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Rome Department of the German Archaeological Institute (DAI)

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ABSTRACT

Since 2007, the Rome Department of the DAI has been conducting research on Fabrateria Nova. The excavation of 2021 focused on the amphitheatre, which had already been investigated in 1984 and 1996–1997, and more recently in 2020, when drone and laser scanner surveys allowed the building to be better integrated into the city plan. With dimensions of 67 × 55 m and an arena of 51 × 37 m, the amphitheatre was built in *opus incertum* and stratigraphic analyses suggest a date to the 1st century BC. Quantitative and qualitative analyses of the ceramics provide further data to support the study of the construction and its phases of use.

KEYWORDS

Roman amphitheatre, Fabrateria Nova, San Giovanni Incarico, ceramic analysis, Roman architecture, Roman pottery, stratigraphic excavation

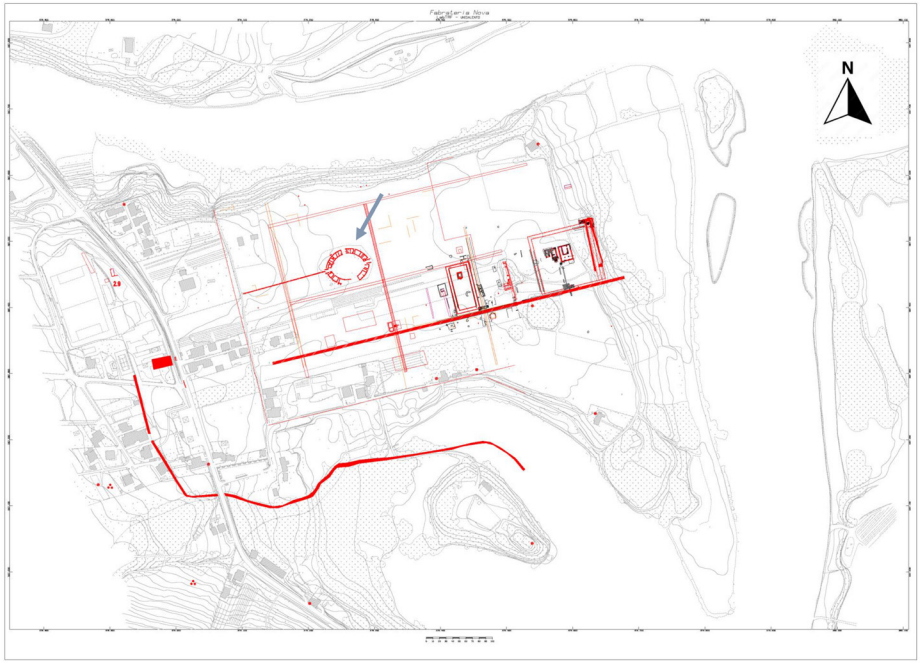

Fig. 1: Position of the amphitheatre in the centre of Fabrateria Nova. The ancient structures are indicated in red

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Die Abteilung Rom des DAI ist seit 2007 an der Erforschung von Fabrateria Nova beteiligt. Die Grabung in 2021 konzentrierte sich auf das Amphitheater, welches bereits in den Jahren 1984 sowie 1996 und 1997 teilweise freigelegt worden war. Im Jahre 2020 wurde der Bau unter Verwendung eines Laserscanners und einer Drohne neu vermessen, um eine präzise Einbindung in den Stadtplan zu ermöglichen. Das Amphitheater mit Außenmaßen von 67 x 55 m und einer 51 x 37 m großen Arena weist ein *Opus-incertum*-Mauerwerk auf und dürfte auf Grund des stratigraphischen Befundes im 1. Jahrhundert v. Chr. entstanden sein. Die quantitative und qualitative Auswertung der Fundkeramik liefert weitere Angaben zur Errichtung und zu den Nutzungsphasen des Baus.

SCHLAGWÖRTER

Römisches Amphitheater, Fabrateria Nova, San Giovanni Incarico, römische Keramik, römische Architektur, stratigraphische Ausgrabung

The Building and the Excavation

1 When, in 125 BC, the draft bill proposed by the consul Marcus Fulvius Flaccus to grant Roman citizenship to the allied Italians, was rejected by the Senate, an uprising broke out in the Latin colony of Fregellae. This uprising was not joined by other cities, as the rebels had presumably hoped. Therefore, the uprising was quickly quelled by the praetor Lucius Opimius. Fregellae was largely destroy-ed, and in the following year, 124 BC, the city of Fabrateria Nova was founded a few kilometres away[1], which the DAI's Rome department has been researching since 2007, together with several partners.

2 An excavation carried out from 13 September to 8 October 2021 was dedicated to the exploration of the amphitheatre, which was not built on the edge, as is usually the case, but in the centre of the city area, located on a plain in a bend of the river Liri (Fig. 1).

3 Clearly visible on older aerial photographs[2], the amphitheatre had been the subject of a six-month excavation campaign in 1984, which was carried out by

1 Coarelli – Monti 1998, 41–42.
2 De Lucia Brolli 1983, 106–107, Fig. 3.

Fig. 2: Orthophoto of the amphitheatre in 2020

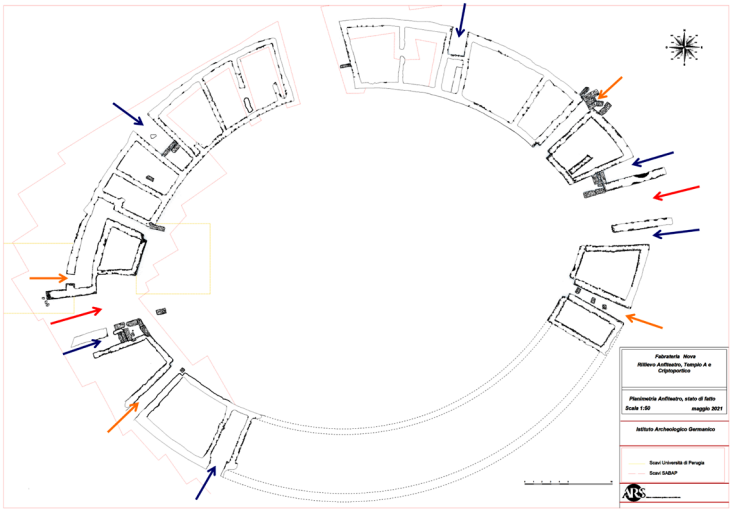

Fig. 3: Plan of the amphitheatre executed in 2020 with an indication of entrances: Red = main entrance to the arena. Blue = Entrance to the cavea. Yellow = secondary entrance to the arena

the then Soprintendenza Archeologica per il Lazio under the direction of Livio Crescenzi[3]. By removing the top layer of humus, it was possible to uncover almost the entire ground plan, but vertical sections were almost completely omitted. In the end, the crests of the walls were secured by applying a modern quarry stone layer. Based on the construction technique, which he described as *opus incertum*, Crescenzi suggested dating the amphitheatre to the years immediately after the foundation of the city. A trench on the outside of the *cavea* revealed that the wall had been built on a 1.50 m high foundation without formwork, probably of mortar.

4 In 1996–1997, the University of Perugia and the American Academy in Rome, under the direction of Paolo Braconi and Elizabeth Fentress carried out several excavations in *Fabrateria Nova*, which also involved the amphitheatre. Two sections were trenched in the area of the western main entrance, but they revealed evidence that had been heavily disturbed by previous interventions, probably due to restoration work carried out in the 1980s.

5 On behalf of the German Archaeological Institute, Rome Department, the amphitheatre was cleared of overgrown vegetation in October 2020 and redocumented by the company ARS S.r.l.s. using a drone and laser scanner (Fig. 2). This new survey allowed for the first time to integrate the floor plan of the building exactly in the overall plan of the ancient city (Fig. 3).

6 The Fabrateria amphitheatre is an amphitheatre with a cavea supported by an embankment obtained by a series of wedge-shaped rooms filled with earth. This type, named by Jean-Claude Golvin »a structure pleine à cavea supportée par des remblais compartimentés«[4], is attested throughout the Roman world, especially for the construction of monuments of small dimensions. Thanks to the latest documentation, it is possible to state that the building measures 67 × 55 m in its entirety, while the extension of the arena is 51 × 37 m. It is, therefore, a small to medium-sized building. The arena was accessed from the two axial main entrances located on the west and east sides of the building, indicated here by red arrows in Fig. 3. The visible *cavea* has only one *maenianum* and was accessed by secondary entrances with stairs, marked here with blue arrows. Other secondary entranc-

3 Crescenzi 1985, 109–111.
4 Golvin 1988, 109–148; Consigli 2016, 310–311.

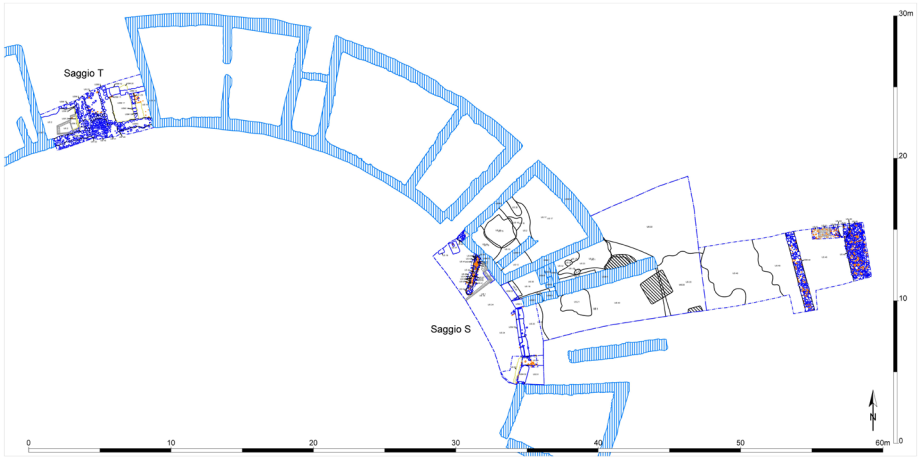

Fig. 4: Plan of the trenches S and T excavated in 2021

Fig. 5: Trench S seen from the east in October 2021

es, marked with yellow arrows, probably led directly into the arena. Compared to other amphitheatres, the *cavea* with only one *maenianum* seems very small in relation to the width of the arena and could have accommodated no more than about 3800 spectators. It has therefore been assumed that the floor plan excavated in 1984 is incomplete and that there was another *maenianum*.

7 The 2021 excavation (Fig. 4) aimed to gather more information about the plan, architecture, and building technique of the amphitheatre, as well as its construction date and its later history. The campaign targeted the main entrance on the eastern side of the building investigated in trench S, as well as the centre of the northern *cavea* explored in trench T, where the *cavea* appeared to be interrupted by an unusually wide third main entrance of 7.30 m.

8 In trench S, the entrance of the building was unearthed (Fig. 5), particularly the main access ramp on the east side, the adjoining *vomitorium* or pedestrian entrance with steps that led onto the *cavea*, and the first wedge-shaped room north of these entrances. At the *porta triumphalis*, the travertine threshold with the housings of the hinges of the large portal was uncovered. Outside the amphitheatre, the trench was extended to the east until it intercepted a via *glareata* running north to south, to be identified with one of the *cardines* of the city's right-angled street system.

9 The *podium* wall between the arena and the cavea was excavated down to the foundation, both from inside the wedge-sharped room as well as from the arena side. In front of the podium wall, additional deepening was also carried out into the arena floor. The podium wall (Fig. 6) was imposed on a bedding of three rows of fractured tiles covering a foundation consisting of mortar and rubble. Like most of the walls of the amphitheatre, it is built of an *opus incertum* with rather large and very irregular limestone *caementa*. Seen from the side of the arena (Fig. 7), the podium wall is preserved up to a height of 1.30 m and is covered with at least two layers of picked cocciopesto, the upper one of which is regarded as the restoration of the lower one. The upper cocciopesto is covered with a layer of white plaster.

10 The foundation of the radial walls shows no brick courses but consists of massive pure mortar fills, probably like the ones noticed by Crescenzi in 1984. Still, different foundations appear under the large travertine blocks at the corners of the

Fig. 6: The podium wall trench S/SU 10 seen from the back side

Fig. 7: The podium wall trench S/SU 10 seen from the arena with the drainage pipe S/SU 42

Fig. 8: Travertine blocks trench S/SU 5 on the north side of the eastern main entrance

main entrance (Fig. 8), which were intended to support the significant weight of the monumental entrance arch. Their strong bedding, broader than the travertine blocks, consisted of mortar with many limestone and roof tile inclusions. The same walls of the main entrances present an *incertum* towards the outside of the *cavea* with corners reinforced by travertine blocks and tiles.

11 The walls of the main east and west entrances to the amphitheatre go beyond the external wall of the cavea for approximately 2.80 m (Fig. 4 and 5). Something similar was observed by Golvin in the small amphitheatre of Roselle, where the shape of the entrances suggests a second *maenianum* built of wood[5]. In the case of Fabrateria Nova, after having verified with the 2021 investigations the absence of a second stone wall outside the *cavea*, the presence of a second *maenianum* made of wood, which would attenuate the disproportion between the auditorium and the arena, could be plausible. However, this hypothesis will have to be confirmed or refuted by further on-site investigations.

12 Trench T on the north side of the amphitheatre was undertaken to verify or falsify the existence of a third wide entrance indicated in the plans published after the 1984 excavation (Fig. 9). It was shown that this third monumental entrance never existed. Immediately beneath the humus layer, the podium wall of the arena came to light, and in the centre of the trench were discovered the two side walls of another narrow secondary entrance to the arena. These walls had not been visible before because they had been left out of the restoration program carried out in 1984, during which the crests of all the other walls were covered and raised with a modern quarry stone layer.

13 Furthermore, in section T, some structures of a previous building were discovered, which had been demolished for the construction of the amphitheatre. There are remains of two rooms that were furnished with cocciopesto floors and coloured wall plaster. The most interesting floor is a cocciopesto with a large number of inclusions of irregular white palombino-limestone fragments and a few small pieces of slate and brick (Fig. 10). The best comparison found so far is a floor in the House of the Four Styles at Pompeii, which belongs to a First Style decoration[6].

5 Golvin 1988, 77 Nr. 13 pl. VIII,6. 98–99.
6 PPM 1, 903, Fig. 95.

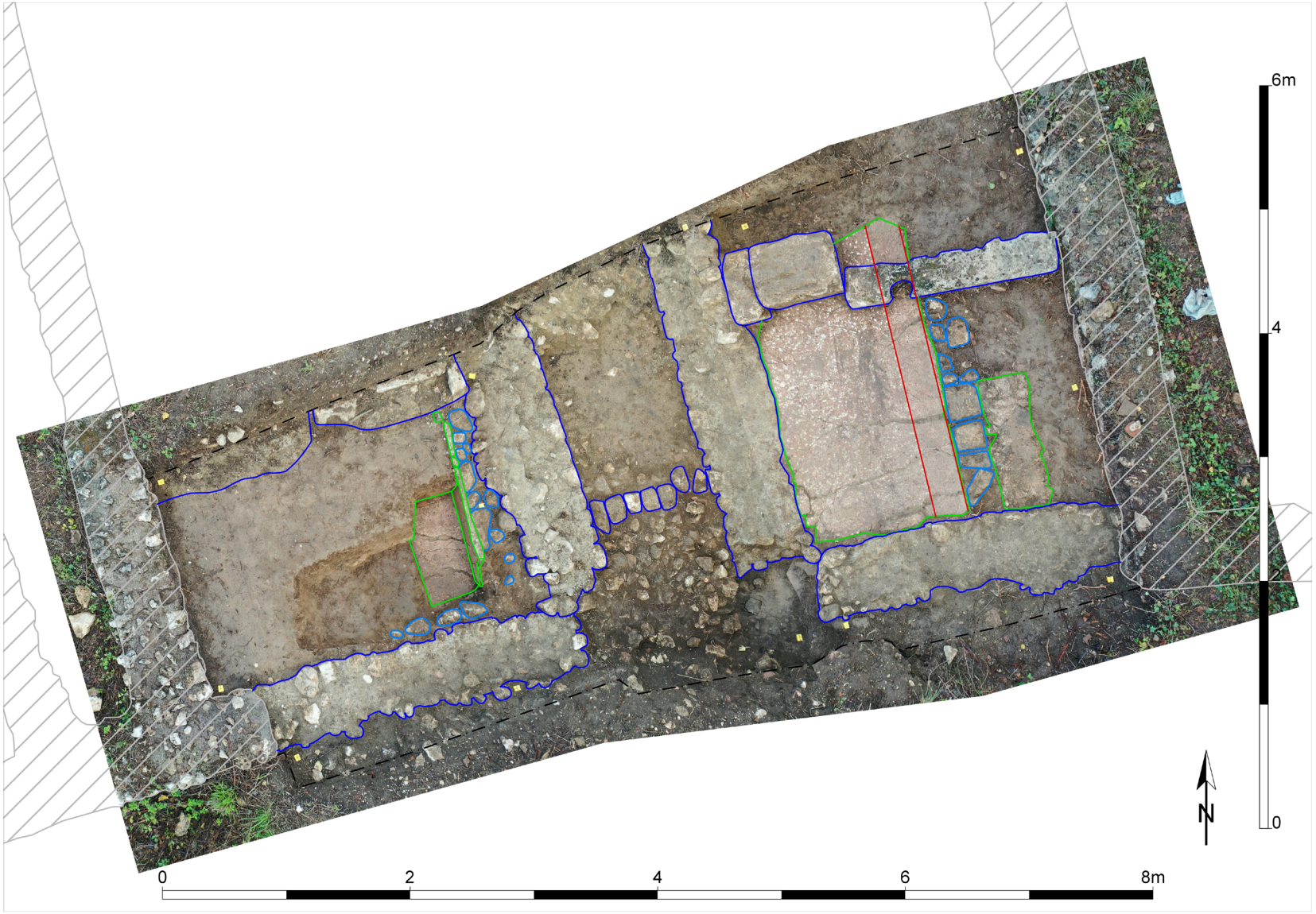

Fig: 9: Orthophoto of trench T. The structures belonging to the amphitheatre are indicated in blue, those of the previous building in green. The red lines indicate the edge of the cocciopesto floor

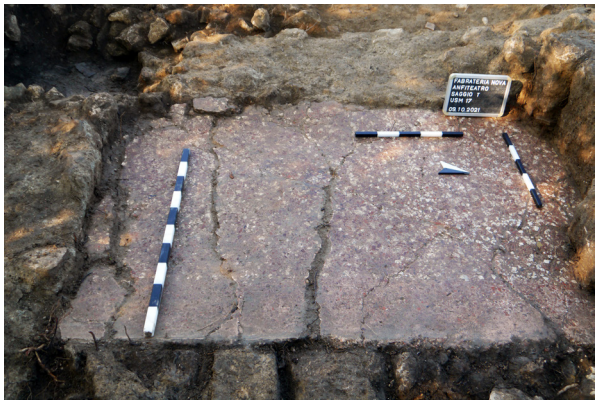

Fig: 10: The cocciopesto floor trench T/SU 17 seen from the east

Fig. 11: Trench S/SU 40

Fig. 12: Trench S/SU 41 and drainage pipe S/SU 42

Very simple floors of this type appear as early as the 3rd century BC[7], but it seems very unlikely that our pavement could belong to a pre-colonial phase. The rectangular border without inserts along the eastern wall of the room shows that the orientation of the room followed the orthogonal-type urban layout of the city, which is inclined to the west by around 13 degrees in relation to the north-south axis. Therefore, the predecessor building was probably constructed in the first period after the foundation of the city in 124 BC, and it can be assumed that it was used for at least a few years. The amphitheatre could consequently not have been built immediately after the city was founded, as Crescenzi assumed.

14 The construction technique classified above as *opus incertum* nevertheless indicates a quite early origin of the building. Some more information is provided by the study of the ceramics, discussed below, coming from the stratigraphic units 40 and 41 located at the foundation level of the building, brought to light in the S trench. Under the stairs leading to the cavea, fragments of Republican pottery were found in the stratigraphic unit 40 (Fig. 11) along with a coin struck in Cales or Teanum in the mid-3rd century BC[8]. In stratigraphic unit 41 (Fig. 12), located inside the arenas, at the height of the foundations of the podium, a Roman-Campanian coin from the end of the 3rd century BC was found[9] in association with Republican ceramics.

S. Consigli, T. Fröhlich

Ceramics from the Amphitheatre: An Overview

15 The excavations at the amphitheatre come as the culmination of more than 15 years of research on the site and provide the opportunity to address key chronological issues relating to the first phases of the city's life and, therefore, to the project of the urban layout. The uniqueness of the context, the multi-layered stratification with special regard to trench T, and the sequence of phases not chronologically too distant from each other make the ceramic data even more

7 Coarelli – Pesando 2011, 53 fig. D.
8 Very poorly preserved but can be safely identified with Rutter 2001, 59 no. 435. pl. 6,435.
9 Cfr. Crawford 1974, 143 no. 27,1–2. pl. I,27/1–2.

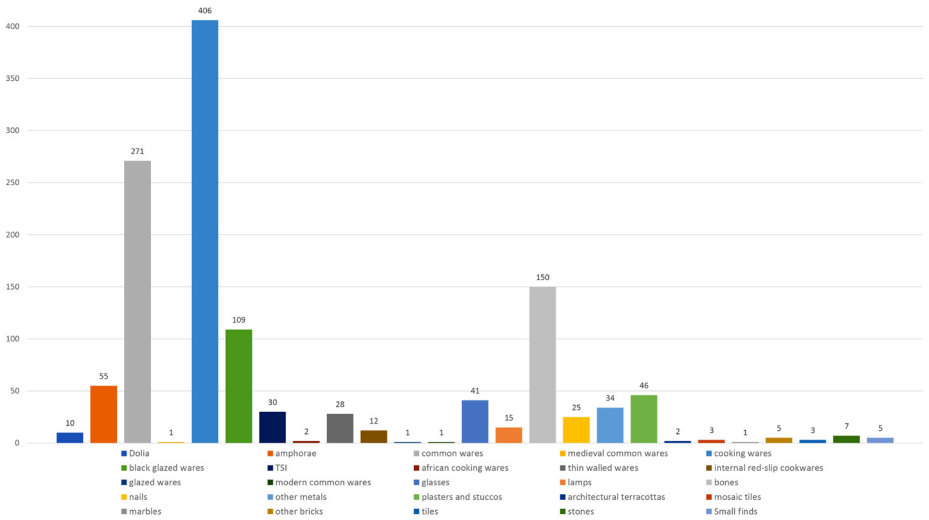

Fig: 13: Number of fragments from S trench by classes

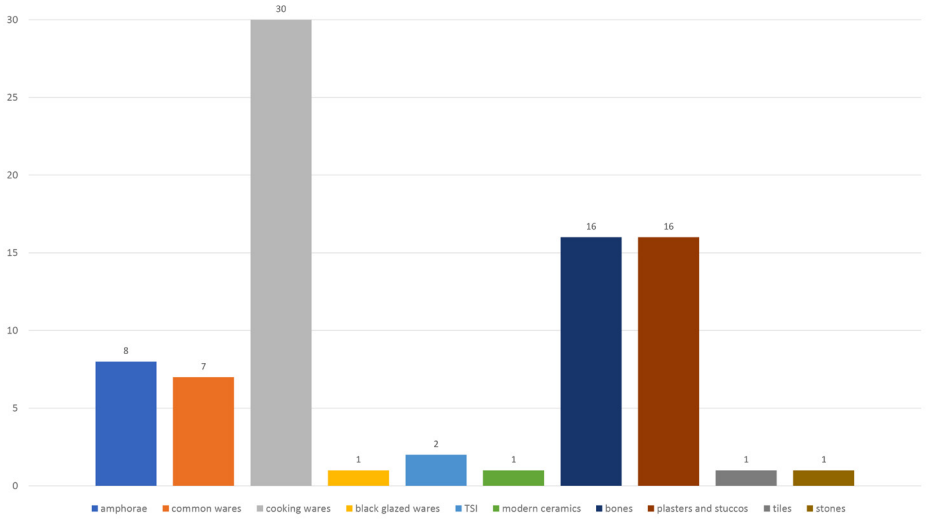

Fig. 14: Number of fragments from T trench by classes

important for its potential to provide insights on the stages of use and attendance of the block[10]. Statistical and typological approaches have been used to get data on chronology, function, and formation processes among diverse layers, and the opportunity was also taken to re-read and compare the new data with those so far emerged from the study of ceramics on an urban scale.

16 An overview of the composition of the assemblages[11] shows a significant variety of classes, albeit with substantially low numbers (out of a total of 1346 fragments, 1263 come from trench S and just 83 from the trench T[12]), where only table, pantry and cooking ware stand out (Figs. 13. 14).

17 The study of ceramics focused on the diagnostic finds of each class represented (rims, bottoms, handles) for a total of 543 sherds (527 from S + 16 from T), which, despite a framework polluted by a high degree of fragmentation, allowed us to provide a fairly clear picture in its general outlines (Fig. 15).

Common Ceramics

18 Common ceramics represent the largest group (715 fragments, with 423 diagnostics between rims, bottoms and handles and a total of 197 + 20[13]), equal

10 Previous research had already shown the potential these finds have in reconstructing the complex image of the town (Manzini – Venditti 2016; Venditti – Taloni 2024); see also short notes on pottery from old excavations at the amphitheatre area in Consigli 2016, 312.

11 The in-depth research on ceramics from the amphitheatre was made possible thanks to a research sholarship funded by the German Archaeological Institute in 2022, in support of the larger project »Roman ceramics from Fabrateria Nova Classification and quantitative-qualitative approach to better understand stratigraphic contexts and urban-hinterland relationships« which also included a quantitative review of the ceramics from the site and the implementation of an internal classification system for the common wares (Venditti – Taloni 2024). While postponing a more detailed discussion and the complete catalogue to a forthcoming publication already planned on the history of the building and the block in which it is located, some notes are given here on the results of the first quantitative and qualitative analyses.

12 The trench was only opened in the last days of the excavation campaign, which explains the small amount of material returned when compared to the S trench.

13 As a first approach, the NMI was calculated, by counting different rims/types within each class and adding fragments from other parts of the vessel only in cases where its type was not otherwise represented in the SU. In order to reduce the risk of overestimation and sample reduction, and counting the same individual multiple times, EVE counting was also experimented, but the poor state of preservation of many sherds, and thus the difficulty of determining the percentage of the vessel represented, has limited its application to avoid further reducing the already insufficiently broad statistical base.

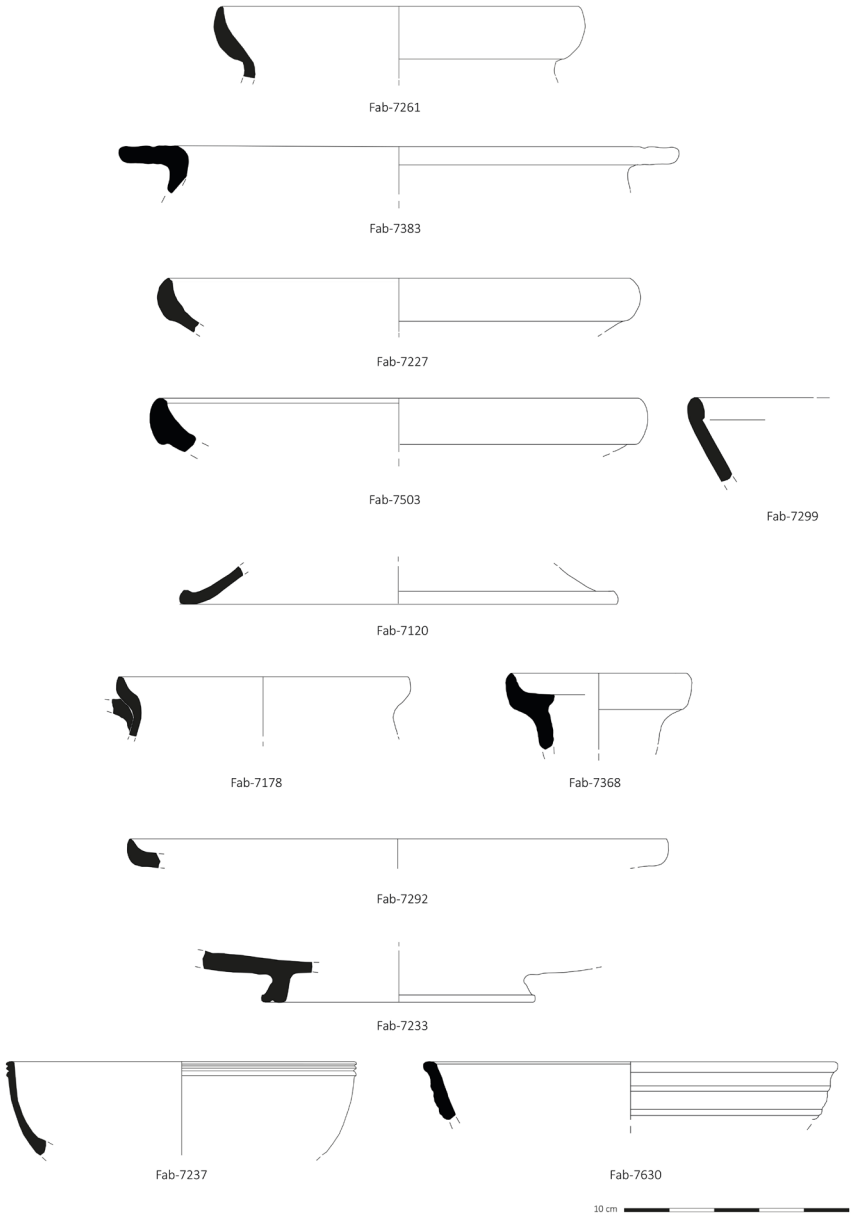

Fig. 15: Summary table with the main ceramic types documented in trenches S and T

overall to approximately 53 % of the finds, and forms and types, already widely attested in the urban area, cover a very wide chronological span, from the 3rd century BC to the Late Antique ages (Figs. 16. 17).

Cooking Wares

19 Within the group of cooking wares, there are at least three distinct main productions, among which is preponderant a coarse fabric, more or less intense orange-coloured clay, with an abundant presence of medium-large inclusions, both calcareous and volcanic, whose local/regional genesis is currently being investigated. With regard to form frequency, jars stand out, followed by lids, pots, and some sherds attributable to multifunctional shapes such as plates/lids (Figs. 18. 19).

20 Among the comparable jars (Fig. 20), the most attested type is the one with an almond-shaped rim, included in the Fabrateria Nova CFO2[14] group, in the two varieties: ›a‹ with a hollow inside the rim (e. g. **Fab-7261**), and ›b‹ with internal profile cut obliquely. The type finds comparisons with the late republican Olcese 2003, type 3b, with few specimens similar to Olcese 2003, type 3a, whose chronology may go as far back as the Augustan age and slightly beyond[15]. The oldest types are jars with a shaped rim, a triangular or shaped profile, belonging to the types CFO1a and CFO1c, and quite similar to Olcese 2003, type 2[16], also found in contexts of the 4th and 3rd centuries BC, but still in the 2nd and 1st BC. Discretely attested are the ollas belonging to the group CFO6a, the so-called funnel-shaped type[17], in which the rim tends to draw a more or less marked ›S‹ and can be only slightly thicker compared to the thickness of the neck. Rarely represented are the jars with oval-section rims, externally pointed or rounded, similar to Olcese 2003, type 8, tav. XI, that appears already at the end of the 1st century BC but knows more attestations in the Flavian age, as well as those similar to the Olcese 2003 type 7, tav. X, nr. 5, also widespread between the late Republican and Flavian age.

14 This abbreviation and the others that follow refer to the internal classification system of common ceramics (Venditti – Taloni 2024).

15 The type is also present at Ostia in layers from the Flavian era, maybe as residues (Olcese 2003, 81).

16 Olcese 2003, type 2, tav. VII, nr. 3–4.

17 It has morphological affinities with Dyson 1976, 124. fig. 47, 2II, nr. 56 (class 37) and with Ciotola 2017, ItCu412a, from the early imperial age, but the model also recalls late republican forms, such as Olcese 2003, type 3b and 3c, tav. VIII.

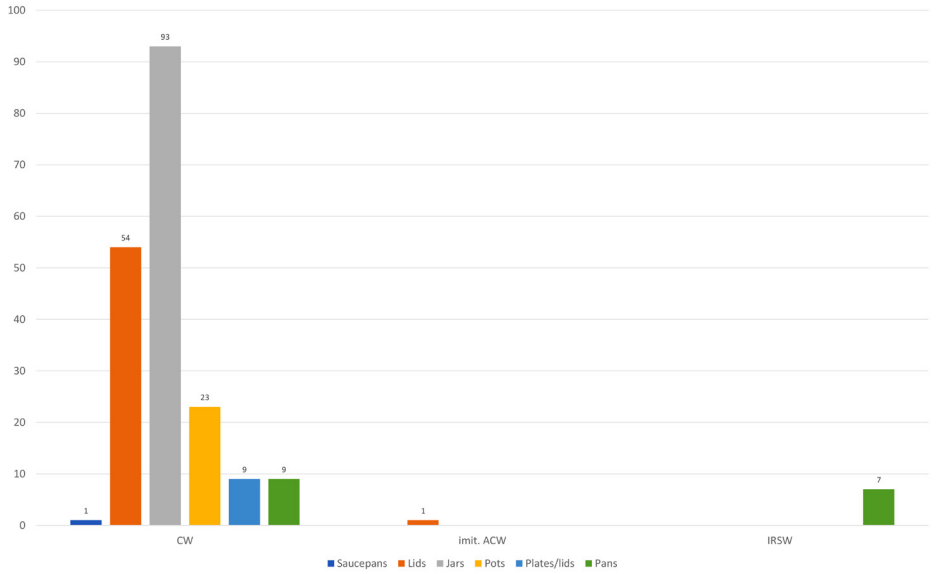

Fig. 16: Cooking wares. NMI

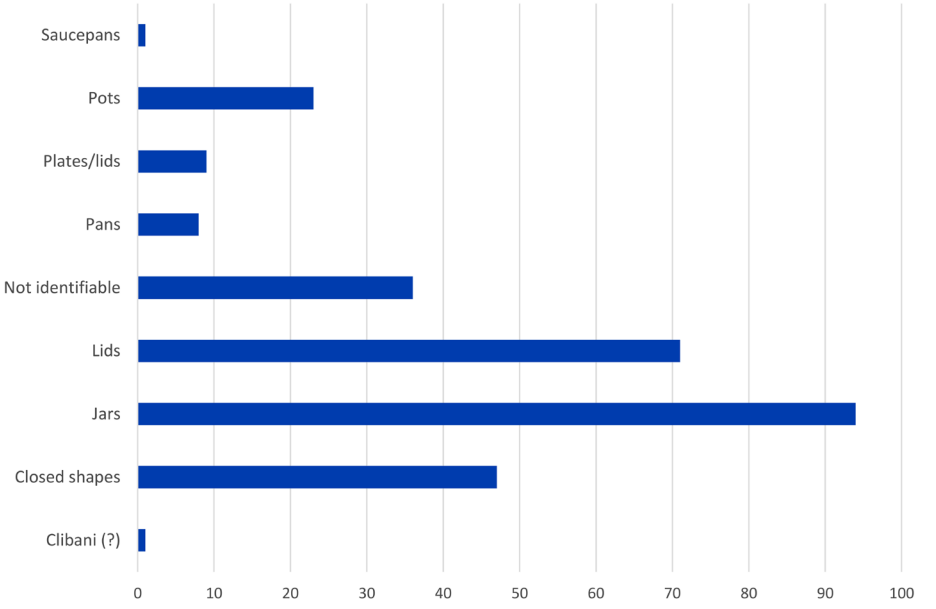

Fig. 18: Number of identified cooking wares' forms from S trench

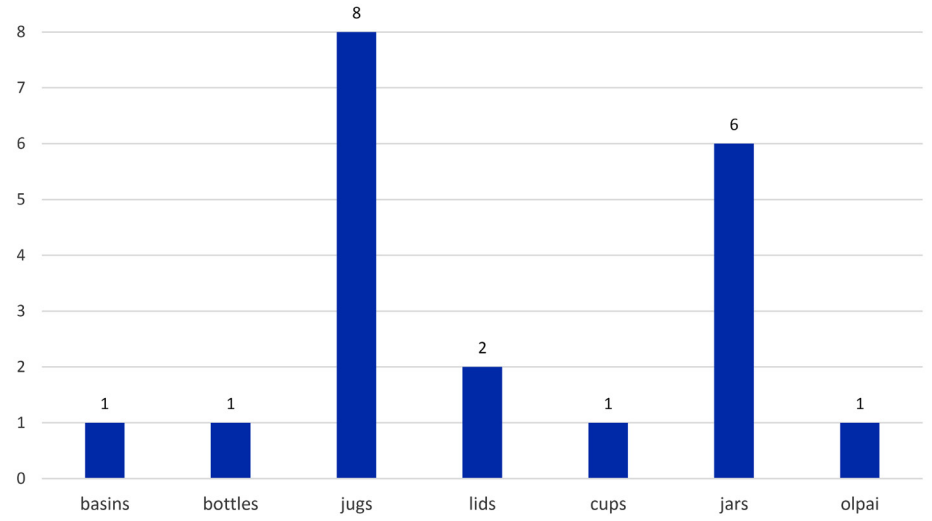

Fig. 17: Table pantry wares. NMI

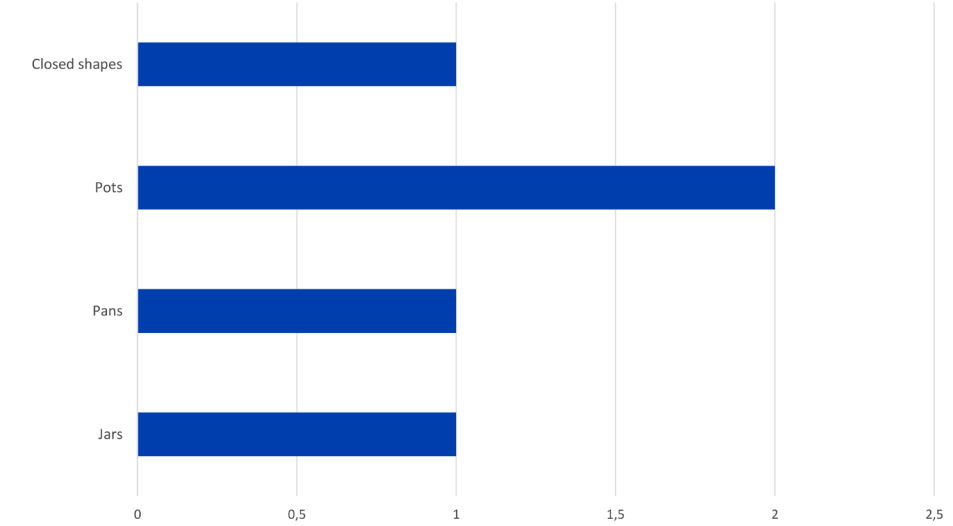

Fig. 19: Number of identified cooking wares' forms from T trench

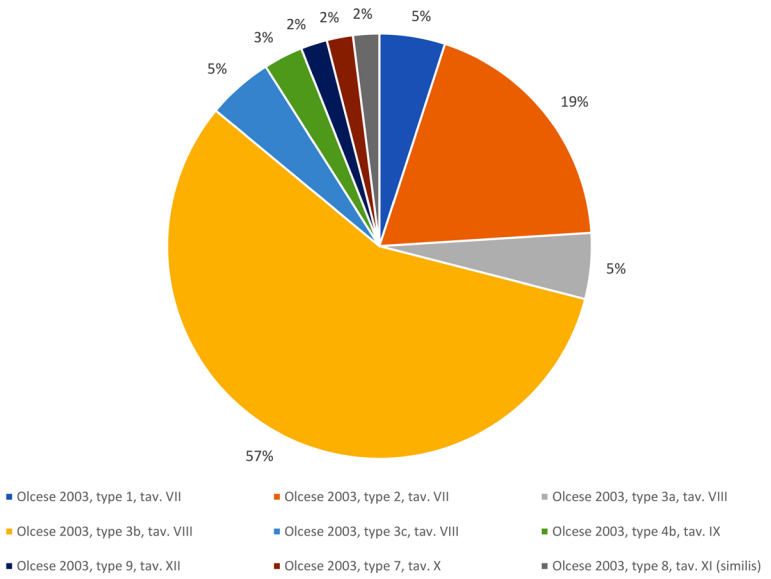

Fig. 20: Cooking wares: jars types

The ollas with everted rims and triangular termination of the CFO5c group have a similar chronology[18]. Among the imperial types, we finally highlight a single fragment of the Olcese 2003 type 9, tav. XII, 1, dated to the early imperial age.

21 The isolated pots mainly fall into the brimmed-rim type (e.g. **Fab-7383**). The most attested variety (7 sherds) has a more or less thick horizontal brim, with a squared, rounded and sometimes thickened profile, with or without grooves (on the brim and on the edge), which forms a right angle to the attachment with the wall, or a very narrow throat[19]. A variety with an oblique brim, inclined upwards or downwards, is represented by only 5 fragments, with or without handles, while only a couple can be attributed to a variant, with the upper surface of the rim concave and the lower one enlarged, vertical or flared. Among the brimmed pots, a curved brim type stands out, pertaining to a pot similar to Olcese 2003, type 1a, tav. I, of the Augustan-Trajan age[20].

22 As regards the pans, shapes and productions are quite varied. Among the late Republican samples, almond-shaped rim pans have been identified, both in a local/regional coarse fabric (e.g. **Fab-7503**) and in Campanian redware fabric (e.g. **Fab-7227**), all dating back to around the middle and end of the 1st century BC[21]. Early-imperial age pans have flat rims (e.g. **Fab-7099**, produced in internal red slipware fabric[22]) or bifid rims with a truncated cone-shaped basin, produced in coarse ware presumably from the Lazio area[23]; the most recent specimens are two pans with a raised rim, imitating African cooking saucepans largely widespread from the second half of the 2nd to 3rd century AD[24].

23 Only two sherds belong to the saucepans' family, the first with a pendulous ›hammerhead‹ rim, a short neck, and a rounded wall[25], the second with a

18 Olcese 2003, type 7, tav. X, nr. 4.
19 The variant CFP1a-1 is similar to Olcese 2003, type 3a, tav. III, 3, whose relative chronology goes from the 1st to the first quarter of the 2nd century AD, and Di Giovanni 1996, 2211e.
20 **Fab-7645** from T/23. Olcese 2003, type 1a, tav. I.
21 Types compare with forms Goudineau 1970, pl. VII, nr. 7 and Dyson 1976, class 2, fig. 29, PD 14.
22 It is one of the most common pans, widespread since the end of the 1st century BC to the first imperial age (1st–2nd century AD). Olcese 2003, type 4, tav. XV, nr. 2; Di Giovanni 1996, 2111b; Goudineau 1970, pl. I, 16.
23 CFT1b: **Fab-7199; Fab-7384**.
24 **Fab-7299** from S/24; **Fab-7646** from T/23, similar to the casserole Lamboglia 10A = Hayes 23B (Atlante I, tav. CVI, nr. 10).
25 Fab-7380 from S/19. Olcese 2003, type 1, tav. VI, nr. 6 and Dyson 1976, class 33, fig. 64, 9. fig. 65, nr. 10.

carinated cylindrical wall and a thickened rim with relief profiling on the inside to support the lid, similar to the Ostia III type, Fig. 267 = Hayes 197[26], and dating from the first half of the 2nd to the early 5th century AD.

24 Lids also offer a certain variety of models. Among the Late Republican lids, some examples with a flat rim find comparisons with forms from the 2nd century BC[27], and others with a slightly enlarged profile rim date back between the 3rd and 1st century BC[28]. More or less, the same chronology has CFC2-type lids with a raised rim, inclined or straight[29], and just a few examples with a distinct rim and internal recess of type CFC3[30]. The imperial types have a more or less flattened brim and a variable external profile, with a raised tip (e.g. **Fab-7120**), as in the specimens similar to Olcese's type 3 of the 1st to 2nd century AD[31], which has a truncated conical body and may be associated with cylindrical or truncated conical handles, or to Hayes – Martini 1994, fig. 61, p. 147, 9, 20 type[32]. The later specimens refer to a lid type with a distinct resting brim and enlarged tip, with a step at the wall connection, similar to Olcese 2003, type 4, from the Claudian to the late Severian period[33].

25 Finally, as with the casseroles, there are a number of plates/lids whose shapes imitate African forms in local coarse fabric[34].

Table/Pantry Common Wares

26 With regard to tableware and pantry ceramics, it must be stated in advance that a detailed reconstruction of presences in these contexts is still premature: in fact, although we have more than a hundred diagnostic units, only about forty of them are actually comparable and even fewer are those for which the state of preservation allows the form to be identified.

27 The few available data show a composition where closed forms prevail, mainly jugs and olpai and a few jars.

28 The pantry/table jars are sometimes similar in shape to the cooking ones: the most frequent types are similar to Olcese 2003, type 3a, dated between the 2nd century BC and the Augustan period[35], and small jars with a funnel-shaped rim and a slightly expanded body, similar to the cooking jars Olcese 2003, type 3b, but with a finer fabric[36]; only one specimen is attributable to a jar with an enlarged rim, slightly pronounced neck, whose profile recalls that of the cooking olla Olcese 2003, type 8[37].

29 Among the olpai, the only well-preserved fragment is a funnel-shaped rim, with a pronounced inner cavity and part of the neck (**Fab-7368**), morphologically similar to Olcese 2003, type 3, and datable between the 1st and 2nd century AD[38].

30 It was not always possible to identify the jugs, because often specimens are too poorly preserved to exclude that they were water jugs or similar. In general terms, types from the early imperial age seem to be prevalent, such as the Olcese 2003, type 3, tav. XXIII type[39], which has an everted rim, internally concave, resting on ribbed handles, set on the neck. A small group belongs to the funnel-rimmed jugs (e.g. **Fab-7178**)[40], similar, by the way, to the type with an everted rim, concave neck sometimes resting on a stick or ribbed handle set on the rim or slightly below and welded on the belly, ovoid or pyriform body, flat or ring-shaped bottom[41]. The chronology for these types ranges from the 1st to the 2nd century AD, with prevalence in 1st century AD contexts.

31 Finally, as far as preparation pottery is concerned, two definitely too fragmentary specimens have been counted, so that only for one of them (**Fab-7334**, from S/41) can a match be proposed with the Olcese 2003, type 4, tav. XXXVIII, nr. 2 of the mid-Republican period.

26 Fab-7100 from S/22. Carandini – Baldassarre 1981, tav. CVII, nr. 6–7.
27 See Dyson 1976, fig. 16, 16 IV, 59 (**Fab-7091; Fab-7487; Fab-7272**).
28 See Olcese 2003, type 1, tav. XIX (**Fab-7092; Fab-7194; Fab-7586**).
29 The type is the most frequent in trench S with 14 specimens: it is similar to Olcese 2003, type 2, tav. XIX, to Dyson 1976, FG 50 and to Hayes – Martini 1994, 141, fig. 57, nr. 22 (from Interamna Lirenas).
30 **Fab-7089; Fab-7498**.
31 CFC4. Olcese 2003, type 3, tav. XIX: **Fab-7120; Fab-7180; Fab-7181; Fab-7388; Fab-7496; Fab-7581; Fab-7582**.
32 **Fab-7122**.
33 CFC5. Olcese 2003, type 4, tav. XX: **Fab-7394; Fab-7519**.
34 Carandini – Baldassarre 1981, tav. CV, nr. 5 = Ostia IV fig. 59, 213 (**Fab-7398** from S/35).
35 Olcese 2003, type 3a, tav. VIIII, nr. 4 (**Fab-7109** from S/22).
36 Olcese 2003, type 3b, tav. VIII, nr. 7 (**Fab-7184; Fab-7241**).
37 Olcese 2003, type 8, tav. XI (**Fab-7110** from S/22).
38 Olcese 2003, type 3, tav. XXX, nr. 4 (**Fab-7368** from S/24).
39 Olcese 2003, type 3, tav. XXIII, nr. 2 (**Fab-7156** from S/17).
40 Of the same type, Fab-7467 from S/19, similar to type Ostia V, 294 and 319, dated from the end of the 1st century AD – and the first half of the 2nd century AD.
41 Olcese 2003, type 2, tav. XXV (**Fab-7178; Fab-7205; Fab-7212; Fab-7213; Fab-7476; Fab-7553**).

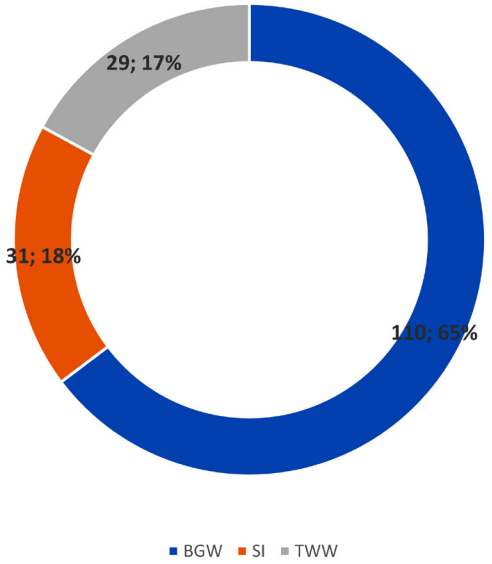

Fig. 21: Distribution of fine tableware ceramics according to class (count of individual fragments, including non-diagnostic fragments)

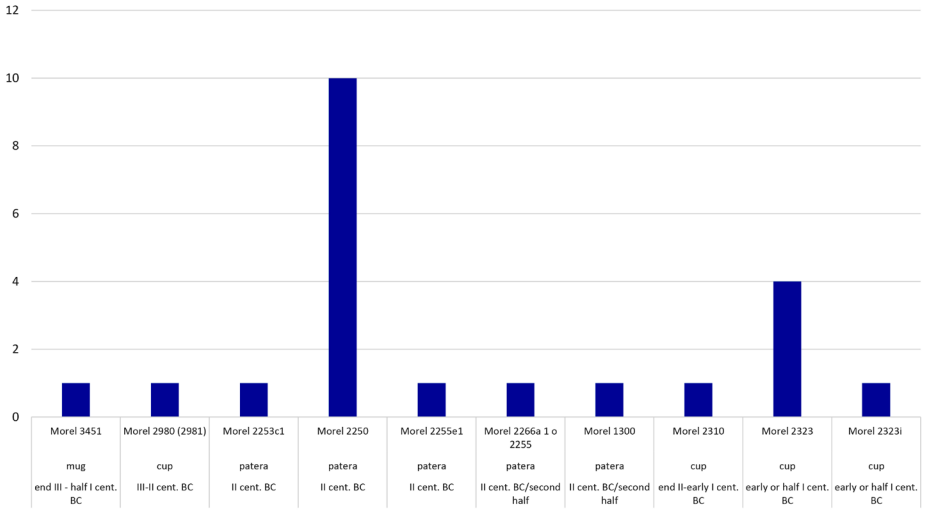

Fig. 22: Forms and types of black glazed wares in SSU

Fine Tableware Ceramics

32 Fine tableware ceramics, on the whole, are scarce, with a predominance of black-glazed ceramics and substantial quantitative equivalence between Italic sigillata and thin-walled wares (Fig. 21).

Black Glazed Wares

33 Black glazed ware represents 4.01 % of the total materials with 110 total sherds, of which 54 are diagnostic, with significant variation between the two trenches (109 fragments from S > 8.63 % + 1 fragment from T) (Fig. 22).

34 The repertoire of shapes so far identified is very limited, dominated by the patera Morel 2250 (e.g. **Fab-7292**)[42], and the cup Morel 2323 (e.g. **Fab-7237**)[43], both attested in 2nd and 1st century BC stratigraphies, while a fragmentary tripartite handle is possibly pertinent to a Morel 3451a1 cup[44]. The presence of other forms is only somewhat suggested by some poorly preserved funds, whose attribution remains uncertain.

35 Among the oldest forms, the Fab-7560 cup stands out for its level of preservation. Almost half of the specimen is preserved, with a reconstructible profile, a slightly flared rim, an indistinct and shallow bowl, an almost hemispherical, ring-shaped bottom, and a slender foot with a rounded swelling on the outer face. The cup series Morel 2980 (2981) is already found in contexts from the 3rd century BC (first half), but still in the 1st century BC (Fig. 23).

Other fine tableware ceramics

36 Other classes of fine pottery are barely represented and, moreover, in a poor state of preservation, which poses great limitations on the search for comparisons. Among the very few thin-walled specimens, there is a glass with an everted rim of the Ricci 1/211 type from the Early Imperial period (**Fab-7628** from S/19). A similar chronology has the only comparison identified among the few (12)

42 There are 16 pieces, all very fragmented, which come from different layers (SSU 12, 18, 24, 35, 40, 41) and only in rare cases could be assigned to a specific series (e. g. Fab-7288, Morel 2255e1; **Fab-7182**, Morel 2253c).

43 Five sherds (3 rims and 2 bases) from SSU 24, 35, 40, 41.

44 **Fab-7435** from S/18.

Fig. 23: Fab-7560 from SU S/41

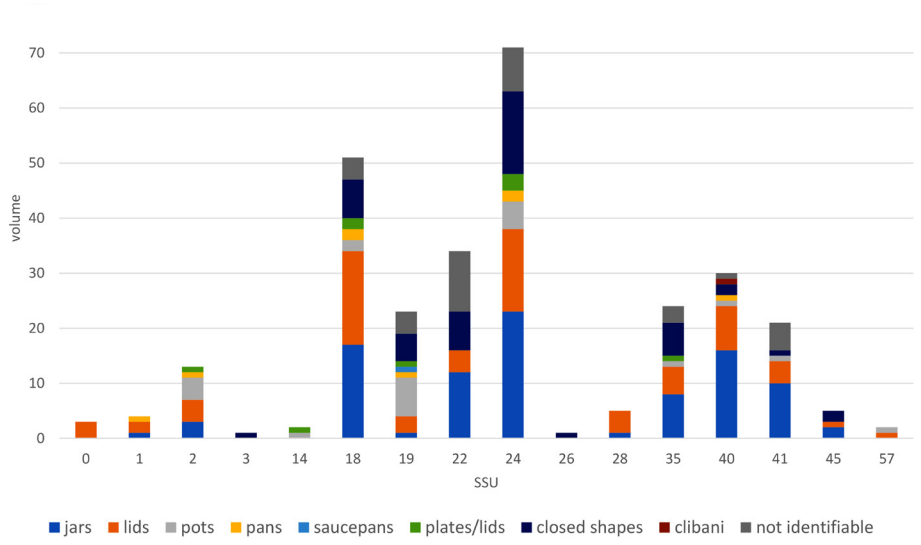

Fig. 24: S trench. Quantification and distribution of cooking wares forms in SSU

fragments pertaining to Italic sigillata vessels, the cup Conspectus form 32 (similis) (e.g. **Fab-7630** from S/24) (Tiberian age).

Amphorae

37 The panorama of transport amphorae is more complex to reconstruct, also because there are only a few samples mostly pertaining to very fragmented handles and bases. In what appears to be the evident preponderance of Italic products, which are also easily recognisable macroscopically by observing the fabrics (rims referable to Dressel 1 and handles of Dressel 2/4 form are mainly identified), rare amphorae from North African areas are reported, which, by the way, are currently being studied.

Dating materials for significant SSU

38 Looking at the assemblages in the SSU, a certain degree of variability of shapes was observed, particularly in some layers (SSU S/35, S/40, corresponding to the staircase filling layers, and S/41, interpreted as the lower interface of the arena floor), which were subjected to more in-depth analysis, since they are crucial to address chronological issues about the building's installation and use phases (Figs. 24. 25. 26)[45].

39 The few sherds coming from SU 35 belong to common table wares and cooking wares, whose chronological range overall goes from the late Republican age and the 2nd century AD[46] and beyond[47], in association with black glazed wares (cups Morel 2323 and paterae Morel 2250, extremely fragmentary) from the 2nd to early 1st century BC, and with a single sherd of an internal red slip ware pan similar to Goudineau 1970, p. 1, 8, of the late 1st century BC.

40 This layer covered SU 40, a very compact clayey soil, with less heterogeneous items: if one excludes the amphorae which are currently being studied,

45 In charts 23–24, only diagnostics were counted, while in chart 25, walls were also included in the count.

46 Jug **Fab-7476**, similar to Olcese 2003, type 2, tav. XXV, nn. 4 e 7 (1st–2nd century AD).

47 A dish/lid **Fab-7398** of type CFC2b may also date up to the Severan age.

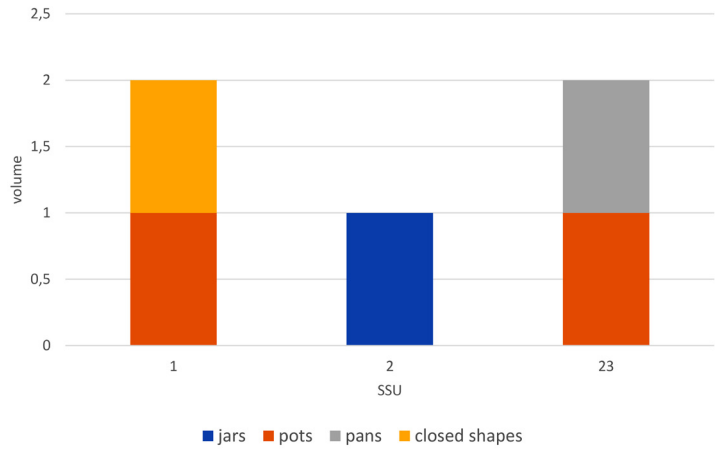

Fig. 25: T trench. Quantification and distribution of cooking wares forms in SSU

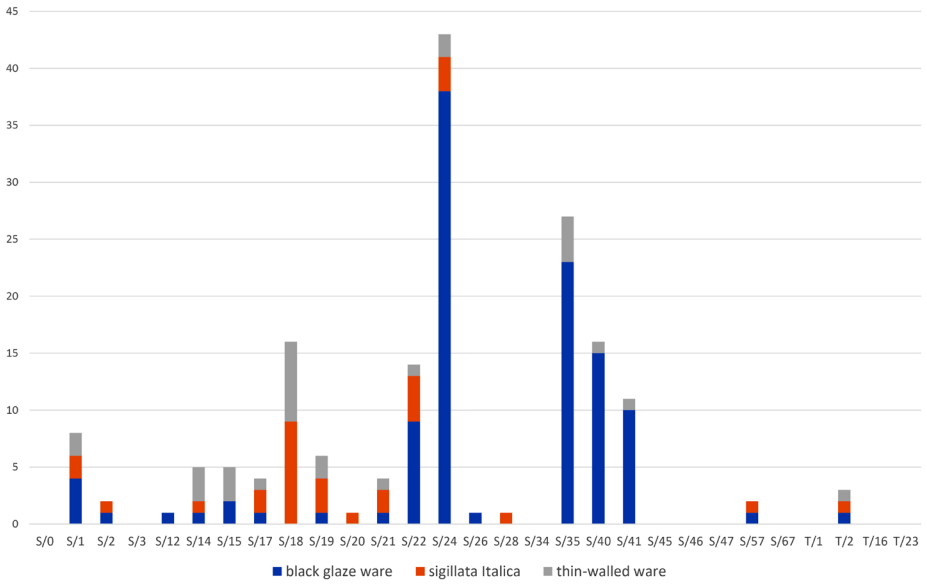

Fig. 26: S and T trenches. Quantification and distribution of fine tableware ceramics in SSU

coarse and fine ceramics come essentially from the 2nd to 1st century BC (lids Olcese 2003, types I and 2, jars Olcese 2003, types 2, 3a and b, type 4b, cups Morel 2323 and paterae Morel 2250 and one pan Goudineau 1970, pl. 1, 3, 8), with the only exception of a very fragmentary pot rim that seems more similar to type Olcese 2003, type 3a, pl. III, 3 and Di Giovanni 1996, 2211e from the Early Imperial period.

41 A more coherent chronological picture of what is known so far comes from the lower interface of the arena floor SU 41: fine ceramics mainly date back to the 2nd century BC material (cups Morel 2323 and paterae Morel 2255), with some sherds whose relative chronology begins in the 3rd century BC (cup **Fab-7560**, Morel 2980) and are in association with late-Republican jars and a basin whose relative chronology start from the mid-republican age[48].

42 The quantity and quality of the finds from trench T do not so far allow speculation on the chronology of the building intercepted under the structures of the amphitheatre and the very few data from the dating finds (**Fab-7651**, Dressel 1A from T/1 and **Fab-7647**, pan similar to Lamboglia 10A = Hayes 23B from T/23) come from superficial layers. Finally, although of little indicative value for dating purposes, the discovery of a perfectly preserved loom weight (**Fab-7656** from T/2) with a through-hole for suspension on the loom, which is mentioned here only for the function it evokes, well placed in a residential or artisanal context, is noteworthy.

C. P. Venditti

43 These few stratigraphically relevant finds, the data from the analysis of the ceramics, and the observations on the construction technique are not sufficient to provide an exact date, but they suggest a construction in the course of the 1st century BC. The amphitheatre of Fabrateria Nova therefore, has a good chance to increase the number of the small group of republican amphitheatres known at present[49].

S. Consigli, T. Fröhlich, C. P. Venditti

48 **Fab-7334**, similar to Olcese 2003, type 4, tav. XXXVIII, n. 2.
49 Welch 2007, 189–263.

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Fig. 18: Caterina Paola Venditti
Fig. 19: Caterina Paola Venditti
Fig. 20: Caterina Paola Venditti
Fig. 21: Caterina Paola Venditti
Fig. 22: Caterina Paola Venditti
Fig. 23: Top and bottom – Caterina Paola Venditti
Fig. 24: Caterina Paola Venditti
Fig. 25: Caterina Paola Venditti
Fig. 26: Caterina Paola Venditti

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