

FLAVIO FERLITO*

Western Greek Amphorae fabric of Selinus

Introduction

The identification of the present fabric is related to previous research on Punic amphorae fabrics of Selinunte.¹ The newly created fabric SEL-A-4 is composed of Western Greek Amphorae found chiefly at Selinunte.² Furthermore, one item comes from Pantelleria. All of the samples have undergone petrographical analysis, moreover one sample has been submitted to chemical analysis.³ As a result, all of these samples were compatible with the local “MAB/F. Narbone Formation” (Marnoso-Arenacea del Belice).⁴

Fabric Description

SEL-A-4

Ref. M 154/150 (M 154/30, M 154/126, M 154/141, M 154/155, M 154/210, M 119/142)

The colour of the matrix is mainly pinkish-orangish or reddish-yellow, in different tones, with sporadic cases of brownish or reddish (Munsell 2.5 YR 6/6, 5 YR 6/6 or 7.5 YR 6/4, 6/6, 7/6). To the naked eye the clay appears fine or very granular, with white or white-yellowish visible particles, generally small-medium sized.

Voids are quite frequent, mostly in form of vughies and channels or chambers, sized between 0.03-04/0.12-44-71 mm or 1.19 mm (rarely), if we consider the channels length.

The temper's distribution ranges from poorly-sorted silt, poorly sorted sand in well-sorted silt (bimodal) to unsorted (sporadically). In general, the size of the inclusions varies from 0.04 to 0.20-79 mm or, rarely, 1.19-1.35 mm. Quartz is infrequent, whitish-grey-transparent and small sized (0.04/0.16-32 mm). Its shape is very spherical-spherical-sub-spherical/rounded-subrounded-subangular-angular. The matrix is mainly carbonatic, which makes difficult the distinction between the inclusions of the matrix and the added temper. The carbonatic component shows two variants: white grains, sized between 0.04/0.48-1.19 (rarely) mm, and white-yellowish micritic clots⁵, small-medium sized (0.04/20-60-79 mm). In both cases the quantity ranges from very frequent, frequent to infrequent and the shape is very spherical-spherical-sub-spherical-subelongate/well rounded-rounded-subrounded-subangular. Dark red or reddish-brownish iron oxide concretions are sporadically attested. Their shape is very spherical-spherical-sub-spherical-elongate/well rounded-rounded-subrounded-subangular,

* Institut für Klassische Archäologie, Universität Wien.

¹ Bechtold and Schmidt 2015; at latest, Bechtold 2015.

² For the full discussion of the issue related to the production of Western Greek amphorae series in Selinus, see Bechtold 2020.

³ Thin-section petrography at the polarizing microscope and chemical analysis (ICP-MS and ICP/OES) have been conducted by G. Montana (DiSTem, University of Palermo) and L. Randazzo (DiBEST, Università della Calabria) to whom we are very grateful for the permission to anticipate some of their forthcoming results.

⁴ Montana et al. 2011, 78-81, 103, 130-32, 160-62. Specifically, see Bechtold 2020, ch. 1 and 3 with full references to previous archaeometric research.

⁵ See Cau Ontiveros et al. 2002, 11-12: formations of secondary calcite, caused by high firing temperatures. This new term indicates the “dissolved carbonate grains” used for the descriptions in FACEM.

and their size varies from 0.04 to 0.48-56 mm. In addition, reddish inclusions, not easily identifiable as iron, are sporadically observable, sized between 0.04/0.32 mm and of very spherical-elongate/rounded shape. Finally, in some rare cases, black inclusions, of spherical/subrounded shape, sized between 0.04/0.08 mm, are visible.

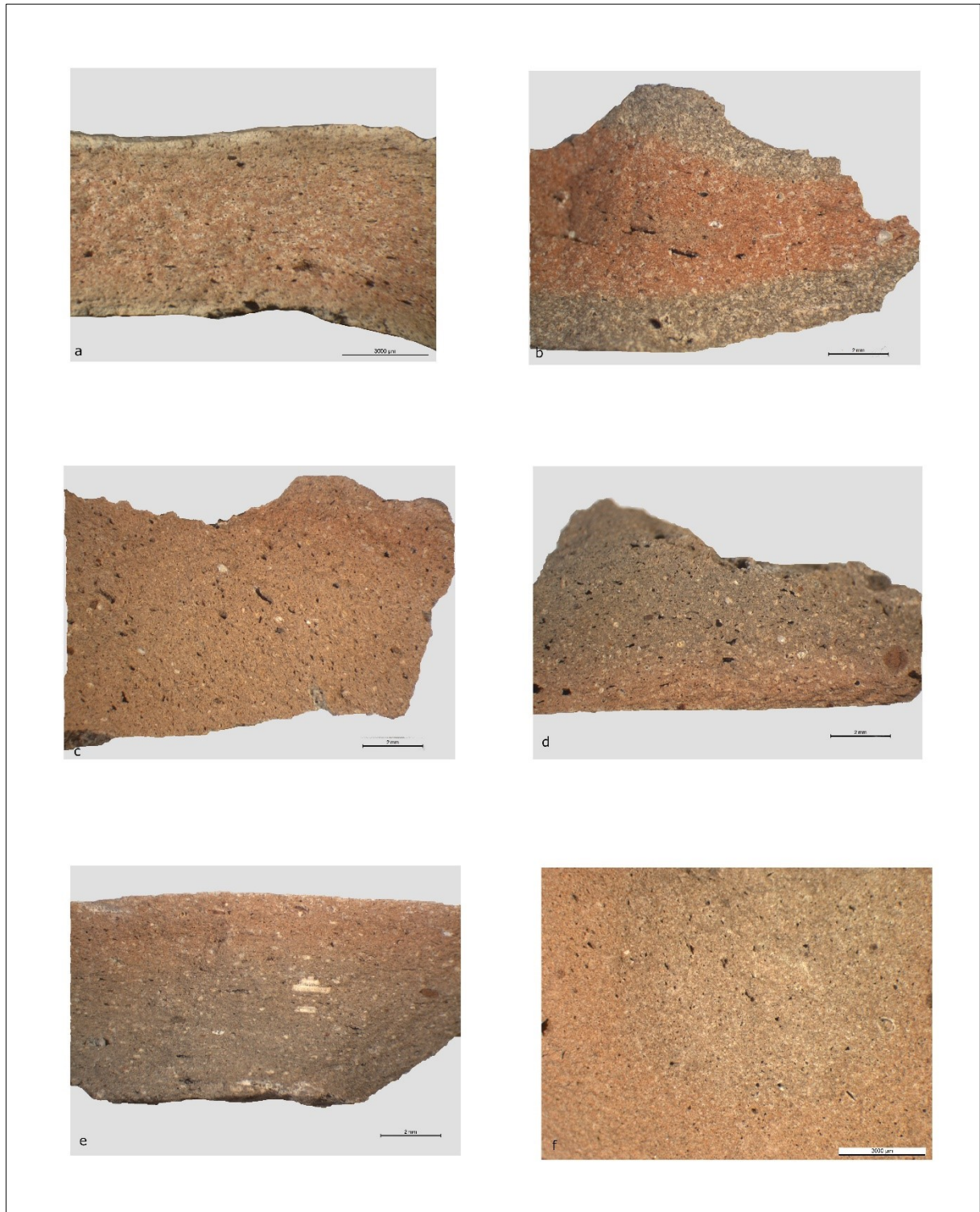


Fig. 1. Microphotos 8x: a. M 154/30; b. M 154/126; c. M 154/141; d. M 154/150; e. M 154/155; f. M 119/142

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