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Olba is printed once a year in May. Deadline for sending papers is November of each year.

The Journal 'Olba', being published since 1998 by the 'Research Center of Cilician Archaeology' of the Mersin University (Turkey), includes original studies done on prehistory, protohistory, classical archaeology, classical philology (language and culture), ancient history, numismatics and Byzantine History of Art.

The studies select their material mostly from Asia Minor but articles (papers) dealing with the Mediterranean area and Near East also form the content of Olba.

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## **CILICIAN CERAMIC PRODUCTION FROM ROMAN TO BYZANTINE AGE. NEW DATA FROM ELAIUSSA SEBASTE**

Adele Federica FERRAZZOLI - Marco RICCI\*

### **Abstract**

This paper provides an overview of the commercial exchanges, trade, and production of the Cilician city of Elaiussa Sebaste, from the 1<sup>st</sup> century to the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The trade patterns changed as political situations evolved. In the first phase, the Roman period, Elaiussa was involved in a regional and mid-range system of import and export, oriented mostly toward the Aegean, Cyprus, and the East, but goods and ceramics arrived also from Africa, Iberia, and Italy. The late Roman period saw, with continuing exchanges with the Aegean, an increase in imports from Africa and the beginning of importation from the Syro-Palestinian region. The early Byzantine period witnessed significant growth in the Cilician economy, with the start of the production of LR 1 amphora-type lamps in the same material and with the creation of a new type of entailed common ware.

**Key words:** Ceramic, Elaiussa Sebaste, amphorae, economy, trade, pottery

### **Özet**

#### **Roma Döneminden Bizans Dönemine Kilikia'da Seramik Üretimi. Elaiussa Sebaste'den Yeni Veriler**

Bu makaledeki amaç, M.S. 1 yüzyıldan M.S. 7. yüzyıla kadarki süreçte bir Kilikia kenti olan Elaiussa Sebaste'nin ticari ilişkilerini ve üretimini genel bir bakış açısı ile ele almaktır. Siyasi gelişmelerle bağlantılı olarak ticari hareketlilik de değişkenlik göstermiştir: Birinci, yani Roma döneminde, Elaiussa Ege, Kıbrıs ve Doğu ile bölgesel ve orta ölçekli bir ihracat ve ithalat sistemine dahil olmuştu ama aynı zamanda batıdan da (İberya, İtalya, Afrika) ürünler ve seramik ulaşmaktaydı. Geç Roma dönemi Ege Bölgesi ile değişimin devamının yanı sıra, Afrika'dan

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ithalatın arttığı ve Suriye-Filistin Bölgesinden de ithalatın başladığı bir dönem olmuştur. Erken Bizans Döneminde, LR 1 amphora tipi ve kandiller ile Kilikia ekonomisindeki büyük artışı görmekteyiz.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Seramik, Elaiussa Sebaste, amphorae, ekonomi, ticaret, kap.

The Elaiussa Sebaste research Project is being carried out since 1995 by the University of Roma “La Sapienza” Archaeological Mission under the direction of professor Eugenia Equini Schneider<sup>1</sup>.

The ancient city of Elaiussa is located in the old district of *Cilicia Tracheia*, in an area which is now occupied by the village of Ayash. The city was founded in the Hellenistic age and saw its major development during the Imperial and early Byzantine times. The city’s economic development from the Late Hellenistic age to the Proto-Byzantine period is related with its strategic location on the seaside with its natural harbours and its agricultural activities dealing mostly with the production of wine and olive oil<sup>2</sup>. Its final decline, probably due to natural causes and to the Arab invasion can be situated in the 7th century A.D.

What is to be stressed is the city’s particular location next to ceramic producing areas: The west coast of Asia Minor, the Syrian coast and Cyprus. The preliminary study on several ceramic and amphora types obtained from the excavations reflects an interesting view on Roman, Late-Roman and Byzantine trade as well as on ancient productions from different areas in the Eastern Mediterranean; the city appears to be an important amphora production centre during all these periods; at first with the Pompei 5, Dressel 2-4, Agorà M 54 types and later with the LR1 type.

### **The first phase: The Hellenistic Period**

The excavations have been lead only at a small part of the so-called “island” where the Hellenistic settlement is supposed to be; so only few materials of this period have been obtained which are in many cases out of context. Though it can be suggested that the earliest materials from a stable settlement date back to the Hellenistic period. The limited presence of ma-

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<sup>1</sup> Equini Schneider 1998 a,b , 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Equini Schneider 1998 b, 125-152

terial from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC, from both East and West (Ionia), allow us to affirm that from this period onwards the city started being part of a trade network which covered the entire eastern Mediterranean area. However the relations with nearby areas such as the plains of Cilicia, northern Syria and Cyprus seem to have been more intense. The coins that have been found allude to Elaiussa's lively trade since the Hellenistic period and they prove the extensive circulation of goods and money.

### The Imperial Period

With more knowledge on the material of this phase it can be observed that the city started developing in this period. Judging from the ceramics it can be suggested that in the Imperial period (1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries A.D.) the city of Elaiussa Sebaste was connected in a traderoute system of importations and exportations between the eastern and western Mediterranean.

Most of the fine ware are the Eastern Sigillata A productions which are probably to be ascribed to local or regional *ateliers*; the clay source was located in the coastal region between Tarsus and Syrian Latakia (fig. 1)<sup>3</sup>. Other fineware productions were imported from Syria (always ESA but in a different fabric) and from Cyprus, less from western Turkey (the Çandarlı ware, produced near Pergamum). Later, production from North Africa (African Red Slip A production) increased. Finds of fine ware from the west are too rare to affirm that there was an organized importation system. Cooking wares came partly from the Aegean area, Cyprus and from Palestine. Furthermore there was local production as we can recognize that great part of the forms were attested in Tarsus (fig. 2). In this period the shapes of the vessels, imported or not, were quite the same as in all the Empire. Lamps were locally made as to be observed in the Tarsian types (fig. 3).

The greatest part of amphorae in Elaiussa between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries A.D. consists of regional production: the so called Anemurium Amphora type A made in Anemurium; Agorà M 54 and Pompeii 5 types -*ateliers* of them have been recognized in Cilicia and Pieria for example at Yumurtalık. Local imitations of Dressel 2-4 types were also found in Elaiussa. In this phase the importations of goods in amphorae came in

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<sup>3</sup> Ferrazzoli 2001, 789-790.

particular from the East; wine from the Aegean area (Rhodian and Koan types), from Crete and from Palestine. A small part of goods (oil) came from the west part of the Empire: from Africa Tripolitana and Byzacaena (Africana I e II types), from Iberia (maybe oil or *garum* in Beltràn 2B and Dressel 20 types) and from Italy (wine in Dressel 2-4 and Dressel 6A types, fig. 4)<sup>4</sup>.

Concluding, in this first period the city seems to be linked mostly to the Aegean area and to the East, in particular to the Syro-Palestinian coast and to Cyprus: the most part of the imported ceramics (fine wares, cooking wares and amphorae) found in the early Imperial period contexts of Elaiussa came from these areas, as far as they were not local or regional productions. Importations from the west are too poor to think of a real organized trade system, they seem to be occasional arrivings.

### **The Late Roman Period**

The second Roman phase, the Late-Roman one, between the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 5th centuries, is characterized by the end of the importation of fine wares from east and Cyprus and the increase in the importation of African fine ware pottery (the typical 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> century African productions, the so-called ARS C). The same increase of importations from north-Africa is visible for the amphorae, other importations from the west are occasional (Iberian amphorae types Almagro 50 and Beltran 72). The arrival of goods from the Aegean area continues throughout these centuries. The shape of the cooking pots changed and the local production satisfied the city's needs; in few cases there are imitations of the typical African cooking pots of this period. Most of the lamps are local productions (fig. 5), but there are also imitations of African models; a small part of the lamps is of African type<sup>5</sup>. At the end of this period, in the late 4th to the early 5th centuries there was a new steady influx of eastern Mediterranean amphorae, whose most common forms are the Palestinian and Syrian series (LR 4, 5 and bag-shaped amphorae); in the same period a new production of amphorae, lamps and common wares started at Elaiussa.

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<sup>4</sup> Ferrazzoli- Ricci 2008, 522-523

<sup>5</sup> Ferrazzoli- Ricci 2008 b

## The Byzantine Period

The transition from the late Roman to the Byzantine age which entailed significant political and economical changes can be clearly seen in the use of the materials. The identifying element of this transition is constituted by the presence of the so-called LR1 amphora in all stratifications of this period which represents nearly 90 percent of the amphora material even if very often it concerns discarded material employed to silt or other uses. Most probably these amphorae can be identified as the *seriolae* designated by Isidorus of Seville as *Cilicienses* at the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Concerning the contents, probably the amphorae were used either for wine, oil and honey<sup>6</sup>. The results of the excavation have shown that Elaiussa was an extremely important manufacturing site of these amphorae and of domestic pottery and oil-lamps (fig. 6, 7).

The LR1 amphora represents one of the most widespread specimens in the whole Mediterranean area between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>7</sup> and its diffusion, as well as the commercialisation of the products seem to be closely related to the flourishing period of Elaiussa. In fact in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, when the great diffusion of this specimen started, the city underwent a distinct economic revival which continued until it was deserted. Between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries only slight morphological differences in the amphorae can be revealed, instead the only feature element which seems to be closely connected to a precise period is constituted by the amphora lids. These lids were made of the same fabric used for the amphorae and were very frequently attested in the contexts of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Other elements closely linked to the amphorae production and retrieved in large quantity among the kiln discard were composed of the same fabric and were spool-shaped spacers sometimes bearing labels and frequently being used as stands<sup>8</sup>. Besides the presence of the local amphorae in the contexts of this period others types coming from different areas such as Palestine, the Aegean, Egypt and North Africa can be documented. The importation of agricultural products from northern Africa seems to have been occasional as it can be inferred judging on the limited findings of amphorae types such

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<sup>6</sup> Ferrazzoli- Ricci 2006

<sup>7</sup> Reynolds 2005, 565-567; Pieri 2005, 70-77

<sup>8</sup> Ferrazzoli- Ricci 2007, 672-675; Ferrazzoli- Ricci 2008 a (forthcoming); for the archaeometrical analysis, see Burragato et al., 2007

as the *spatheia* (fig. 8) and the large dimensioned amphorae concentrated especially in the 6th century<sup>9</sup>.

The same fabrics used for the LRI amphorae and for the common wares of Elaiussa characterize a big part of the oil-lamps (fig. 9) and the lanterns present in the layers of this period; one kiln for their production and a considerable nucleus of wasters have been found.

If for the amphorae one can highlight the self-sufficiency, as far as the kitchen pottery is concerned, Elaiussa strongly relied on importation. Besides a small group of products from the Aegean area of which the importation is limited to the 6th century, more than 80% of the ditcher earthenware of the 6th and 7th centuries come from Cypriot or Cilician factories. A group of lids was produced in the workshops of Elaiussa.

From the middle of the 5th century onwards Elaiussa fulfilled its needs for fine table and kitchen pottery mainly by importing products from south-western Turkey or from Cyprus. Red slip originating from these areas can actually be well identified basically with an analogous percentage, even if with slight differences between the various contexts. Both types, the Anatolian and the Cypriot, are attested including nearly all the morphological repertory even if the most common shapes are far more frequent than others. A definitely minor role is played by the red slip D produced in northern Africa which is, however, always present in the local market even if in smaller quantity compared to other types; there seems to be a substantial increase in the arrivals only between the end of the 6th and the middle of the 7th centuries.

As far as the closed forms for tableware are concerned, the greatest part of the materials can be attributed to local production and is characterized by the same pastes and the same technological repertory that distinguishes the LRI with a peculiar repertory for the 6th and the 7th century. The morphological panorama of the common local production is completed by other forms. From the end of the 5th century onwards bowls, whose morphological evolution concerns mainly the rim are very common and are sometimes decorated. It appears difficult to attribute the *dolia* of medium size to local productions which is identified quite frequently by the fabrics belonging for the most part to northern Syrian and Cypriot production.

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<sup>9</sup> Ferrazzoli- Ricci 2008 b, 1570



The production of carved decorated pottery attributed to the *ateliers* of Elaiussa seems to represent a novelty in the panorama of Byzantine pottery even if recently few fragments have been found in Cyprus, Lycia and Africa (fig. 10). The production originating clearly from the imitation of metal prototypes presents a morphological repertory articulated in jugs, basins, censers, lanterns, fretted vases and other forms. The production seems to be concentrated in the 6<sup>th</sup> century even if it continues into the next century with less elaborate decoration. The decoration painted in red found on large basins and jars with a vertical neck, in both cases with a decorated and carved rim, appears on the products of Elaiussa only in the first half of the 7<sup>th</sup> century<sup>10</sup>.

From this first examination it appears quite clear how from the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century and more completely from the beginning of the 6<sup>th</sup> century the Byzantine economical system reorganized itself emphasizing the imperial model of production and consumption based on production centres specialized in products with widespread circulation. Meanwhile it can be noted that even if on one hand the Cilician centres diffused their products to the Mediterranean area, on the other hand they turned to the internal north western part of the Mediterranean for local consumption. The arrivals of commodities from more distant territories were not constant but occurred in an episodic manner.

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<sup>10</sup> Ferrazzoli-Ricci 2008 c (forthcoming)

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Fig. 1 Eastern sigillata A cup, Hayes 61 form, II<sup>nd</sup> century A.D.



Fig. 2 Cooking pot. Similar to Anemurium n. 371-374 forms. From the rock tomb n. 1. Maybe local production, I<sup>st</sup> - II<sup>nd</sup> century A.D.

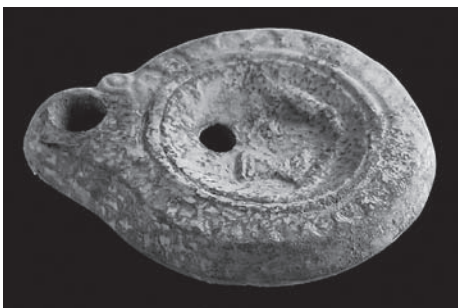


Fig. 3 Lamp of Tarsus type XVIII with the same disk decoration of Tarsus, n. 246 (bird type) I<sup>st</sup> - II<sup>nd</sup> century A.D.



Fig. 4 Dressel 2-4 amphora type from the rock tomb n. 1. Italian production, I<sup>st</sup> century A.D.



Fig. 5 Tarsus type lamp n. XIX.  
Disk decoration: Rider.  
Elaiussa production?  
III<sup>rd</sup> - early V<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

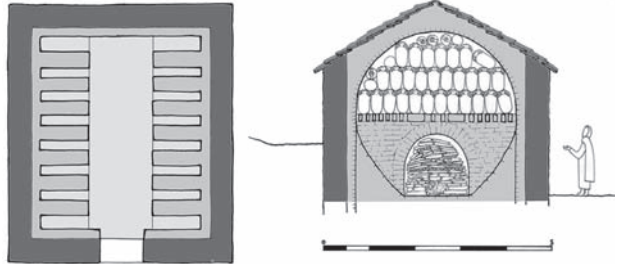


Fig. 6 Reconstruction of one of the kilns  
for LR1 amphorae production



Fig. 7 Some LR1 amphorae from the cistern deposit





Fig. 8 Spatheion from Africa,  
first half of  
V<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

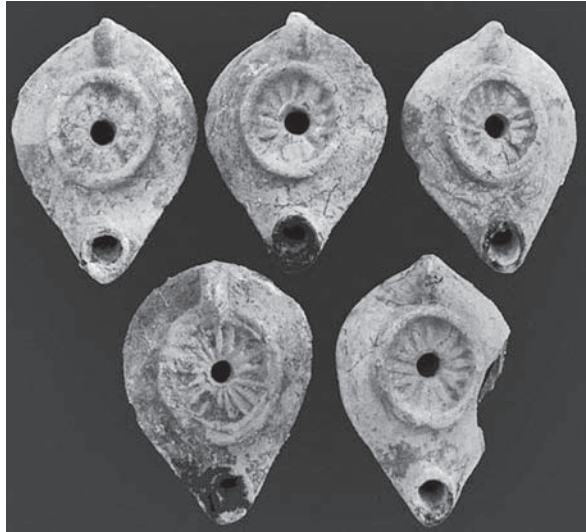


Fig. 9 Lamps. Elaiussa production, VI<sup>th</sup> century A.D.



Fig. 10 Carved pottery. Elaiussa production, VI<sup>th</sup> century A.D.