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HELLENISTIC AND ROMAN FINE WARES FROM THE BYZANTINE CONTEXTS IN TYANA/KEMERHISAR (SOUTH CAPPADOCIA)

In 2005 the Ancient Topography section of the University of Padua began a series of investigations on the northern slopes of the höyük at Kemerhisar, the ancient *Tyana*. The oldest structures brought to light during the course of this research were a Christian complex together with a series of shops leaning against it, dating from the late Roman/early Byzantine period. Both the Christian buildings and the shops were extensively damaged by subsequent settlements, particularly during the Seljuk and Ottoman periods.

The history of *Tyana*, however, is considerably older than this, as has been attested by various sources.² Its origin dates back to at least the Iron Age, and in the 3rd century BC it was probably re-founded by the philhellene Ariarathes V, who began to mint coins bearing the name of the city.³ A variety of information about the civic institutions and activities during the Hellenistic era has been offered by a number of sources. In Roman times the town was famous for being the birthplace of Apollonius, a magician and philosopher who was especially admired by Iulia Domna and Caracalla, and this led to the emperor granting the status of *colonia* to *Tyana*. The biography of Apollonius, written by Philostratus of Lemnos, dates back to the 3rd century: it also contains a description of the monuments of the town and its surroundings.⁴ From the 4th century the sources deal mainly with the role assumed by the bishopric of *Tyana*, whose main church was probably the largest of the buildings identified during the excavations.

As always in contexts where human settlement has been continuous, the oldest layers were considerably damaged and/or reutilised in more recent buildings. It is therefore common to find materials related to earlier phases in the later layers. In the course of the last seven years of research, numerous potteries have been found which relate to earlier periods than that of the church. In these circumstances the common ware dating from Hellenistic and Roman times is not easily individualised. However, the decorated forms or those with particular surface treatments allow us to open a window which, albeit partial, nevertheless offers some insight into the more ancient times and likewise into the trade routes in this centre of central Anatolia.

Eastern Sigillata A (ESA)

This pottery is characterized by fine granular and light coloured clay, ranging from yellow to pink, and coated with a thick red-brown or red slip.⁵ In *Tyana* this form is common from the Hellenistic period until the productions of the 2nd century AD; the potteries are homogeneous with yellow ware in the earlier period and light pink ware in the Roman era.

The Hellenistic series, in all the examples identified, belongs to the first group described by Hayes: “a faintly granular light yellow-cream body coated with a sharply contrasting medium to dark red gloss.”⁶ The Atlante 3/Tell Anafa (TA) 13 form⁷ is the most common and it dates from the late 2nd to the 1st century BC: many rims in poor condition were found (**fig. 1,1–2**). Also pertinent to this form, in all probability, is the shard with an Isis stamp impressed between grooves and rouletting wheel-made bands (**fig. 1,3; 4,3**) and the small fragment of a ring foot with a rouletting band (**fig. 1,4**).

Only one example of the Atlante 17B/TA 26⁸ form has been identified so far, which dates either from the second half of the 2nd or the early 1st century BC; it is a rim of moulded interior *mastos* with horizontal ridged lines and an ovolo row (**fig. 1,5**). There is also a triangular rim cup, perhaps TA 29 form,⁹ dating from the late 2nd or early 1st century BC (**fig. 1,6**).

The early Roman series is the most common at *Tyana*, though the types are usually present in only one fragment. Compared to the earlier production, these wares are predominantly light pink; only **figure 1,8** has yellow ware as in the Hellenistic production; and **figure 1,10** has a more of a yellow-beige colour as a result of overfiring.

In the group dated from the end of the 1st century BC until the 1st century AD there are Atlante 28/TA 22 (**fig. 1,7**) and Atlante 29 (**fig. 1,8**) dishes.¹⁰ The most common forms are the Atlante 35¹¹ dishes decorated with rouletting bands on the top of the rim (**fig. 1,9–10**) and the wall with a flat step (**fig. 1,11**), this form is dated around the middle of the 1st century AD. Attested by more shards is also the form Atlante

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² BERGES/NOLLÉ 2000.

³ COHEN 1995, 57–58; 378–379; 416; 428–429; 435–436; CASSIA 2004, 238–245.

⁴ In this regard, see: DZIŁSKA 1986, 56–62.

⁵ HAYES 1985, 9–41; ID. 2008, 13–21.

⁶ Ibid. 14.

⁷ HAYES 1985, 14–15; WARNER SLANE 1997, 285–297; 340.

⁸ HAYES 1985, 21–22; WARNER SLANE 1997, 314–315 FW 218.

⁹ TARSUS 1950, 175 fig. 188; 290; WARNER SLANE 1997, 318–319.

¹⁰ TARSUS 1950, 181 fig. 192; HAYES 1985, 27–28; WARNER SLANE 1997, 306–307; ABADIE-REYNAL 2003, 102 pl. 71,1.

¹¹ TARSUS 1950, 241–242 fig. 192; HAYES 1985, 30; WARNER SLANE 1997, 306–307.

36 (fig. 1,12–13) of which only parts of their wall and base are preserved: this form is dated to the second half of the 1st century AD. Less common are the Atlante 45¹² bowls (fig. 1,14) produced during the first half of the 1st century AD; Atlante 47/TA 34¹³ (fig. 1,15) with rouletting decorations attested from the years 10 to 70 AD and Atlante 51 (fig. 1,16–17) with rouletting bands on the rim: this form is dated between the last thirty years of the 1st century and the first twenty years of the 2nd century AD. Most of the walls and bases are probably part of the early Roman ESA series. The small fragments do not enable us to identify the precise types into which they might be categorized, but the characteristic textures are typical of this production.

The middle Roman ESA are uncommon; the shards are fine with a light-pink colour and dark red matt slip: fragment 18 (fig. 1,18) has an accumulation of slip near the rim. The attested forms date from the last quarter of the 1st to the first half of the 2nd century AD. Small fragments of rim dish type Atlante 54¹⁴ (fig. 1,18) were found, and also the ring foot Atlante 57 (fig. 1,19) with at least four rows of rouletting bands decoration and traces of a stamp, possibly in *planta pedis*, at the centre. The base shard probably also belongs to this series which, perhaps, is identifiable as the Atlante 62 (fig. 1,20) form.

At the present stage of research in *Tyana* only one ESA close form shard has so far been identified. The ring foot 21 (fig. 1,21) has fine ware and pink fabric; it has no slip applied on the inner surface. The outer surface is coated with a dark red slip. The form is, perhaps, a small jug.

Eastern Sigillata B (ESB)

The only ESB so far identified in *Tyana* is a ring foot 22 (fig. 2,22). It is part of an open form, perhaps a plate, with a rouletting decoration within two grooves and a second concentric rouletting band. The fine ware is made brilliant by the fine mica typical of this pottery, while the slip has almost completely disappeared and is only visible within the grooves of the decorations. The characteristics of the ware and decorations are compatible with the oldest production dating from the Augustan age until about the third quarter of the 1st century AD.¹⁵

Cypriot Sigillata

In the description of Cypriot Sigillata proposed by Hayes in 1976,¹⁶ he distinguished two sub-groups according to the ware inclusions: the first group consisting of the finest products with a few small lime lumps, whereas the second consists of ware which is coarser with larger lime inclusions. In *Tyana* both of these ware characteristics are well represented, although the lower quality imports seem to be more numerous.¹⁷

Compared to the ESA or the Italic Sigillata, the Cypriot Sigillata generally shows an imperfect fire control during baking. This caused a variety of colours to both the slip and the ware, and consequently there are examples with firing defects. Grey ware production is also common. From the data that has emerged so far, in *Tyana* this class is quantitatively second only to the ESA.

The oldest forms are the Atlante P3 and P8 dishes. The first fragment (fig. 2,23) is a rouletting bifid rim: the grey-brown ware is very refined and the covering slip is dark brown. This is an uncommon form:¹⁸ the few known fragments possibly date from the Augustan period. Because of the type of cooking for which it would have been used, the dish 24 (fig. 2,24) with red fine ware is covered with a mottled red and brown slip. This is the Atlante P8 small version form, dated from the early 1st century AD, where the rim is decorated with rouletting similar to that of the wall. In particular, the wall rouletting band is under the flat step, in an area not ostensibly visible.

Among the open forms there is also a variant of the Atlante P7 form (fig. 2,25; 1st century AD) with a rouletting band decoration under the rim. The form is like the ESA Atlante 28, dated from between the end of the 1st century BC to the early 1st century AD, but the light grey ware and the dark grey-brown lusted slip indicate that this pottery should be grouped among the Cypriot productions.

The two Atlante P11.2 dishes with a low curved wall and rolled rim (fig. 2,26–27), when compared to shapes previously seen, have thicker walls and the ware is pink with bright red slip. These forms, dated between the second half of the 1st century AD and the first half of the 2nd century, are very common. Many bases pertinent to open forms such as dishes and bowls are also found.

Fragments of handles, walls and bases have been identified among the closed forms; the only elements related to known forms are two jug rims. The first (fig. 2,28) is light grey ware with numerous small lime lumps and with dark grey slip; it is the Atlante X52 form, and probably dates from the second half of the 1st century AD or the first half of the 2nd. The second fragment (fig. 2,29) belongs to a jug with a grooved rim and red-orange ware with small and medium sized lime lumps. The outer surface and part of the inner are coated with a brown-red homogeneous slip. These characteristics seem to indicate Hellenistic production, when the slip was only covered by the upper part of the pottery.¹⁹

Cnidus Sigillata (?)

The base figure 2,30 can be compared with the Cnidus Sigillata²⁰ produced between the 2nd and the 1st century BC. It is a flat base where only the outer surface remains: on the base there are four grooves and the wall is decorated with

¹² Tarsus 1950, 244 fig. 194.417; HAYES 1985, 34.

¹³ Tarsus 1950, 244, fig. 193.413; HAYES 1985, 35–36; WARNER SLANE 1997, 324–326.

¹⁴ Tarsus 1950, 270, fig. 202.740; HAYES 1985, 38–39.

¹⁵ Ibid. 50–51.

¹⁶ HAYES 1976, 66. For classification, *vide* ID. 1985, 79–91; ID. 1991, 37–50.

¹⁷ The bowl 36 inserted might be part of this group, on the basis of comparisons with the Sigillata forms whose production has not been

localized, but the ware characteristics are similar to those found in Cypriot production. HAYES 1985, 86 form P30; DASZEWSKI 1995, 30 pl. 5.5.

¹⁸ MEYZA 2002, 25.

¹⁹ DIEDERICH 1980, 19–26.

²⁰ KASSAB TEZGÖR 2003, 36; 41–42 pl. 35,2

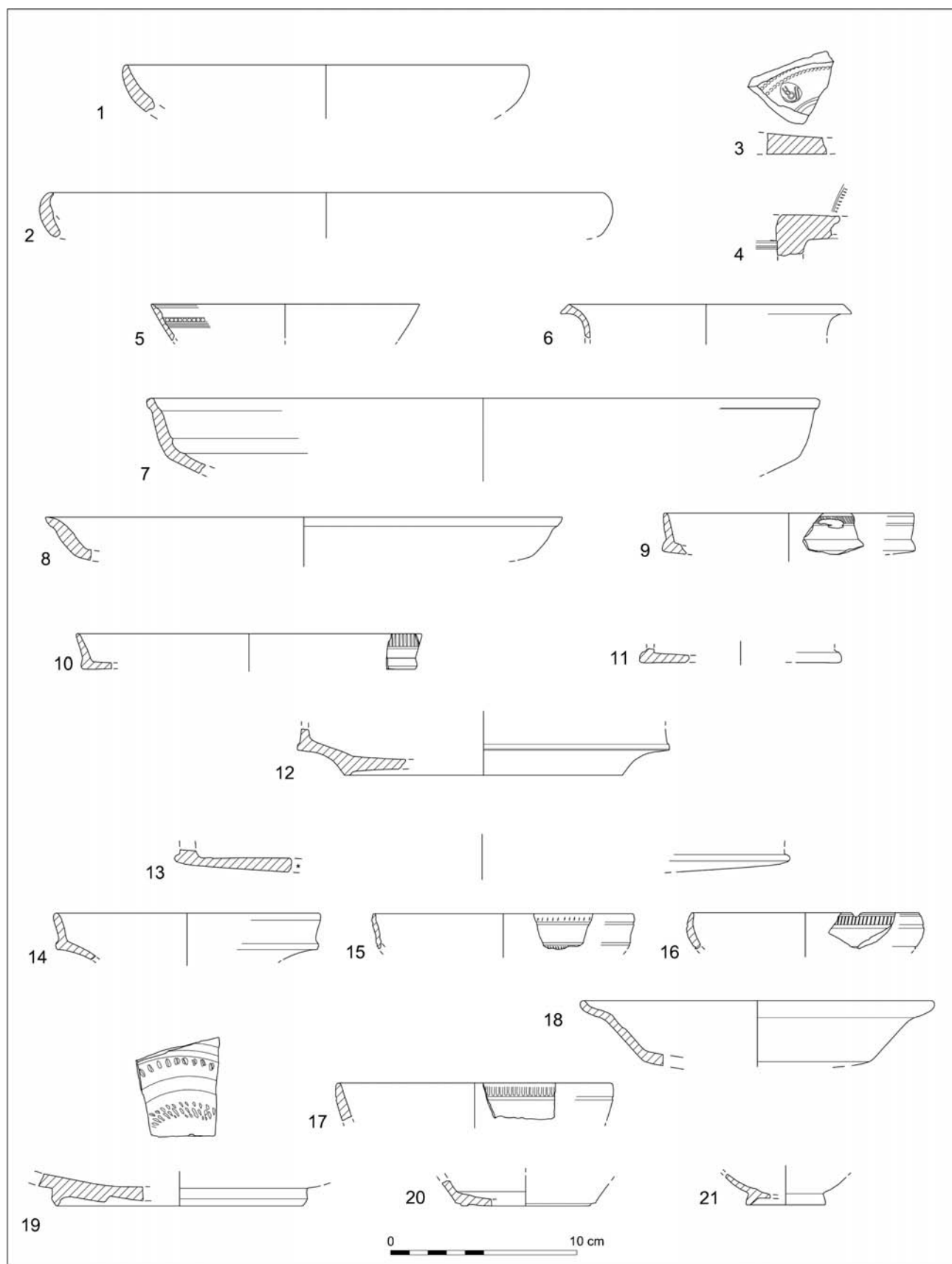


Fig. 1. Eastern Sigillata A (drawings: P Vedovetto, M. Zanon; graphics: C. Mondin).

at least seven rouletting bands. The surface is coated with a homogeneous matt red-orange slip. The pink-beige ware is fine with a few sand grits and regular breaks. There have been no published reports of wares similar to this from the sites along the coast of Cilicia. Together with the only known ESB fragment, it would appear to be one of the few examples of the fine Aegean coast pottery imports.

Italic Sigillata

A fragment of dish with smooth vertical rim Conspectus 20.4.1 (**fig. 2,31**) with pink-orange fine ware and orange slip was included with the imports. It is dated from between the Augustan period and the late Tiberian or early Claudian period.

Other Sigillata

In *Tyana*, numerous types of Sigillata have been unearthed which do not find a precise comparison in the most common typologies. In particular, a significant group of Sigillata similar to Cypriot Sigillata was identified, which, as we have said, is one of the most common of the imported pottery classes. The similar forms are distinguishable, however, on account of the characteristics of the ware and the slip.

Among the oldest forms, there is a rim of *mastos* (**fig. 2,32**), which is similar to the ESA Atlante 17B/TA 26 form dated from between the second half of the 2nd century and the early 1st century BC and also to the Cypriot Sigillata Atlante P15. This fragment has thicker walls in comparison with the ESA production; the slip is red, but the outer surface is mostly dark brown and the inner surface is in a very poor state of preservation. The fabric is soft and reddish-pink with lime lumps. This type of *mastos* is the evolution of the black-gloss Hellenistic production; in this case it can appropriately be considered that the broad black band is one of the characteristics of the period of transition between the black and the red gloss types (?). The form probably dates from between the second half of the 2nd century AD and the first half of the 1st.²¹ Similar characteristics of the slip (with blackened areas on the outer wall) and the ware are relevant to the bowl 33 (**fig. 2,33**), which can be compared with forms identified in Cyprus with red and grey ware,²² and in the Tell Anafa²³ excavation in grey ware. It, too, is probably a transitional form between the black and red gloss ware, although in this case it is also found in grey ware. The form comparisons place this type of rim within the 1st century BC.

Similar to the Cypriot sigillata form Atlante P4 is the dish 34 (**fig. 3,34**) with everted hanging rim and shallow rounded bowl body and bright red slip. The orange ware is fine and hard but it does have a darkening in the most central section which shows an imperfect treatment of the clay which is unusual in the high quality Cypriot sigillata productions. Because of its affinity with the Cypriot form, it is perhaps possible to date this dish as being from the late 1st century BC.²⁴

The double foot-rings are typical of the Cypriot Sigillata identified in the Atlante P4, P5, P 6, and P7 forms which date from the late 1st century BC to the first half of the 1st century AD.²⁵ The foot 35 (**fig. 3,35; 4,35**) found in *Tyana* is decorated with at least three rouletting bands and it is coated with a light brown slip which is bright on the inner surface and matt on the outer (the internal surface of the ring-foot is unslipped). The ware is red-grey with small grits and mica, and like the dish 34 (**fig. 3,34**), it has a darkening in the most central section. Also in this case, it seems to be a form inspired by the Cypriot Sigillata.

The introverted triangular section rim 36 (**fig. 3,36**) is also of uncertain provenance: it displays rouletting band decorations both on the rim and on the outer surface. The red ware is fine with a few lime lumps, and dark red slip coating on the surface, whilst the signs of wheel are clearly visible. The slip was applied with a brush. Similar forms, with the same decoration on the wall, have been identified in Athens in the context of the late 2nd–early 3rd century AD and also at Anemuri in Cilicia.²⁶ There is a similarity with the Cypriot sigillata ware, in particular with the coarser series.

Moulded ware

Among the moulded pottery there is a wall fragment 37 (**fig. 4,37**) perhaps belonging to the “Megarian bowls” category. In *Tyana* the only fragment found has fine light grey ware with dark grey slip of non-identified production (Ephesus?). The decoration consists of a series of irregular arcs under which there is a vegetal relief decoration. An identical comparison for the decoration was not found, but in Paphos similar profiles are dated as belonging to the second half of the 2nd century BC.²⁷

The bowl 38 (**fig. 3,38**) has been manufactured with a mould and, near the break, one can see that small, stylized palms or leaves have been impressed. The orange-brown fabric is fine and hard with regular breaks. The whole surface is coated with a soapy red slip. The simple form of the rim occurs in numerous Hellenistic productions dating from the 2nd century BC, and the decorations were still used even up to the 1st century AD.²⁸

There is a relief decoration (wall fragment **fig. 3,39**) consisting of the head of a bull and vegetable elements which are perhaps an indication that a mould was used during manufacture (**fig. 4,37**). The red ware is fine with a few small grits and the break is irregular (perhaps Çandarlı ware?). On the outer surface the slip is matt red and poorly preserved. The inner surface, on the other hand, is well preserved. The bull’s head decoration is uncommon, but at *Hierapolis* in Phrygia a similar example exists which dates from the 1st century AD.²⁹

A mould (**fig. 4,40**) for the production of beakers or cups with palm decorations has been identified in the northern part of the höyük, in a layer containing material probably dating from the late 4th until at least the 5th century AD. On

²¹ HAYES 1985, 21–22; 83.

²² HAYES 1985, 81.

²³ WARNER SLANE 1997, 367 FW534.

²⁴ HAYES 1985, 81; ID. 1991, 39; MEYZA 2002, 25.

²⁵ HAYES 1985, 81–82; ID. 1991, 39; MEYZA 2002, 25.

²⁶ WILLIAMS 1989 n. 137; HAYES 2008, 30; 140 n. 184.

²⁷ HAYES 1991 (NEURU), 13–16 nn. 13–14; 17.

²⁸ GÜRLER 2003 A17–21; B1; D3; KASSABTEZGÖR 2003, 41; SEMERARO 2003, 86 pl. 58,3.

²⁹ SEMERARO 2003, 87 pl. 61,7.

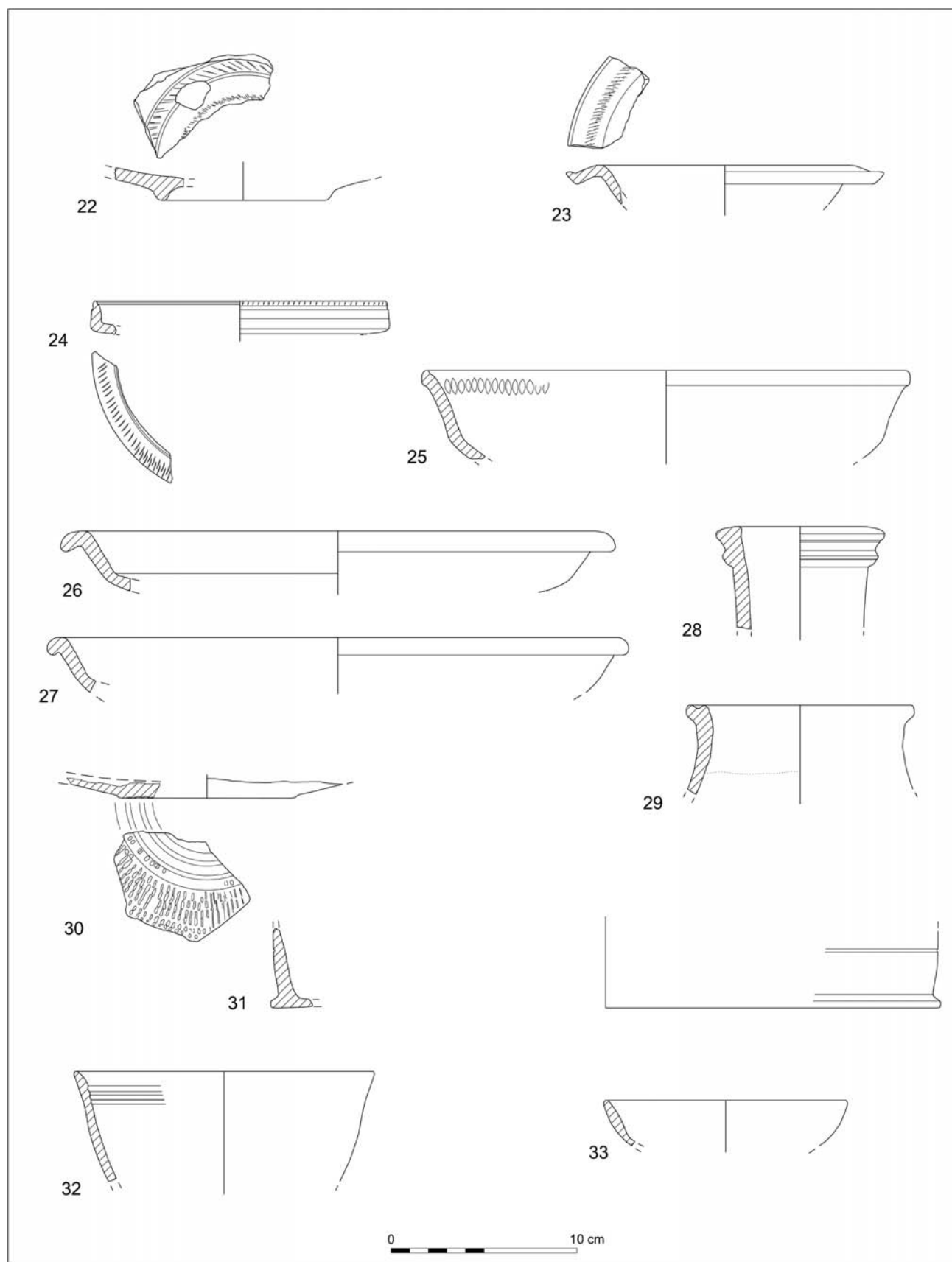


Fig. 2. 22 ESB; 23–29 Cypriot Sigillata; 30 Cnidus Sigillata; 31 Italic Sigillata; 32–33 other Sigillata (drawings: P Vedovetto, M. Zanon; graphics: C. Mondin).

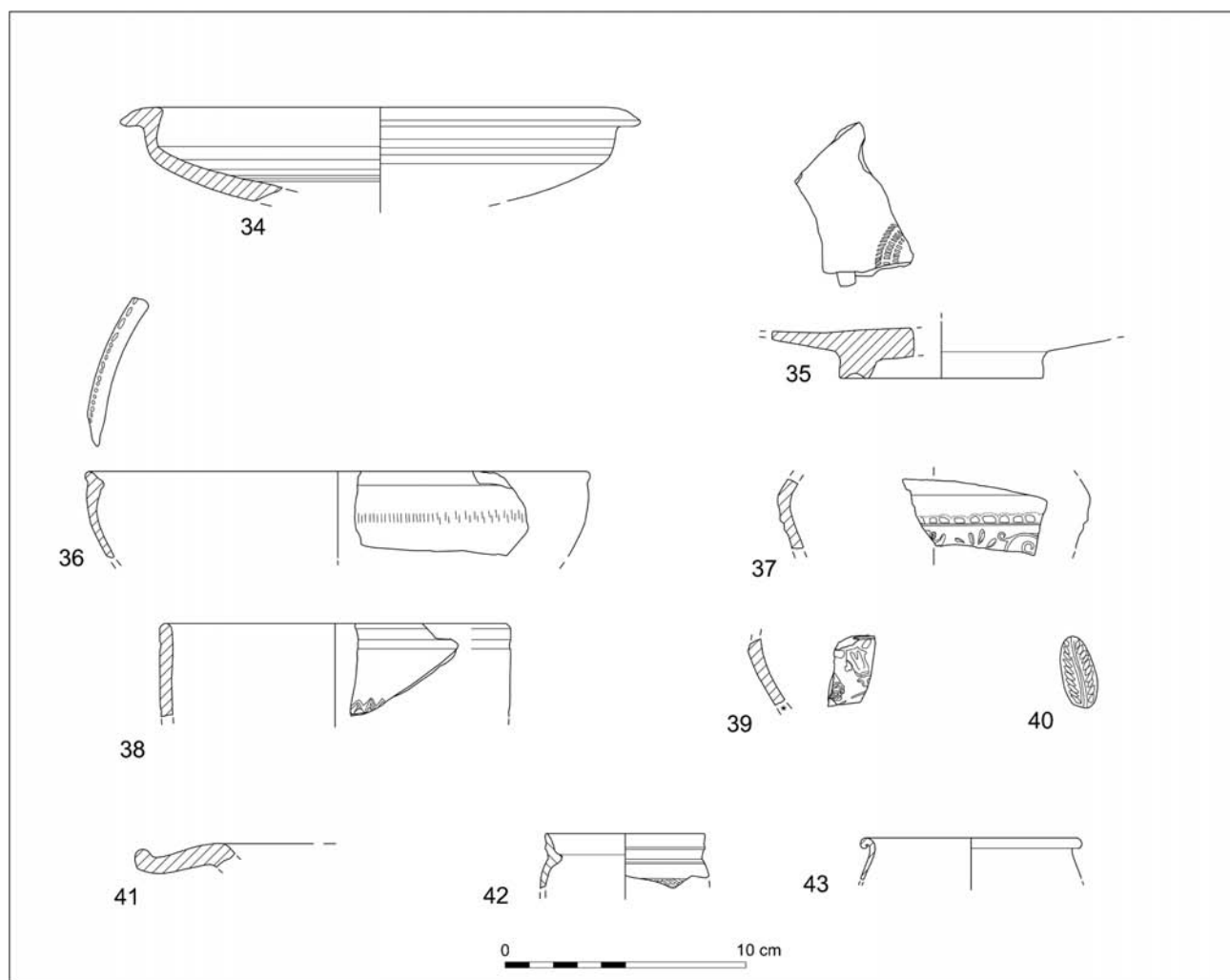


Fig. 3. 34–36 other Sigillata; 37–40 moulded ware; 41 black-gloss ware; 42–43 thin-walled ware (drawings: P Vedovetto, M. Zanon; graphics: C. Mondin).

the fragmentary mould, palm branches were imprinted, placed in an irregular pattern on the interior wall. The pink-yellow ware is hard with chip fractures and coarse with numerous grits and lime lumps. The palm mould motif occurs in many Hellenistic productions and generally is neatly placed around a rosette made on the bottom of the bowl; these decorations are usually dated from the 2nd century BC.³⁰ However, all these productions are characterized by their very regular palm distributions, whereas the *Tyana* mould has the palm impressions in two irregular rows which superimpose at several points. From the shard it is unfortunately not possible to see whether the palm leaves were organized around a central decoration.

Black-gloss ware

Among the fine pottery, there is only a rim fragment in black-gloss ware (fig. 3,41). It is a brimmed rim with black slip and metallic lustre only on the inner surface. The outer surface is light beige (probably slipped) and burnished. The light red

ware is fine with a few lime lumps. The type is similar to the Campana A Morel 1441, dating from the second half of the 2nd century to the first half of the 1st BC.³¹ However, the characteristic ware and the absence of black-gloss on the outer surface seems to exclude this provenience.

Thin-walled ware

A beaker rim 42 (fig. 3,42) comes from a context containing numerous sigillata fragments, but this one dates from the Ottoman age. This form is similar to the type Ricci 1/47 with a vertical rim and inner step; the body outer surface is applied by sandblast. The fine ware is pink with a coating of dark red slip, which in the inner surface is covered only until the step. The ware and the slip remind us of the early Roman ESA series. The beaker form would be dated to the second first half of the 1st century AC, but given that the sanded decoration made its appearance from the end of the Augustan age.³²

³⁰ GÜRLER 2003, 14–15 C14.

³¹ MOREL 1981, 1441c; 1443l; WARNER SLANE 1997, 348 FW457.

³² RICCI 1985, 254–255; 319–320 dec. 63.

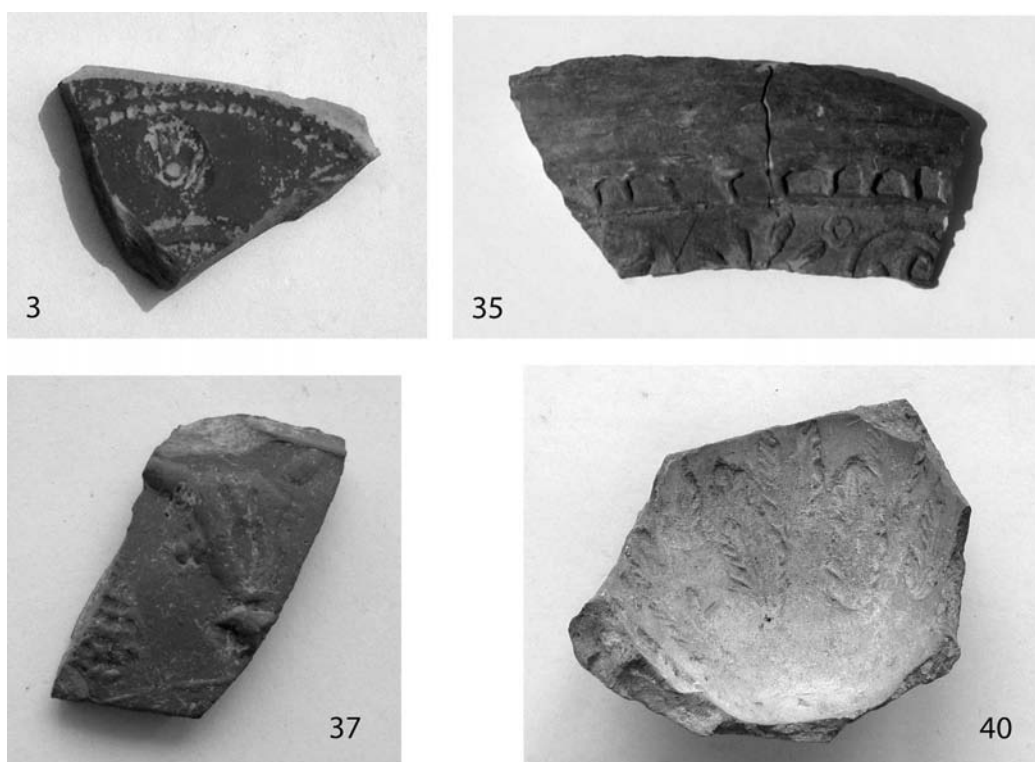


Fig. 4. 3 ESA Isis stamp; 35 moulded grey ware; 37 bull's head decoration; 40 mould with palm decorations (photograph and graphics: C. Mondin).

The beaker fragment 43 (**fig. 3,43**) has an everted rim, a short neck and a globular body; the surface is unslipped with signs of wheel manufacture on the inner surface. The fine ware is red with a slight darkening on the outer surface. The profile shape is similar to Magdalensberg or Cosa potteries found in 1st century contexts.³³ However, the small size of the fragment, the absence of context as well as the characteristics of the ware and the surface treatment are such that they do not enable us to make any suggestions as to the precise origin (perhaps middle eastern) and date of this specific piece of pottery.

Concluding remarks

In *Tyana*, as in numerous Middle East sites,³⁴ there is a predominance of ESA and Cypriot Sigillata importations, whilst few examples of pottery production from the Aegean coast and the western Mediterranean were found. In addition to these better-known productions, I would like to highlight the presence of several potteries with a surface treatment that

is similar to Terra Sigillata; but with a coarser impasto and a form that resembles that of the more famous productions without having specific characteristics.³⁵ Furthermore, the discovery of a mould raises the possibility that fine pottery workshops were present either in *Tyana* or in the surrounding area, although there is no other evidence of similar local production for the Hellenistic and Roman periods.

From the data obtained through the study of this fine pottery found out of context, not only the vitality of *Tyana* in the Hellenistic-Roman period becomes clear, but there is also firm evidence that this part of the höyük was already settled in this period. There is also evidence that the northern limits of the Byzantine town during that period were almost equal to those of 3rd–2nd century BC. The importance of *Tyana*, and the continuity of settlement there over the centuries is largely due to two reasons: the first is its strategic position on the road leading from the Anatolian plateau to the Mediterranean coast through the Cilician Gates (this route is mentioned in the *Itinerarium Burdigalense*).³⁶ The second reason, no less important for the life of the town, was the fertility of the soil, which had the benefit of being irrigated by natural water sources, as mentioned by Philostratus in his biography of Apollonius (I, 6).³⁷

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³³ SCHINDLER-KAUDELKA 1975, 54–55 form 20c; MARABINI-MOEUS 1973, 76 form XV. French productions, morphologically similar to this shard, have been found in Lyon and the surrounding area; these productions are often decorated with barbotina or sanded and the pottery is rugged. They date from between the middle of the 1st century AD up until the Flavian age. BERTRAND 2000, 117–119 pl. 71 form 11.2 and 11.

³⁴ MALFITANA 2002, 145–147. In this case it seems inappropriate to offer any quantitative remarks because of the absence of contexts which can be related to the Hellenistic and Roman phases. Instead, some notes of a more general sort are provided which can be evaluated if new excavations below the Christian buildings are carried out at some point in the future.

³⁵ A limited numbers of potteries are present in this article as space is not sufficient for descriptions to be provided in respect of all those forms which have not yet been identified. These productions probably attest to a lively material culture in central Anatolia, albeit one which is not yet well known.

³⁶ ItBurdig 577,7,93 (ed. Cuntz 1929).

³⁷ CASSIA 2004, 242; ROSADA, LACHIN 2010, 112–116.

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