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Phaselis' Hellenistic Temple (?) Entrance Slope and Terracotta Finds: A Preliminary Study

Phaselis Hellenistik Tapınağı'nın (?) Giriş Sahanlığı ve Pişmiş Toprak Buluntuları: Bir Ön Değerlendirme Çalışması

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Uğurcan ORHAN *

Abstract: The tornado disaster in January 2019 in and around the Kemer district of Antalya province start and hit the Phaselis very hard and thousands of trees were broken and blown down. During this unfortunate disaster, dozens of trees around the Hellenistic Temple (?), the terrace walls of which are visible on the piedmont of the Hellenistic *Acropolis* on the northern slope of Phaselis toppled over. The roots of these fallen trees exposed terracotta material from a depth of 50 cm to 2 m. During the examinations started with a land survey over a quite broad area, thousands of broken and deficient terracotta pieces were found in an area of approximately 60 x 40 m. Among this material, roof tiles, pavement slabs, bricks, tableware, kitchenware, storage containers, amphorae, black-glazed pottery sherds, small finds and some production waste were found. According to preliminary investigations, these finds belong to the period from the mid Vth c. B.C. to the mid IVth c. B.C. The area of the Hellenistic Temple (?) of Phaselis ancient city have been included in the investigation area for the first time and yielded tangible results about the earlier phases of the city which give importance to this study. Further, the finds vary in date and material an important issue. Another important issue are the traces of local production among the finds.

Keywords: Phaselis, *Hellenistic Temple (?)*, Terracotta, Ceramic Finds, Traces of Local Ceramic Production

Öz: 2019 yılı Ocak ayında; Antalya ili Kemer ilçesi ve çevresinde yaşanan hortum felaketi Phaselis'i derinden etkilemiş ve binlerce ağacın kırılmasına ve devrilmesine sebep olmuştur. Bu talihsiz afet sırasında Phaselis'in kuzey yamacındaki Hellenistik *akropolisin* eteklerinde teras duvarları görünen Hellenistik Tapınak (?) alanında ve çevresinde de düzinelerce ağaç kökünden devrilmiştir. Yıkılan ağaçlar, 50 cm ile 2 m arasındaki derinliklerden kökleriyle birlikte pişmiş toprak malzemeyi gün ışığına çıkarmıştır. Oldukça geniş bir saha taramasıyla başlanan çalışmalarda, yak. 60 x 40 m alana yayılım gösteren kırık ve eksik olarak binlerce pişmiş toprak malzeme tespit edilmiştir. Söz konusu pişmiş toprak malzemeler arasında, çatı kiremitleri, zemin döşemeleri, pişmiş toprak tuğlalar, günlük kullanım kapları, mutfak kapları, depolama kapları, amphoralar, siyah firnisli kap parçaları, binlerce küçük buluntu ve üretimi işaret eden bazı atıklar da tespit edilmiştir. İlk belirlemelere göre; ele geçen buluntuların MÖ V. yüzyıl ortaları ile IV. yüzyıl ortaları arasındaki tarihlere ait oldukları saptanmıştır. Phaselis kenti Hellenistik Tapınak (?) alanının ilk defa araştırma kapsamına alınması ve kentin erken dönemlerine dair somut veriler sunması, bu çalışmanın önemini arz etmektedir. Ayrıca farklı mal gruplarının saptanması ve farklı tarihli malzemelerin tespit edilmesi, bu alan için önemli bir problematik oluşturmaktadır. Diğer bir önem arz eden sorunsal ise, buluntular üzerinde yerel üretimi işaret eden verilerin ele geçmesidir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Phaselis, Hellenistik Tapınak (?), Pişmiş Toprak Kaplar, Seramik Buluntular, Lokal Seramik Üretimine Dair İzler

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Introduction

The tornado disaster in and around Kemer district on the 24th of January 2019, caused a catastrophe, hitting the area of the so-called Hellenistic Temple (?)¹ located by the lagoon at Phaselis. In consequence, thousands of trees in the area were flattened (Fig. 1). While some of these trees were broken, others were uprooted. The latter exposed terracotta materials. A systematic work was conducted on the terracotta finds found on entrance slope of the temple in an extensive area of approximately 60 x 40 m. The situation of the area was documented before and after the removal of the trees via aerial photographs (Fig. 2). After cleaning activities, the research area appeared clearly.

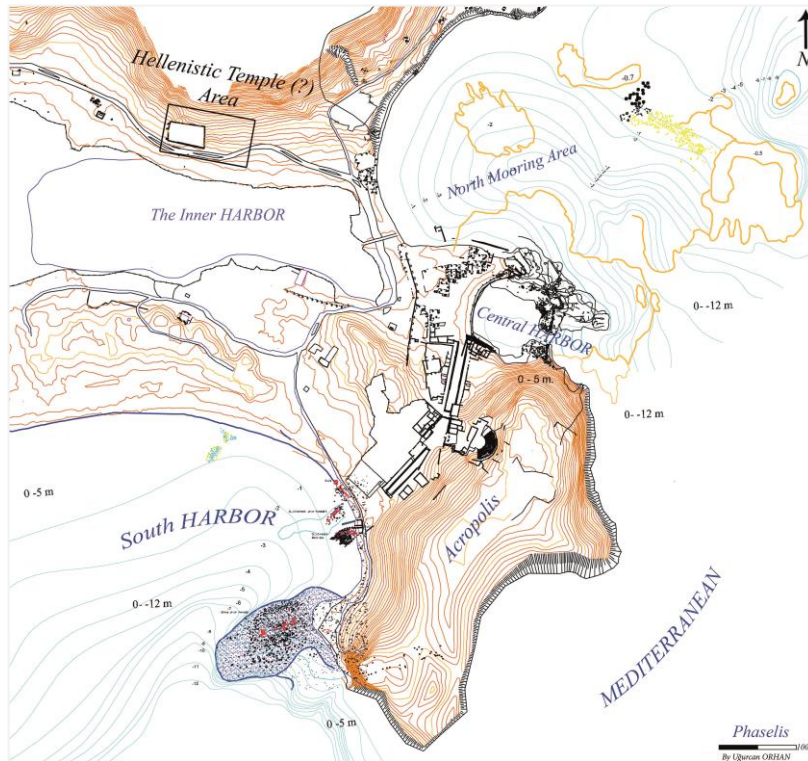


Fig. 1. Phaselis Ancient City Map and Hellenistic Temple Area

The aerial pictures of the area were taken, the orthophoto was created and topographical data were obtained (Fig. 3). The GPS coordinates of the mentioned areas located on a certain line on the slope of the temple² where the finds were located was measured and thus, the data needed for the creation of a digital map of the survey site was obtained³. The information of coordinates and altitudes of the whole area were charted on the orthophoto. Then a 5 x 5 m digital grid system was

¹ The studies and publications about Phaselis, the building with a question mark is interpreted as a temple. See Schläger – Schäfer 1971, 544, Abb. 2,Q1; Schäfer *et al.* 1981, Taf. 4; Bayburtluoğlu 1982, 307. However, the exact data showing that this building is a temple is uncertain for now, but studies in this area are ongoing. Especially see Arslan – Tüner Önen 2019, 426-427, Fig. 1-6, 444, Fig. 49-55. Therefore, it is thought that it may be beneficial to approach the structure in question sceptically.

² The finds were not identify from any part of the temple structure. It was independently determined at the terrace level of the building.

³ The orthophoto was created by combining a total of 134 photos. In addition, the shooting was made with a drone from a certain height and over the planned routes. All the finds in the area can be determined with their localization due to this process. Also the current situation of the area is digitally documented and protected.

created on the orthophoto to determine the find-spots and the find areas⁴ (Fig. 4). Later, the area was divided into sectors according to the intensity of the finds and six different sectors were determined (Fig. 5)⁵.



Fig. 2. Hellenistic Temple Area Orthophoto Before Plant Cleaning



Fig. 3. Hellenistic Temple Area Orthophoto After Plant Cleaning

At the Hellenistic Temple (?) area, observation, identification and documentation of the finds conducted and the related sectors were recorded first and then the data entered digitally on the grid system. Due to the broad layout of some sectors, the grids of 5 x 5 m were decreased to 1 x 1 m grids when required. After the distribution of finds⁶, beginning from Sector 1 (*S1*), the finds were documented. Only the diagnostic terracotta finds from the surface were systematically collected and documented in the area. The same procedure was implemented in all sectors (*S2*, *S3*, *S4*, *S5* and

⁴ The reason for the establishment of the digital grid system; is the determination of the border and the exact location of the material. Also the orthophoto has been synchronized with Google Earth.

⁵ There are one or more tree roots in each sector.

⁶ From here onwards, the abbreviations for the sectors will be "S". Also all the sectors are named according to their intensity, followed by numerical continuity.

S6)⁷ with only the surface finds collected and documented in the area. Over the course of the exploration, detailed works were carried out only in three sectors and the functions of these (S1, S2 and S6) were tried to be understood. Later, the tree roots in the sectors were cleared of the soil, the finds in the soil were collected and these finds were photographed and documented⁸.

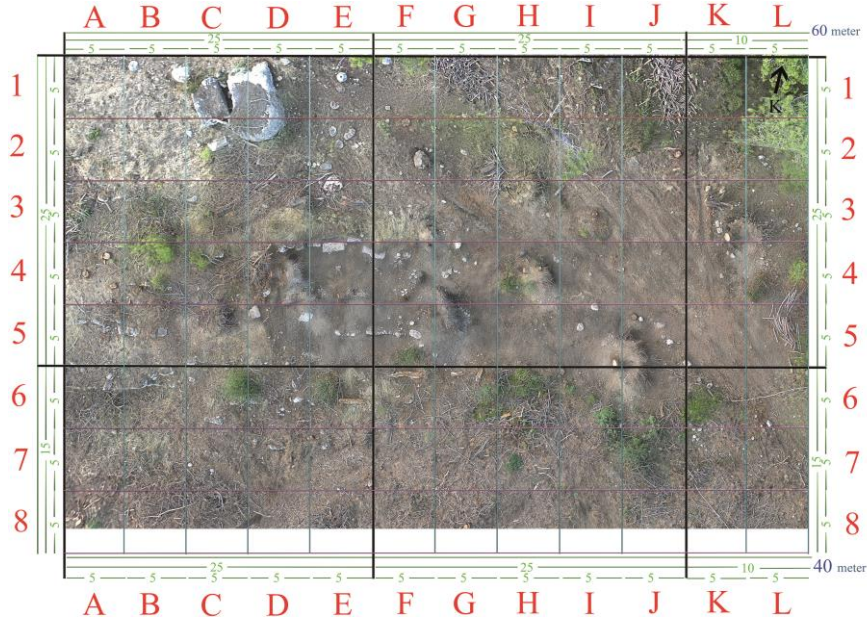


Fig. 4. Temple Area Digital Grid

In the studies carried out in the Hellenistic temple area built in an east-west direction and in the Doric order; the materials obtained included roof tiles, pavement slabs, bricks, tableware, kitchenware, storage containers, amphorae, black-glazed pottery sherds, and thousands of small finds. However, the scope of this study was not to investigate the finds in detail, but to identify the area and to present preliminary results. The study aimed to understand the aforementioned area in the context of its history and function.

The Area of The Hellenistic Temple (?)

The Sectors

At the northeast part of the city, around the Hellenistic Temple (?) entrance slope an area of 40 x 60 m was surveyed. Six different sites were determined according to the intensity of the finds and these sites were named accordingly. The sectors which had finds were added to the grid system to indicate the distribution (Fig. 5). Furthermore, those sectors were divided into 1 x 1 m grids when required⁹. Detailed excavations only carried out in three sectors (S1, S2 and S6). During the documentation, the digital grid system on the orthophoto was used.

In this context, S1 is located in the south-west corner of the area and includes the squares I-5/6 and J-5/6, S2 includes south-western corner of square G-4 and north-eastern corner of the square G-5, S3 includes squares K-3/4 and L-3/4, S4 includes the north-eastern margin of square F-3 and south-eastern end of square G-3¹⁰, S5 includes east side of square D4 and south-western corner of

⁷ In the following studies, S3 was found to be insufficient in quantity. So, S3 is not mentioned throughout this text.

⁸ The mentioned area and terracotta finds are being studied by the Author within the scope of the PhD thesis.

⁹ The sectors are divided into grids of 1 x 1 m to precisely determine the location of the terracotta material. In addition, the GPS coordinates of all the terracotta material were taken and their locations were marked by point.

¹⁰ A dense layer of ash was found in S4.

square E-4, and S6 is located in the east of S5 and south-eastern corner of square E-4 (Fig. 6). It was observed that the roots in some sectors uncovered various materials from a depth of 2 m. Located on a certain line, the sectors have some differences as well as some similarities. These similarities and differences are revealed upon examination of the terracotta finds¹¹. The finds consist of roof tiles, pavements, flat and hollow plaques, rectangle and square shaped kiln bricks, amorphous pieces, ceramic production waste, tableware, cooking ware, storage ware, and rim, neck, handle, body and bottom sherds of amphorae which date to a certain period.

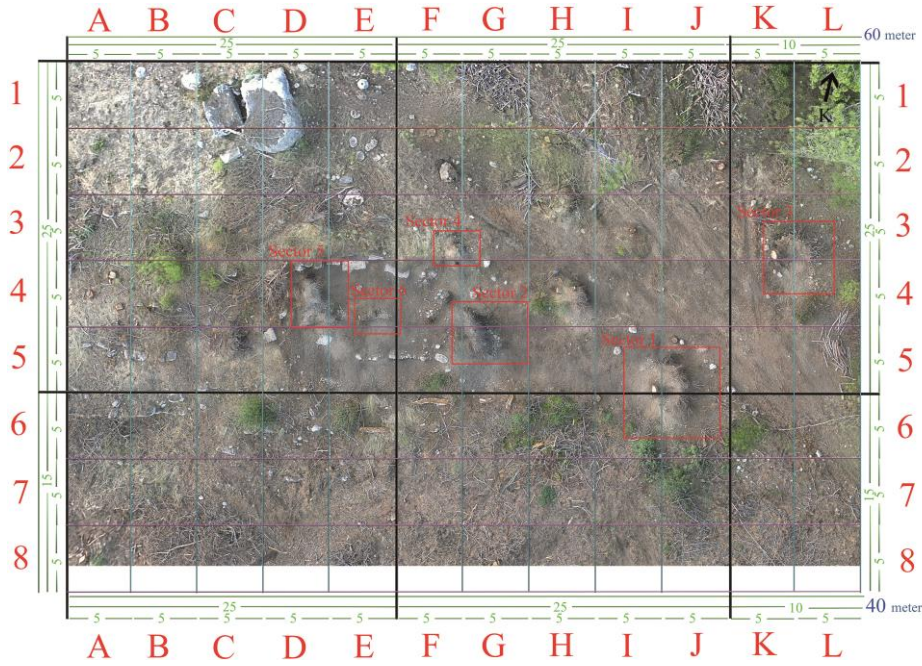


Fig. 5. Digital Grid System Showing The Distribution of Sectors

Terracotta Finds

Black-Glazed Pottery¹² and Table Amphora

Pieces of black-glazed rims, handles, bodies and bases of were found during the study¹³. The decorative details of the black-glazed pottery are visible with stamped palettes and roulette circles visible among them (Fig. 7)¹⁴.

One of the finds was a ekhinus bowl and although the black glaze on it can be seen in patches, its outer surface is ruined. However, this piece of bowl is significant because it precisely reflects the profile. Similar examples of this small bowl with thickened rim and shallow body were dated to 425-400 B.C. from the Karaçallı Necropolis¹⁵, to the end of Vth century and the beginning of IVth century B.C. in Olynthus¹⁶ and to the second half of IVth century and second and third quarters of IVth century

¹¹ When we look at these differences; For example, while vessels with intensive black-glaze are obtained from S1, amphorae from S6 and vessels of daily-use from S2.

¹² At the final phase of ceramic production; the black layer on the vessels that cannot change colour during the baking is called 'glaze'.

¹³ Of the hundreds of black glazed pieces detected, only the diagnostic ones were selected. Also this material was moved to the research station and all documentation were completed at this station.

¹⁴ For similar decorations see Robinson 1950, Pl. 224, No. 778, Pl. 228, No. 865-869; Sparkes – Talcott 1970, Pl. 47-59; Dallık 2009, Lev. 7, Şek. 38, Kat. No. 132.

¹⁵ Çokay-Kepçe 2006, 110-111, Kat. No. SFr 24, 26.

¹⁶ Robinson 1950, Pl. 224, No. 789.

B.C. in the theater excavations at Karantina Island¹⁷ (Fig. 8a).

Another black-glazed find is the piece of a rim from a cylicsoid kantharos. It has an outward thickened rim, narrow concave neck, convex vertical body connecting to the neck and it narrows towards the base. The similar examples of this type were dated to the second half of IVth century B.C. at Olynthus¹⁸, to 350-325 B.C. at Athens¹⁹, to 350-325 B.C. at the Karaçalı Necropolis²⁰, and to 350-325 B.C. at Clarus²¹ (Fig. 8b).

Another find unearthed together with the black-glazed potteries is a table amphora. Only the rim, neck and part of the handle have been preserved. The form of the amphora found together with aforementioned groups presents a pulled out and extended brim, a short and thick neck, oval handles beginning from below the neck and going up to the shoulder, a spherical body and a flat base. On this pottery form, there is a convex moulding on the neck. Similar lip profiled potteries and convex moulding on the neck have been found in the Agora of Athens²² and also similar in form, dated to 450-350 B.C. in the Karaçalı Necropolis²³ and to the end of Vth century B.C. at Olynthus²⁴ (Fig. 8c).

Other Finds and Some Finds Showing Traces of Production

Amongst the other finds, a stopper, a weight, a sifter, a piece of a mortar, a piece of terracotta base and a loom weight. Although there are dozens more finds, only the best preserved ones are evaluated within the scope of this subject (Fig. 9a-e). Terracotta stoppers represent an important group frequently found in excavations and surveys²⁵.



Fig. 6. Overview of the Sectors



Fig. 7. Black-Glazed Pottery Pieces and Decoration Details
 (Fig. 9a-e). Terracotta stoppers represent an important group frequently found in excavations and surveys²⁵.

¹⁷ Egeci 2014, Kat. No. 142-143.

¹⁸ Robinson 1950, Pl. 183, No. 502, 504-505.

¹⁹ Sparkes – Talcott 1970, No. 661.

²⁰ Çokay-Kepçe 2006, 108, Kat. No. SFr 18.

²¹ Dallık 2009, Lev. 2, Şek. 20, Kat. No. 69.

²² Sparkes – Talcott 1970, 187-188, Fig. 12, 1466, Pl. 61, No. 1465.-1466.

²³ Çokay-Kepçe 2006, 128, Kat. No. BZ 8.

²⁴ Robinson 1950, 200, Pl. 139, No. 237.

²⁵ In addition to terracotta stoppers, cork stoppers, clay stoppers and stoppers made of organic materials can be included.

Stoppers are generally used to cover the brims of amphorae and manufactured in the form of the brim of the containers²⁶. In some cases, they are particularly manufactured for uniform-shaped containers and in some cases, broken body parts were used as stoppers²⁷. The terracotta stopper²⁸ found in our study was intact and there are two strapping circles²⁹. While one end of the stopper is long and flat, the other end is narrow (Fig. 9a). Mortars are the forms generally³⁰ used for crushing, grinding and mixing. The spout of the mortar which is shaped as a flat pot with a shallow body we found has been preserved until today (Fig. 9b). The mortars found in the agora of Athens which have close resemblance to the mortar we have found were dated to the end of Vth century³¹ and the beginning of IVth century B.C. and another is dated to around 400 B.C.³².

A piece of a terracotta figurine base and pieces of a sieve were also found³³ (Fig. 9d-e). Another find from the area was a single-hole bench type loom weight in pyramidal form³⁴. It is seen that this well-preserved weight is a flat and smooth on the surface³⁵ (Fig. 9c).

A large number of terracotta bricks, hollow and flat plates, ceramic production waste, misfired vessels, amorphous groups and ceramic waste (slags) were found in the area. When we look at the production waste in the area where four different clay groups are attested, it is seen that the sand mixed with soil had a glassy shine when exposed to high temperature³⁶ (Fig. 10a).

Other materials found in the area are the terracotta bricks. It was observed that some of these

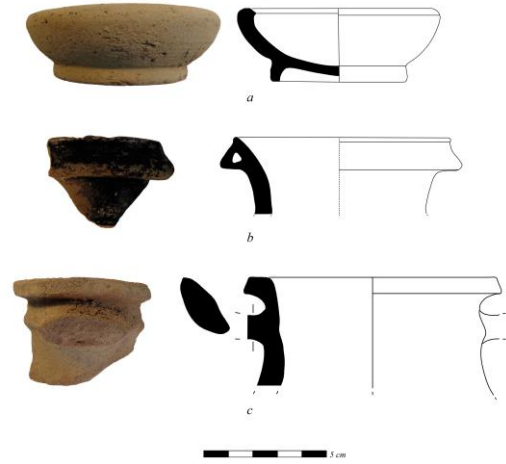


Fig. 8a. Bowl b. Kyliksoid Kantharos c. Table Amphora

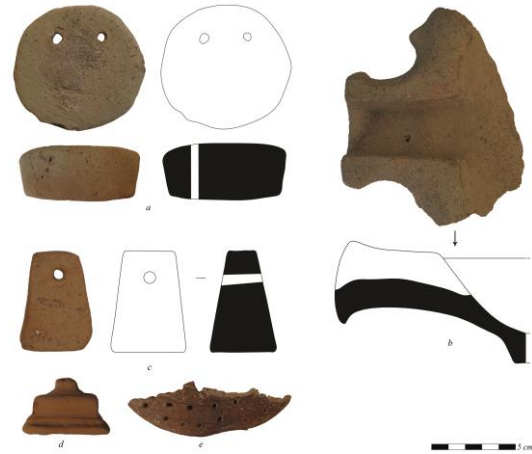


Fig. 9a. Stopper b. Mortarium c. Loom Weight d. Terracotta Figurine Base Piece e. Piece of a Sifter

²⁶ For stoppers, especially see Doğer 1991, 44-47. R. 40-42.

²⁷ For stoppers found in the Bozburun excavation, see Altınanıt-Biçer 2015, 47-63.

²⁸ For stoppers methods, see Denecker – Vandorpe 2007, 115-117, Fig. 3.

²⁹ Stoppers with circular connecting holes are usually encountered with a single hole structure. However, it is known that a second vent hole is sometimes opened according to the material filling the amphora. This application is also practiced often especially for wines fermenting in amphorae. In addition it is speculated that this circular ring may have been opened for a secondary purpose apart from the holes for binding and fermentation.

³⁰ For the mortar, see Sparkes – Talcott 1970, 221-223.

³¹ Sparkes – Talcott 1970, 369, Pl. 92, Fig. 16, No. 1898, 1914.

³² Sparkes – Talcott 1977, Fig. 35, Mortars.

³³ For similar a sieve see Robinson 1950, Pl. 253, No. 1053.

³⁴ Single-holed and double-holed loom weight show a certain usage range in history. It is also, known that single-hole pyramidal loom weight were used intensively during the Hellenistic Period. See Fazlıoğlu 1997, 24-28, Şek. 9-11; Çokay-Kepçe 2006, 71, 149, Kat. No. DG 4. For similar types of loom weights, see Tsakirgis 2016, 172-173, Fig. 7.2-7.3.

³⁵ For similar loom weight, see Hood *et al.* 1954, 172, 182, Fig. 22. No. 378.

³⁶ It is also thought that the wastes exposed to very high temperature and that can be seen to reach glassy luster may be oven plaster. For Rhodiapolis samples see Çetintaş 2018, 93-104, Gör. 11.

rectangular bricks were fired at a high temperature and some lime punctures were formed as they were exposed to this high temperature. Even though the mentioned bricks do not provide precise data regarding their use, it is considered that they were used externally in ovens or furnaces³⁷ (Fig. 10b).



Fig. 10. a.Ceramic Waste(Slags) b.Terracotta Bricks c.Faulty Production Amorphous Vessel d.Production Faulty Terracotta Materials

Another interesting find uncovered in the area is the bottom of a base which was initially produced on a wheel, but for some unknown reason, it was tried to be fixed by hand manually. It is also observed that this piece which has not been baked and fired at high temperatures is quite brittle³⁸ (Fig. 10c). Apart from this piece, some other pottery production waste was also found in the area (Fig. 10d).

Conclusion

As already known, there are not yet much concrete data reflecting the Archaic, Classic and Hellenistic periods of Phaselis³⁹. Most of the upper architectural structure of the city belongs to Roman periods and from the late antiquity. For this reason, except for some Archaic and Classical pottery and a few inscriptions dated to the mentioned periods there is not much in terms of archaeological material finds. Scientific and well recorded excavations of the city has recently begun, but to date the main concern and priorities of the excavations has been recording, planning, cleaning and conserving of the archaeological material cultures of the city. So our information about these periods of Phaselis mostly comes from the ancient sources. However, the number of the ancient sources that shed light on this obscurity is inadequate.

³⁷ Only a few of the bricks found in the Hellenistic Temple Area were included in the study and examined. Also for the use of bricks see Vargas – García 2004, 322, Fig. 31.

³⁸ The container in question, which could be considered as production waste, was probably thrown after attempted be to drawn and shaped on the wheel. It is believed that the amorphous, which has been attempted to be produced in an amateur manner, was manufactured in this way by someone who must have still been in the learning process, or due to a sudden problem in the shaping stage. In addition, it is observed that the amorphous in question hardened by exposure to the sun or heat, yet its hardness being still insufficient it is rather weak and fragile against small impacts.

³⁹ For the Phaselis and its territorium see Arslan – Tüner-Önen 2013, 78-89; 2014, 289-300; 2015, 69-80; 2016, 355-368; 2017, 181-198; 2018a, 295-323; 2018b, 71-82; 2019, 425-463.

Unfortunately, the quantity of terracotta finds which would provide a sufficient amount of data about these periods are also insufficient. In addition, ceramic studies have not been carried out in the city to date and some comments have been made with only a few pieces of terracotta pot pieces⁴⁰. Accordingly, no detailed study regarding the ceramics that reflect the early periods of Phaselis has been conducted to date⁴¹.

Pieces of ceramics exposed by the actions of the storm in January due to the toppled down trees in the area of the temple entrance slope provide significant data about lesser known eras of the Phaselis. As explained above, thousands of terracotta pieces were found in the area. A major part of these remains were exposed with the roots of the fallen trees, others were picked up from the roots⁴². In consequence, it was determined that the finds⁴³ uncovered had various forms and functions which belongs to certain periods⁴⁴. As previously stated, the aim of this study is to understand the function and historical usage of the area. In this context, a total of 236 terracotta pieces were recorded.

68% of these finds are pieces of amphorae⁴⁵ (90 of them are amphora bottoms)⁴⁶. Pieces of daily use pottery constitute 19%, black-glazed pottery sherds constitute 7%, other types of finds constitute 2% and production waste-amorphous pieces-slugs constitute⁴⁷ 4% of these finds (Fig. 11). When investigated for their period, it's possible to say that these finds date from between the mid of Vth century and the mid IVth century B.C.⁴⁸.

The works carried out in the aforementioned Hellenistic Temple (?) have simply aimed to document the finds on the surface. However, even these finds did not provide concrete evidence

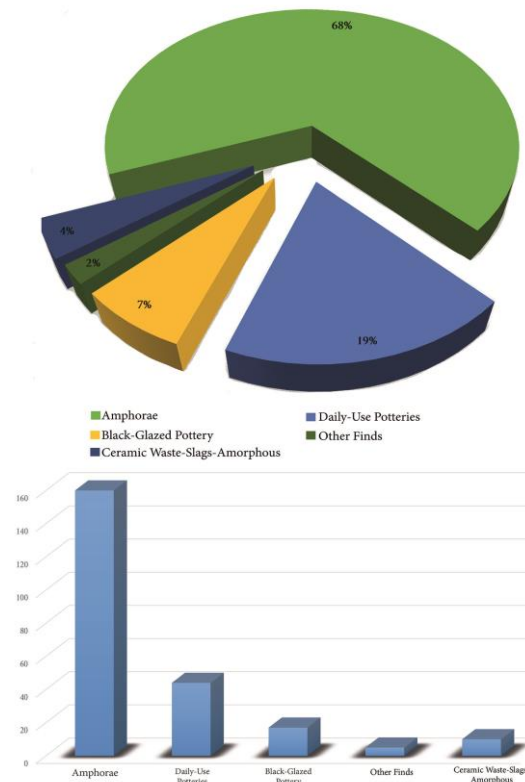


Fig. 11. Number and Rate Graph of Findings

⁴⁰ The existence of such an area was unknown before the tornado of January 24, 2019.

⁴¹ Except for the amphorae detected in underwater research in Phaselis, no detailed studies on terracotta materials has been conducted. For amphorae detected in underwater research see Orhan 2017, 141-148, Fig. 1-8; Aslan – Orhan 2019, 85-99, Fig. 2-9.

⁴² After the diagnostic terracotta finds were determined on site, they were taken to the research station for study.

⁴³ Like all of these finds; it was discovered within the scope of surveys and excavations in 2019.

⁴⁴ Apart from the terracotta material unearthed, Phaselis' ancient history should not be overlooked. Supporting the known historical development, trade networks and the history of the city with concrete data is important for the later stages of this study.

⁴⁵ Amphorae have different origins, forms and dates. Regarding the amphorae form detected in our study, the period Vth-IVth B.C. century is suggested. There are also some forms that are thought to be local among these amphorae.

⁴⁶ Amphorae detected in the Hellenistic Temple Area; it is not included in this publication because it is the subject of another study by the author.

⁴⁷ When examined on a broader perspective a production workshop of any kind in Phaselis has not been identified. However, the presence of a lagoon fed by streams in the city and the existence of many streams outside the lagoon may have led to a potentially abundant presence of raw materials. Therefore, it will be determined for certain whether the terracotta vessels recovered after the analysis on the recovered materials originated from local production.

⁴⁸ The overall finds obtained in the study; It shows a close resemblance to the finds from the Karaçallı Necropolis in terms of both period and form.

regarding the function(s) of the area. As a matter of fact, the topography surrounding the study area was also surveyed to attempt to understand the function of the area, but no structural remains have been found. The mentioned topography is composed of a steep slope and bedrock. The absence of any building complex in the area is a datum to be revealed by systematic excavations to be made in this area. The excavation of this area should be made very carefully and no data should be lost during documentation.

In consequence, despite of all the work carried out and the finds, sufficient data providing clear information about the historic process and function of the area has not as yet been obtained. Therefore, the study to assess the terracotta finds and understand the function of the area are still in progress. However, as it is understood from the various terracotta finds of various forms, it is considered that the mentioned working area might have served as a waste disposal area⁴⁹. Further excavations and explorations in this area may result in obtaining more finds leading to a better understanding of the function of this area.

⁴⁹ Findings being located on a certain line and is detected between the terrace walls extending parallel to each other, it is also seemed possible that it may have been used in the filling of the terraces to be formed - in the levelling off the ground in this area.

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