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Fabrics of North Eastern Sardinia

Introductory Note

Thirteen samples of transport amphorae, coarse wares and terracotta objects from different excavations at Olbia (Scavo ex Mercato, scavo Via Torino) and from the region of Olbia (Isola Bocca) were selected by R. d' Oriano (Soprintendenza di Sardinia) in order to define a local pottery production that was indicated by some fragments of wasters. Yet the general characteristics of the observed fabrics from different ware groups are very similar (see below), so that local or regional productions within the region of North Eastern Sardinia can be assumed.

Coarse Ware

The general characteristics of the observed fabrics are a non calcareous matrix, the reddish yellow color of which may turn into brown and gray due to different firing conditions. The few calcareous particles are to be regarded as part of the temper. Very striking is the occurrence of partly large dark mica particles; in addition red and dark grey inclusions are common. The distinguished fabrics differ in color and/or in size and quantity of the observed inclusions as well as the sorting (bimodal to unsorted).

FABRIC DESCRIPTION

NE-SARD-C-1 (M 122/1) shows a yellowish red granular matrix with a gray core, a high percentage of moderately sorted quartz temper, and large brownish black inclusions (iron-oxide concretions). The sample stems from a shape which is to be regarded as imitation of glazed ware.

NE-SARD-C-2 (M 121/4): The fabric is very similar to NE-SARD-C-1, the inclusions being larger and their sorting being worse.

NE-SARD-C-3 (M 121/3) is characterized by a yellowish red to brown matrix, the fresh break is irregular; the temper is characterized by a high percentage of unsorted quartz temper as well as large reddish brown rounded clay inclusions.

NE-SARD-C-4 (M 121/2) the irregular breaking matrix is brown to gray by reduced firing conditions, the coarse temper is unsorted and contains partly large quartz particles. This type of fabric goes usually with cooking vessels.

Transport Amphorae

The five samples of transport amphorae show the same general characteristics which are observed with samples of the coarse wares: A non calcareous matrix in which sometimes calcareous particles are included as part of the temper.

FABRIC DESCRIPTION

NE-SARD-A-1(M 120/1 and 4) contains some partly large white, calcareous inclusions. Angular, clear and white quartz particles as well as red and dark grey rounded particles occur frequently.

NE-SARD-A-2 (M 120/3) shows a well sorted temper which consists mainly of quartz and differs from NE-SARD-A-1 by large red (clay) particles.

NE-SARD-A-3 (M 120/2): The matrix is brown to olive brown in the core and contains frequently small to large reddish iron-oxide concretions.

Terracotta Objects

NE-SARD-VT-1 (M 123/1) is comparable to the above described fabrics NE-SARD-C-1 and NE-SARD-A-1 in terms of color and character of inclusions. Due to the coarse temper, it differs from them in terms of the size of the inclusions, containing very large quartz particles up to 4 mm.

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