

Burak Sönmez

**OINOPHOROI OF SELEUKEIA SIDERA**

*A large number of vessels in the form of oinophoroi were found during the studies carried out in 1993 and since 2017 in Seleukeia Sidera in the Pisidia Region (Turkey). This group can be dated between the 4th to the 7th centuries AD. In the region, this form was found most intensely in Sagalassos, which is also known for its production. A fewer number of examples were also identified in the surrounding cities. When compared with these cities, the oinophoroi of Seleukeia Sidera become prominent in terms of number and variety. The group in this study is discussed together with archaeometric analyses. Analyses show that the oinophoroi of Seleukeia Sidera have the same elemental composition as the Late Roman red slipped wares, which were produced in or around Seleukeia Sidera.*

Pisidia – oinophoroi – Dionysiac – archaeometrical analysis – LRD Koiné

**1. Introduction**

The ancient city of Seleukeia Sidera is located 800 m northwest of the village of Bayat in the Atabey District in the province of Isparta (Hürmüzlü 2015). The first excavations in the city were carried out in the Theater by the Isparta Museum between 1985 and 1987 (Kaya 1999: 163). Then in 1993, again by the Isparta Museum, a single season of excavation was conducted under the scientific consultancy of Prof. Dr. Orhan Bingöl (Bingöl 2012). Between 2016 and 2019 systematic surveys were carried out by a team of Prof. Dr. Bilge Hürmüzlü. Since 2018, systematic excavations are being carried out at the site (Hürmüzlü, Sönmez and Ayaşan 2017; Hürmüzlü Kortholt et al. 2017; Hürmüzlü, Sönmez and Atav-Köker 2020; Hürmüzlü and Sönmez 2021). The oinophoroi group evaluated as part of this study were found in 1993 and in 2017-2020<sup>1</sup>.

Roman Imperial oinophoroi were intensively produced at Pergamon, Knidos (Mandel 1998: 6-191) and Iasos (Baldoni 2003) during the 2nd and 3rd centuries. In the Late Roman Period, between the 4th and 7th centuries, production resumed at Sagalassos (Poblome 1998; Talloen and Poblome 2019: 426), Pednelissos (Jackson et al. 2012: 95), Tripolis (Duman 2018: 667-674) and Laodikeia (Bilgin 2017: 523-524).

The oinophoroi from Seleukeia Sidera were evaluated in terms of their form and iconographic features, as well as the results of archaeometric analysis.

As part of this study, oinophoroi found at Seleukeia Sidera, which have been discussed previously in two publications were re-evaluated. The oinophoroi found in the excavations carried out in 1993 in the city were introduced in general terms in a bachelor thesis (Laflı 1996) and in two articles (Laflı 1999; 2004); these finds were allegedly uncovered by the excavations at the South Terrace and inside the so-called Oval Building (Laflı 1996: 19) yet no exact context information is known. Only a superficial evaluation of the finds was presented in these studies, and no archaeometric analysis was performed. Based on their macroscopic and iconographic features, it was concluded that the vessels were produced in Sagalassos (Laflı 1999: 228; 2004: 125).

Not only were the typological characteristics and iconographic features of the vessels reconsidered, but they were now also examined considering their archaeometric analysis. Furthermore, based on these analyses they were compared with the products of other cities where production has been established, to determine their provenance: Do they originate from one of these workshops or do they have a different origin?

**Typological and iconographic features of oinophoroi**

Of the Seleukeia Sidera oinophoroi, three different types could be established. Except for four hexagonal flasks and two rectangular ones, all the finds belonged to the form of circular flasks. The bodies of the vessels are circular, ranging in diameter from 9,6 cm. to 30,2 cm. There are two oppositely placed handles connecting the neck to the shoulder. Both sides of the flasks were decorated with rich relief ornaments.

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Bilge Hürmüzlü, the director of the excavations at the ancient city of Seleukeia Sidera, for allowing me to work on these finds as part of my doctoral research and her continuous support for my studies as well as the fruitful discussions about my PhD thesis. This article was completed during a research stay at the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium, financially supported by the Georg Maxim Anossov Hanfmann scholarship, granted by the American Research Institute in Turkey (ARIT). I would like to thank ARIT for their support and Prof. Dr. Jeroen Poblome, Professor of Archaeology at the Catholic University of Leuven and the director of the Sagalassos Archaeological Research Project.

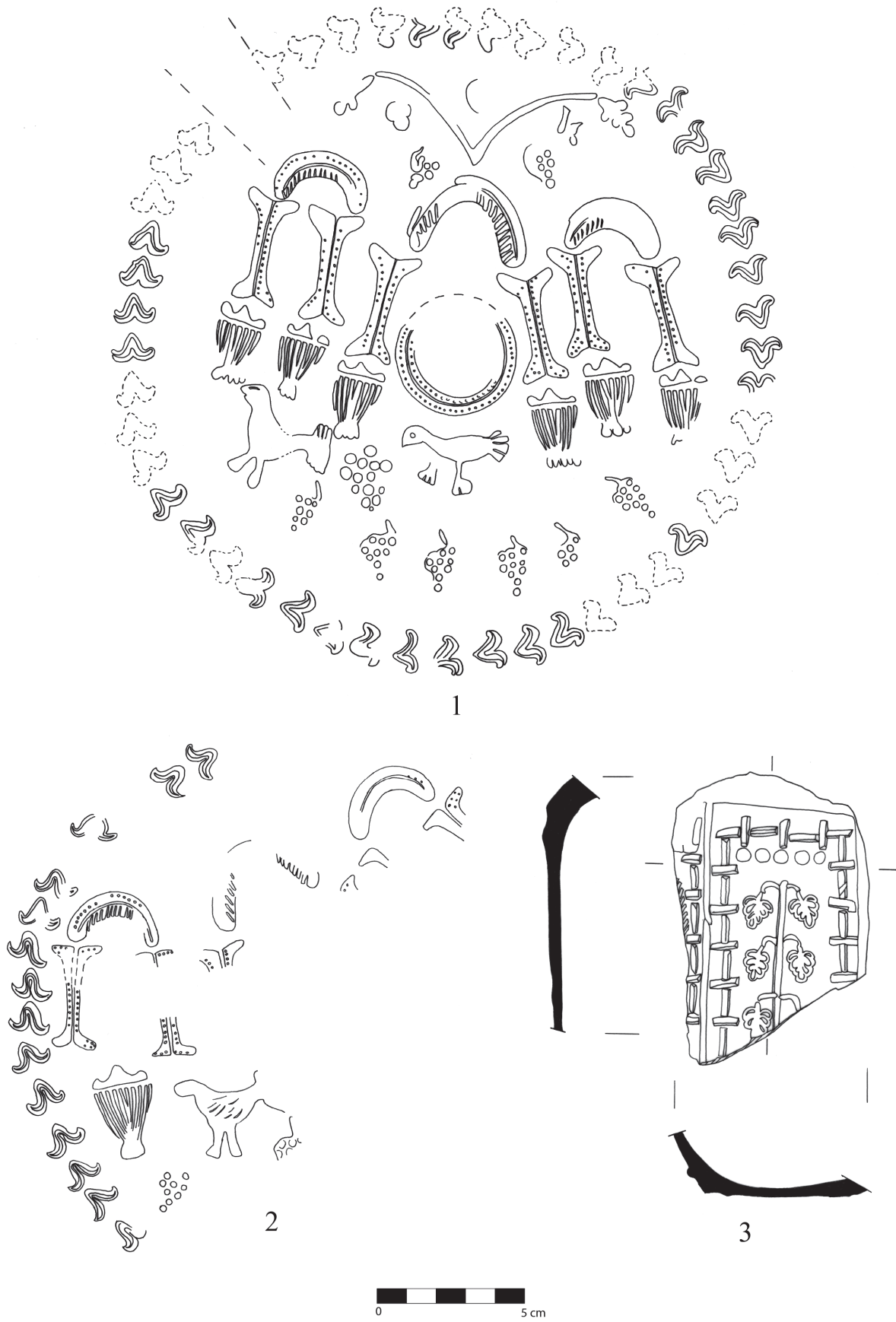


Fig. 1. *Oinophoroi* of Seleukeia Sidera with a main scene and framing motifs.

Most of the pilgrim flask-shaped *oinophoroi* and all the hexagonal *oinophoroi* have a decorative template consisting of a main scene and a frame pattern framing its surroundings (fig. 1). Three examples display motifs between concentric circles, covering the entire surface of the vessel (fig. 2, 1 and 3). On one piece, there is a composition arranged around a medallion consisting of a rosette and a garland motif (fig. 2, 4). The main scenes of the hexagonal forms are rather basic compared to the circular examples; singular, simple motifs

such as the vine branch (fig. 1, 3) and the figure of Pan are depicted in the centre.

The iconography in the Seleukeia Sidera *oinophoroi* is largely composed of themes related to Dionysos (fig. 3 and 4), as is also known from the examples of Sagalassos (Talloen 2011: 578-579). Besides *maenads* and dancing male figures in *thiasos* scenes, there were erotes harvesting grapes, warriors, various animals and vine branches and grape bunches which were used as an extremely common filling motif (fig. 4).

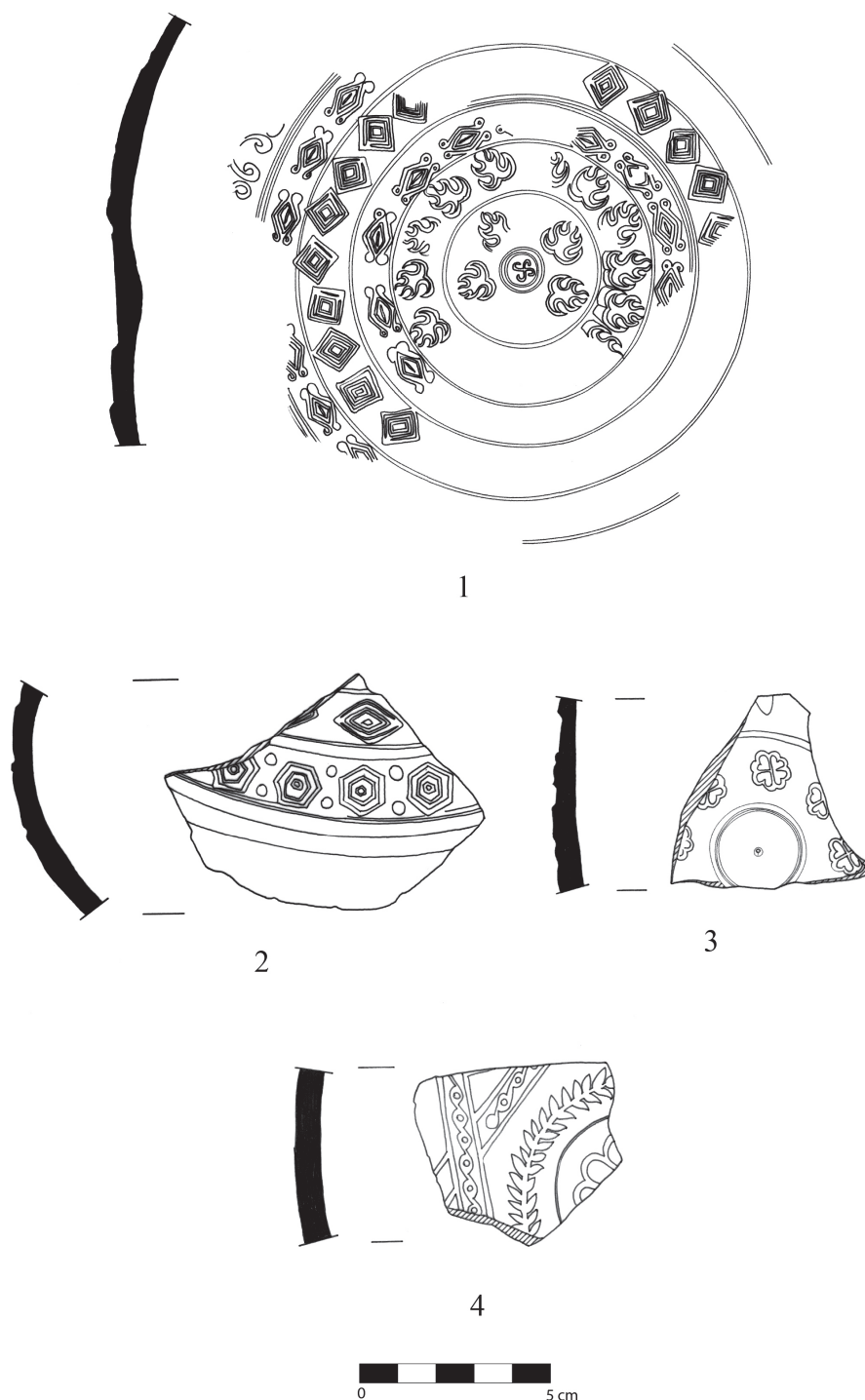


Fig. 2. *Oinophoroi* of Seleukeia Sidera with concentric pattern and central medallion.

## 2. Clay characteristics and archaeometric analysis

The clay fabric of the *oinophoroi* is medium hard, all with very small pores. Although there is mostly a very small to small-sized lime content, some pieces had a completely pure clay fabric. Usually there are fluctuations in the colour of the slip. Archaeometric analyses were carried out on 21 samples selected among the *oinophoroi* found at Seleukeia Sidera<sup>2</sup>.

As a result of petrographic analysis, quartz, sericite, plagioclase, and chert were detected in all the fragments. In addition, muscovite and chlorite were detected in nine of the fragments, and pyroxene and biotite in twelve fragments. XRF analyses performed on the ceramics showed that the element contents were identical to those of red slipped ceramics found at Seleukeia Sidera, which we consider to be of local/regional production (Hürmüzlü and Sönmez 2021).



Fig. 3. Figurative motifs on *oinophoroi* connected with *thiasos* scenes.

<sup>2</sup> The archaeometric analyses were carried out at the Archeometry Laboratory of the Earth Sciences Research and Application Center at Ankara University, by the team of Prof. Dr. Yusuf Kağan Kadioğlu. I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Yusuf Kağan Kadioğlu for his kind support in the archaeometrical analyses. These archaeometric analyses were supported by a PhD research fellowship provided by the Turkish Historical

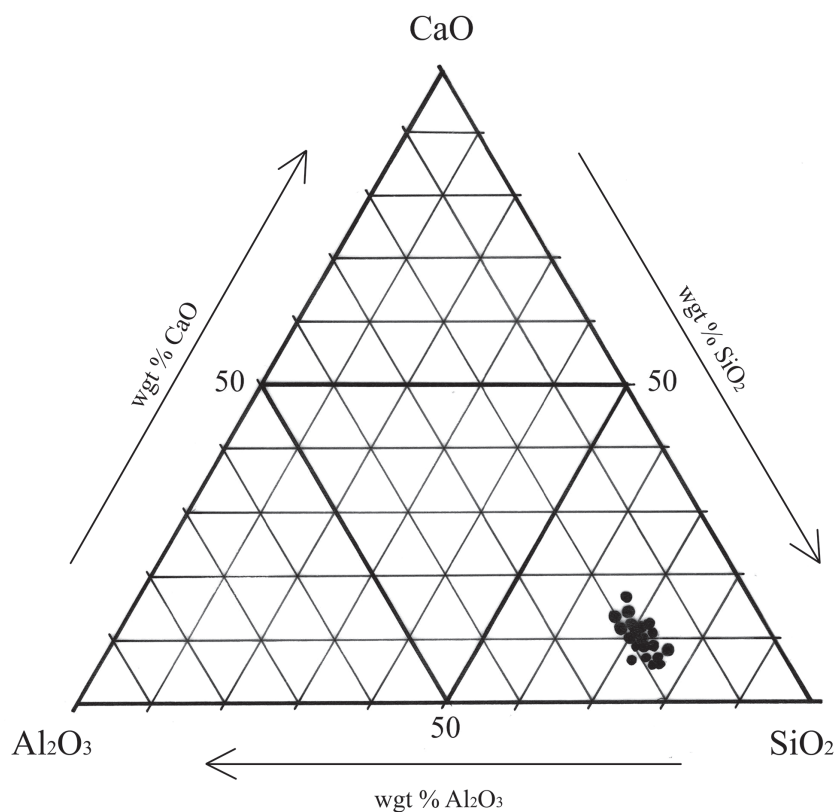
Society Project No. 84 and Suna & İnan Kırık Institute of Mediterranean Civilizations (AKMED). I would like to thank them for their support. Moreover, I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Patrick Degryse (KU Leuven University) and Prof. Dr. Ünsal Yalçın (Deutsches Bergbau-Museum, Bochum and Süleyman Demirel University) for their kind help for interpreting the results of archaeometrical analyses.



Fig. 4. Figurative and floral motifs on oinophoroi.

Sample No.	Na <sub>2</sub> O	K <sub>2</sub> O	CaO	MgO	MnO	Fe <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	Al <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub>	SiO <sub>2</sub>	TiO <sub>2</sub>	P <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub>	LOI	Total
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
54	0,06	2,85	7,11	6,06	0,09	8,03	12,25	57,10	0,78	1,28	4,83	100,44
55	0,05	2,92	10,79	6,72	0,08	8,51	14,63	49,85	0,91	1,80	3,72	99,98
56	0,05	3,07	7,34	7,12	0,09	8,44	14,30	52,49	0,86	1,32	4,55	99,63
57	0,30	3,10	8,90	7,30	0,08	8,72	14,04	51,25	0,89	2,17	2,22	98,97
58	0,05	2,90	9,74	5,90	0,07	8,00	13,88	47,09	0,84	1,24	9,73	99,44
59	0,05	3,20	7,54	7,74	0,07	8,64	14,21	49,67	0,86	0,54	7,64	100,16
60	0,04	2,80	7,72	6,04	0,08	7,93	12,07	46,84	0,78	1,70	13,88	99,88
61	0,30	2,83	8,90	8,10	0,08	8,43	14,05	50,84	0,83	0,73	4,37	99,46
62	0,05	2,70	11,42	7,32	0,08	8,00	12,81	47,58	0,77	1,64	7,93	100,30
133	0,05	2,82	7,60	7,25	0,07	8,17	13,40	55,88	0,83	0,25	3,82	100,14
134	0,05	2,85	7,04	7,24	0,07	8,41	13,59	56,11	0,84	0,33	3,55	100,08
135	0,05	3,75	5,86	3,20	0,09	7,34	17,44	59,13	0,92	0,30	1,36	99,44
136	0,05	3,00	6,05	6,73	0,07	8,71	13,42	56,96	0,86	0,15	3,82	99,82
137	0,05	3,05	8,20	7,05	0,10	8,30	13,68	52,25	0,83	0,32	5,72	99,55
138	0,09	3,29	8,20	7,51	0,10	8,01	13,39	57,15	0,78	0,30	0,63	99,45
139	0,05	3,00	5,91	7,05	0,08	9,12	14,46	54,62	0,87	0,14	4,62	99,92
140	0,20	2,90	8,02	7,30	0,09	8,80	14,70	53,43	0,88	0,20	3,82	100,34
141	0,05	3,00	6,15	7,31	0,09	8,37	13,70	55,39	0,82	0,15	4,52	99,55
142	0,05	2,80	5,90	6,66	0,08	8,67	13,62	58,16	0,84	0,13	2,62	99,53
143	0,05	2,93	5,90	8,13	0,08	8,68	14,21	56,32	0,85	0,15	2,82	100,12
144	0,05	2,90	9,13	4,90	0,07	8,25	13,53	55,44	0,83	0,20	4,83	100,13

**Tab. 1.** XRF results of *oinophoroi* of Seleukeia Sidera.



**Fig. 5.** Cao-Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>-SiO<sub>2</sub> diagram of the *oinophoroi*.



Besides ten main elements, volatile components were also determined as a result of XRF analysis (**Table 1**). Analyses were performed on the Spectro brand X-LAB 2000 Polarized Energy Dispersive X-Ray Fluorescence Spectrometer (PEDXRF). XRF analyses were performed with the GEO-7220 method and the calibration of the device was made using the K02-GSR-09 and G01-GS-N-Granite standards, which were created by the USGS for plutonic rocks (granite, granodiorite, etc.). In addition, 34 trace elements were detected, although, due to space limits, only the main and side components will be briefly discussed here. The clay shows a homogeneous structure. The main component is  $\text{SiO}_2$  which has been determined to be between 47% and 58%.  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  values vary between 12% and 14%. Other main components are  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$ ,  $\text{MgO}$  and  $\text{CaO}$  (**Table 1**). It is noteworthy that  $\text{Na}_2\text{O}$ , one of the alkaline components, is in small amounts. The homogeneous features of the clay that point to the same clay source is also clearly seen in the  $\text{CaO-Al}_2\text{O}_3\text{-SiO}_2$  diagram (**fig. 5**). From this result, it can be concluded that the same clay source was used in their production. Having said that, this clay source has not yet been determined. Provenance of clay will be evaluated in another study considering trace elements.

When the element contents of the Seleukeia Sidera *oinophoroi* are compared with the element contents of ceramics found in the surrounding cities which have been archeometrically analysed, it is seen that there are differences in their ratios. Among the pieces,  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$  values only show deviations in nine pieces with a fabric including dark coloured amorphous shapes. In seven of these fragments, the  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$  values ranged from 1,24% to 2,17%, while the values of fragments that did not have such a dark-coloured amorphous content varied between 0,20% and 0,73% (**Table 1**).

Numerous analyses have been carried out on the Sagalassos ceramics and have been discussed in different publications. The percentage ranges of the elements in the first analysis group have wide ranges compared to the other Sagalassos Red Slip groups analysed within the scope of this study. This group has the closest values to Seleukeia Sidera *oinophoroi* in terms of element contents (Ottenburgs, Jorissen and Viaene 1993: 164, Table 1). However,  $\text{Na}_2\text{O}$  ratios are

completely different and the  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  ratios are also inconsistent, except for one piece which has a value of 17,44%.  $\text{SiO}_2$  values are compatible in 11 of 21 parts and incompatible in the other ten. Of the  $\text{P}_2\text{O}_5$  values, nine are compatible and 12 are incompatible.  $\text{CaO}$  is incompatible in four sherds.  $\text{K}_2\text{O}$ ,  $\text{TiO}_2$  and  $\text{Fe}_2\text{O}_3$  values seem to be completely compatible.

The values of a second group of Sagalassos Red Slip Ware found at Sagalassos of which analysis results were published (Poblome et al 1997: 514, Table 1), differ more than those of the first group. When the element values of the red slip wares in this group were compared with the Seleukeia Sidera *oinophoroi*, it was seen that the  $\text{Na}_2\text{O}$  and  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$  values were in completely different ranges.

### 3. A new workshop in Seleukeia Sidera or its neighbourhood?

As a result, the *oinophoroi* of Seleukeia Sidera are mostly similar to the Sagalassos products in terms of iconography and the macroscopic structure of the clay and the application of slip. On the other hand, due to the differences in their geochemical contents, it is clear that the *oinophoroi* of Seleukeia Sidera are the products of a different workshop. The fact that the element values (**Table 1**) are identical with the red slip wares found in Seleukeia Sidera, which are considered to be local/regional (Hürmüzlü and Sönmez 2021), suggests that they were produced by the same workshop. The clay sources of these ceramics have not been determined yet and the research of possible clay sources continues. Having said that, absence of direct evidence such as misfired red slip wares and *oinophoroi*, or moulds used to produce *oinophoroi*, make it difficult to assert Seleukeia Sidera as a production centre at this time.

The existence of a new workshop, where *oinophoroi* were produced along with red slip wares which we have considered to be local/regional, suits the concept of LRD *koiné*, as put forward by Poblome and Fırat for the region of Western Anatolia (Poblome and Fırat 2011). Further studies are needed to reveal the extent of its production, as discussed in a previous study (Hürmüzlü and Sönmez 2021).

Burak Sönmez

Süleyman Demirel University,

Faculty of Arts & Sciences, Archaeology Department

buraksonmez@sdu.edu.tr

### Bibliography

- Baldoni, D. 2003. *Missione Archeologica di Iasos 3: Vasi a Matricedi Età Imperiale a Iasos*. Rome, Giorgio Bretschneider.
- Bingöl, O. 2012. Seleukeia Sidera. *Dil Tarih Coğrafya Fakültesi Arkeoloji Bölümü Dergisi* EK III 2, 457–471.
- Bilgin, M. 2017. *Laodikeia'nın Geç Antik Çağ Yerel Üretim Kırmızı Astarlı Seramikleri*. Unpublished PhD thesis, Pamukkale University.
- Duman, B. 2018. The First Evidence of Round Oinophoros Workshop in Late Roman Tripolis. *Rei Cretariae Romanæ Fautorum Acta* 45, 667–674. Bonn, Rei Cretariae Romanæ Fautores.
- Hürmüzlü, B. 2015. Pisidia Bölgesi'nde Seleukoslar Dönemi Yerleşim Politikaları. *Colloquium Anatolicum* 14, 66–185.
- Hürmüzlü, B. Sönmez, B. and Ayaşan, M. 2017. Seleukeia Sidera Antik Kenti 2016 Yılı Yüzey Araştırması Sonuçları. *Araştırma Sonuçları Toplantısı* 35/1, 247–254.

- Hürmüzlü Kortholt, B., Ayaşan, M., Hecebil, U., Sönmez, B., Köker, H., Schenk, T. and Atav Köker, İ. 2017. Seleukeia Sidera Antik Kenti Yüzey Araştırması Sonuçları. *ANMED* 15, 233–241.
- Hürmüzlü, B., Sönmez, B. and Atav-Köker, İ. 2020. Seleukeia Sidera Antik Kenti Üretim Faaliyetleri Hakkında Ön Değerlendirmeler. In A. Mörel, G. Kaşka, H. Köker, M. Kaşka, M. Fırat and S. O. Akgönül (ed.), *II. Pisidia Araştırmaları Sempozyumu: Pisidia ve Yakın Çevresinde Üretim, Ticaret ve Ekonomi (Isparta, 31.10.2018-03.11.2018)*, 140–153. Isparta, Süleyman Demirel Üniversitesi Yayınları.
- Hürmüzlü, B. and Sönmez, B. 2021. A New Member of Late Roman D *Koiné*? A New Red-Slipped Pottery Group Found at Seleukeia Sidera. *Olba* XXIV, 349–362.
- Jackson, M., Zelle, M., Vandeput, L. and Köse, V. 2012. Primary Evidence for Late Roman D Ware Production in Southern Asia Minor: A Challenge to “Cypriot Red Slip Ware”. *Anatolian Studies* 62, 89–114.
- Kaya, D. 1999. Die Theaterausgrabung von Seleuceia Sidera (KlaudiosSeleukeia). *Asia Minor Studien* 34, 163–174.
- Laflı, E. 1996. *Seleukeia Sidera 1993 Kazısında Bulunmuş Olan Pişmiş Toprak Eserler*. Unpublished Bachelor thesis, Ankara University.
- Laflı, E. 1999. Sagalassos Roman Relief Wares from Seleuceia Sidera in Pisidia (Turkey). In R. F. Docter and E. M. Moormann (ed.), *Classical Archaeology Towards the Third Millenium: Reflections and Perspectives, Proceedings of the XVth International Congress of Classical Archaeology (Amsterdam: July 12-17, 1998)*, 227–230. Amsterdam, Allard Pierson Series.
- Laflı, E. 2004. Dionysiac Scenes on Sagalassian oinophoroi from Seleuceia Sidera in Pisidia (southwestern Turkey). In S. Bell and G. Davies (ed.), *Games and Festivals in Classical Antiquity, Proceedings of the Conference (Edinburgh: 10-12 June 2000)* (BAR International Series 1220): 125–136. Oxford, BAR Publishing.
- Mandel, U. 1988. *Kleinasiatische Reliefkeramik der Mittleren Kaiserzeit Die “Oinophorengruppe und Verwandtes* (Pergamenische Forschungen 5). Berlin-New York, Walter de Gruyter.
- Ottensmeyer, R., Jorissen, C. and Viaene, W. 1993. Study of the Clays. In M. Waelkens (ed.) *Sagalassos I. First General Report on the (1986-1989) and Excavations (1990-1991)* (Acta Archaeologica Lovaniensia Monographiae V): 163–169. Leuven, Leuven University Press.
- Poblome, J. 1998. Dionysiac Oinophoroi from Sagalassos Found in Egypt. In W. Clarysse, A. Schoors and H. Willems (ed.), *Egyptian Religion The Last Thousand Years Part I. Studies dedicated to the memory of Jan Quaegebeur* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta): 205–226. Leuven, Peeters.
- Poblome, J. and Fırat, N. 2011. Late Roman D. A Matter of Open(ing) or Closed Horizons?”. In M. A. Cau, P. Reynolds and M. Bonifay, (ed.) *LRFW I. Late Roman Fine Wares: Solving Problems of Typology and Chronology. A Review of the Evidence, Debate and New Contexts* (RLAMP 1): 49–56. Oxford, Archaeopress.
- Poblome, J., Viaene, W., Kucha, H., Waelkens, M., Laduron, D., Depuydt, F. 1997. The Clay Raw Materials of Sagalassos Red slip ware. A chronological evaluation. In M. Waelkens and J. Poblome (ed.), *Sagalassos IV, Report on the Survey and Excavation Campaigns of 1994 and 1995* (Acta Archaeologica Lovaniensia Monographiae 9): 507–518. Leuven, Leuven University Press.
- Talloon, P. 2011. From Pagan to Christian: Religious Iconography in Material Culture from Sagalassos. *Late Antique Archaeology* 7, 573–607.
- Talloon, P. and Poblome, J. 2019. The Age of Specialization. Dionysus and the Production of Wine in Late Antiquity: A View from Sagalassos (SW Turkey). *Olba* XXVII, 413–442.