

SAN GEMINI PRESERVATION STUDIES

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Research Title:

Central Bevagna's First Imperial Age Context:

An analysis of archaeological material found at the excavation of an ancient domus in Via Primo Maggio in Bevagna, Italy, carried out in 2014

Nature of the Research: The research involved the cleaning, sorting, analyzing and categorizing a portion of the ceramic finds from the Via Primo Maggio excavation.

Context of the research: The research was done as part of a course *Analysis of Archaeological Ceramics* offered by the **San Gemini Preservation Studies** (SGPS) in San Gemini, Italy, during the summer of 2018. The research work was carried out in San Gemini at the old monastery of San Giovanni by the staff and students of SGPS. The finds were temporarily loaned by the *Soprintendenza Archaelogia Belle Arti e Pesaggio dell'Umbria* for the duration of the course and returned to the storage at Ponte San Giovanni after the completion of the work.

Research participants:

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Student researchers: Romina Campanella, Cristina Rita Ciccu, Julia Lawless, Callie Richards, Emily Schwartz, Charlotte T. Seaman, Kaylee Rae Toews, Chelsea M. West,

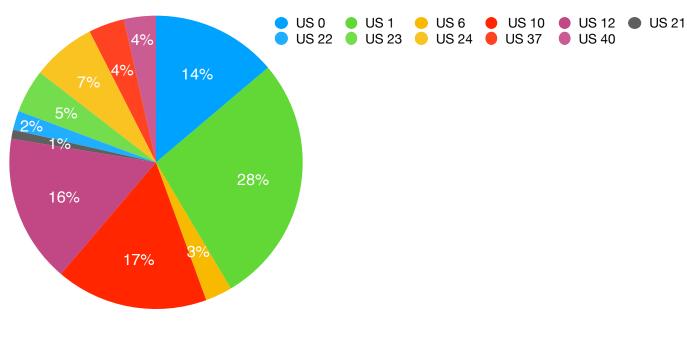
Introduction

This report deals with the findings of an excavation that took place on the Via Primo Maggio in Bevagna in 2014. Bevagna, once a Roman colony north of Todi, is today a town in the central part of the Italian province of Perugia (Umbria). An important stop on the western branch of the Via Flaminia, Bevagna is inscribed on the Vicarello Cups, a set of four silver cylindrical cups in the shape of Roman milestones which detail the stops along the overland route from modern day Cadiz to Rome. Bevagna is also depicted on the Tabula Peutingeriana, a 13th century copy of a 4th or 5th century map of the Roman roads, which was based on the map created by Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa in the first century CE.

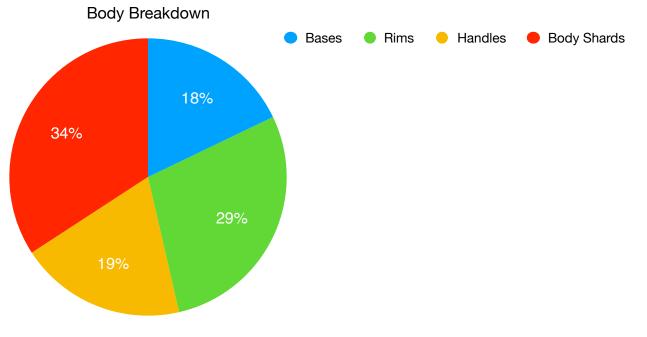
This excavation took place on the Via Primo Maggio, in the center of the city, and was a small excavation done in advance of a building project. A total of eleven layers were excavated, producing 1552 catalogued objects in total. Based on the objects found, it can be concluded that this part of the city was once a residential area, as the majority of objects found had to do with domestic life – loom weights, cooking ware, cups, etc. were found in each layer.

Using the fine wares (black gloss ware) to date the layers, it can also be concluded that the excavation as a whole dates between 600 BC – 70 AD The earliest objects come from before the Romanization of Umbria in 290 BC, when the region was Etruscan territory, and the Italic sigillata that are the latest objects can be dated to the 1st Imperial Age (1st century AD). The lack of African sigillata ends the timeline at 70 AD, as they became prevalent in the mid to late 1st century AD. In addition to this chronology, it shall also be noted that the majority of fine ware found in this excavation was from the Republican Age, while the transport amphorae are dated to the 1st Imperial Age.

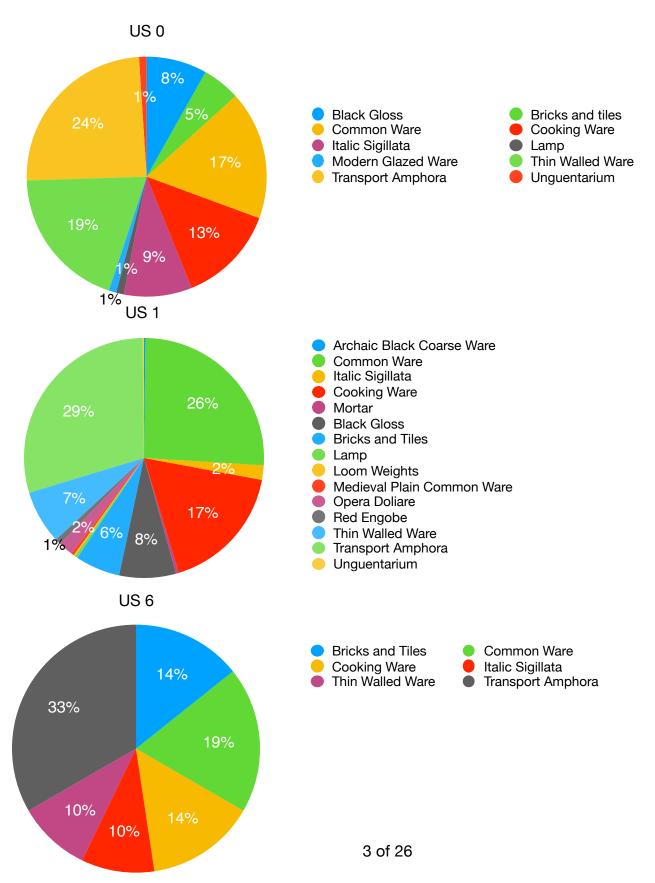
The largest layer was US 1 with 512 pieces, primarily composed of Transport Amphoras, while the smallest layer was US 22 with only 15 pieces. The excavation can also be broken down into types of shard found, showing a relatively even split between vessel shard types - as shown in the chart below all pointing to the hypothesis that the area was once residential.

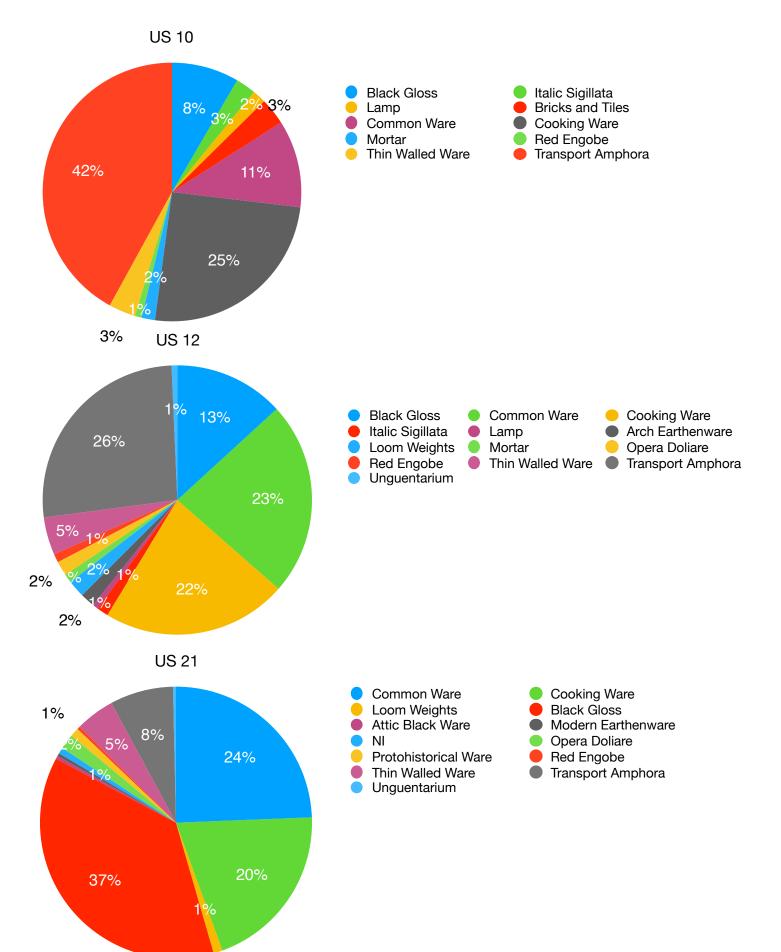


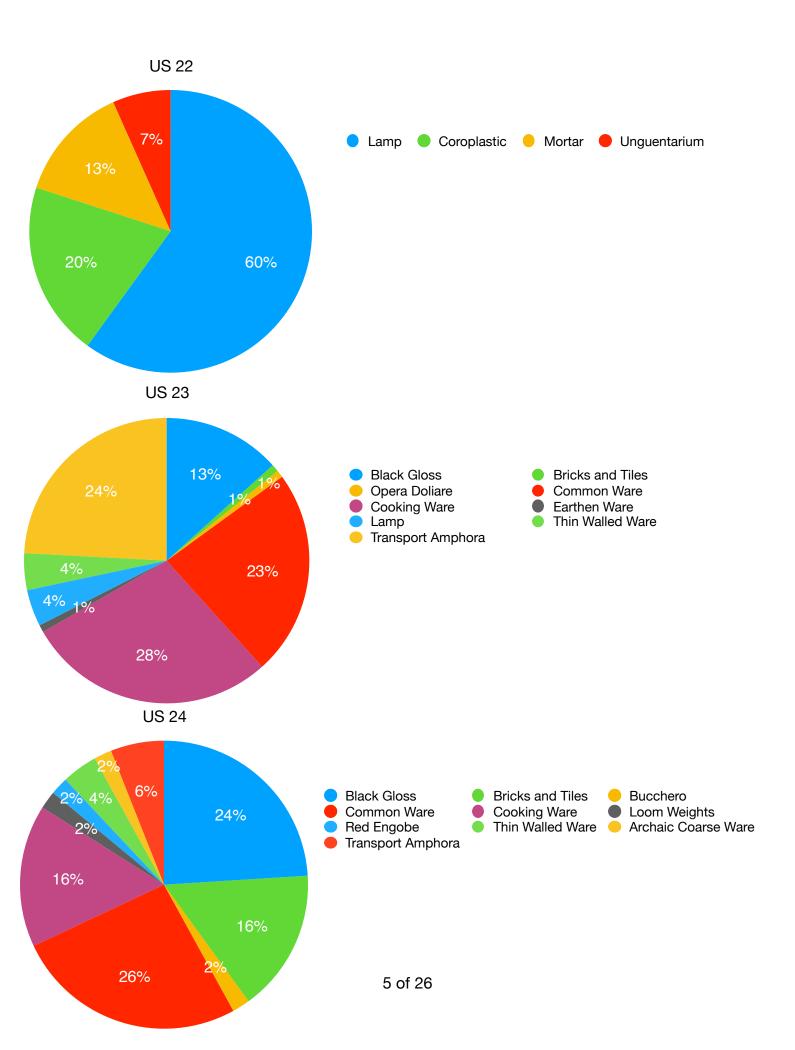
Composition of Context

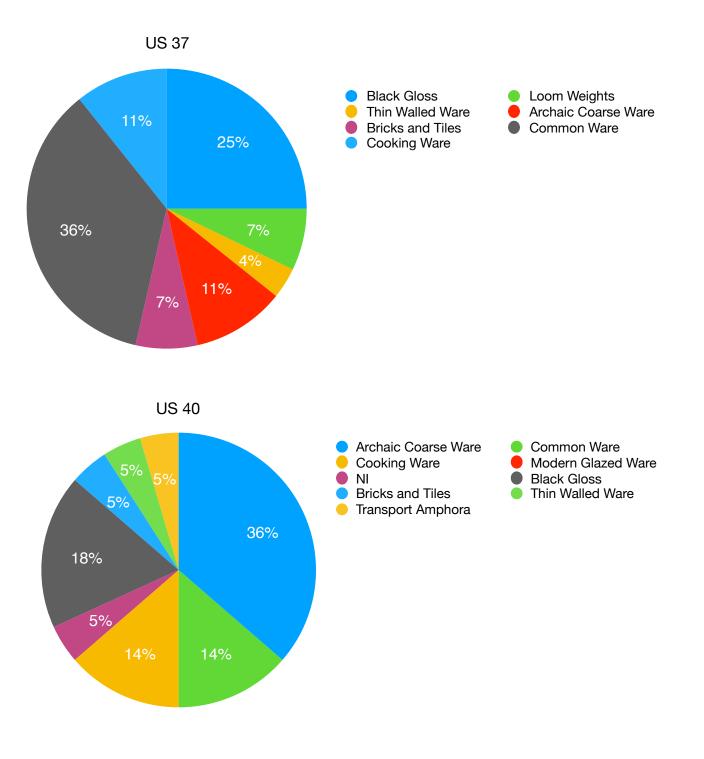


The following prepared charts have been included to highlight differences and similarities between the layers, showcasing a breakdown of each layer's composition.









Black Gloss

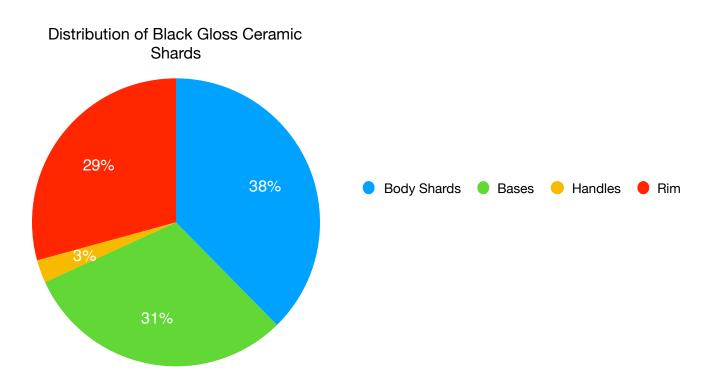
Black gloss is a type of fine ware ceramic identifiable by its black coating and light clay body. It is produced in a reducing-oxidizing firing process, which allows the outer coating to remain black while the interior returns to the clay's original colour. In order for a piece to be considered black gloss it must be wheel made, and made with fine clay, which allows us to assume it would be used as tableware rather than cooking or storage vessels.

Black gloss ceramics are present from the 4th century BC to the 1st century BC. This timeline can be divided into two sections: 4th - 3rd century BC and the 2nd - 1st century BC. Ceramics in the 4th - 3rd century BC can be identified by its repertoire of closed and deep forms, a higher amount of decoration (reliefs, overpainting, and pressed or incised decorations), and the Petites Estampilles (305-265 BC). The Petites Estampilles are radial stamps impressed into the bottom of the cups in groups of 4 or 5, they can be anything from animals, to plants, to human iconography. This type of black gloss is largely produced in Rome and Lazio, therefore the quality and details are noted by the potters.

Ceramics from the 2nd - 1st century BC are characterized by their open forms, simple, easily carried shapes, and with little or no decoration. The black gloss during this century were trying to imitate metallic forms, which have be labelled Campana A, Campana B, and Campana C.

Roman Imperial expansion, and the adoption of Roman customs, meant that provinces under Roman control were beginning to import more items than they exported. The province of Umbria acted as a cross way between the Tyrrhenian Sea and the Adriatic Sea, as well as the North and South of Italy. This means that Umbria was gathering products from across Italy.

Black gloss pottery is a prominent fixture in almost every layer of the Bevagna Excavation. It shows a vast repertoire, were shapes are only repeated a couple of times. In total black gloss pottery makes up 15% of the entire excavation – the majority of pieces found were body shards with 117 of 310 pieces, 95 bases, 91 rims, and 8 handles.



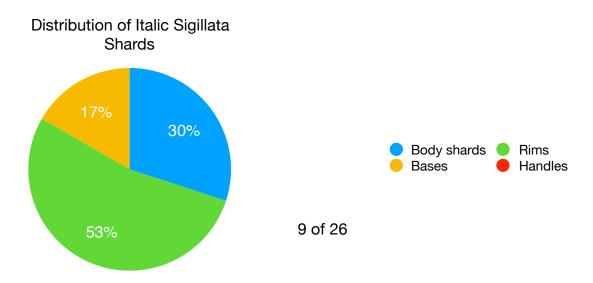
Italic Sigillata

Sigillata refers to decorated red-slipped ware, and is often used to refer to all red-slipped pottery made during the Roman Age. Italic Sigillata, a fine tableware decorated in relief, can be identified by a red slip over a light clay fabric. The slip, when fired, was glossy but required no polishing or burnishing. Instead, the glossy slipped surface was achieved by a low firing range and an oxidizing firing atmosphere. The motifs often depicted mythological scenes, or were reminiscent of those seen on the black gloss wares. Decoration was achieved by a mold on a wheel, meaning large-scale production could be achieved from a small number of ceramic production sites.

Production of Italic Sigillata occurred between 40 B.C and 50 A.D. The earliest sites have been identified in Tuscany, but manufacture spread to other regions due to popularity and low production cost. Often controlled by wealthy or powerful families involved in agriculture and trade, this fine tableware paired well with the already established trade routes. Military conquest brought the tableware to the far reaches of the empire and due to its popularity, imitations were produced outside of Italy from Gaul to Africa. Excavations of Roman military camps established a connection between the Italic Sigillata and use by Roman soldiers, with findings from sites as far as Germany.

As a stopping point on established routes between Rome and other cities, Bevagna should present a number of trade goods as well as indication of military interaction. With the Italic Sigillata being produced just north of Umbria in Tuscany, goods coming into Rome would pass through this city. Excavation of residential areas of the city will present with domestic items, and as a popular tableware, one would expect Italic Sigillata to be found in this assemblage. The presence of this type of ceramic ware confirms Bevagna's status as an important stop along the Via Flaminia.

There were 31 italic sigillata pieces found in total. 9 body shards, 16 rims, 5 bases, and no handles.



Plain Common/Cooking Ware

Unlike other delicate pottery types, common wares (including cooking wares and plain wares) often played a more practical role in ancient people's daily lives, perpetuated in the history of mass-produced potteries in human society. In general, the development of common wares can be divided into three time periods: the Archaic time period, the Hellenistic and Roman period, and the Medieval period.

During the Archaic period of time, the distinction between fine ware and common ware was not significant. As one of the main classes of Archaic pottery, *Impasto Grezzo* (coarse ware) functioned as the common cooking ware (*olla*), with no slip nor light burnishing inside, often appearing in a closed form with no decorations. With a strong morphological tradition, the *Impasto Grezzo* that were commonly produced within a domestic space are hard to distinguish from one another. Moreover, the high presence of closed-form cooking ware demonstrates a soup-based diet with long cooking times during this period.

When it comes to the Hellenistic and Roman period, the definition of common wares becomes more distinguished from that of the fine wares. In addition to the fact that they were all made from coarser clay and were technologically advanced for specific use, in general there were four main classes of common wares: Plain Common Ware, Cooking Ware, Red Engobe Cooking Ware, and African Cooking Ware. Except for the imported African cooking ware, the other three classes were often locally produced, and the repertoire of this local production experienced very slow change, since for these largely produced common wares, innovations were not necessary.

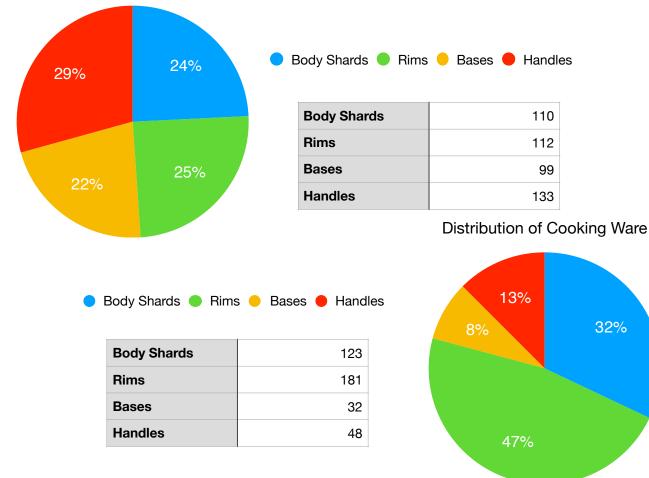
Plain Common Ware and Cooking Ware are two types of common wares that were most widely distributed at the time, and their production usually inherited the local traditions. Whilst Plain Common Ware includes forms like fish sauce amphorae, bottles, and jars, Cooking Ware often had no handles since their rims functioned as handles.

Pompeian Red Engobe Cooking Ware, just as its name implies, was made in the Pompei area and dates back to the time ranging from II BC to the second half of I AD, when the eruption of Vesuvius and Pompei's destruction marked the end of this production. These large saucepans (with diameters of up to 95 cm) were made on potter's wheels, whilst the thick engobe (known as *Teflon* today) covered both the inside and the outside rim, granting the whole pottery a smooth quality and a deep red colour. This type of pottery represented a technologically advanced and commercially successful handcraft of the time, the repertory of which had few variations, except for the slight changes in the morphology of the rims.

African Cooking Ware, as a typical form of cooking wares, was usually imported from the African colonies of the Roman Empire, whilst its repertory slowly changed during its longtime production from I to V AD. These wares were produced in the same laboratories as African Sigillata, which sometimes made it difficult to distinguish them from African Sigillata body sherds. There were two common types of this production, one of which often had blackish rims, while the other one featured ashed slip.

Later on, in the Medieval period, the evolvement of Roman plain ware called *Acroma Depurate* (depurated uncovered ware) constituted the main class of Medieval common ware. This type of common ware was often locally produced, and was characterized by sharing long-lasting continuity, which means these products demonstrated a very poor, narrow repertory. Nevertheless, the Medieval cooking ware developed its own characteristics: unlike former kitchenwares, even cooking ware could be glazed after XIV AD, in order to contain sticky food. Moreover, whilst pans and *olla* were still the most common forms, two new pottery forms, the mug and the baking tin, also came into use.

All common wares found in this context were locally produced, which means that all these pieces are originally from Italy. In total there were 454 Common ware pieces, and 386 Cooking ware pieces. In addition there were 12 pieces of Pompeian origin (The red engobe cooking ware) 11 rims and 1 base. See page 20-22 For images of cooking ware, and page 24 for common ware.



Distribution of Common Ware

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Transport Amphorae

Amphoras are ceramic containers used to carry and preserve foodstuffs, designed primarily to be stowed on ships. They mostly contain liquid or semi-liquid agricultural goods (such as wine, oil, or garum), but also olives, fruits, seeds, and pulses. They are characterized mostly by a tapered body shape with two handles (hence their name), terminating with a push rod.

Over the centuries they underwent several changes, but their basic form remained constant, since it was linked to their functionality. The amphorae were manufactured in specialized laboratories through a complex procedure. The clay used to model the amphoras was usually rich in tempers, whether naturally occuring or added to give it more robustness and greater strength. After the extraction and the preparation of the clay, the potter modeled it on the wheel by shaping the body and the neck of the amphora, while the handles were made by hand. Specifically, the body was built by coil method on a potter's wheel, which consists of successive additions of clay cords that are stacked in a spiral form to create a vessel's walls. To confer more solidity, the body was probably completed in multiple stages with intermediate drying. At the end, all parts of the amphora were consolidated into its final form. It was then allowed to dry until it reached the consistency suitable for baking inside the kiln.

The furnace usually consisted of a combustion chamber and a firing chamber. The latter was situated above the former and separated by a perforated floor, usually circular in shape and supported by a central column, on which the amphoras were placed, insulating them from direct contact with the fire. During this process, the amphorae take on the texture of ceramics and a color that could vary from beige to pink to orange.Before being filled, the amphoras were often coated inside with a waterproofing substance (in most cases, resin). After the contents were added, the amphora were closed with a "operculum"—a terracotta disc—blocked with mortar.

On this closure was often a stamp, probably referring to the merchant who looked after the marketing of the amphora and its contents. In fact, amphoras can give helpful information about commerce and trade between different regions of the ancient world including their productivity, traditions and technical knowledge of the laboratories, the social dynamics linked to the consumption of the goods, and the goods themselves. The presence of "fresh incisions" on the amphoras are of primary importance in the reconstruction of the trade on the amphoras. They may show the preparation of containers, the owners of the pottery workshops, or recipients of a lot of jars to fill and trade.

Unlike fine wares that were subject to stylistic trends that shift quickly and frequently, the transport amphora repertoire remained fairly stable. Based primarily on a functional purpose,

amphora style didn't change unless prompted by some similar change in that purpose, such as fluctuations in trade patterns or content type. For instance, despite some stylistic changes over the years of transport amphoras use, all wine amphoras tended to have long and narrow necks. Similarly, garum amphoras had long necks but wide mouths; oil amphoras had short and narrow necks; and salted fish amphoras had large bodies, as well as large necks and mouths.

Roman amphoras—as a sign of the Roman trade and conquest—arose in 250 BC with the appearance of the Greco-italica tarda, a wine amphora from the Tirrenic coast of Italy. While based off of pre-existing forms from Great Greece and Sicily, the Greco-italica tarda gave rise to later forms (Dressel 1, Tirrenic; Lamboglia 2, Adriatic) during the expansion of Roman power in the West from 125 BC-30 BC.

After a period of civil wars came an era of peace. It was marked by a general evolution of Roman economy, evidenced by a growth in agricultural productivity, extensive urbanization and Romanization, a growth of a money-based economy, and general demographic expansion. All of these factors helped to promote the development of big markets and trade flow was directed from peripheral regions to the Roman core, affecting the number and types of amphoras used.

This type of trade and economy lasted from II BC – I BC, when there is a sudden slowing of Italic production. This change reflects a growth of regional trade and decrease of long-distance trade. This lasts until the end of I AD, at which point there is a greater focus on regional specialization of product surplus in order to support Rome's growing empire (and it's growing armies). For example, Egypt and Africa produce the majority of wheat for Rome, while oil is imported from Baetica. This balanced trade continues until the end of II AD.

In III AD there is another marked emphasis on regional production, the most prosperous of which are the African productions due to a shift in both structural and productive aspects. While much of the previous agricultural production in regions of export was based on slaves, the African system was based on village communities and familial units cultivating large tracts of land. Similarly, production itself had switched from intensive agriculture (wine, oil) to extensive (wheat, cereals). Thus, there may be a stronger presence of African vessels in the trade system, though not necessarily of amphora form as wheats and cereals would have been transported by other methods.

IV AD saw the foundation of Constantinople. It's establishment created a new centre of commerce, diverting trade away from Rome. For example, the regions of Africa produced sufficient wheat to meat the needs of Rome. The rise of the new capital, however, redirected African wheat to service its own demands, leading to a stronger link between the Roman core and Southern Italy (a previous wheat production centre). Thus, new amphora styles were introduced into the trade system to reflect the new trade patterns.

The evolution of amphora styles ends with the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476 AD. The dissolution of the empire disconnects many regions from one another and decreases the agricultural productivity, lowering the frequency of trade and ultimately ending the use of amphoras.

The most frequent type of transport amphora found in this context was Italian. There were 226 transport amphora pieces found in total, broken down by region in the table below.

Region	Total
Adriatic Side of Italy	3
Aegean	9
African	4
Central Italy	21
Cnidos	1
Greece	19
Italic	24
Italic-Adriatic Side	2
Italic Tirrenic Side	38
No Information	74
North Africa	5
Punic	2
Rhodian	1
Rodi	1
Scicily	1
Spanish	21
	226

Amphora breakdown by region

Below the pieces are further broken up into type, and chronology sorted by production and broken up by US.

US 0 Transport Amphora Breakdown

US	Class	Producti on	Туре	Chonology	Total
0	Transport Amphora	Italic	Ostia III 369,370	10 bc-150ad	6
0	Transport Amphora	Italic	Dressel 21-22	25bc-100ad	2
0	Transport Amphora	Ni	Ni	Ni	16

US 1 Transport Amphora Breakdown

US	class	production	type	chronology	total
1	transp amph	african	Mau XXXV		3
1	transp amph	greek	Agora M 54	1-200 A.D.	1
1	transp amph	greek	Cnidian Amph	100-50 b.C.	1
1	transp amph	greek	Cretese 4	1-150 a.D.	1
1	transp amph	greek	ni		10
1	transp amph	greek	Rhodian Amph		2
1	transp amph	italic-adriatic side	Lamboglia 2	130 b.C25 A.D.	2
1	transp amph	italic-tirrenic side	Dressel 1	100-1 b.C.	5
1	transp amph	italic-tirrenic side	Dressel 2-4	60 b.C160 A.D.	1
1	transp amph	italic-tirrenic side	Ostia III 369-370	10 b.C 150 A.D.	1
1	transp amph	Sicily	Ostia II 522-523		1
1	transp amph	spanish	Beltran IIA 2	50-125 A.D.	1
1	transp amph	spanish	Dressel 14	20-200 A.D.	2
1	transp amph	spanish	Dressel 20	10 b.C 260 A.D.	2
1	transp amph	spanish	Dressel 7-11	25 b.C 100 A.D.	5
1	transp amph	spanish	Dressel 9	25 b.C 100 A.D.	1

US	class	production	type	chronology	total
4	transp amph	italic-tirrenic side	Dressel 1	100-1 b.C.	1
4	transp amph	italic-tirrenic side	Dressel 2-4	60 b.C160 A.D.	1
4	transp amph	italic-tirrenic side	Ostia III 369-370	10 b.C 150 A.D.	2
4	transp amph	ni	ni		6
4	transp amph	spanish	Dressel 7-11	25 b.C 100 A.D.	1

US 4 Transport Amphora Breakdown

US 5 Transport Amphora Breakdown

US	class	production	type	chronology	total
5	transp amph	african	Mau XXXV		3
5	transp amph	italic-tirrenic side	Dressel 1	100-1 b.C.	1
5	transp amph	italic-tirrenic side	Dressel 2-4	60 b.C160 A.D.	1
5	transp amph	italic-tirrenic side	Ostia III 369-370	10 b.C 150 A.D.	29
5	transp amph	ni	ni		4
5	transp amph	spanish	Dressel 14	20-200 A.D.	2
5	transp amph	spanish	ni		4

US 6 Transport Amphora Breakdown

US	Class	Production	Туре	Chonology	Total
6	Transport Amphora	Aegean	Ni	Ni	6
6	Transport Amphora	Aegean	Dressel 2-4	100Bc-100AD	1

US 9 Transport Amphora Breakdown

US	class	production	type	chronology	total
9	transp amph	italic-tirrenic side	Ostia III 369-370	10 b.C 150 A.D.	3
9	transp amph	ni	ni		21
9	transp amph	spanish	Dressel 7-11	25 b.C 100 A.D.	1

US 10 Transport Am	phora Breakdown
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US	class	production	type	chronology	total
10	transport amphora	cnidos	mau38	1-100ad	1
10	transport amphora	Italic	dressel 1c	125bc-25bc	1
10	transport amphora	Italic	ostia 3, 369-370	10bc-150ad	10
10	transport amphora	Italic	dressel 1	125bc-25bc	1
10	transport amphora	ni	ni	ni	34
10	transport amphora	rodi		1-100ad	1
10	transport amphora	Spanish	dressel 7-11	25c-100ad	2

US 12 Transport Amphora Breakdown

US	Class	Production	Туре	Chronology	Total
12	transport amphora	central italy	ni	ni	3
12	transport amphora	central italy	Ostia III 369-370	10 b.C 150 A.D.	18
12	transport amphora	Greek	Camulodunum 184	1-100 ad	2
12	transport amphora	Greek	Cretese 1	1-250 A.D.	2
12	transport amphora	Greek	dressel 2/4	100bc-160ad	6
12	transport amphora	Greek	Dressel 5	100 b.C100 A.D.	1
12	transport amphora	Greek	ni		12
12	transport amphora	Greek	Camulodunum 184	1-50 d.C.	1
12	transport amphora	Greek	Dressel 5	100 b.C100 A.D.	1
12	transport amphora	italic-adriatic side	lamboglia 2	130bc-25ad	3
12	transport amphora	italic-tirrenic side	Dressel 1	125bc-25bc	10
12	transport amphora	italic-tirrenic side	Dressel 21-22		1
12	transport amphora	italic-tirrenic side	Dressel 2/4	100bc-160ad	5
12	transport amphora	italic-tirrenic side	Dressel 1	100-1 b.C.	6
12	transport amphora	italic-tirrenic side	Dressel 21-22		1
12	transport amphora	italic-tirrenic side	Dressel 2-4	60 b.C160 A.D.	3
12	transport amphora	italic-tirrenic side	Ostia III 369-370	10 b.C 150 A.D.	12
12	transport amphora	ni	ni	ni	11
12	transport amphora	North Africa	MAU 35	30ad-220ad	7
12	transport amphora	spanish	Dressel 14	50ad-150ad	1
12	transport amphora	spanish	Dressel 7/11	25bC-100 AD	1
12	transport amphora	spanish	Haltern 70	50 b.C75 A.D.	1
12	transport amphora	spanish 1	7 ⁱ of 26	ni	5
12	transport amphora	spanish	Haltern 70	50 b.C75 A.D.	1

US	class	production	type	chronology	total
21	transp amph	adriatic side of Italy	Lamboglia 2	130 b.C25 A.D.	1
21	transp amph	adriatic side of Italy	Lamboglia 6b	50 b.C150 A.D.	2
21	transp amph	greek	Coan Amph	100 b.C100 A.D.	1
21	transp amph	greek	Rhodian Amph		1
21	transp amph	italic-tirrenic side	Dressel 1	100-1 b.C.	3
21	transp amph	italic-tirrenic side	Dressel 2-4	60 b.C160 A.D.	3
21	transp amph	italic-tirrenic side	Ostia III 369-370	10 b.C 150 A.D.	3
21	transp amph	ni	ni		5
21	transp amph	punic	Mana C2C	100 b.C10 A.D.	1
21	transp amph	punic	ni		1

US 23 Transport Amphora Breakdown

US	class	production	type	chronology	total
23	transp amph	greek	Rhodian Amph		1
23	transp amph	italic-tirrenic side	Ostia III 369-370	10 b.C 150 A.D.	13
23	transp amph	ni	ni		11
23	transp amph	spanish	Dressel 14	20-200 A.D.	1
23	transp amph	spanish	Dressel 20	10 b.C 260 A.D.	1
23	transp amph	spanish	Dressel 7-11	25 b.C 100 A.D.	2

US 24 Transport Amphora Breakdown

US	class	production	type	chronology	total
24	transport amphora	italic	ni	ni	1
24	transport amphora	ni	ni	ni	1
24	transport amphora	spanish	ni	ni	1

US 28 Transport Amphora Breakdown

US	class	production	type	chronology	total
28	transp amph	italic-tirrenic side	Dressel 2-4	60 b.C160 A.D.	1

US 31	Transport Amp	hora Breakdown
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US	class	production	type	chronology	total
31	transp amph	italic-tirrenic side	Dressel 1a	125-10 b.C.	1
31	transp amph	italic-tirrenic side	Ostia III 369-370	10 b.C 150 A.D.	1
31	transp amph	ni	ni		8

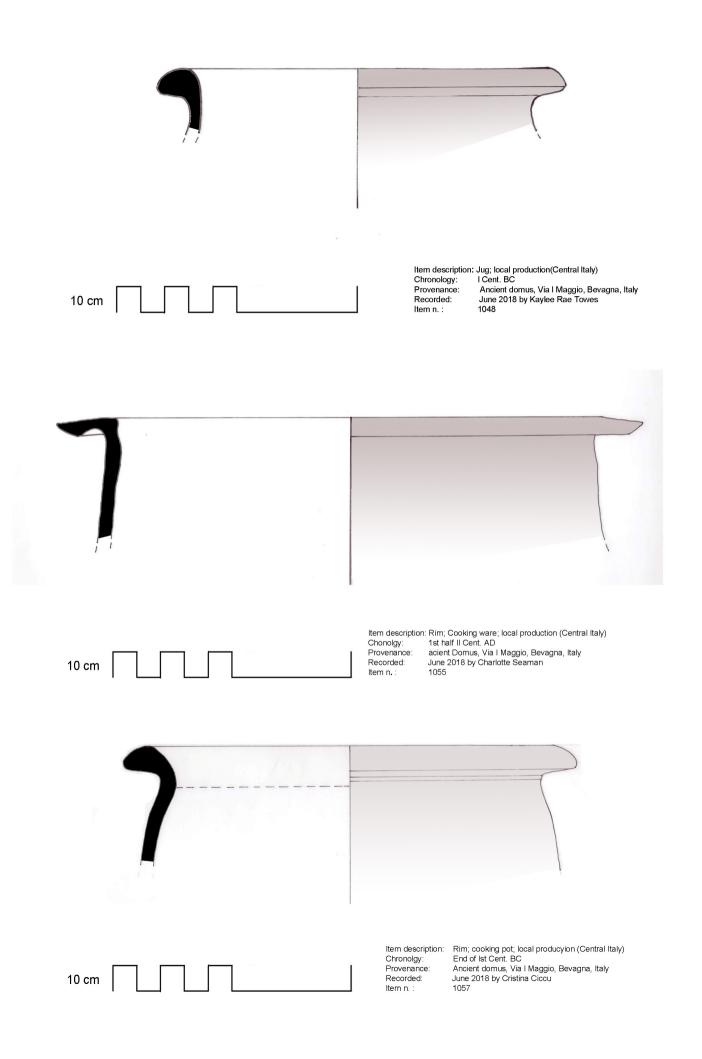
US 40 Transport Amphora Breakdown

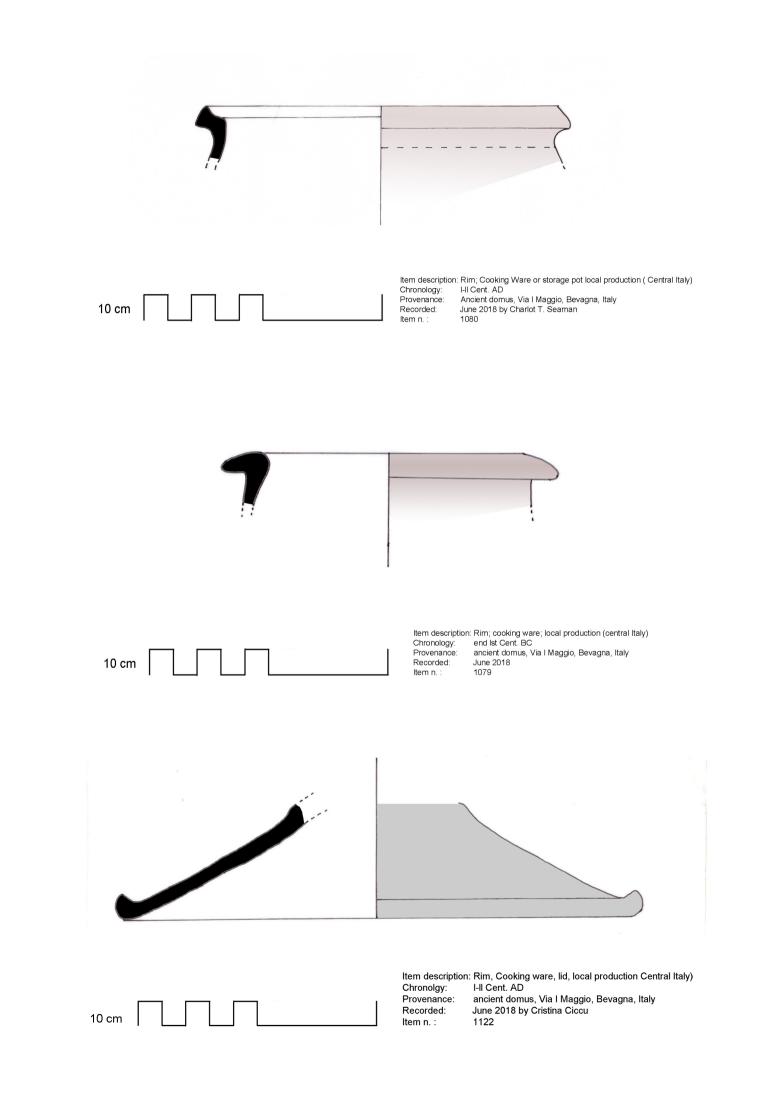
US	Class	Production	Туре	Chonology	Total
40	transport amphora	local	ni	ni	1

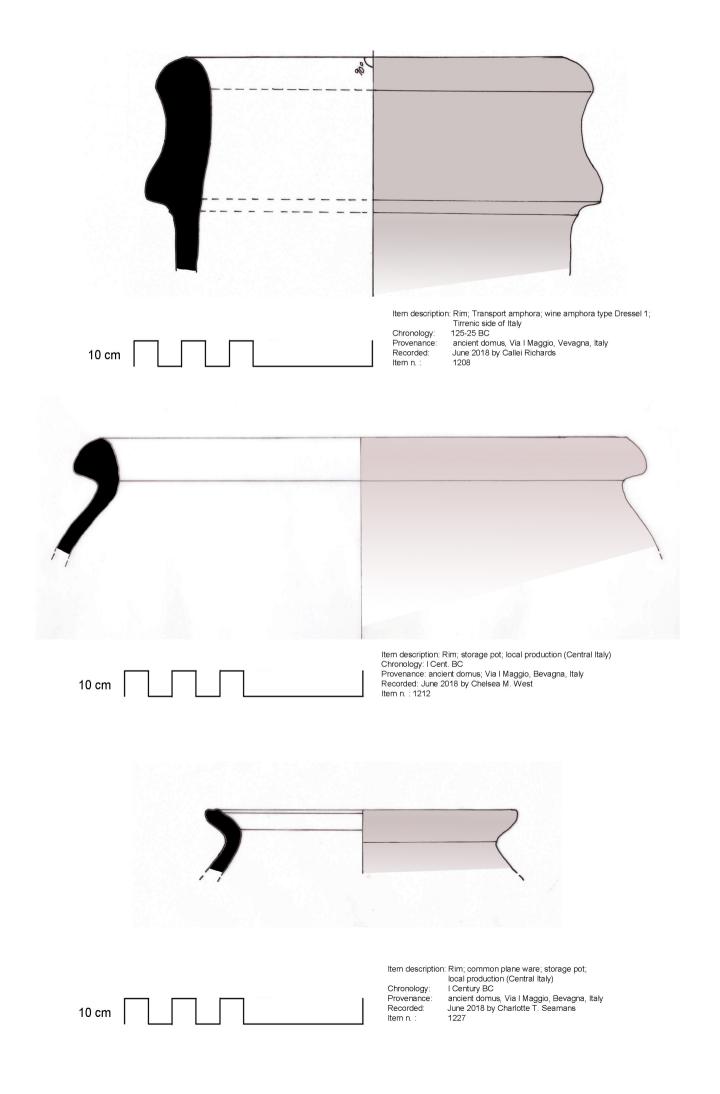
US 1 over 8 Transport Amphora Breakdown

US	class	production	type	chronology	total
1 over 8	transport amphora	aegean	ni	ni	2
1 over 8	transport amphora	african	Mau 35	25-100 AD	1
1 over 8	transport amphora	central italy	ostia 3, 369-370	125 BC- 25 BC	3
1 over 8	transport amphora	italic	Dressel 2.4	25 BC - 160 AD	2
1 over 8	transport amphora	Spanish	Dressel 8	25 BC - 100 AD	1

See page 23 for images







10 cm	Item description: Rim; common ware; jug; local production (Central Italy) Chronology: IV-I Cent. BC Provenance: ancient domus, Via I Maggio, Bevagna, Italy Recorded: June 2018 Kaylee Rae Towes Item n. : 1233

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