ADR-A-7	Gassner 3	15,7
M 105/2	ION-ADR-A-9	undiagnostic	
M 119/155	ION-ADR-A-9	MGS VI	15,6 / pl. 2,8
M 92/84	PAE-A-1	Gassner 3b	18,1 / pl. 3,1
M 119/141	PAE-A-1	Gassner 7a	18,2
M 154/53	PAE-A-1	Gassner 8a	18,3 / pl. 3,2
M 154/55	PAE-A-1	Gassner 9c	18,4
M 149/55	PAE-A-1	Gassner 10a	18,5
M 92/88	PAE-A-1 close to	Late-Graeco-Italic	18,6
M 119/211	PAE-A-1	Late-Graeco-Italic	18,7
M 119/220	PAE-A-1	Late-Graeco-Italic	18,8
M 92/87	PAE-A-1	undiagnostic	
M 149/21	PAE-A-2	Gassner 4	19,1 / pl. 3,3
M 149/20	PAE-A-2	Gassner 7f	19,2
M 92/83	PAE-A-2	Gassner 7i	19,3
M 154/43	PAE-A-2	Gassner 8a	19,4
M 154/56	PAE-A-2	Gassner 9b	19,5
M 119/217	PAE-A-2	Gassner 10b	19,6 / pl. 3,4
M 149/17	PAE-A-2	handle	
M 149/15	PAE-A-3	Gassner 7c close to	20,1
M 92/18	PAE-A-3	Gassner 10	20,3
M 119/218	PAE-A-3	Gassner 10	20,4
M 154/52	PAE-A-4	Gassner 9a	20,6 / pl. 3,6
M 119/134	VEL-A-2	Gassner 7c close to	21,1 / pl. 3,7
M 119/139	VEL-A-2	Gassner 7d	21,2
M 119/135	VEL-A-2	Gassner 8a	21,3

M 154/40	VEL-A-2	Gassner 8a	21,4
M 154/51	VEL-A-2	Gassner 8a	21,5
M 154/42	VEL-A-2	Gassner 8e	21,6
M 154/45	VEL-A-2	Gassner 8d/e	21,7
M 119/133	VEL-A-2	Gassner 9a	21,8
M 154/50	VEL-A-2	Gassner 9a	21,9
M 154/47	VEL-A-2	Gassner 9c	.21,10
M 165/40	VEL-A-2	MGS III/V	22,3
M 154/44	VEL-A-2	MGS V	22,5
M 154/48	VEL-A-2	MGS III/V	22,6
M 119/136	VEL-A-2	MGS VI small sized	22,7
M 119/137	VEL-A-2	Late Graeco-Italic	22,8
M 92/77	VEL-A-2	undiagnostic	
M 119/131	VEL-A-3	Gassner 7f	22,9 / pl. 3,8
M 119/138	VEL-A-3	Gassner 7f	.22,10
M 119/132	VEL-A-3	Gassner 8a	22,11
M 149/14	VEL-A-3	Gassner 8a	22,12
M 154/54	VEL-A-3	Gassner 9b	22,13
M 165/41	VEL-A-3	MGS III/V	22,14
M 166/12	VEL-A-4	Gassner 8	23,1 / pl. 4,1
M 165/37	VEL-A-4	MGS III/V	23,2
M 92/81	VEL-A-5	Gassner 9c	23,4
M 154/39	VEL-A-5	MGS V	23,5 /pl. 4,2
M 119/86	W-CENT-SARD-A-1	T-1.4.4.1	27,1 / pl. 4,5
M 119/85	W-CENT-SARD-A-1	T-4.1.1.3	27,2 / pl. 4,6
M 119/76	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	T-1.4.2.1	28,1
M 92/10	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	T-4.1.1.3	28,2
M 119/73	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	T-4.1.1.3	28,3
M 154/62	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	T-4.1.1.4/5.2.2.1	28,4 / pl. 4,7
M 119/72	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	T-5.2.2.1	28,5
M 119/74	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	T-5.2.2.1	28,6 / pl. 4,8
M 119/77	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	T-5.2.2.1	28,7
M 119/78	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	T-5.2.2.1	28,8
M 119/71	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	T-5.2.1.1	28,9

M 119/75	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	T-5.2.1.1	.28,10
M 119/98	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	T-5.2.1.1.	28,11
M 92/11	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	undiagnostic	
M 92/13	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	undiagnostic	
M 92/14	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	undiagnostic	
M 92/15	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	undiagnostic	
M 105/25	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	undiagnostic	
M 166/1	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	undiagnostic	
M 166/2	W-CENT-SARD-A-3	undiagnostic	
M 119/57	W-SARD-A-2	T-4.1.1.3	29,1 / pl. 5,1
M 119/61	W-SARD-A-2	T-4.1.1.3	29,2
M 119/62	W-SARD-A-2	T-4.1.1.3	29,3
M 119/58	W-SARD-A-2	T-5.2.2.1	29,4
M 119/60	W-SARD-A-2	T-5.2.2.1	29,5
M 119/95	W-SARD-A-3	T-1.4.4.1	29,6 / pl. 5,2
M 119/64	W-SARD-A-3	T-4.1.1.3	29,7
M 119/63	W-SARD-A-3	T-4.1.1.4	29,8
M 119/59	W-SARD-A-3	T-4.2.1.2	29,9
M 119/96	W-SARD-A-5	T-1.4.2.1	30,1 / pl. 5,3
M 119/92	W-SARD-A-5	T-4.1.1.3	30,2
M 92/19	W-SARD-A-5	T-4.1.1.3	30,3 / pl. 5,4
M 92/22	W-SARD-A-5	T-4.1.1.3	30,4
M 119/68	W-SARD-A-5	T-4.1.1.4	30,5
M 119/80	W-SARD-A-6	T-1.4.3.1	31,1
M 92/23	W-SARD-A-6	T-1.4.4.1	31,2
M 92/21	W-SARD-A-6	T-4.1.1.3	31,3
M 119/69.93	W-SARD-A-6	T-4.1.1.3	31,4 / pl. 5,5
M 119/70	W-SARD-A-6	undiagnostic	
M 119/66	W-SARD-A-7	T-4.1.1.4	32,1 / pl. 5,6
M 119/67	W-SARD-A-7	T-4.1.1.4	32,2
M 119/65	W-SARD-A-7	T-5.1.1.1	32,3

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