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Distribution in Gaul of amphorae produced in Fondi / Southern Latium in the Second Iron Age



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Outset

In the Fondi plain on the tyrrhenian coast of Italy, several amphora production sites have been discovered in the 1970s and sherds collected in a land survey (Hesnard et al. 1989). As some of the stamps on sherds among the Fondi production were identical to those on amphorae found in the shipwreck La Madrague de Giens off the French Mediterranean Coast, large wine imports to Gaul from the region of Fondi were assumed.

Comparisons to the amphorae from oppida along the Mediterranean coast and those of other late Iron Age and early Roman consumer sites on the Rhone-Rhine axis between Lyon and Basle / Augst did not reveal the expected large numbers of Fondi amphorae.

Reference groups



12 analytically well-defined Dressel 1 amphorae production sites on the Tyrrhenian coast of Italy. From Albinia to Pompei, fabrics contain inclusions characteristic of the volcanic region of Central Italy.

Different fabric types:

- predominantly light inclusions (mostly sanidine among volcanic inclusions)
- black sand (mainly well sorted dark volcanic inclusions)
- others (various inclusions)

Differentiation by combining chemical composition and petrographic characteristics.

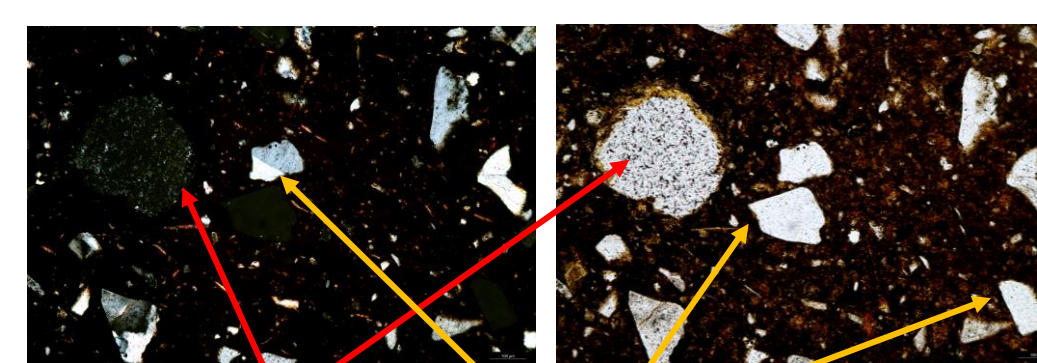
ITIVIN Project

Recent analyses carried out in the framework of the ITIVIN project concerned with the multidisciplinary comparative study of amphorae from sites in Western Gaul allowed attributing a more significant proportion of amphorae to the Fondi production among the imported amphorae. Results for three sites are presented here, studies are ongoing for other sites.

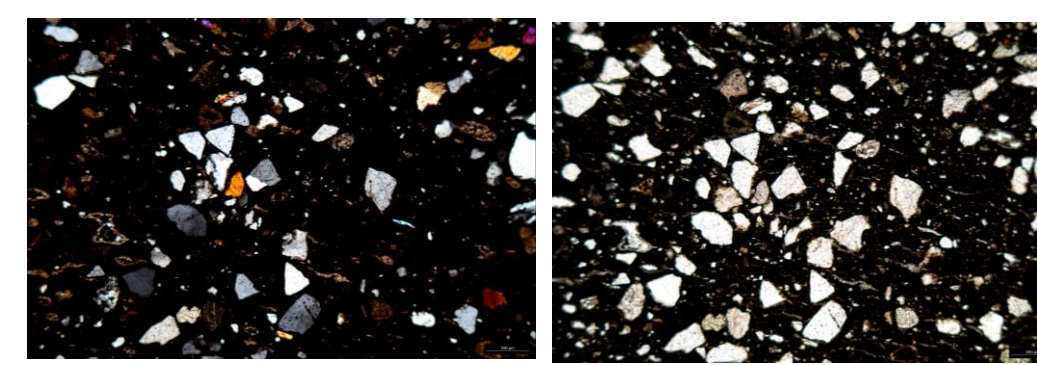
Analytical methods

- Macroscopic fabric analyses
- Petrographic analyses by polarization microscopy on thin sections
- chemical analyses by WD-XRF

Amphora production at Fondi



pumice (rare) and sanidine (characteristic) left crossed polars, right single polar

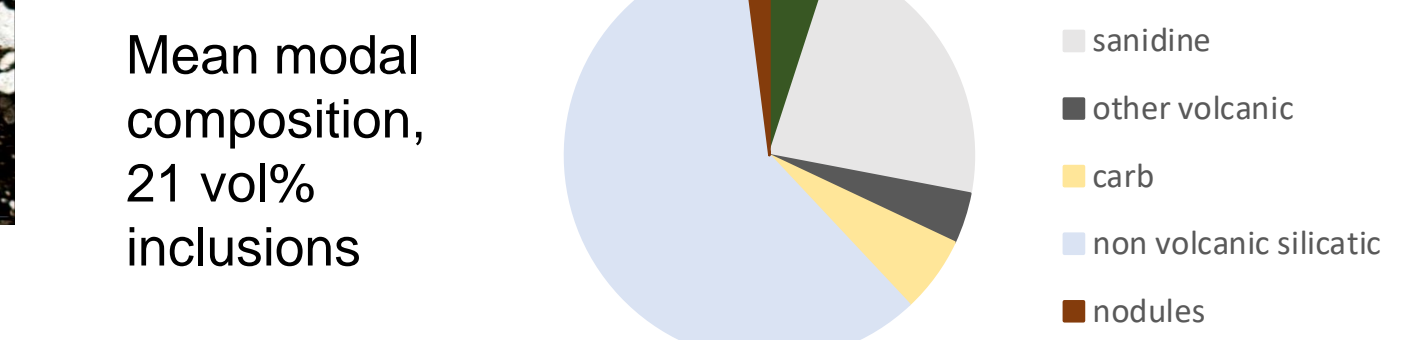


Representative example of Fondi fabric under the microscope

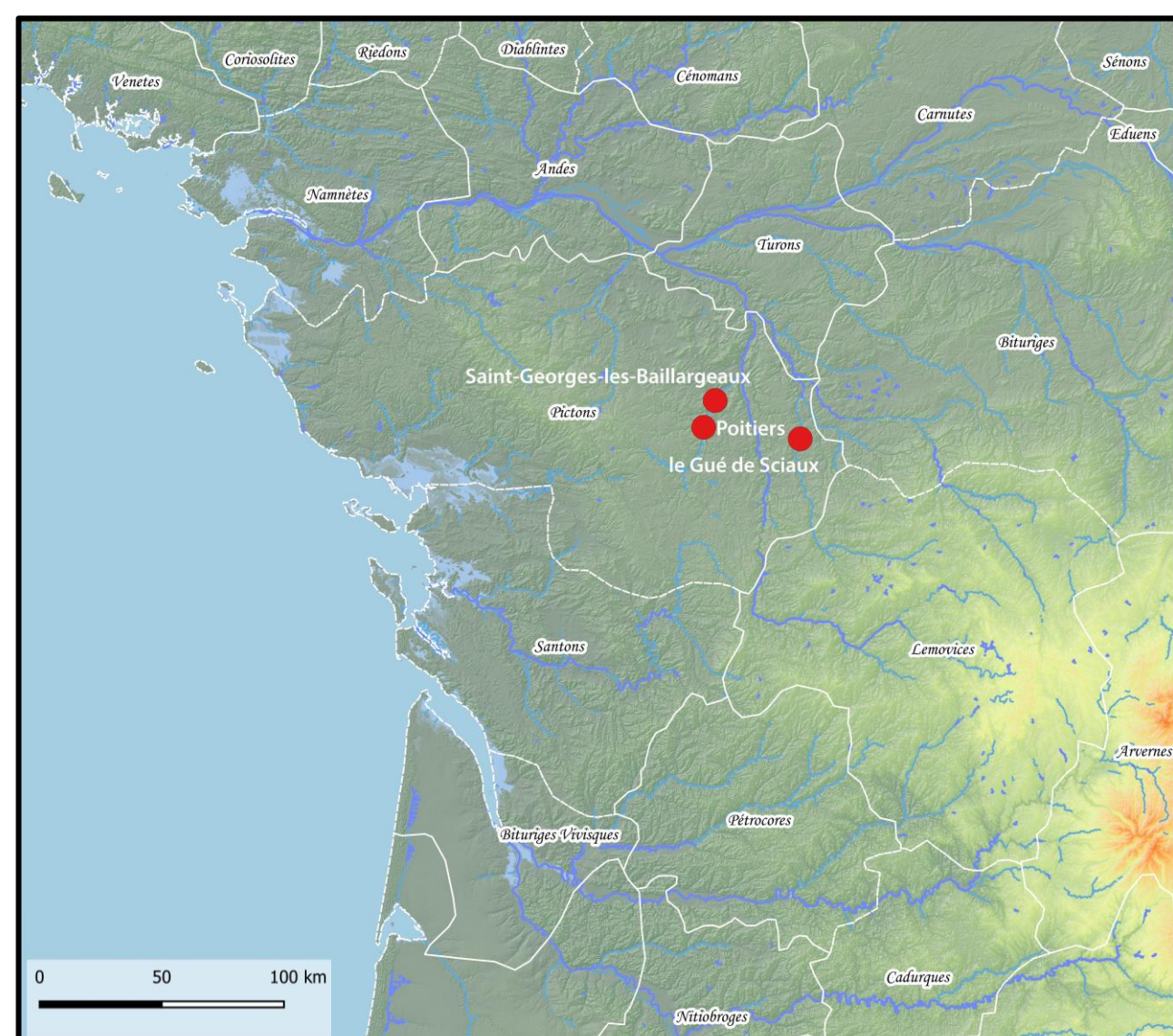
Reference group constituted of 50 samples from several workshops around lake Fondi (Hesnard et al. 1989, Thierrin-Michael 1992).



Fabric characterized by predominantly light inclusions.



Consumer sites in Western Gaul

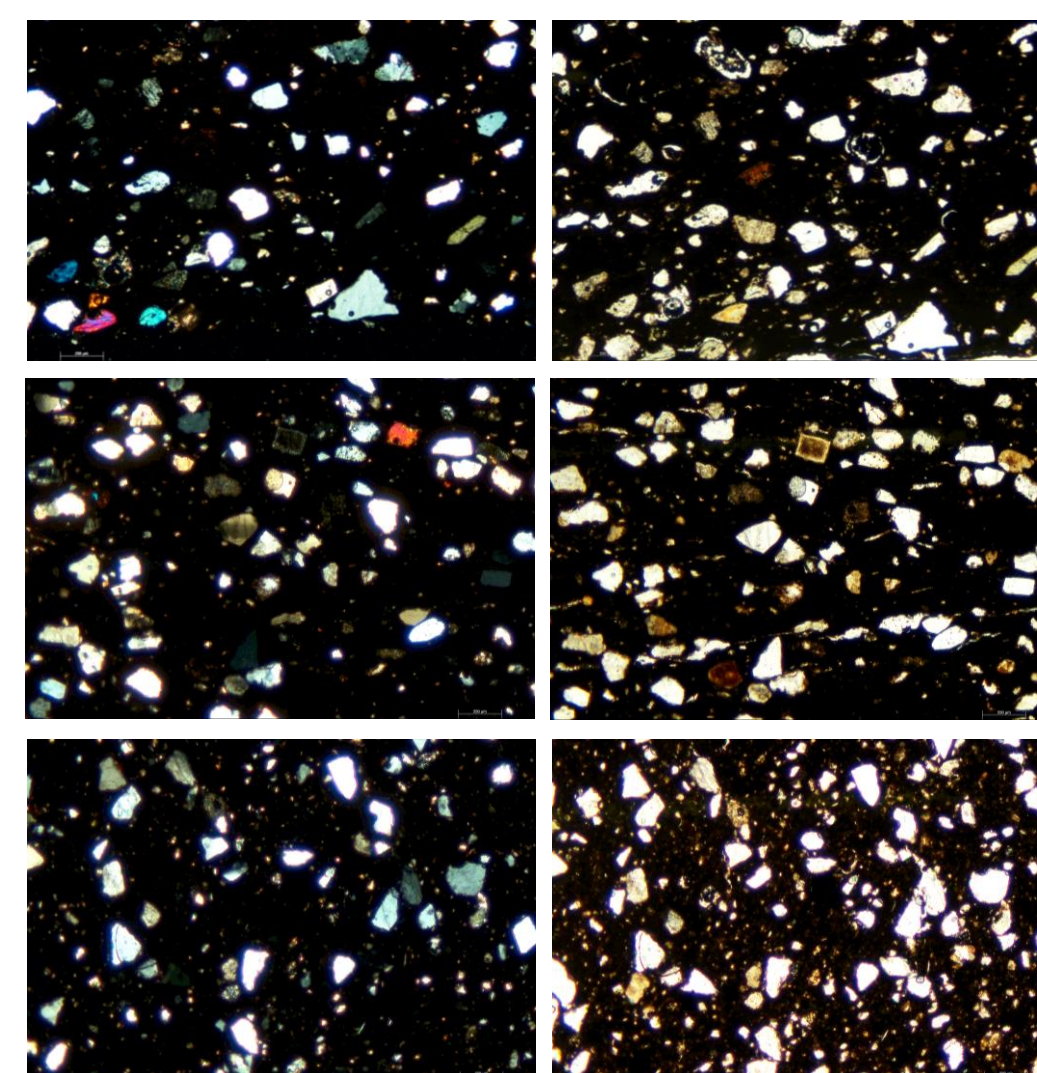


Selected sites:

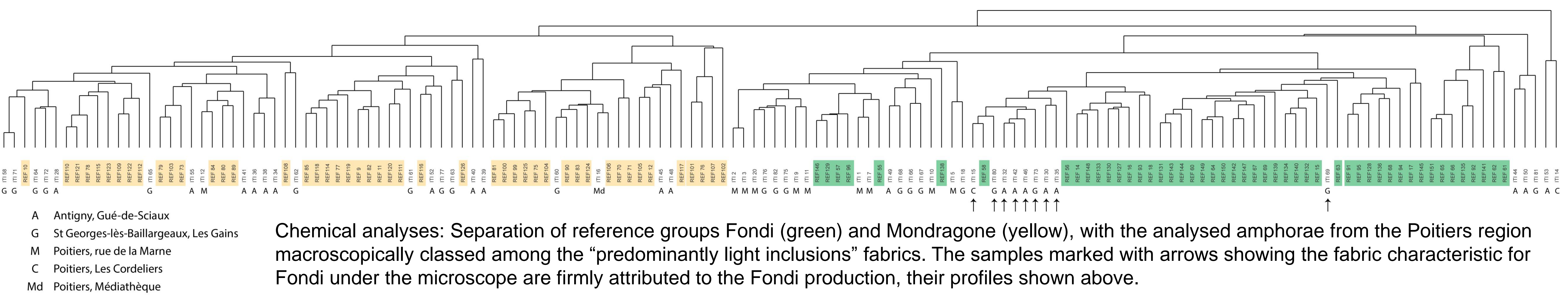
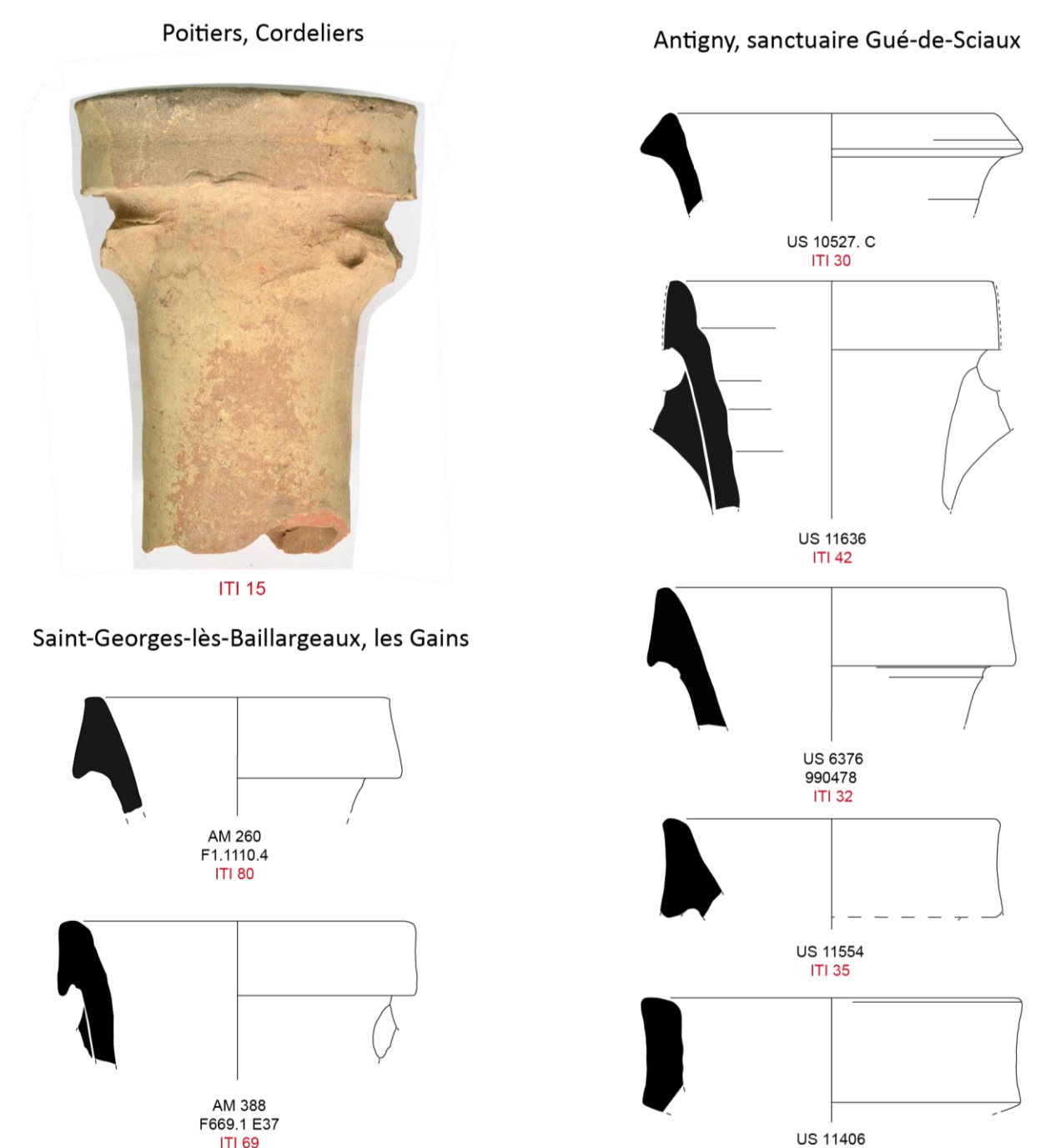
- Poitiers (M, Md, C), urban agglomeration
- Antigny (A), Gué de Sciaux, sanctuary
- St Georges-lès-Baillargeaux (G), rural site

The majority of amphorae from these sites show fabrics with predominantly light inclusions, containing characteristic volcanic minerals of Central Italy. Comparison with the references reveals not only the presence of amphorae from Mondragone but also from **Fondi**.

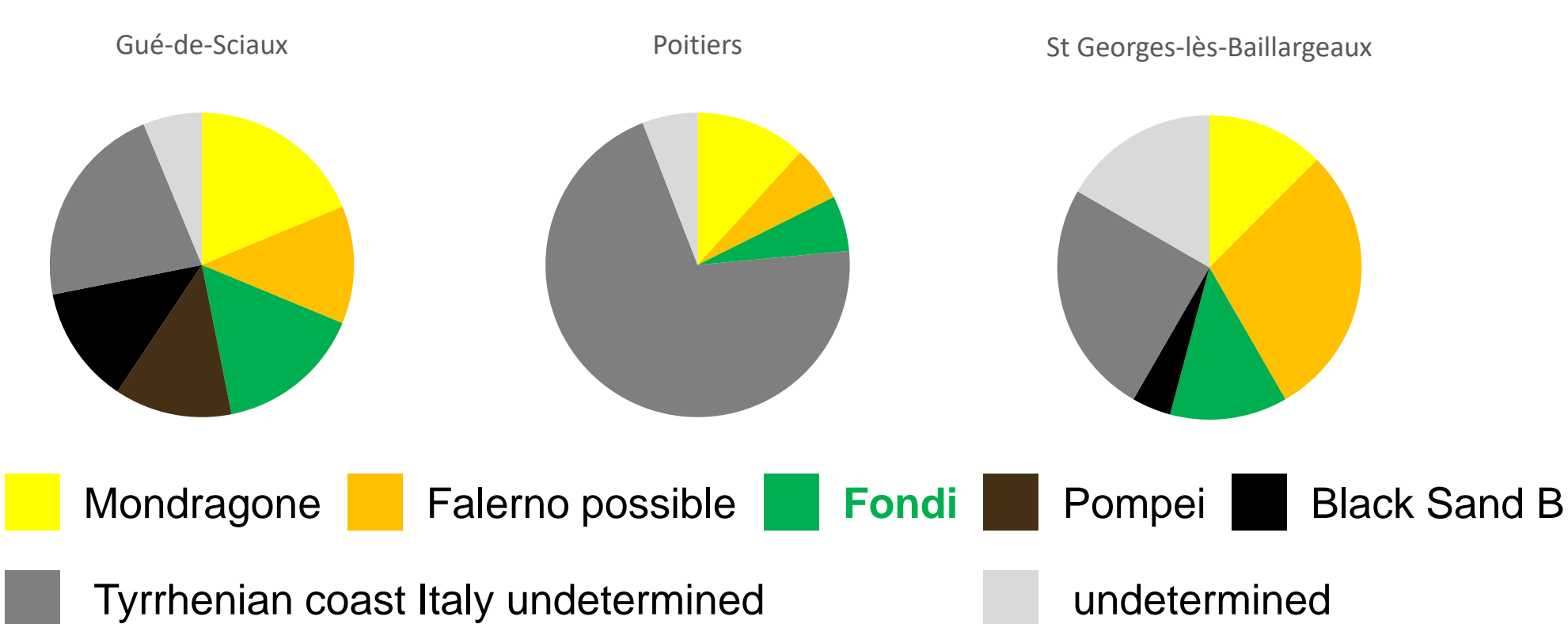
Attributions to Fondi



Examples of same fabric on 3 sites



Proportion of attributions to Fondi



Amphorae from Fondi constitute up to 16 % of the analysed sample. This makes Fondi the second most important provenance after the Mondragone/Falerno region (Northern Campania) for the wine consumed on the selected sites. While the undetermined origins represent considerable portions in total, the amphorae in that category do not form large uniform groups consistent with a single origin.

Southern and Eastern Gaul

No attributions to Fondi for amphorae from Second Iron Age sites along the Mediterranean coast and on the Rhone-Rhine axis (Thierrin-Michael et al. 2005; Martin-Kilcher et al. 2013): examples of classification clusters with amphorae of fabric "predominantly light inclusions" and the Fondi reference group show the clear separation.

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