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ARTIFACTS ASSEMBLAGES AND SETTLERS' IDENTITY: CASE STUDIES FROM THE CONTESSA ENTELLINA SURVEY (AUGUSTEAN PERIOD – 7TH CENTURY AD)

Introduction

From 1998 to 2005 the Scuola Normale Superiore of Pisa carried out a systematic archaeological survey in the territory of Contessa Entellina (PA, Sicily). A total area of 136.4 km² was investigated (more than 114 km² intensively) leading to the identification of over 280 archaeological sites and hundreds of off-site finds. Predictably, numerous sites revealed phases of Roman occupation, and thousands of sherds were collected, dating from the Roman conquest of Sicily to the Byzantine Age. The finds are still under examination and our overview of the Roman pottery cannot be considered exhaustive yet¹.

In this paper, we focus on just six sites (**fig. 1**)² characterized by multi-secular occupation in the Imperial period and in Late Antiquity (1st to 7th century AD) and selected to cover a variety of locations (farms, villas, villages). Starting from a picture of pottery supply provided by these selected sites, we try to examine some aspects that could be significant in terms of the social and cultural identity of the settlers.

The first site is **Conigliera**, a small site (0.87 ha) on a hill slope permanently occupied from the 3rd, but especially from the 2nd century BC, and abandoned at the end of the 5th century AD. It was probably a farm, composed of at least three buildings.

The second site is **Vaccarizzo Casa Grimaldi**, a medium-size site (1,53 ha) on a small hill, occupied from the 3rd/2nd century BC to the 7th century AD. In the Roman Imperial period it was probably a villa.³

The third one is **Quattrocasse**, a medium-size site (about 3 ha), on a small hill close to an important road crossing. The site was permanently inhabited from the 3rd/2nd century BC to the end of the 5th century AD. It was maybe a villa, or more likely a small village.

The fourth one is **Caravedda**, a medium-size site (about 3,3 ha), on a fluvial terrace, occupied from Hellenistic times to the 5th century AD. It could be a large villa or, more probably, a small village. As can be noted (**fig. 2**), the site revealed a large amount of cooking-ware, especially African wares, that can hardly be attributed to casual chance.

The fifth site is **Bagnitelle S. Antonino**, a large site (over 11 ha) spread on a hill slope not far from the Senore river. It was permanently inhabited from proto-Hellenistic to Medieval times (13th century AD), with possible abandonment between the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD. In the Middle and Late Roman Imperial period, it was probably a villa with a luxury residential sector, which possibly developed into a village in the Early Byzantine period.

The last one is **Miccina**, a very large site (17,33 ha) on a gentle slope, inhabited from Classical period to the 7th century AD, and again from the 10th century to the Norman Age. Early Imperial artefacts come mainly from the western part of the site. It gradually extended eastwards only after the late 2nd century AD. In the Middle-Late Imperial period and Late Antiquity it was a vast village. Its hey-day was in the second half of the 5th century and in the early 6th century.

Data analysis

A preliminary analysis of the pottery from these sites, and generally from the whole survey, leads to some observations that could be interesting in terms of 'identity'.

Before discussing pottery, it can be pointed out that, from the 1st to the 7th century AD, the roofs of buildings in the surveyed area followed the so called 'laconic' system,

¹ A detailed publication of the results of the Contessa Entellina survey is forthcoming. For project descriptions and contributions on specific topics, see (with previous bibliography): CORRETTI ET AL. 2006; A. CORRETTI/C. MICHELINI/M. A. VAGGIOLI, Frammenti di Medioevo siciliano: Entella e il suo territorio dall'alto Medioevo a Federico II. In: P. PENSABENE (a cura di), Piazza Armerina. Villa del Casale e la Sicilia tra tardoantico e medioevo (Roma 2010) 147–196; FACELLA ET AL. in press; A. ARNESE ET AL., Contessa Entellina: foto aeree 1955–2000. Persistenze e mutamenti nel paesaggio naturale ed antropico. In: C. AMPOLO (a cura di), Sicilia occidentale. Studi, rassegne, ricerche (Pisa 2012) 121–128; FACELLA ET AL. 2012. The project integrated also data of a previous unsystematic survey, carried out by M. G. Canzanella (CANZANELLA 1993). In the project, A. Maccari studied Italian Terra Sigillata and Roman bricks and tiles, M. A. Vaggioli African Red Slip Ware A, A/D and C, non-African Early Imperial amphorae and cooking wares, A. Facella and M. Perna African Red Slip Ware D and African lamps, P. Puppo Eastern Terra Sigillata, coarse ware, non-African Roman lamps, glasses and millstones, D. Zirone African and Late Antique amphorae. The present paper is the result of the authors' joint work, coordinated by A. Facella and M.A. Vaggioli.

² In the charts the number of sherds of each pottery class is reported. In survey operations, each fragment collected can be roughly considered as a single specimen, apart from exceptional cases, like contiguous fragments (usually with fresh fracture), counted of course as one specimen.

³ In the Vaccarizzo Casa Grimaldi chart (**fig. 2**) the amount of coarse ware is unusually small: could it be due to a too selective collection in the survey (by M. G. Canzanella)? This problem has to be taken into consideration when dealing with pottery from the site.

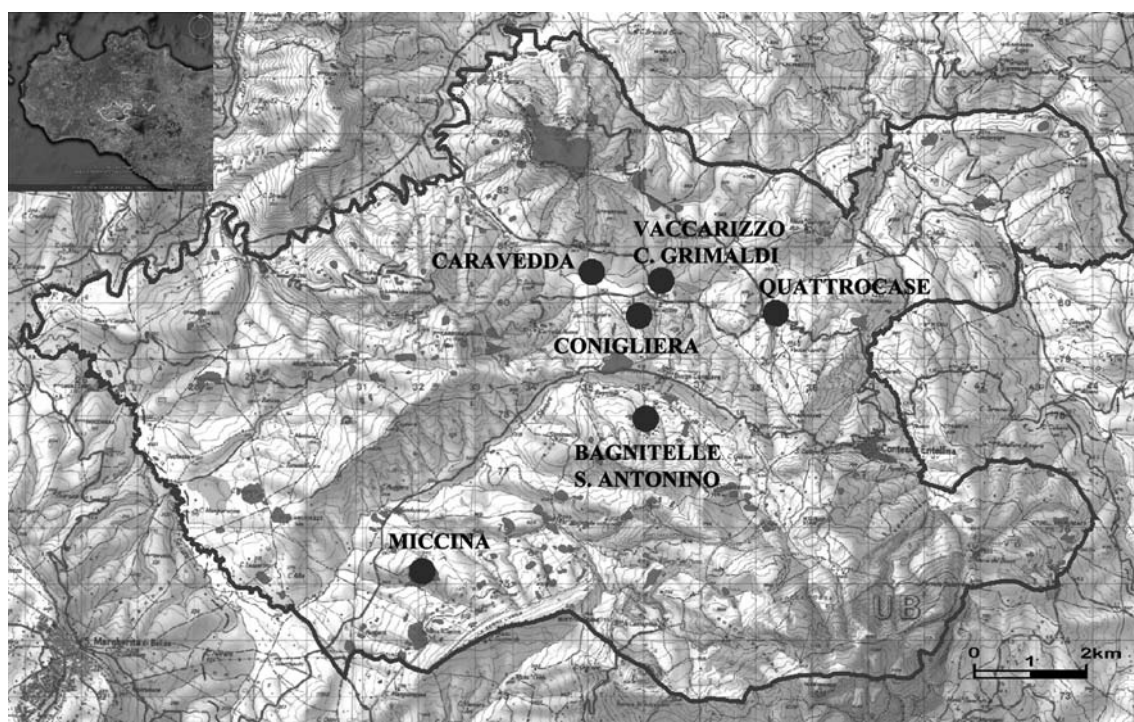


Fig. 1. Contessa Entellina: the investigated area and the six sites selected as case studies.

widespread in Imperial and Late Antique Sicily,⁴ and consisting of a combination of curved tiles (first flanged and then, from late 5th century, decorated with combed lines).⁵ Such curved tiles were found in very large amounts, while the lack of flat tiles of the Roman period is almost absolute: among our sites, just one fragment of the flange of a flat tile comes from Conigliera, and in the whole survey only one other specimen, a fragment of flange again, has been found (site 162: Lazzarino).

As for the Early Imperial period, interesting data come from Italian Terra Sigillata (ITS). The general tendency of western and central Sicily to get its supplies predominantly from the market of northern Etruria, and only to a lesser extent from Puteoli, is well known.⁶ Nevertheless, our six sites reveal a diversified situation: some of them (Miccina, Conigliera) revealed only Etrurian ITS, in the site of Vaccarizzo both Etrurian and Puteolan productions were found, with a predominance of the former, and at least in one site – Quattrocasse – the ITS came entirely from Puteoli (fig. 3). Even when recognizing that these data are often made up from just a few sherds, it seems nonetheless that different trading channels were used in the investigated area: otherwise, a unique way of distribution would have produced a more homogeneous pattern. This picture requires an explanation that is not easy to find. If ITS supplies from Campania and

Etruria followed different yet coexisting ways, it would be interesting to understand the motivations for close sites to use different channels. On the other hand, we cannot deny that the two productions were imported in partially different periods: as a matter of fact, the Puteolan ITS found in Quattrocasse dates from Tiberian to Flavian ages, while the Etrurian one from Conigliera is slightly earlier, with just a brief overlap⁷.

Examining the entire picture of Early Imperial fine wares (fig. 4), we can note that Eastern Sigillata (ES) is infrequent in the Entella territory. Among our case studies, only the sites of Miccina, Conigliera and Caravedda revealed several sherds of ESA (fig. 2); from the whole survey, we have recorded only 15 ESA sherds. Even more rare is ESB: only 4 sherds from the entire survey. One fragment of ESD (Cypriot Sigillata) was also collected. Not surprisingly, it comes from the site where we found the highest number of ESA sherds (4 out of 15 in total).⁸ Moreover, in Miccina there is a fragment of red glazed ware of possible Sicilian production (1st century AD), on the basis of comparison with

⁴ The system was never abandoned in Middle Ages and Modern Age, being still in use in present-day Sicily.

⁵ R. J. A. WILSON, *Bricks and tiles in Roman Sicily*. In: A. Mc Whirr (ed.), *Roman Brick and Tile. Studies in manufacture, distribution and use in western Empire*, BAR Internat. Ser. 68 (Oxford 1979) 11–43 types B and C; *id.*, *Iscrizioni su manufatti siciliani in età ellenistico-romana*. In: *Sicilia Epigraphica. Atti del Convegno Internazionale*, Erice, 15–18 ottobre 1998. Quad. ASNP 8, 1999, 531–555 in part. 538.

⁶ POLITO 2000, 87–89.

⁷ A. Polito notes that ITS distribution in Sicily sees in its initial phase (40–15 BC) an absolute predominance of the Arretine ware, followed by the arrival of productions from central Italy; the latter ones, however, never totally replace the Etrurian market (POLITO 2000, 87–88).

⁸ It has been noted that Cypriot Sigillata trade in the Western Mediterranean follows the ways of ETS A, but on a smaller scale (J. W. HAYES, *Sigillate orientali*. In: A. Carandini (a cura di), *Atlante delle Forme Ceramiche I. Ceramica Fine Romana nel Bacino Mediterraneo [Medio e Tardo Impero]*. EAA [Roma 1981] 81). On diffusion of ETS in Sicily, see D. MALFITANA/J. POBLOME/J. LUND, *Eastern Sigillata A in Italy: a socio-economic evaluation*. *Bull. Ant. Beschaving* 80, 2005, 199–212; see also A. MANDRUZZATO, *Ceramica nella Sicilia romana. Officine locali ed importazioni dal II secolo a.C. al I sec.d.C.* *Thalassa* 1, 2004, 171–183.

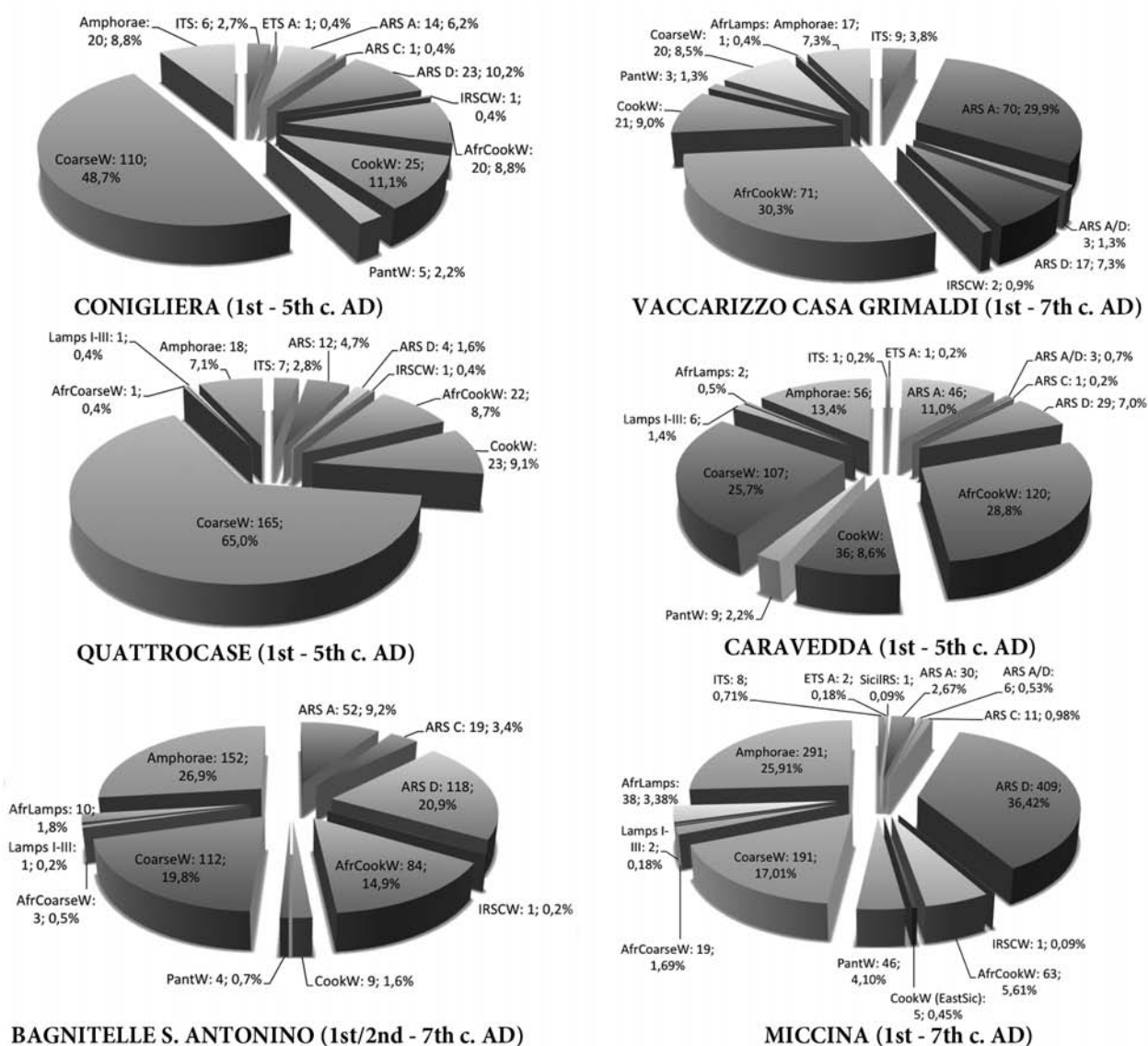


Fig. 2. Imperial and Late Antique pottery from the six sites.

fabrics from Termini Imerese. From the rest of the survey, 12 other specimens can be attributed to this class.⁹

In the Early Imperial Age, the number of non-African amphorae from the whole territory is very poor: only 28 specimens have been identified, mainly Dressel 2/4 and Dressel 21/22. Some of the Dressel 2/4 are of reduced size, typical of numerous Early Imperial productions (also from

Sicily¹⁰); similarly, most of the Dressel 21/22 belong to the small model (A) of the two sizes produced in Alcamo.¹¹ It has been supposed that this change in size might be connected, at least as far as the wine amphorae are concerned, with a variation in customers' preference.¹²

African cooking ware (fig. 5) is well attested in the territory from 1st–2nd to 4th–5th century. Our sites show that this class was imported mainly from the Carthaginian region (both culinaire A and C/A¹³); pottery from Byzacena is poorly attested, and is represented both by typical Byzacena

⁹ Red glazed ware of Sicilian production (called 'presigillata' in the study of S. C. STONE, *Presigillata* from Morgantina. *Am. Journal Arch.* 91, 1987, 85–103; see also R. J. A. WILSON, *Trade and Industry in Sicily during the Roman Empire*. ANRW II,11,1 [Berlin/New York 1988] 207–305 in part. 240–245) is not well documented yet: besides Termini Imerese (Termini Imerese 1993, 252, 369–370) and Tindari (A. PRATOLONGO, *Ceramica a vernice rossa di produzione siciliana*. In: R. Leone/U. Spigo (a cura di), *Tyndaris I. Ricerche nel settore occidentale: campagne di scavo 1993–2004* [Palermo 2008] 149–160), further specimens have been published by G. BIONDI, *Nuovi materiali di età ellenistica e romana dall'area del Calvario*. In: G. Rizza (a cura di), *Scavi e ricerche a Centuripe* (Catania 2002) 170–187 in part. 175–176; *id.*, *Centuripe. Indagini archeologiche e prospettive di ricerca* (Enna 2010) 30.

¹⁰ See in general PANELLA 1989, 158–160; for Eastern Sicily: M.C. LENTINI, *Naxos di Sicilia dall'età ellenistica all'età bizantina*. In: Lentini 2001, 13–39 in part. 20; OLLÀ 2001; D. MALFATTANA ET AL., *Roman Sicily Project (RSP): Ceramics and trade. A multidisciplinary approach to the study of material culture assemblages*. First overview: the transport amphorae evidence. *Facta*, 2, 2008, 127–192 in part. 138.

¹¹ GIORGETTI/GONZÁLES MUÑOZ 2011, 104.

¹² PANELLA 1989, 159–160; OLLÀ 2001, 49.

¹³ Identified types: Hayes 23A–B; Hayes 196–197; Hayes 181A; Ostia I 269–270; Ostia II 306.

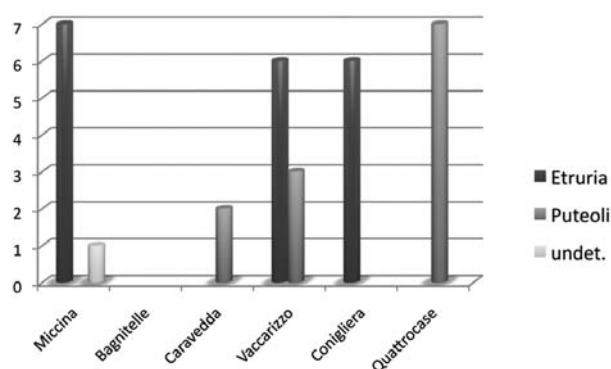


Fig. 3. Italian Terra Sigillata from the six sites.

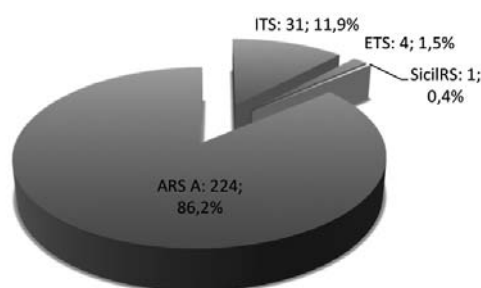


Fig. 4. Early Imperial fine wares from the six sites.

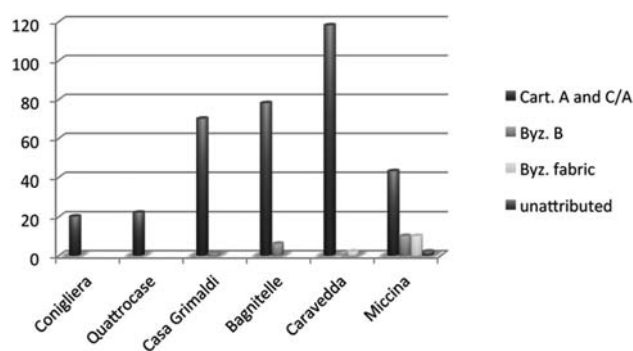


Fig. 5. African cooking ware from the six sites.

forms (culinaire B¹⁴) and by forms of Carthaginian tradition, but manufactured in Byzacena factories (Hayes 23B, Hayes 196, Hayes 197¹⁵). Byzacena pottery is well attested only at Miccina (20 sherds, almost one third of the whole African cooking ware), being absent or rare at the other five sites.

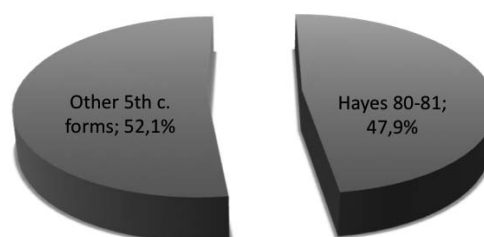
At Caravedda, located alongside the Vaccarizzo torrent, rough fragments of burnt clay and various wasters (sherds showing deformations, air bubbles, cracks and colour changes caused by firing errors) prove the existence of a kiln of Imperial Age.¹⁶ Comparison between wasters and the rest of the sherds collected on the site surface permitted the identification of several forms of coarse ware produced in the kiln.

¹⁴ Identified types: Hayes 181–185.

¹⁵ BONIFAY 2004, 211; 225–227.

¹⁶ The kiln had been already identified by CANZANELLA 1993, 246, who mentions wasters and fragments of burnt clay scattered in large amounts over a small area.

BODY SHERDS INCLUDED



BODY SHERDS NOT INCLUDED

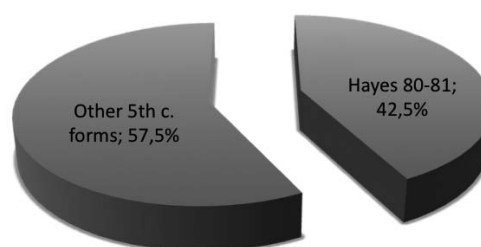


Fig. 6. Hayes 80–81 and 5th century African Red Slip D ware in the investigated area.

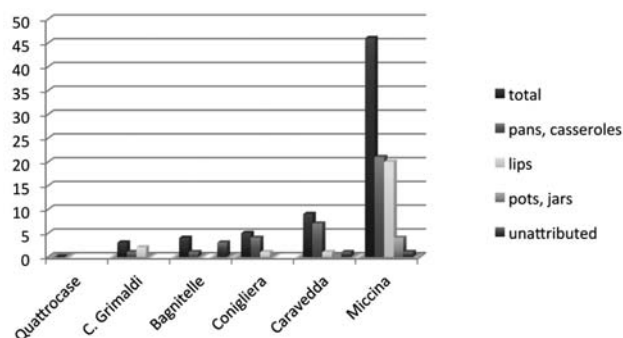


Fig. 7. Pantellerian Ware from the six sites.

The pottery was well made, as shown by the homogeneous firing conditions of well-fired specimens and by the fine texture of clay. The fabric is light red (2.5YR 7/6), with small chamotte-like inclusions and a sharp fracture.

The kiln seems to have been active for a long period. Several bottoms of closed shapes (jugs and jars) possibly belong to an initial stage of production, dating back to around the 2nd century AD¹⁷; other forms, especially open shapes (plates, basins, bowls) seem to find comparisons within 4th–

¹⁷ Although some forms of coarse ware (in particular jugs, olpai and jars) show continuity in time, however the bottoms in fig. 9, 8–15 can be dated to the Early Imperial period: Termini Imerese 1993, 127 n. 976–977; 234 tav. 123 (for n. 4 and 5); E. PAPI, *Ceramica comune*, in Settefinestre III. I reperti (Roma 1985) 245 tav. 66,10 (for n. 8); 66,18 (for n. 7); G. OLCESE, *Ceramiche comuni a Roma e in età romana: produzione, circolazione e tecnologia*. Doc. Arch. 23 (Mantova 2003) 97; 141 tav. 30,6.

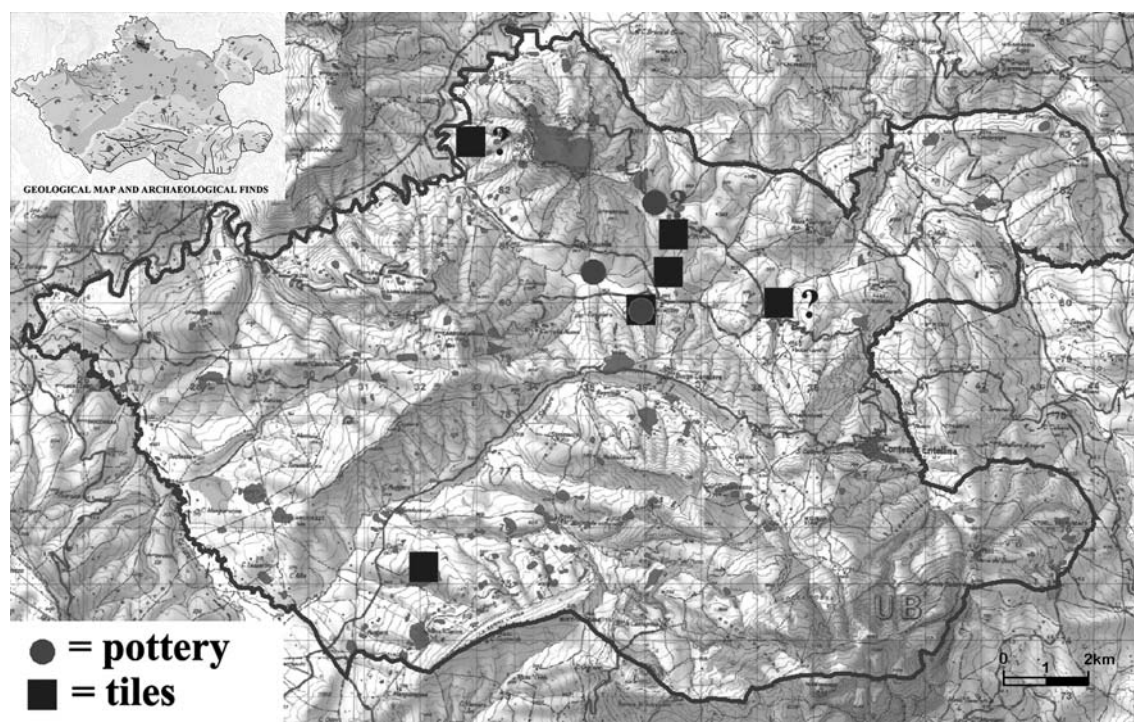


Fig. 8. Roman kilns in the investigated area. Top left: geological map of the territory.

5th century ware¹⁸ (fig. 9). Only excavations could lead to a more precise chronology.

The identification of a coarse ware kiln dating back to the Roman Imperial Age is, of course, essential for a better understanding of the dynamics of production and craft activities in our territory.¹⁹ Regarding that, a kiln producing bricks and coarse ware in the Late Republican Age is documented at the site of Conigliera²⁰ (our first case study), and wasters, no longer verifiable, are reported by M. G. Canzanella²¹ at the site 063 (Pizzillo 1). Other clues to the presence of Roman kilns refer to roof tile wasters. In general, evidence appears to be concentrated along the valley of the Vaccarizzo torrent, in territory rich in sandy clay (fig. 8).

At Conigliera, a possible indirect clue that pottery production was ongoing in the Imperial Age is the presence of bowls imitating the shape of Hayes 9 in African Red Slip

Ware A; this form is also present elsewhere in the territory, such as at site 154 (Duchessa 2, two specimens) (fig. 10). A local production at Conigliera is also suggested by the presence of peculiar forms of Roman cooking ware (pans, jars, pots),²² with fabrics similar to those of the Hellenistic pottery produced at Entella²³.

Moving on to Late Antiquity, about 1590 fragments of African Red Slip (ARS) D were found across the whole survey. Miccina alone provides 410 sherds, and 120 come from Bagnitelle S. Antonino. As for production centres, we identified above all 5th–6th century ware from Oudhna and Sidi Khalifa workshops. From Oudhna come most of Hayes 91C and 99A forms, from Sidi Khalifa most of the Hayes 88, together with some Hayes 61B, 87A, 91 and 103. Several Hayes 50 B n. 61 produced in Nabeul-Sidi Zahrani ateliers were also identified.²⁴

In terms of dietary habits, it is highly interesting to note the massive presence of Hayes 80–81 forms (especially 81A) in all 5th century contexts.²⁵ In the investigated area, 357 fragments of Hayes 80–81 cups were discovered, and among them 251 of Hayes 81A. Hayes 80–81 cups therefore compose 47.9% of the 746 fragments of ARS D that can be

¹⁸ The basin with small digital impressions on the outer rim (fig. 9,2) can be compared with a basin from the kiln in Alcamo (GIORGETTI/GONZÁLES MURO 2011, 160; 209 tav. 11,64 [half 4th–mid 5th century AD]) as well as the basin with thickened rim inside (fig. 9,3) is similar to an Alcamo basin with a small pendent rim (ibid. 160; 209 tav. 11,63); the mortar with a rim pendent (fig. 9,5) recalls the shape of mortars of 4th AD. The flat bottom in fig. 9,16 recalls the shape of flat-bottomed jugs (M. C. PARELLO/A. AMICO/F. D'ANGELO, L'insediamento alla foce del Verdura in territorio di Sciacca (Agrigento – Sicilia – Italia). I materiali ceramici. In: LRCW 3, 283–291 in part. 284; 288 fig. 3,10).

¹⁹ In western Sicily, craft activities similar to those identified at Caravedda were discovered, e.g., at Alcamo Marina (GIORGETTI/GONZÁLES MURO 2011), where different phases of production have been distinguished, from the end of 1st century BC to the middle of 5th century AD. For other evidence of Imperial and Late Roman kilns in western Sicily, see now G. OLCESE, Atlante dei siti di produzione ceramica (Toscana, Lazio, Campania e Sicilia). Immensa Aequora 2 (Roma 2012) 390; 394–396; 517; 519; 525 (with bibliography).

²⁰ CORRETTI ET AL. 2006, 572.

²¹ CANZANELLA 1993, 268.

²² See FACELLA ET AL. 2012, 159 figg. 281,17; 282, 2–4.

²³ On ceramic production at Entella in Archaic and Hellenistic Age, see A. CORRETTI/C. CAPELLI, Entella. SAS 3. Le anfore. In: Quarte Giornate Internazionali di Studi sull'area elima. Atti del Convegno, Erice, 1– dicembre 2000 (Pisa 2003), 87–341; G. MONTANA ET AL., Ceramic Production in the Indigenous Settlement of Entella (Western Sicily) during the Archaic Age. In: I. Turbanti Memmi (ed.), Proceedings of the 37th International Symposium on Archaeometry, Siena, Italy, 12th–16th May 2008 (Heidelberg 2011) 113–118.

²⁴ On Miccina, see FACELLA ET AL. in press.

²⁵ This form, rare at Carthage and well attested to the East of Cape Bon, is supposed to be produced in Eastern Zeugitana (BONIFAY 2004, 173).

approximately dated to the 5th century; even excluding body sherds, they form 42.5 % of all 5th century fragments (fig. 6). The shape of the cup, fairly deep and measuring some 15–20 cm in diameter, points clearly to individual consumption of liquids or semi-liquids. Scholars tend to believe that these cups, at least in continental Italy, were scarcely used in the countryside, partly because of the custom to serve food on a single large common plate.²⁶ Our data reveal a very different picture, which finds analogies at present only with big cities such as Rome or Carthage.²⁷ The lack of data from nearby areas precludes us from understanding whether the picture of our territory is peculiar, or if, instead, it is part of a more widespread phenomenon involving a larger area, such as Western Sicily (or even the entire island).

It could also be of interest to note that no Phocaean sigillata (LRC) was found in our case studies, and a total of only 4 fragments of LRC comes from the entire surveyed area. This picture fits the general scarcity of Eastern importations in Late Antiquity, as testified by transport amphorae (see below).

Pantellerian Ware (PW), fairly widespread in the territory, tends to replace African cooking ware after the 3rd century AD. As we can see (fig. 7), PW is absent or very scarce in most of the six sites, the only exception being Miccina. Shallow forms are usual (pans and casseroles with their lids²⁸); only at Miccina there are deeper forms (pots and jars²⁹).

At Miccina there is also evidence of cooking pottery belonging to a late production imitating PW forms (pans of Guiducci G2.2 type),³⁰ but manufactured in eastern Sicily (area of Catania), a production which seems first to coexist with, and then to replace PW, possibly during the 6th century.³¹ The same fabric is detectable in some specimens from Bagnitelle (lids similar to Guiducci L1 type and a pot of Guiducci A type³²) (fig. 11).

Among our case studies, only Bagnitelle and Miccina provide a significant quantity of transport amphorae. At Bagnitelle most of the amphorae are of African production (122 fragments out of 152) (fig. 12). Only spatheion 1 (9 specimens) and Keay 62 (6 specimens) are present in a significant number.³³ The only amphorae of non-African origin identified with certainty are a rim of Dressel 21/22, a body sherd of LRA 2 and a rim probably belonging to a Keay 52. Types belonging to Late Empire and Late Antiquity prevail strongly.³⁴ At Miccina 291

amphora sherds were collected: 205 are African, 9 come from Eastern Mediterranean, 23 are probably Sicilian or Italian (fig. 13). The supremacy of African imports (more than 70%) is definitely evident both at Bagnitelle and at Miccina.³⁵

Even more overwhelming, for both sites, is the quantity of African amphorae from between the 5th and 7th century (figs. 14–15).³⁶ Expanding this analysis to the entire territory for the period from the 5th to the 7th century, results are similar: 320 fragments of African amphorae, 28 of Eastern Mediterranean (LRA 1 and 2), 7 Italian/Sicilian (Keay 52) (fig. 16).³⁷

It must be remarked, however, that information provided by amphora sherds from the survey collection may have no great significance for detecting the cultural identity of the settlers of the area. Reuse phenomena, affected by fortuitous and functional causes (e. g. availability of unbroken or still usable objects for precise aims) and scarcely related to conscious or unconscious selection based on cultural factors, are highly possible.³⁸

Strong similarities with findings in coastal sites of southwestern Sicily show that African amphorae (containing olive-oil, *salsamenta*, wine?) and pottery present in our territory could have arrived from North-Africa to some of the great harbours of western and southern Sicily, probably *Aquae Labodes* (rather than *Lilybaeum* or *Agrirentum*). From there, the commodities were re-distributed to minor coastal market-sites

²⁶ FONTANA 1991, 115–119; G. VOLPE ET AL., Ceramiche e circolazione delle merci in Apulia tra Tardoantico e Altomedioevo. In: S. Gelichi/C. Negrelli (a cura di), *La circolazione delle ceramiche nell'Adriatico tra tarda antichità e altomedioevo* (Mantova 2007) 353–374 in part. 355; G. VOLPE ET AL., Produzioni locali ed importazioni nella Puglia centro-settentrionale tardoantica. In: LRCW 3, 643–656 in part. 644; see also S. FONTANA, Le “imitazioni” della sigillata africana e le ceramiche da mensa italiche tardo-antiche. In: L. Sagui (a cura di), *Ceramica in Italia: VI–VII secolo. Atti del convegno in onore di John W. Hayes*, Roma 11–13 maggio 1995 (Firenze 1998) 83–100 in part. 95–97.

²⁷ See FONTANA 1991, 119.

²⁸ Pan type G, casserole types M1 and M2, lid types L1, L2.1, L2.2: GUIDUCCI 2003 figg. 4–5.

²⁹ Pot type A, jar type O1: GUIDUCCI 2003 fig. 3.

³⁰ Ibid. fig. 5.

³¹ FACELLA ET AL. 2012, 165 fig. 286.10.

³² GUIDUCCI 2003 fig. 3 and 5.

³³ The other African types attested are Africana III C (1 base), spatheion 2A (1 rim), Keay 35 B (1 rim), Keay 55 (1 rim), Hammamet 3 B (1 rim) and Keay 61 (2 rims).

³⁴ Bagnitelle S. Antonino was previously surveyed by G. Canzanella, who published most of the findings: see CANZANELLA 1993, 290–300.

³⁵ Most common African types from Miccina are Africana I B, Tripolitanian III, Africana II B and C, pseudo-Dressel 2/4, Africana III A, B and C, spatheion 1 and 2 A, Keay 35 A and B, Keay 59, Keay 57, Hammamet 2/3, spatheion 2 B, Keay 55, Keay 62, Keay 61, Sidi Jdidi 1. From Eastern Mediterranean come LRA 1 and 2. Among Italian and Sicilian productions, Dressel 21/22, Dressel 2/4 or small Gauloise 4, Keay 52 and Caronia Marina type have been identified (each class documented only by 1 or 2 specimens).

³⁶ At Bagnitelle, only 24 specimens dating back to 5th–7th century have been identified with certainty: 22 of African amphorae (see above, note 30), 1 from Eastern Mediterranean (LRA 2), and 1 from Italy/Sicily (Keay 52). In detail, this is the pattern of amphorae from Miccina from 5th–7th century: 142 african amphorae, 9 East Mediterranean (LRA 1 and 2), 1 Keay 52. Amongst African amphorae there are 9 fragments of Africana III C, 98 of spatheion 1, 1 of Keay 59, 5 of spatheion 2, 1 of Hammamet 2/3, 4 of Keay 35A, 31 of Keay 35B, 6 of Keay 57, 2 of Keay 55, 7 of Keay 62, 1 of Keay 61, 1 of Keay 34, 6 of Sidi Sdidi 1, 1 of Byzantine “amphore globulaire” type Castrum Perti. This ratio seems to be distinctive in sites of central and western Sicily of Roman Imperial period: see RIZZO/ZAMBITO 2010 and V. CAMINNECI/C. FRANCO/G. GALIOTO, L'insediamento tardoantico di contrada Carabollace (Sciacca-Agrigento, Sicilia, Italia): primi dati sui rinvenimenti ceramici. In: LRCW 3, 273–282; RIZZO/ZAMBITO 2010, 294. Also notice the presence at Cignana of Sidi Jdidi 1 amphorae (hardly attested in Sicilian sites, either because of the actual rarity of imports, or of the lack of full publications of the excavations): the type is quite well attested in the territory of Contessa Entellina.

³⁷ The identified types are: 21 fragments of Africana III C, 1 of Keay 59, 1 of Keay 39, 166(!) of spatheion 1, 1 of Keay 27 B, 48 of Keay 35 B, 7 of Keay 35 A, 13 of Keay 57, 11 of spatheion 2, 1 of Keay 8B, 3 of Keay 26 of Keay 62, 1 of Hammamet 2 or 3, 1 of Hammamet 3 B, 4 of Keay 34, 4 of Keay 61, 8 of Sidi Jdidi 1, 4 probably of Sidi Jdidi 2, 1 of Byzantine “amphore globulaire” type Castrum Perti.

³⁸ These circumstances have already been pointed out in FACELLA ET AL. 2012. About reuse of amphorae see J. T. PEÑA, Roman Pottery in the Archaeological Record (Cambridge/New York 2007) 61–118. See also R. J. A. WILSON, Trade and Industry in Sicily during the Roman Empire. ANRW II, 11.1 (Berlin/New York 1988) 207–305 in part. 264; id., Rural Settlement in Hellenistic and Roman Sicily: Excavations at Campanaio (AG), 1994–1998. Papers Brit. School Rome 68, 2000, 337–369 in part. 341; RIZZO/ZAMBITO 2010, 294, on re-use of amphorae and on residual amphora types in later chronological contexts in Sicilian rural sites.

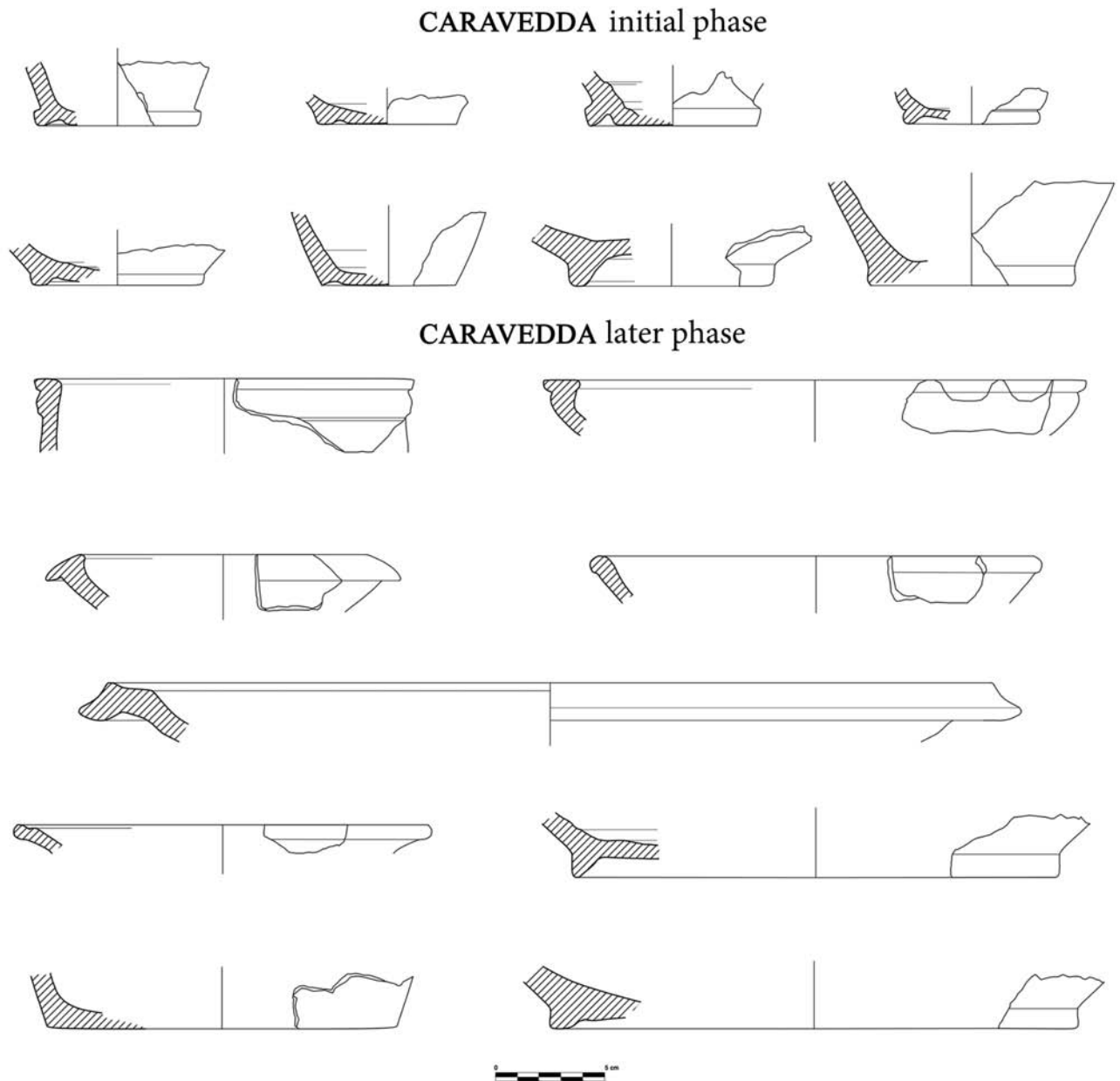


Fig. 9. Pottery evidence from Caravedda kiln.

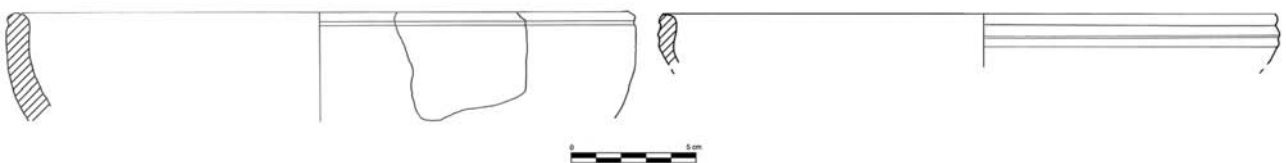


Fig. 10. Imitations of Hayes 9 from the sites of Conigliera (left) and Duchessa (right).

and then transported inland, mainly through river valleys: in our case the Belice valley could have played a primary role (**fig. 18**). Moreover, according to recent studies, from the Vandal period onwards, trade contacts between African sites of production and Sicilian centres of consumption could have become less hierarchical and more simplified, thus promoting the role of minor harbours (mouth of Verdura, Carboj and,

maybe, Carabollace – unless the latter is identifiable with *Aquae Labodes* itself³⁹).

³⁹ V. CAMINNECI, Tra il mare e il fiume. Dinamiche insediative nella Sicilia occidentale in età tardoantica: il villaggio in contrada Carabollace (Sciacca, Agrigento, Sicilia, Italia). In: *FastiOnLineDocuments&Research* 2010, 213 in part. 8–13 (with bibliography).

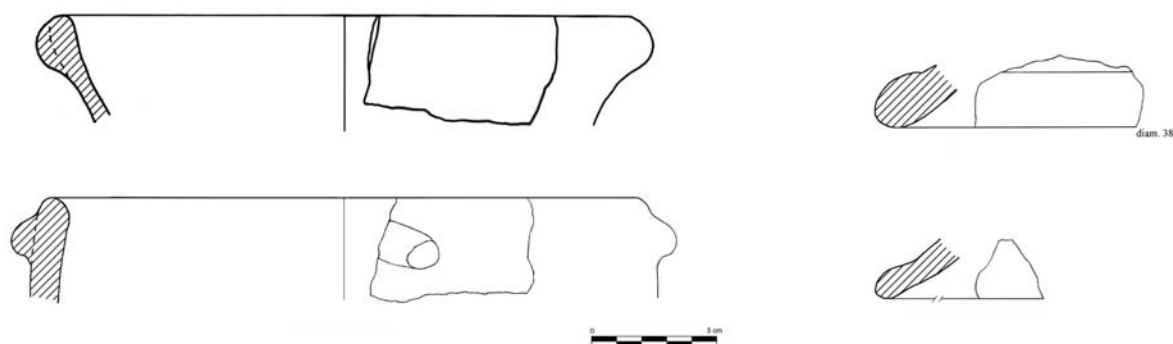


Fig. 11. Cooking ware imitating PW forms from the sites of Miccina (pan) and Bagnitelle (pot and lids).

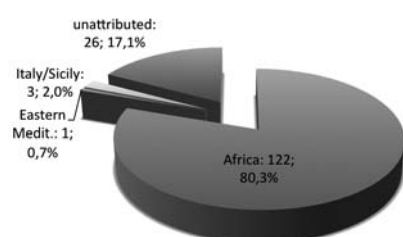


Fig. 12. Bagnitelle: Imperial and Late Antique transport amphorae.

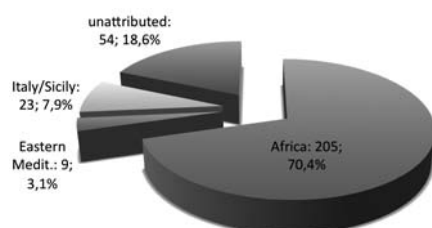


Fig. 13. Miccina: Imperial and Late Antique transport amphorae.

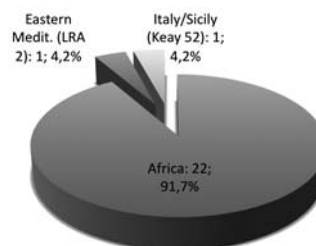


Fig. 14. Bagnitelle: 5th–7th century AD transport amphorae.

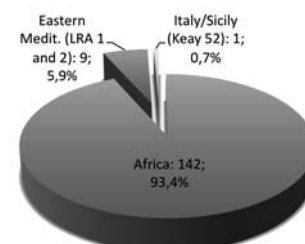


Fig. 15. Miccina: 5th–7th century AD transport amphorae.

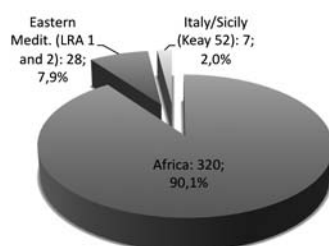


Fig. 16. Total of 5th–7th century AD transport amphorae from the investigated area.

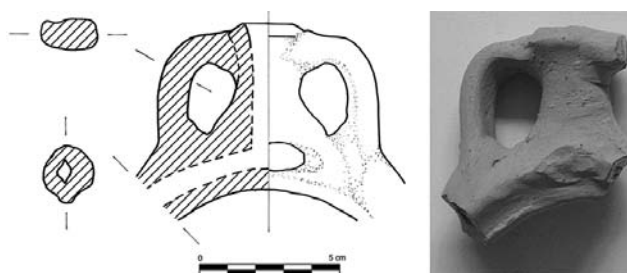


Fig. 17. Pilgrim's flask from Miccina.

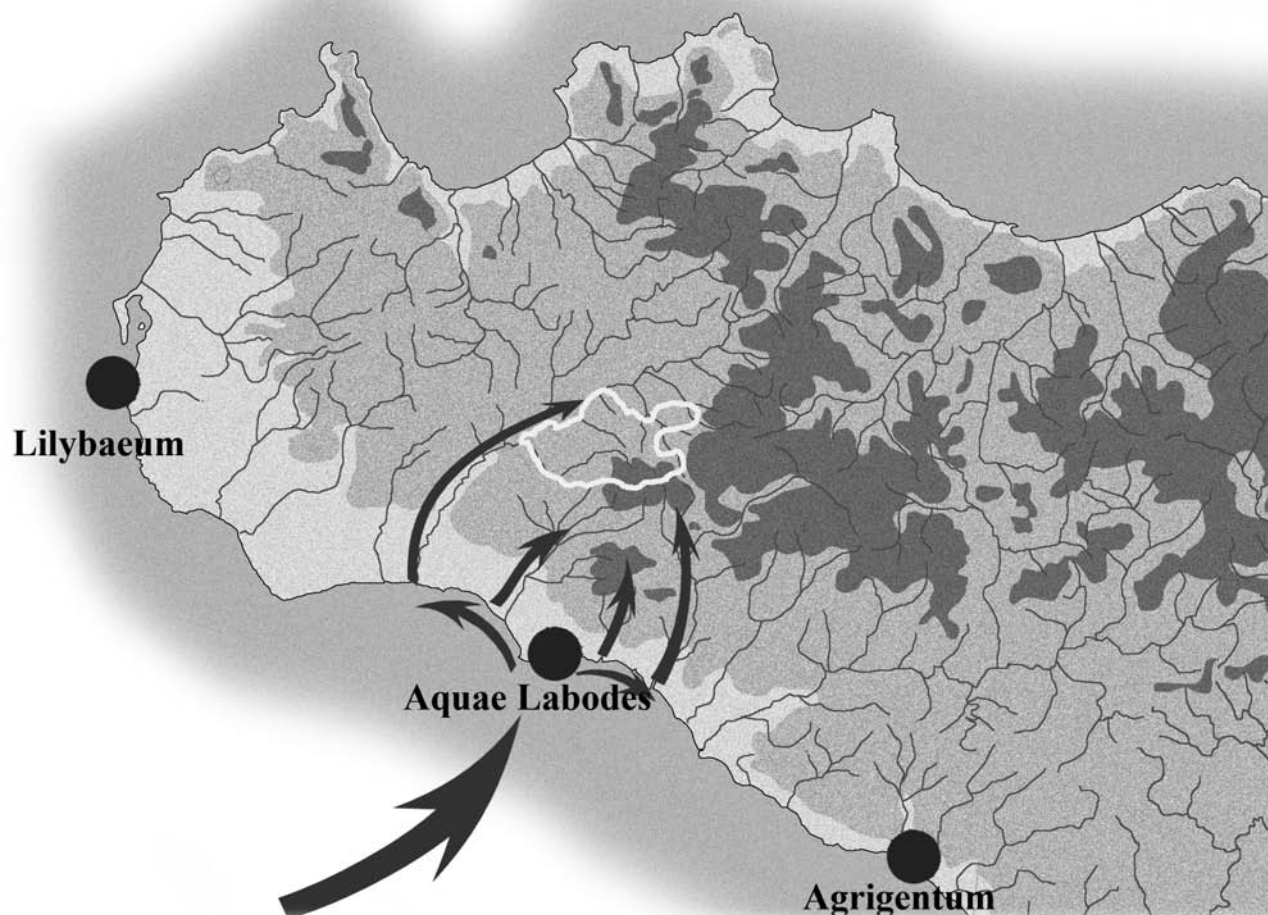


Fig. 18. Trade routes from North Africa to Contessa Entellina territory.

In Late Antiquity the supply of pottery from the Eastern Mediterranean seems to be very limited: this is not surprising in western Sicily, where, from the Middle Imperial Age onwards, the massive influx of African wares matches well with the scanty arrival of products from other trade channels. A partial exception is provided by the site of Miccina, standing out in Late Antiquity (among other aspects) not only for the significant evidence of African coarse wares and Byzacena cooking wares, but also for the presence of peculiar typologies of Eastern artefacts, namely a *labrum* in dark grey stone (4th–5th century) and a two-handled ‘pilgrim’s flask’ (fig. 17) with flattened spherical body and cylindrical neck (6th–7th century), both probably from Syria⁴⁰. It is still to be determined whether this supposed exceptionality of

Miccina is due to its larger size, with a site-surface rich in scattered artefacts including rare objects, or, instead, to more complex routes of supply, related to the typology and function of the settlement, or even maybe to aspects of the settlers’ cultural identity, as some findings (flask, *labrum*) could reveal.

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⁴⁰ See FACELLA ET AL. 2012, 165; 168 fig. 286,7.

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