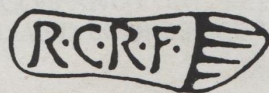


REI CRETARIÆ ROMANÆ FAVORVM

ACTA 36



CONGRESSVS VICESIMVS
REI CRETARIÆ ROMANÆ FAVORVM
EPHESI ET PERGAMI HABITVS
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Ergün Lafli

SAGALASSOS TABLE AND COMMON WARES FROM SELEUKEIA SIDERA IN PISIDIA (SOUTHWESTERN TURKEY) — A PRELIMINARY REPORT

I. Introduction*

Seleukeia Sidera lies 18.5 km north-east of Isparta (southwestern Turkey), on the south slope of a small mountainous group and about 45 km north-east of ancient Sagalassos (fig. 1a). The main occupation of the ancient city stands on a hill, called Hisar or Asar Tepe, which is 1.5 km north-west of the village Bayat (fig. 1b). During the late 19th century the site was located by the German geographer G. Hirschfeld.¹ Later it was visited and briefly described by several travelers, but detailed investigation of the remains began only in 1987 by the local archaeological museum of Isparta. In the summer of 1993 Orhan Bingöl (Ankara University) carried out an excavation at Seleukeia Sidera, lasting one year. The results of this excavation appeared in a report by the excavator.²

Seleukeia was founded by the Seleucid Antiochus I in the 3rd century BC as a colony to protect the northern frontier of Pisidia and the famous 'Syria-Asia Minor Road', which comes from Ephesus and extends to Tarsus.³ The city was lying very close to that major route of Hellenistic times to avoid any direct impact from the traffic of armies which dominated its early history. The small amount of evidence provided by the surface finds and excavated material from the site may confirm that the first settlement was in the Hellenistic period. During the Early Roman period the name of Seleukeia Sidera was changed to 'Claudioseluceia'.⁴ In this phase the city had a small-scale peasant population. In the late Roman period, however, the town seems to have developed rapidly. The nature of the late Roman development in the city is not well known. Occupation levels are widely distributed over the area of the late Roman town.

During the 1993 field season, O. Bingöl excavated in seven different areas⁵: the first southern terrace (and the round building), the second southern terrace, the eastern gate, the eastern terrace, a necropolis, a cistern and the theater. These sondages generated a considerable amount of ceramics. Most of the vessels, however, were found in the southern terrace houses. The ceramic material of Seleukeia Sidera falls into seven main groups: table wares, common wares, relief wares, oil lamps, terracottas, unguentaria and miscellaneous. Unfortunately no conclusive stratigraphical dating evidence was found for the ceramic materials except in the necropolis. Almost all the identified red slip table ware found at Seleukeia Sidera was imported from Sagalassos. It occurs in large quantities and predominates in all of the periods.

The purpose of this short report is to present a range of the table and common wares found in Seleukeia Sidera in 1993 and to provide a brief outlook on Sagalassos pottery trade in the Roman period. Relief wares, terracotta figurines, unguentaria and oil lamps are not considered here, results of my studies of these types having been published elsewhere.⁶

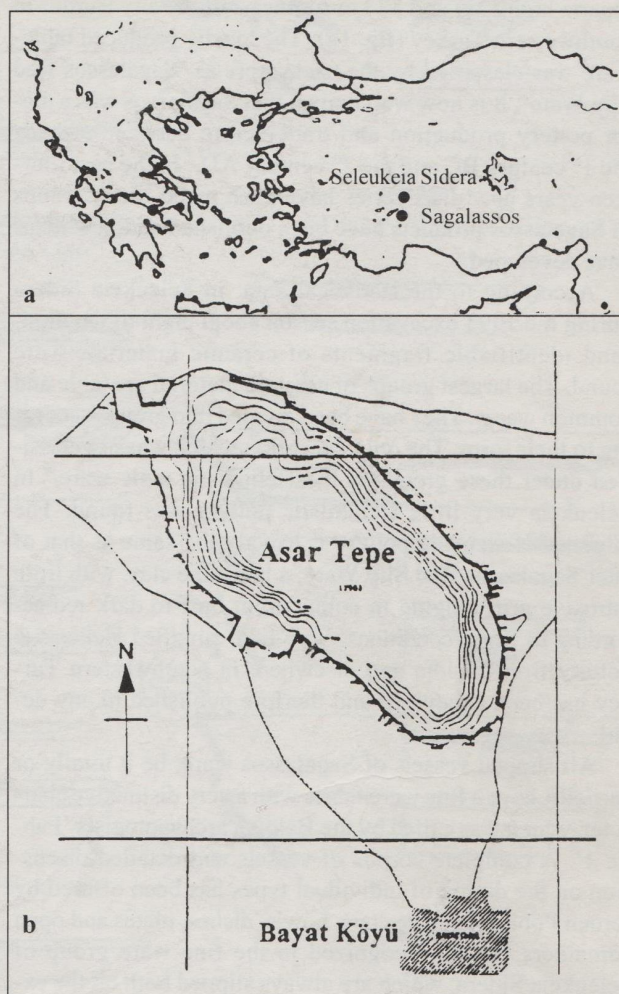


Fig. 1: a Seleukeia Sidera and Sagalassos. — b General sketch of the excavation areas in Seleukeia Sidera.

* This paper based on the unpublished B.A. thesis by the author with the title of 'The Pottery Found at the Excavations of Seleuceia Sidera in 1993', submitted to the University of Ankara (Turkey) in 1996. The general content of this paper is heavily dependent on the research of the Sagalassos Archaeological Research Project. The manuscript was delivered in January 1999. Further researches could not be included.

¹ G. Hirschfeld, Vorläufiger Bericht über eine Reise im südwestlichen Kleinasien. Monatsber. Preuss. Akad. Wiss. Berlin (20. März 1879 — Gesamtsitzung der Akademie) (Berlin 1879) 312.

² Bingöl 1994.

³ H. Bracke, Pisidia in Hellenistic Times (334–25 BC). In: Waelkens 1993, 21 note 54.

⁴ D. Magie, Roman Rule in Asia Minor to the End of the Third Century After Christ (Princeton NJ 1950) 547.

⁵ Bingöl 1994, 48.

⁶ E. Lafli, Les figurines romaines en terre cuite de Seleucia Sidera en Pisidie (Turquie). *Orient Express. Notes et nouvelles d'archéologie orientale* 1998.3, 73–78. — E. Lafli, Sagalassos Roman Relief Wares from Seleuceia Sidera in Pisidia (Turkey). In: R. F. Docter/E. M. Moormann (eds.), *Classical archaeology towards the third millennium. Reflexions and perspectives. Proc. XVth Internat. Congress Class. Arch., Amsterdam July 12–17, 1998. Allard Pierson Ser. 12* (Amsterdam 1999) 105–107.

II. Sagalassos Table and Common Wares

In the summer of 1987, a team of archaeologists discovered a potters' quarter on the slopes to the east of Sagalassos, the metropolis of ancient Pisidia.⁷ This site is located 7 km north of the town of Ağlasun (on the Antalya-Isparta highway) and 37 km southeast of the city Burdur in southwestern Turkey (fig. 1a). The locally produced tableware was classified by the excavators as 'Sagalassos Red Slip Ware'. It is now well known that Sagalassos was a major pottery production and trade centre between at least the 1st century BC and the 7th century AD.⁸ In the past fourteen years new discoveries have been made, fresh groups of Sagalassos products have been published and new ideas have developed.

According to the statistical data, in Seleukeia Sidera during the 1993 excavation season about eight to ten thousand identifiable fragments of ceramic materials were found. The largest groups of ceramic material are table and common wares. They have been divided into groups according to their form. The only exception which was not classified under these groups is the Hellenistic table ware.⁹ In Seleukeia very little Hellenistic pottery was found. The fabric of Hellenistic pottery is exactly the same as that of later Sagalassos Red Slip Ware: a hard fine clay, with little intrusive grit, ranging in colour from buff to dark red according to firing conditions. Very little stratified Hellenistic pottery from Pisidia and elsewhere in southwestern Turkey has been excavated and therefore published in any detail.

All slipped vessels of Sagalassos ware, be it totally or partially, have a fine ware fabric with a very distinctive character, which was called by the Belgian archaeologists 'Fabric 1'. A complete corpus of vessels and detailed discussion on the dating of individual types has been offered by Jeroen Poblome.¹⁰ The cups, bowls, dishes, plates and open containers can be recognized in the fine ware group of Seleukeia Sidera, which are always slipped both on the exterior and the interior (fig. 2). The main features of the table wares found in Seleukeia are as follows: The colour of the core is usually 2.5R 5/6 red. The surface of the table wares is fine and smooth. The slip colour, always determined by the oxidizing firing conditions, shows great variety. Wheel-marks can be seen inside the vessels.

Well over half of the total pottery finds (an estimated 6,000 sherds) at Seleukeia Sidera belong to the Late Roman Period. Fine tablewares and cooking-pots are a more or less constant element in all the Late Roman assemblages. Some of the coarse ware could also have been produced at Sagalassos.¹¹ In Seleukeia for common ware we could not distinguish ware fabric groups. The general scheme for describing the different forms in each group is as follows: first come the vertical or nearly vertical rounded containers, followed by the closed containers, then jars and jugs, casseroles, mortars, lids and miscellaneous (fig. 3). Unglazed cooking wares, mostly in the form of round-bottomed cooking pots with one or two handles, are present in all Roman and early Byzantine trenches at Seleukeia Sidera in much the same quantities as the Sagalassos Red Slip Ware. Their hallmarks are a thin, hard, gritty

reddish or brownish heat-resistant fabric, scarcely ever glazed, designed to transmit efficiently the heat of flames or embers to the contents. They are wheel-made, often lightly ribbed for safer handling, mostly round-bottomed, and have small handles. The most striking feature of this category of pottery is the continuity of tradition throughout Roman and Early Byzantine times. Other common ware forms are storage vats, pithoi, amphorae and pitchers.

As mentioned above we have very little stratigraphical data for the fine and coarse wares. Just two vessels illustrated here appeared during the 1993 season in two graves (both called SM 2) in the necropolis found with some other datable materials (fig. 2/Dish 1: with a coin from the 3rd cent. AD, and fig. 3/Jug 1: with a coin from Baris from the 3rd cent. AD). For the date and classification of these ceramics from Seleukeia the finds from the Sagalassos excavations provide the largest single source of material for this study. Those types for which there is almost no evidence of a date can mostly be paralleled with forms current in Sagalassos.

III. Conclusions

In recent years, scholars of Asia Minor Hellenistic and Roman pottery have begun to expand their focus beyond the study of single local pottery workshops and their products. Sagalassos Red Slip Ware is one of the best examples, which played a critical role in the eastern Mediterranean pottery trade. One of the most important problems of this ware is its distribution.¹² Why should Sagalassos Red Slip Ware be more popular in some areas than others? Any attempt to answer this question must take into consideration the cultural and social issues of tradition, aesthetic preference and practical needs and advantages of Sagalassos Red Slip Ware, as well as the raw materials available and the firing technology used. Perhaps of the greatest importance was the influence of economic structure. Pisidian sites appear to have imported this ware in relatively great numbers. It is clear that the production centre at Sagalassos served both a regional market in Pisidia, and reached additional sites at longer distances.

The unstratified layers of the early Roman phase of Seleukeia Sidera contained a great deal of Sagalassos Red Slip Ware. The middle and late Roman periods are marked at Seleukeia Sidera by a rise in the quantity of imported Sagalassos Red Slip Ware. There is a continuity of the dis-

⁷ S. Mitchell/M. Waelkens, Cremna and Sagalassos 1987. *Anatolian Stud.* 38, 1988, 60.

⁸ J. Poblome *et al.*, The ceramic production centre of Sagalassos, in this volume p. 39–42.

⁹ A previous lecture on that subject was given at the 3rd Hellenistic Ceramic Congress in Chania/Crete (Greece) in April 1997.

¹⁰ J. Poblome/R. Degeest/M. Waelkens/E. Scheltens, *The Fine Ware*. In: Waelkens 1993, 114–126. — Poblome 1999.

¹¹ For Sagalassos common ware: R. Degeest/M. Waelkens, *The Common Ware*. In: Waelkens 1993, 131–152.

¹² For the distribution of Sagalassos Red Slip Ware: J. Poblome, *Production and Distribution of Sagalassos Red Slip Ware. A Dialogue with the Roman Economy*. In: M. Herfort-Koch/U. Mandel/U. Schädler (eds.), *Hellenistische und kaiserzeitliche Keramik des östlichen Mittelmeergebietes. Kolloquium Frankfurt 24.–25. April 1995* (Frankfurt/Main 1996) 75–103 Taf. 24–25. — Poblome 1999 fig. 1.

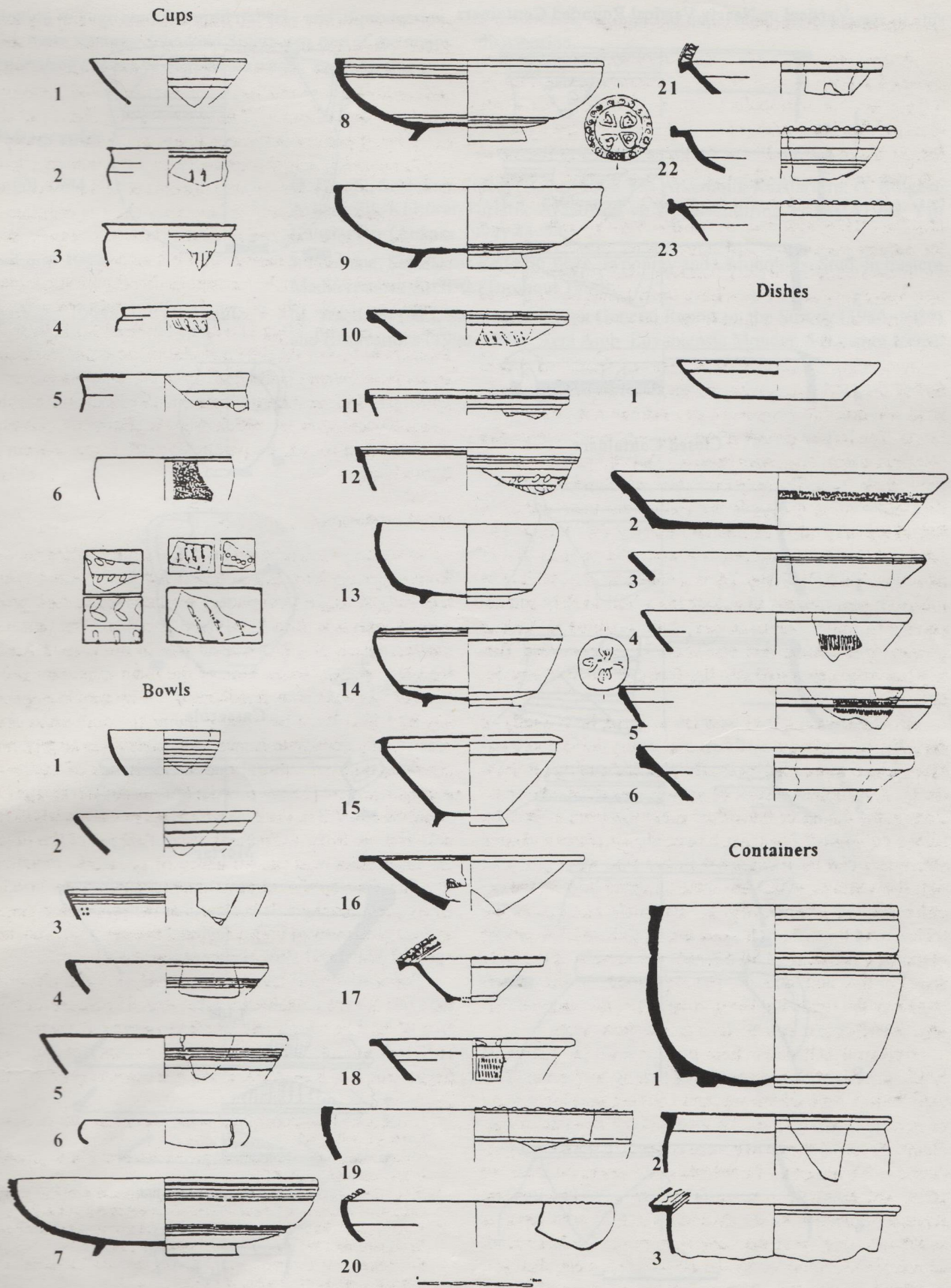
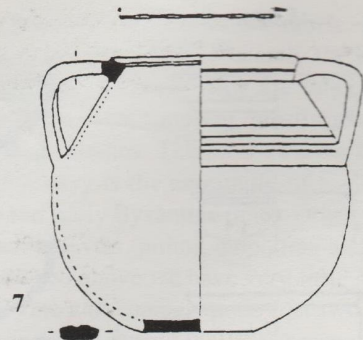
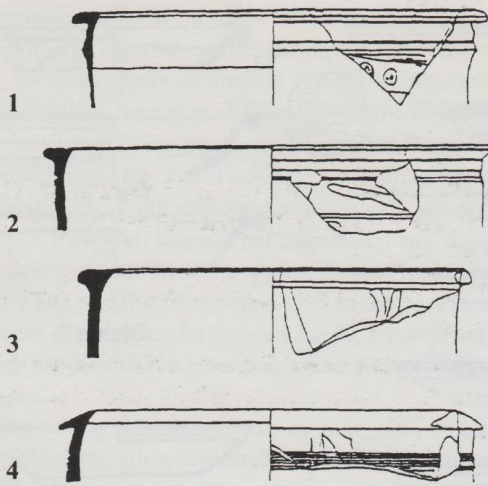
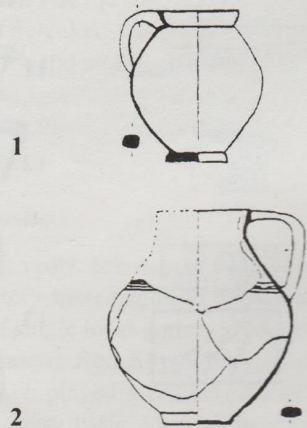


Fig. 2: Table wares found at Seleukeia Sidera.

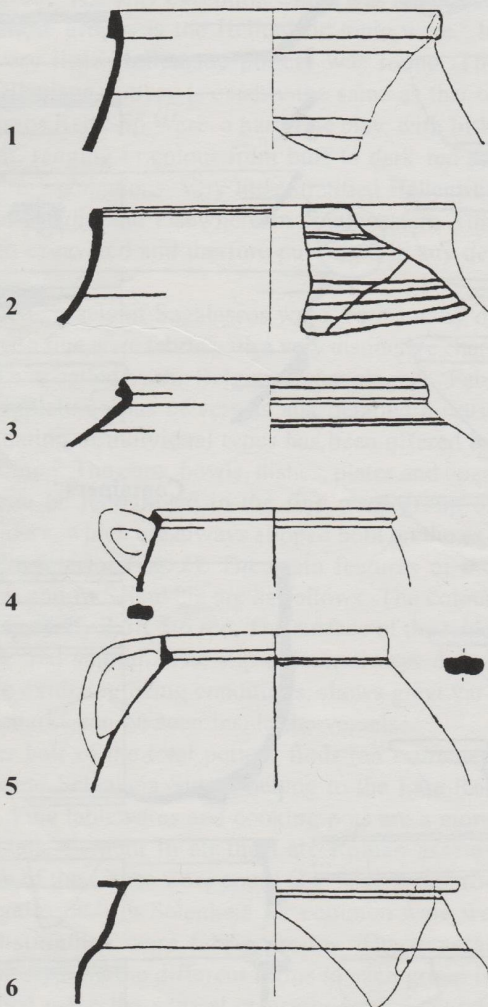
Vertical or Nearly Vertical Rounded Containers



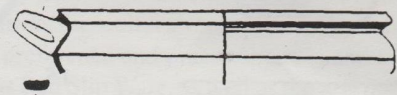
Jugs



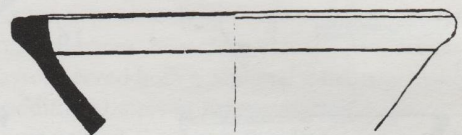
Closed Containers



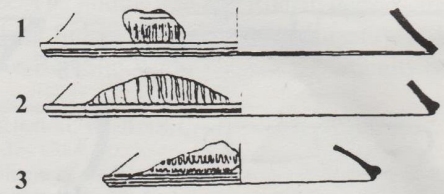
Casserole



Mortar



Lids



Miscellaneous Form

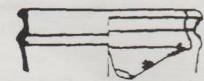


Fig. 3: Common wares found at Seleukeia Sidera.

tribution in huge amounts until the very end of production. With these features Seleukeia Sidera was one of the major importation centres of Sagalassos wares, and thus, it is also

a remarkable example to understand the character of this distribution.

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