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Fabrics from Chios

Introductory Note

The fabrics presented here have been identified only in the area of importation, mainly at Velia and mostly in contexts of the fifth century B.C.E.¹ In the following period, imports from the East Aegean area to the west are rare and become more frequent only in the course of the third century B.C.E. with the appearance of stamped amphorae from Rhodos.²

The following fabrics have been attributed to the island of Chios because they can be identified on amphorae of the characteristic 'swollen neck type' of the fifth century B.C.E.³ Their identification is confirmed by the analyses of Roman Sauer who compared them with samples of Whitbread's fabric class 2.⁴ As their mineralogical components can mostly be found in the northern part of the island, they might belong to Chios town or its territory. We have to bear in mind, however, that our knowledge of fabrics from the Western part of the island as well as of those of the adjacent main land is extremely limited. Thus it cannot be excluded that some of the more important Ionian cities like Erythrai or Teos show similar geological conditions as Chios.⁵

Fabric Description

CHI-A-1 The fabric consists of a yellow red matrix with poorly sorted inclusions. Characteristic are larger grey particles and infrequent carbonate particles. Frequent, but very small, are quartz inclusions and dark mica, the latter being poorly visible on the images.

CHI-A-2 The general characteristics of this fabric correspond to those of CHI-A-1, but the white carbonate inclusions are much more frequent. Sauer classified these samples as his raw material group RVA06a.

CHI-A-3 The fabric shows similarities with CHI-A-2 in the frequency of carbonate inclusions, however, it is characterized by the appearance of large red particles that are not present in CHI-A-2.

References

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¹ Gassner 2003, 122–3.

² For imports to the west in the fifth century B.C.E. see in general Gassner 2005; Lawall 2006; the import of Rhodian amphorae to the west has not been studied *in extenso* yet, see for example recently Lund 2007.

³ Knigge 1976, 23–4; Lawall 1995, 89–104; Dupont 1998, 146–51; Whitbread 1995, 135–53.

⁴ Sauer's class RVA006(a). Whitbread 1995, 135–53.

⁵ See also Dupont 1998, 151 (Chios) and the new contributions Dupont 2010 and Lungu 2010 with the identification of the local pottery production at Erythrai.

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