

Uzita: Preliminary Observations on the Middle and Late Punic Amphora Repertoire

Andrea Perugini, Universitäten Gent

The focus of the present study is the amphora repertoire of the Middle and Late Punic period at Uzita (Henchir el-Mackrceba), a small town in the North-African Punic heartland, 17 km from Sousse. Special attention is paid to the local or regional fabrics as well as to the provenances of the imported amphorae. The methodology used for identification is morphological analysis in combination with fabric analysis, both macroscopically with the aid of a magnifying glass (x10) and a stereomicroscope. The important database of the Vienna-based FACEM-project (**F**Abrics in the **C**entral **M**editerranean; <http://facem.at/>) is used as a reference collection.

The material culture shows that Uzita, also known as Uzitta, was occupied since the 4th century BCE, if not earlier, to at least the middle of the 3rd century CE. The site was excavated by a Dutch-Tunisian team of the State University Utrecht and the Institut National d'Archéologie et d'Art, directed by Prof. Jan Willem Salomonson between 1970 and 1972. Relatively few publications on these excavations have seen the light since (van der Vin 1971, 1971-1972; Feije 1994; van der Werff 1977-1978, 1982a, 1982b, 1984). The excavation archives and the majority of the archaeological finds are presently at Ghent University and available for study.

The study of the amphorae from the site starts from the important work of Jaap H. van der Werff (1982) on the amphorae of the Roman period, and an unpublished Master thesis at Ghent University by Steven Hast (2009) on the imported amphorae from the pre-Roman period. It is wider in scope, though, and aims at a full statistical coverage of the amphorae stemming from Houses 1, 2 and 3. The present contribution is intended as a first glimpse at the potential of the dataset for the knowledge of amphora borne trade in this part of the Central Mediterranean.