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ETRUSCAN IMPORTS IN THE INDIGENOUS SITES
OF CATALONIA

WHEN approaching the subject that has been committed to us by the organizers it is as well for the reader to be forewarned that our conclusions are not significantly different from those already drawn in 1979 by Professor Jean-Paul Morel: «il n'existe pas de commerce étrusque en Ibérie (Ampurias exceptée) qui soit attesté à nos yeux par des vestiges archéologiques véritablement significatifs».¹ In spite of the fact that a whole symposium was devoted to the subject in 1990,² more than ten years after, the bare facts obstinately remain the same: Etruscan finds on the Iberian shores are extremely rare. Thus, whatever the way we consider the subject, it is clear to us that no organized and persistent Etruscan trade ever existed in this area.

That being said, it may however be useful to briefly review the number and nature of these finds in indigenous settlements between the Ebro River and the Pyrenees. Most of this material is constituted by pottery, mainly amphorae and drinking-cups, although some bronze items have also been considered of Etruscan origin. As for its quantitative relevance, the first observation that can be made is that the total number of pottery vases is only twenty-seven³ (see TAB. 1). This is far less than what has been found in some not particularly large sites of Mediterranean Gaul, like La Liquière⁴ or Mailhac.⁵ This fact is in itself enough to illustrate the extent of the regional contrast as far as Etruscan imports are concerned.

Second, it must be stressed that, in sharp contrast to Mediterranean Gaul - where Etruscan vases are usual finds everywhere from the very late 7th century BC, at least to the West of Massalia -,⁶ only eleven sites in the aforementioned area have yielded Etruscan pottery (including one underwater amphora found near Cap de Creus) (FIG. 2). This material is absent in such widely excavated sites as Aldovesta, Barranc de Gàfols, Sant Jaume-Mas d'en Serrà,⁷ Puig Roig, El Catllar,

¹ J.-P. MOREL, *Le commerce étrusque en France, en Espagne et en Afrique*, in *Atti Firenze III*, p. 470.

² J. REMESAL, O. MUSSO (edd.), *La presencia de material etrusco en la Península Ibérica*, Barcelona, 1991.

³ This estimate is based on entire vases and relevant fragments (rims, bases, handles). The total number would be slightly larger (27) if other, amorphous, Etruscan sherds that have been found at Mas Castellar de Pontós, where no shapes are attested, were also taken into account.

⁴ M. PY, *La Liquière (Calvisson, Gard). Village du Premier Âge du Fer en Languedoc Oriental*, Paris, 1984 («Revue Archéologique de Narbonnaise», suppl. 11).

⁵ E. GAILLEDRAIT, O. TAFFANEL, J. TAFFANEL, *Le Cayla de Mailhac (Aude). Les niveaux du Premier Âge du Fer (VI^e-V^e s. av. J.-C.)*, Lattes, 2002 («Monographies d'Archéologie Méditerranéenne», 12).

⁶ M. GRAS, *Les Étrusques et la Gaule méditerranéenne*, in T. JANIN (ed.), *Mailhac et le Premier Âge du Fer en Europe Occidentale, Hommages à Odette et Jean Taffanel*, Lattes, 2000 («Monographies d'Archéologie Méditerranéenne», 7), pp. 229-241; M. BATS, *Les Grecs en Gaule au premier Âge du Fer et le commerce emporique en Méditerranée occidentale*, ivi, pp. 243-248.

⁷ A rim fragment from this site has been published as belonging to an Etruscan amphora (F. GRACIA, *El comercio arcaico en el nordeste de la Península Ibérica. Estado de la cuestión y perspectivas*, in M. SANTOS, P. CABRERA (edd.), *Cerámiques jònies d'època arcaica: centres de producció i comercialització al Mediterrani Occidental*, «Monografies Emporitanes», 11, 2000, p. 262, fig. 3, 9), but this is clearly wide of the mark. Two other rims from Ullastret that were formerly attributed to Etruscan amphorae are actually Phoenician (M. A. MARTÍN, *El material etrusco en el mundo indígena del NE. de Catalunya*, in J. REMESAL, O. MUSSO (edd.), *La presencia de material etrusco en la Península Ibérica*, Barcelona, 1991, p. 104, fig. 4, 5-6); see also M. A. MARTÍN, *Noves dades per a l'estudi del comerç etrusc a l'Empordà*, «Cypsela», v, 1985, pp. 79-87. It is also doubtful that most of the pottery from Moleta del Remei that has been published as black and grey Etruscan *bucchero* does really belong to this production (F. GRACIA, *Materiales etruscos en el poblado ibérico de la Moleta del Remei (Alcanar, Montsià, Tarragona)*, in J. REMESAL, O. MUSSO (edd.), *La presencia de material etrusco en la Península Ibérica*, Barcelona, 1991, pp. 177-186), although this is not the case for the kantharos sherd that was identified by E. Sanmartí-Grego (*Materiales cerámicos griegos y etruscos de época arcaica en las comarcas meridionales de Cataluña*, «Ampurias», 35, 1973, pp. 221-234; *Las cerámicas finas de importación de los poblados prerromanos del Bajo Aragón (comarca del Matarranya)*, «Cuadernos de Prehistoria y Arqueología Castellonenses», 2, 1975, pp. 87-127.

Nº	Function	Category	Shape	Type	Site	Context	Production Chronology	Context Chronology	Bibliog.
1	Drinking vase	Bucchero Nero	rim	Kantharos Rasmus.3c Gras F1 Py Serie A	La Fonollera	no	625-575	Circa 600	Martín 1991
2	Drinking vase	Bucchero Nero	comp. profile	Kantharos Rasmus.3e Gras F3 Py Serie B	Puig St Andreu-	yes	600-525	Before 550	Martín 1985 Martín 1991
3	Drinking vase	Bucchero Nero	handle	Kantharos Rasmus.3e Gras F1 Py Serie A	Puig St Andreu.	yes	600-525	Before 550	Martín 1991
4	Drinking vase	Bucchero Nero	rim	Kantharos	Illa d'en Reixac	yes		550-525	Martín 1985 Martín 1991
5	Drinking vase	Bucchero Nero	rim	Kantharos	Illa d'en Reixac	yes		550-525	Martín 1985 Martín 1991
6	Drinking vase	Bucchero Nero	rim	Kantharos	Illa d'en Reixac	yes		550-525	Martín 1985 Martín 1991
7	Drinking vase	Bucchero Nero	amorphous	Undet.	Mas Castellar Pontós	no			Martín 1991
8	Drinking vase	Bucchero Nero	rim	Kylix Rasmus. 1	Tur. Font Canya	yes	675-575	625-575	
9	Drinking vase	Bucchero Nero	handle	Kantharos	Moleta d. Remei	no			Sanmartí 1973
10	Drinking vase	Bucchero Nero	comp. profile	Kylix Rasmus. 5 Albore 23A	La Gessera	no	525-475		Sanmartí 1973 Sanmartí 1975
11	Drinking vase	Etrusco-Corinthian pottery	comp. profile	Anthropropous Cup	Puig St. Andreu	yes	600-525	Before 550	Martín 1985 Martín 1991 Sanmartí alií 2002
12	Drinking vase	Etrusco-Corinthian pottery	rim	Kylix	Penya del Moro	no	550-500		Barberà/ Sanmartí 1982 Barberà 2000
13	Transport	Amphora	comp. profile	Py 3C	Cap de Creus (underwater)	no	525-375		Martín 1991
14	Transport	Amphora	base	Py 3A o 3B	Mas Castellar Pontós	no	625-525		Martín 1991
15	Transport	Amphora	comp. profile	Py 3B	Puig St. Andreu	yes	625-525	Before 550	Martín 1991
16	Transport	Amphora	rim	Py 3AB	Puig St. Andreu	no	625-525		Martín 1991
17	Transport	Amphora	rim	Py 3AB	Puig St. Andreu	yes	625-525	400-300	
18	Transport	Amphora	rim	Py 3C	Puig St. Andreu	no	550-400		Martín 1991
19	Transport	Amphora	rim	Py 3C	Puig St. Andreu	yes	550-400	500-400	
20	Transport	Amphora	rim	Py 4A	Puig St. Andreu	no	450-250		Martín 1985 Martín 1991
21	Transport	Amphora	rim	Py 4A	Puig St. Andreu	yes	450-250	450-350	
22	Transport	Amphora	base	Py 4A	Puig St. Andreu	no	450-250		Martín 1985 Martín 1991
23	Transport	Amphora	rim	Py 3AB	Illa d'en Reixac	yes	625-525	550-525	Martín 1985 Martín 1991
24	Transport	Amphora	rim	Py 3AB	Illa d'en Reixac	yes	625-525	550-525	Martín 1985 Martín 1991
25	Transport	Amphora	rim	Py 3AB	Illa d'en Reixac	yes	625-525	575-550	Martín/ Sanmartí 1976-1978
26	Transport	Amphora	rim	Py 3AB	Castell Fosca	no	625-525		
27	Transport	Amphora	rim	Py 3AB	Puig Castellar	no	625-525		
28	Transport	Amphora	rim	Py 1/2	Tur. Font Canya	no	625-575		

TAB. 1. Etruscan ceramic imports on coastal Catalonia.

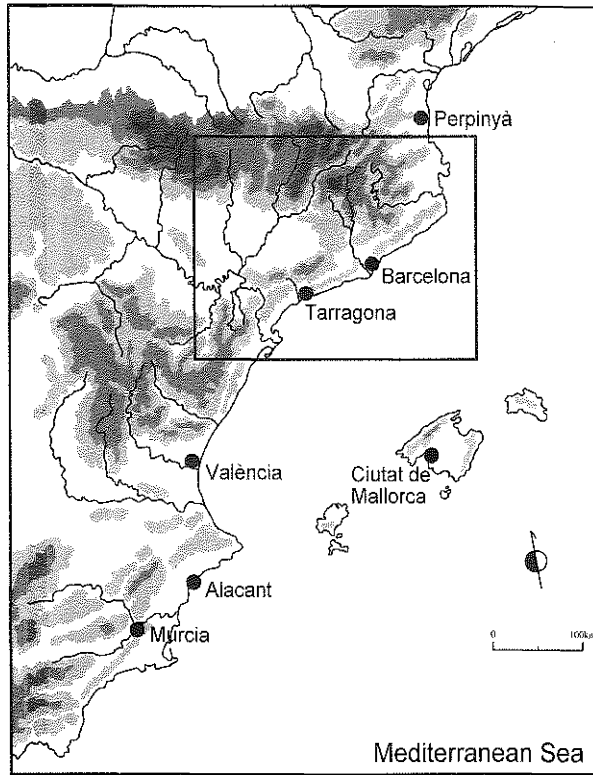


FIG. 1. Location map of the area involved in this study.

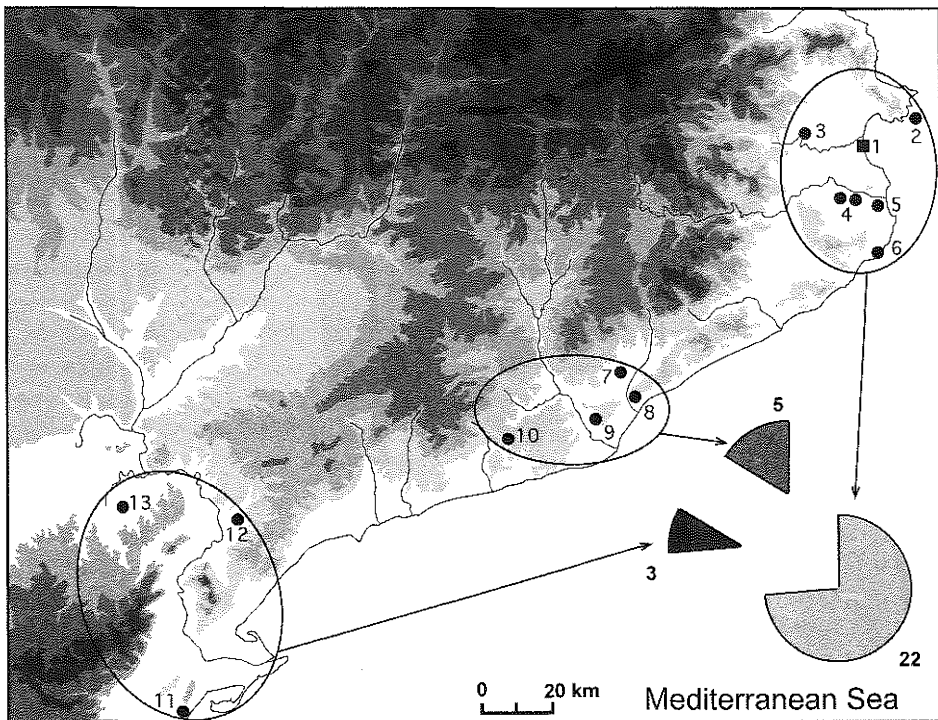


Fig. 2. Location map of the area involved in this study: 1. *Emporion* (Empúries); 2. Cap de Creus (underwater find); 3. Mas Castellar de Pontós; 4. Puig de Sant Andreu and Illa d'en Reixac (Ullastret); 5. La Fonollera; 6. Castell de la Fosca; 7. Granja Soley; 8. Puig Castellar; 9. Penya del Moro; 10. Turó de la Font de la Canya; 11. Moleta del Remei; 12. Coll del Moro de Serra d'Almos; 13. La Gessera.

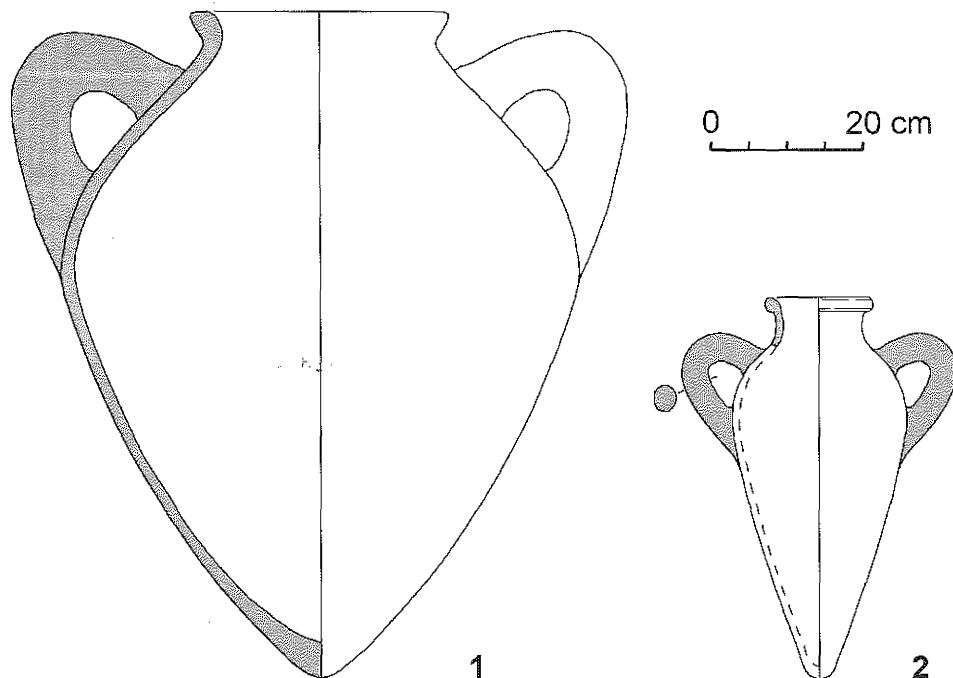


FIG. 3. Py 3C amphora from Cap de Creus (1) and Py 3B amphora from Puig de Sant Andreu (2).

Alorda Park or Turó de ca n'Olivé. It must be added that where Etruscan pottery is present, it only amounts to a very small proportion of the imported materials.¹ Although precise quantification is seldom possible, this is clearly seen in TAB. I.

As regards the geographical distribution of the Etruscan material, most of it has been found at Ullastret (Puig de Sant Andreu and Illa d'en Reixac) (eighteen out of twenty-nine vases!) and neighbouring sites (including the previously mentioned underwater find), while the rest is concentrated in two different areas: central coastal Catalonia and the lower Ebro River region (FIG. 2). Assuredly, this peculiar distribution is partly due to the considerable extent of the excavations at Ullastret, but the most important reason must lie in the proximity to Mediterranean Gaul, where, as noted above, a large number of Etruscan vases were imported from the last years of the seventh century BC.

If we now move on to the nature and typology of the Etruscan pottery imports - as well as on its chronology, which can generally be established on typological and stratigraphical criteria - it is plain to see that their purpose was for wine-drinking: twelve out of twenty-seven reported finds are amphorae - which are generally supposed to have transported wine -, while the remaining fifteen are drinking vases (kantharoi and, to a lesser extent, kylikes) (see TAB. I). The composition of the material is thus quite similar to the south-gaulish facies. Consequently, we may suppose that it was the same social reasons that led to its acquisition in both areas. Most of the amphorae belong to type Py 1-2 and 3AB (FIG. 4; FIG. 5, 1-3), and must thus be dated between 625 and 525 BC, while only five, belonging to types Py 3C and 4A (FIG. 5, 4-7), may be dated to the fifth or the first half of the fourth century BC. As regards drinking vases, different types of bucchero nero kantharoi constitute the most frequent shape (eight out of twelve items) (FIG. 6, 2-10), but we also have two bucchero nero kylikes (FIG. 6, 1 and 11) and two Etrusco-Corinthian cups (FIG. 7). It is important to notice that all the drinking-vases (excepting perhaps the Rasmussen type 5 kylix from La

¹ At Turó de la Font de la Canya, for example, Phoenician pottery constitutes 8,8% of the total number of vases found in late seventh-early sixth century BC, while Etruscan ceramic amounts only to 0,4%.

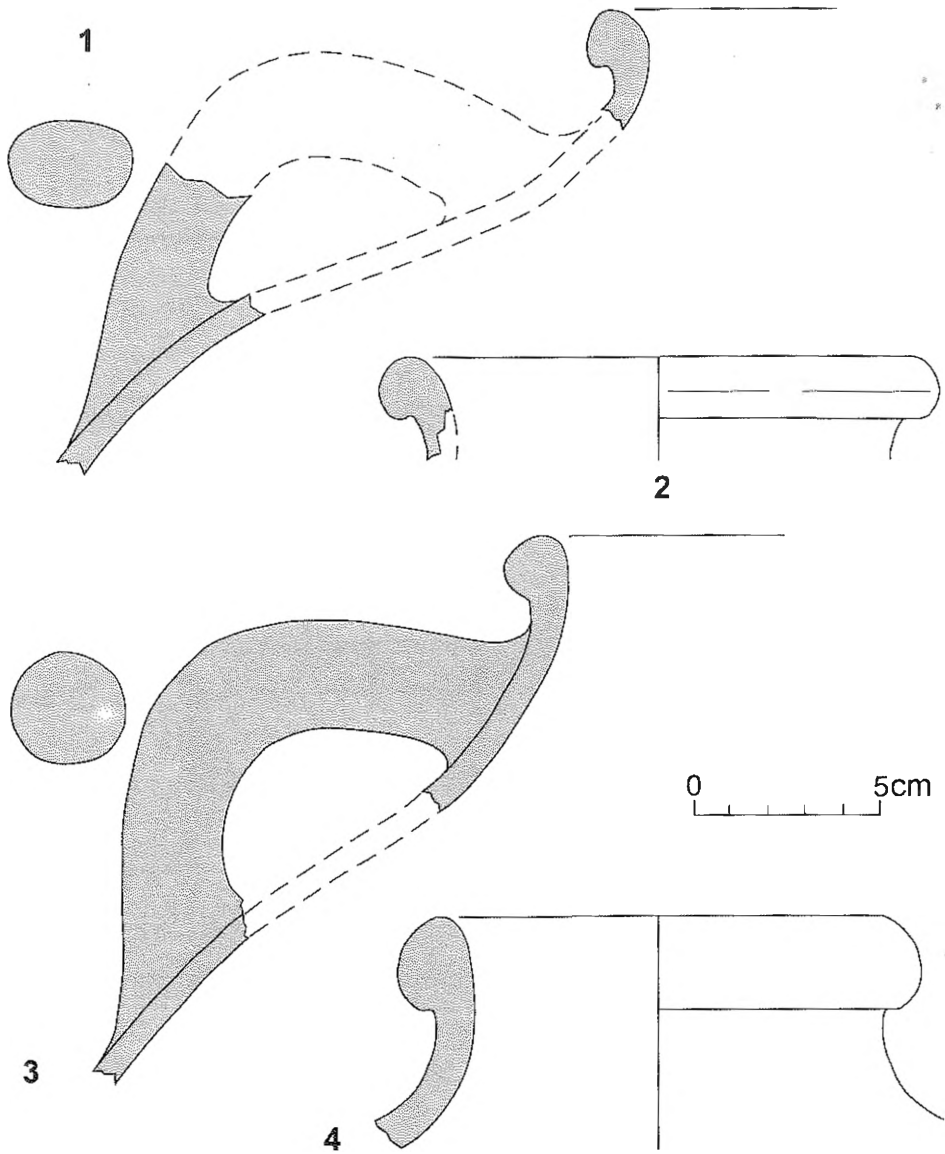


FIG. 4. Py 1-2 amphora from Turó de la Font de la Canya (1); Py 3AB amphorae from Puig Castellar (3) and Puig de Sant Andreu (2, 4).

Gessera [FIG. 6, 11], which must be dated about 525-475 BC) were certainly imported before the last quarter of the sixth century BC. On the whole, then, twenty-two out of twenty-seven vases are certainly to be dated to the sixth or the last quarter of the seventh century BC. Here, then, as in southern France, Etruscan imports are mostly an archaic-period matter.

To this must still be added two bronze bowls found in tombs at Granja Soley,¹ not far from Barcelona, and Coll del Moro de Serra d'Almos (FIG. 8), in the lower Ebro River Valley.² Both have the central boss that, after Bouloumié and Lagrand,³ is the most specific feature of the

¹ E. SANMARTÍ GREGO, *Les troballes funeràries d'època ibèrica arcaica a la Granja Soley (Santa Perpètua de Mogoda, Vallès Occ. Barcelona)*, «Ampurias», 44, 1982, pp. 71-103.

² X. CELA, J. NOGUERA, M. C. ROVIRA, *Els materials arqueològics del jaciment ibèric del Coll del Moro de Serra d'Almos (Tivissa, Ribera d'Ebre)*. *Col·lecció del Museu Comarcal Salvador Vilaseca de Reus*, «Pyrenae», 30, 1999, pp. 91-121.

³ B. BOULOUMIÉ, C. LAGRAND, *Les bassins à rebord perlé et autres bassins de Provence*, «Revue Archéologique de Narbonnaise», x, 1977, pp. 1-31.

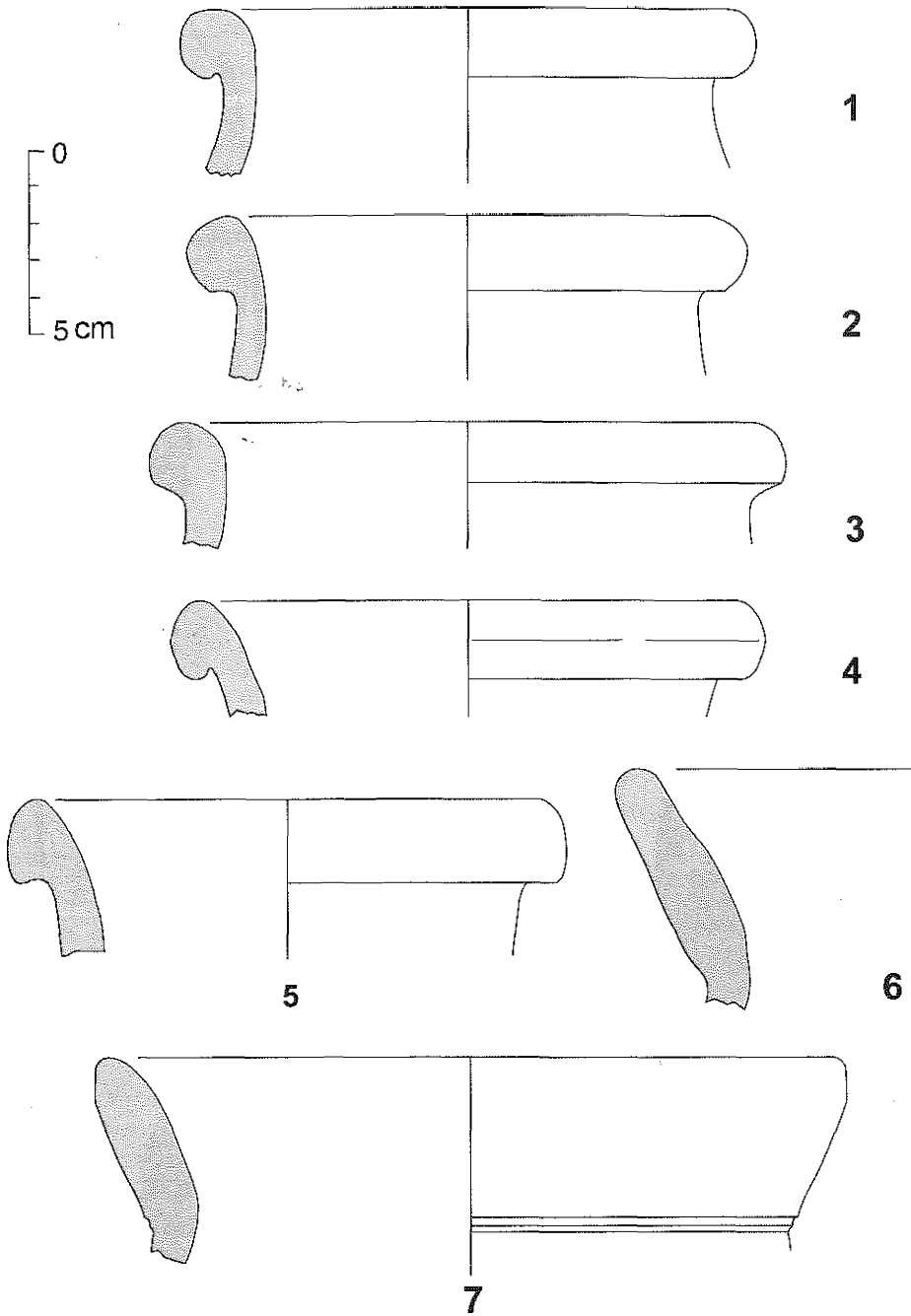


FIG. 5. Py 3AB amphorae from Illa d'en Reixac (1-3); Py 3C amphorae from Puig de Sant Andreu (4-5); Py 4A amphorae from Puig de Sant Andreu.

bowls made in Etruria. It is also worth noting that, after Albanese Procelli,¹ this kind of bowl was also part of the Etruscan wine-drinking gear. The fact that both items were found in rich tombs strongly suggests that they were considered important as prestige goods.

So far, we have dealt with basic, bare facts. Now, two big, deeply interrelated, questions have been at the centre of the research on Etruscan imports to the far Western Mediterranean during

¹ R. M. ALBANESE PROCELLI, *Considerazioni sulla distribuzione dei bacini bronzei in area tirrenica e in Sicilia*, in *Commercio etrusco arcaico*, pp. 179-206.

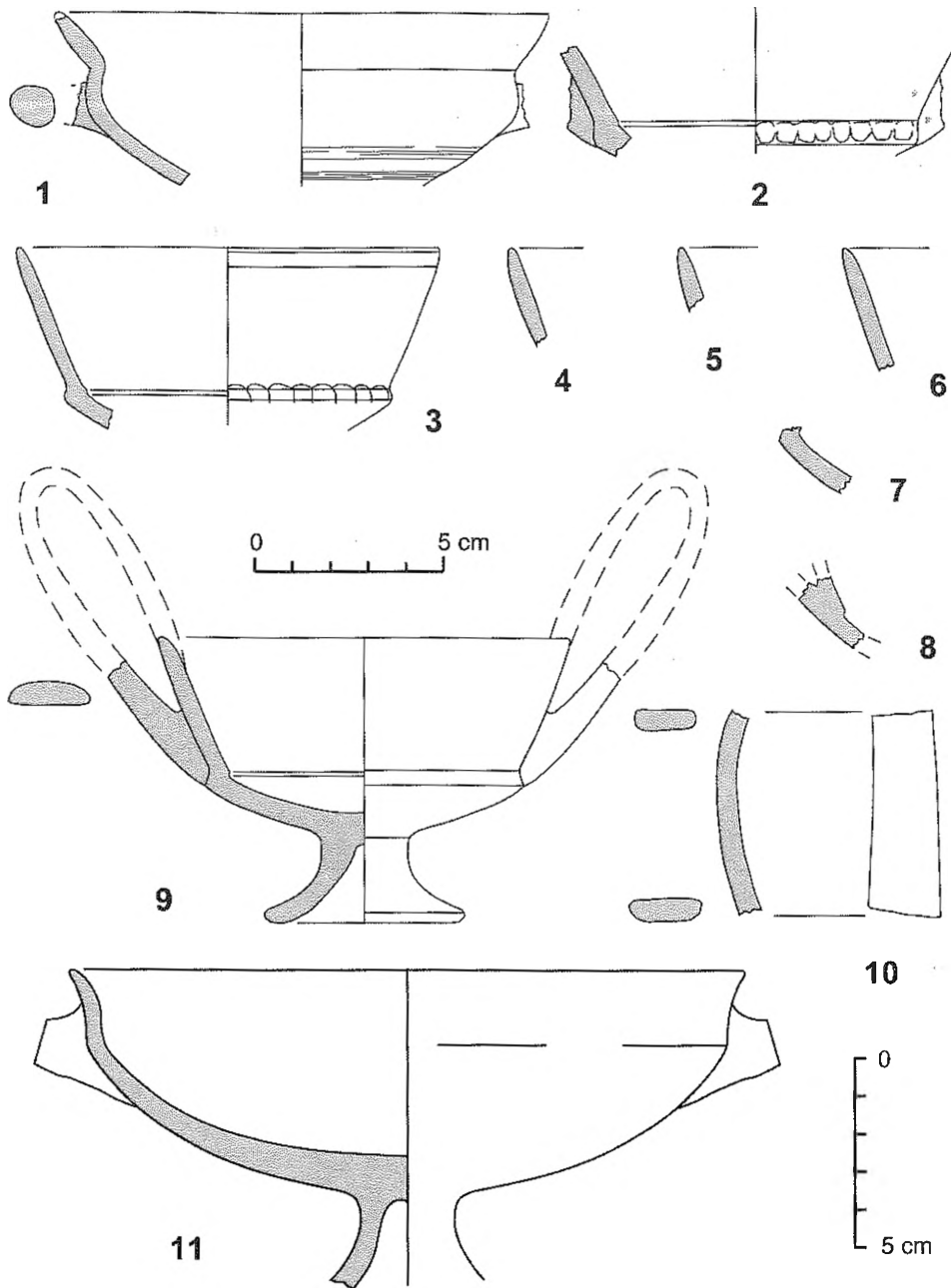


FIG. 6. Bucchero nero cups from Turó de la Fonts de la Canya (1), Puig de Sant Andreu (2, 9), Illa d'en Reixac (4-8, 10), La Fonollera (3) and La Gessera (11).

the last ten years among French scholars. First, when did this commercial flux start? Was it before or after *circa* 600 BC (or, in other words, before or after the foundation of Massalia)? And, second, who brought this pottery to the South-gaulish and Iberian shores? Did an independent Etruscan trade really exist and actually start before the Phocaeans' first presence in the area, as M. Py would tend to think?¹ Or, on the contrary, was the Etruscan material traded by Phocaean *emporoi*

¹ J. GUILAINE, M. PY, *Le sud de la Gaule et les relations méditerranéennes et occidentales (-1000-500)*, in T. JANIN (ed.), *Mailhac et le Premier Âge du Fer en Europe Occidentale. Hommages à Odette et Jean Taffanel*, Lattes, 2000 («Monographies d'Archéologie Méditerranéenne», 7), pp. 415-432. See also M. PY, *Les Étrusques, les Grecs et la fondation de Lattes*, in

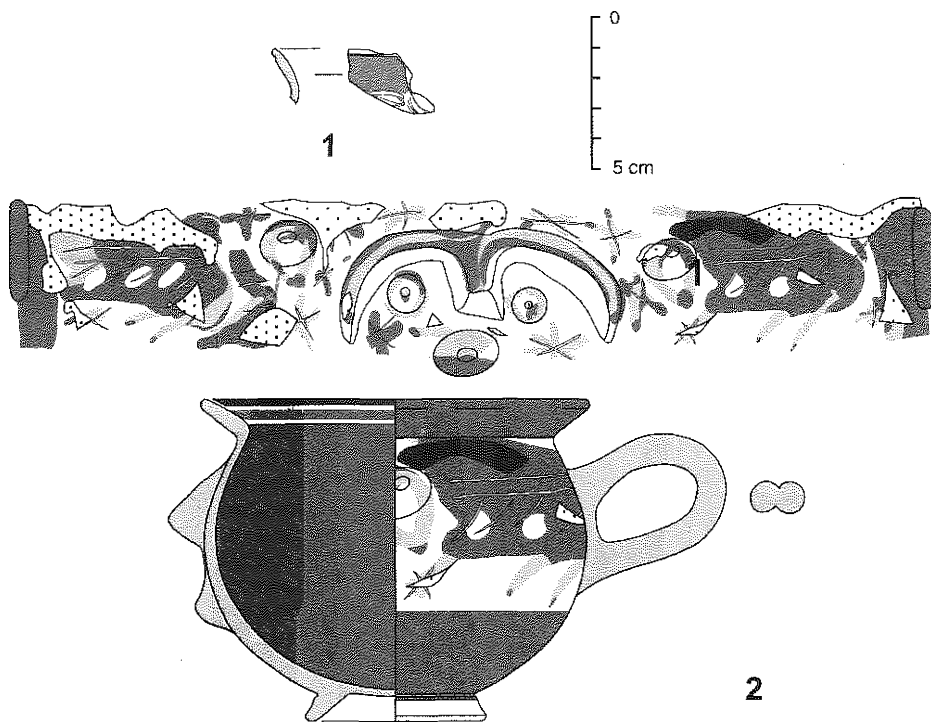


FIG. 7. Etrusco-corinthian pottery from Penya del Moro (1) and Puig de Sant Andreu (2).

as an outcome of the foundation of Massalia? This last point of view has basically been held by L.-F. Gantès, M. Bats and M. Gras.¹ In their opinion, the fact that most of the imported material found in Gaul since the late seventh century is Etruscan does not imply any active Etruscan trade, but can be easily explained in the light of the Phocaeen *emporìa*: after unloading in Etruscan ports, Phocaeen ships, now loaded with essentially Etruscan cargoes, would have proceeded to Mediterranean Gaul.

It is obvious that our contribution to such a debate can be but a very modest one, since neither in the Iberian area is it easy to state the precise date when Etruscan pottery started to be imported. The major difficulty derives from the fact that precise, «fine-grained» dating of stratigraphic levels containing Etruscan pottery that were formed before *circa* 550 BC is still not possible. All that we can say is that the most ancient Etruscan imports are associated with Phoenician amphorae from the Straits of Gibraltar area and local hand-made Early Iron Age pottery, and that this would suggest a dating before 575 BC. This is clearly the case for the Rasmussen 1 kylix and the PY 3AB amphorae found in two different silos at Turó de la Font de la Canya, as well as for the earliest Phase II levels at Sant Martí d'Empúries.² It is a reasonable assumption that the Rasmussen 3e kantharos from La Fonollera arrived in this very same period, not only for obvious typological reasons, but also for the general context of the site, which is a typical Early Iron Age pre-urban site.³ On the contrary, at Illa d'en Reixac the first Etruscan imports are associated

P. ARCELIN *et alii* (edd.), *Sur les pas des Grecs en Occident. Hommages à André Nickels*, Paris-Lattes, 1995 («Études Massaliètes», 4), pp. 261-276.

¹ L.-F. GANTÈS, *L'apport des fouilles récentes à l'étude quantitative de l'économie massaliète*, in *Marseille Grecque et la Gaule*, Lattes-Aix-en-Provence, 1992 («Études Massaliètes», 3), pp. 171-178; M. BATS, *Marseille, les colonies massaliètes et les relais indigènes dans le trafic le long du littoral méditerranéen gaulois (VI^e-I^{er} s. av. J.-C.)*, in *Marseille Grecque et la Gaule*, Lattes-Aix-en-Provence, 1992 («Études Massaliètes», 3), pp. 263-278. See also the papers quoted in note 6.

² X. AQUILUÉ *et alii*, *Les céramiques gregues archaïques de la Palaia Polis d'Empòrion*, in P. CABRERA, M. SANTOS (edd.), *Ceràmiques jònies d'època arcaica: centres de producció i comercialització al Mediterrani occidental*, Barcelona, 2000 («Monografies Emporitanes», 11), pp. 285-346.

³ E. PONS, *La Fonollera: 1^a y 2^a campañas de excavación, 1975-1976*, «Sèrie monogràfica», 1, Girona, 1977.

with «Ionian» cups and Western Greek gray ware that may be dated to about the second quarter of the sixth century BC.¹

To sum up, then, available evidence suggests that Etruscan pottery reached the Iberian coast to the South of the Pyrenees as early as it did in Mediterranean Gaul, but it does not give any clues to decide whether this happened before or after the foundation of Massalia towards 600 BC. As regards the agents of this spread, all possibilities are obviously open: Etruscan or Greek ships *could* sporadically have sailed along the Iberian coast. Now, the most obvious fact is that Phoenician pottery – most of all Phoenician amphorae – from the Straits of Gibraltar area constitute the vast majority of the imported material in this area until the first quarter of the sixth century BC.² Even in the two decades before *circa* 550 BC it is other Phoenician-type pottery (probably made in the South-East of the Iberian Peninsula) that is most usually found in the indigenous sites of the Iberian coast. Therefore, two vast commercial areas existed before 575 BC: a specifically Phoenician one on the Iberian coast, and a Greek or Etruscan one in Mediterranean Gaul. The Empordà area, just to the south of the Pyrenees, is placed at the intersection of both, a fact that reasonably accounts for the relatively large number of Etruscan pottery that has been found

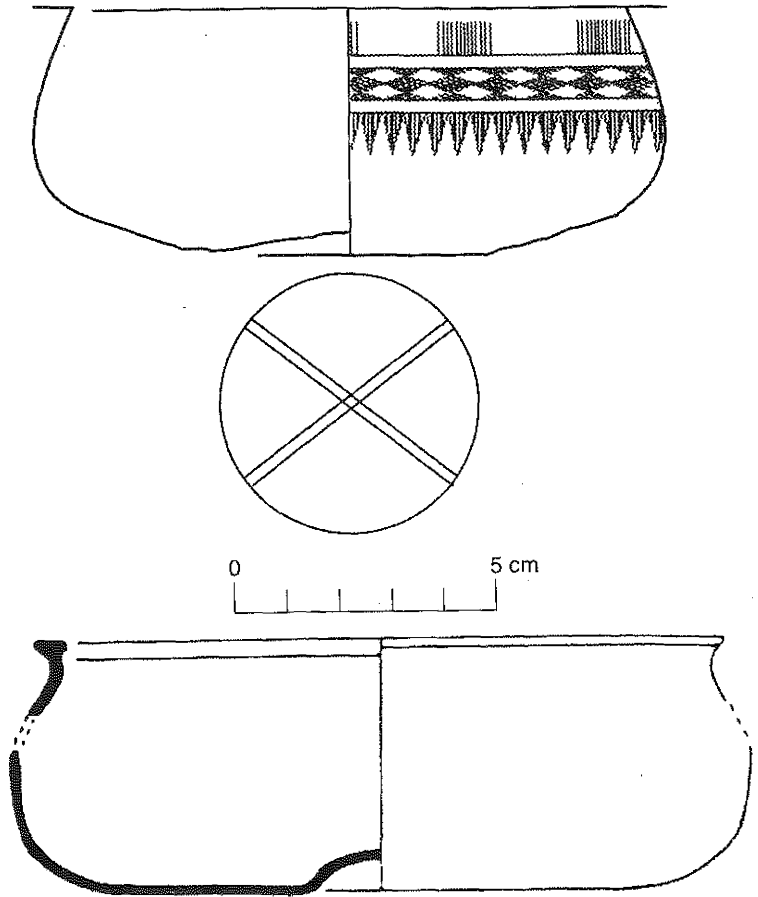


FIG. 8. Bronze bowls from Coll del Moro de Serra d'almos (1) (after Cela, Noguera, Rovira) and Granja Soley (2) (after Sanmartí-Gregó *et alii*).

at Ullastret and other sites. Further south, we think it is a more likely possibility that Etruscan pottery (or other Etruscan items) were traded by Phoenician agents, who would in turn have acquired it in places like Sant Martí d'Empúries. This pattern would continue after the collapse of the Phoenician trade in Iberia toward 575 BC, but the main agents would now progressively be the Phocaeen traders. The clearest evidence is afforded by the anchorage of El Cabanyal/ La Malva-Rosa, near the city of València, where several Py 3 and Py 4 type Etruscan amphorae have been found along with Punic, Massaliot and other Greek transport contain-

¹ M. A. MARTÍN, E. SANMARTÍ-GREGO, *Aportación de las excavaciones de la 'Illa d'en Reixach' al conocimiento del fenómeno de la iberización en el norte de Cataluña*, Simposi Internacional: *Els Orígens del Món Ibèric*, «Ampurias», 38-40, 1976-1978, pp. 431-447.

² D. ASENSIO *et alii*, *L'expansion phénicienne sur la côte orientale de la Péninsule Ibérique, Mailhac et le Premier Âge du Fer en Europe Occidentale. Hommages à Odette et Jean Taffanel*, Actes du Colloque International de Carcassonne, 17-20 septembre 1997, Lattes, 2000 («Monographies d'Archéologie Méditerranéenne», 7), pp. 249-260. See also F. Gracia, quoted in note 7, p. 193.

ers¹ (Ribera, Fernández Izquierdo 1989; Fernández Izquierdo, Gómez-Bellard, Ribera, 1993).² Similar evidence has been reported still further South, at El Oral (San Fulgencio, Alacant). Punic amphorae constitute here the vast majority of the imported material in early fifth-century BC levels, but there are also some Greek amphorae, as well as a few Etruscan containers (8% of the imported amphorae) and bronze items.³

Sufficient has been said to show that the commercial relationship between the Iberian coast and Etruria is an indirect, secondary one, excepting, perhaps, Sant Martí d'Empúries and the surrounding area. Let us just add, to conclude, that the flux of Etruscan pottery to the Iberian coast seems to have completely stopped by the second half of the fifth century BC. Indeed, as far as we can say, not a single Etruscan vase has ever been recovered from levels that may be confidently dated after 400 BC, excepting a few amorphous sherds, which must obviously be considered as residual items.

¹ A. RIBERA, A. FERNÁNDEZ IZQUIERDO, *Ánforas etruscas en el País Valenciano*, in *Secondo Congresso Internazionale Etrusco*, Firenze 1985, Atti, II («StEtr», suppl.), Rome, 1989, pp. 1115-1124; A. FERNÁNDEZ, C. GÓMEZ, A. RIBERA, *Las ánforas griegas, etruscas y fenicio-púnicas en las costas del País Valenciano*, in T. HACKENS (ed.), *Navies and Commerce of the Greeks, the Carthaginians and the Etruscans in the Tyrrhenian Sea*, Rixensart, 1993 («PACT», 20-IV, 4), pp. 317-333.

² See also C. MATA, J. M. BURRIEL, *Importaciones de los siglos VI-V a. C. en el centro y norte del País Valenciano*, in P. CABRERA, M. SANTOS (edd.), *Ceràmiques jònies d'època arcaica: centres de producció i comercialització al Mediterrani Occidental*, Barcelona, 2000 («Monografies Emporitanes» 11), pp. 233-256 for an up-to-date overview on the archaic imported pottery in Northern València.

³ L. ABAD *et alii*, *El Oral y La Escuera, dos lugares de intercambio en la desembocadura del río Segura (Alicante) en época ibérica*, in *Puertos Fluviales Antiguos: Ciudad, desarrollo e Infraestructura*, IV Jornadas de Arqueología Subacuática, València, 2003, pp. 81-98.