

Sierra Rojo Type: Sierra Variety

Group:	Sierra
Phase:	Pre-Picota
Period:	Late Pre-Classic
Provenience:	Groups I and C
Frequency:	Very Scarce
Established by:	Smith and Gifford: 1966

Main Characteristics

1. Yellow-reddish paste with coarse and grainy texture.
2. Red slip with waxy touch.
3. Long-necked ollas with out-flaring rim, and bowls with thick walls.



General Description

The paste is between fragile and hard, and has a coarse and grainy texture. Its color shows several shades of reddish-brown; reddish yellow (7.5YR6/6, 7/6) and yellowish red (SYR 5/6). The vessels are fired in an irregular oxidizing atmosphere, based on the reddish color of the paste and the dark core which is seen in most sections. About the clay composition it should be pointed out that there is plenty quartz sand as natural inclusions. There is no significant evidence of the use of any kind of temper.

The surface finish has a smooth, polished aspect. One of the diagnostic characteristics of the Sierra group is the presence of a red-red (2.5YR 4/6, 4/8), 10R (4/6, 4/8) and dark red (2.SYR 3/6) slip which has a waxy touch and is usually well adhered to the paste. Although its state of conservation is relatively good, one frequently finds a slight cracking of the slip and areas with firing stains or blackish smoke stains.

As for the forms, we have found a scant representation of the great variety of vessels which traditionally have been assigned to the Sierra group. Therefore, we only have fragments belonging to four form classes:

1. Jars with long neck and out-flaring rim. Occasionally the lip shows an incision dividing it in two sections (Figure 1 a-c). Likewise the neck usually shows undulations on its exterior side, which result from using the coiling technique for modeling the vessel (Figure 1 a-e). Although

we have no evidence for the shape of the body, it is possible to infer through comparison with whole jars found in other sites, that the body had a globular shape.

- Mouth diameter: 20-27 cm
 - Neck wall thickness: medium (0.8-1 cm)
 - Neck height: medium-high (3.6-6.5 cm).
 - Height of whole vessel: unknown.
 - Illustrations: Figure 1 a-e
 - Record number of sample: Figure 1 a (D1), b (D2), c (D10), d (D3), e (D4)
2. Bowls with very thick curved, converging walls, inverted rim and rounded lip.
- Diametro de la boca: desconocido
 - Espesor de la pared: grueso (1.1 - 1.4 cm.)
 - Altura de la vasija completa: desconocida
 - Ilustraciones: Figura 1 f- h
 - Numero de registro del muestrario: Figura 1 f (D5), g (D7), h (D6)
3. Cajetes de paredes recto-divergentes, horde directo y labio redondeado.
- Mouth diameter: unknown
 - Wall thickness: thick (1.1-1.4 cm)
 - Height of whole vessel: unknown
 - Illustrations: Figure 1 f-h
 - Record number of sample: Figure 1 f (D5), g (D7), h (D6)
4. Dishes with straight-divergent walls, direct rim, and rounded lip.
- Mouth diameter: unknown
 - Wall thickness: thick (1-1.1 cm)
 - Height of whole vessel: unknown
 - Illustrations: Figure 1 k-m
 - Record number of sample: Figure 1k (D28), 1 (D29), m (D30)

Aguila Naranja Type: Unspecified Variety

Group:	Aguila
Phase:	Motiepa
Period:	Early Classic
Provenience:	Groups I and C
Frequency:	Very Scarce
Established by:	Smith and Gifford; 1966

Main Characteristics

1. Pink paste with abundant temper of ground calcite.
2. Orange-color slip, usually over a cream-slip base.
3. Dishes with high curved, divergent walls and bowls with interior-beveled lips.



General Description

The paste is hard and has a medium texture. Its most characteristic colors are pink, reddish yellow (SYR 6/6) or light red (2.SYR 7/6, 6/8; 10R 6/6). Firing took place in an oxidizing atmosphere, which was not always well under control, as surmised by the dark core which can be seen in the section of some of the fragments. About the composition of the paste it can be said that abundant ground-calcite temper was employed, as well as the occasional presence of iron oxide nodules.

The surface finish shows a smooth, polished and shiny aspect. One of the diagnostic characteristics of the Aguila Group is the presence of an orange-colored slip (red 2.5YR 4/8, 5/8; reddish-yellow SYR 6/8; yellowish-red SYR 5/8), which was usually applied over a base of cream-colored slip (pink 7.SYR 8/4; very light brown 10 YR 7/4). This slip was applied on the inside of walls, on the exterior, or on both, depending on the shape of the vessel.

Since the frequency of the Aguila Naranja type is very scarce in Palenque, we don't have a good representation of the variety of forms which characterize this group. Therefore, for the moment we only have the following vessel forms:

1. Dishes of straight-divergent walls and direct rim with a 2.5 cm-wide molding. These dishes usually have slip both on the interior and the exterior of walls.
 - Mouth diameter: 20 cm
 - Wall thickness: medium (0.7 cm)
 - Height of whole vessel: unknown
2. Bowls of curved-divergent walls, direct rim and beveled lip on the inside. These bowls only have slip in the inside of walls.
 - Mouth diameter: 32 cm
 - Wall thickness: medium (0.7 cm)
 - Height of whole vessel: unknown
 - Illustrations: 1 a
3. Vases with straight walls, direct rim and rounded lip. The slip only covers the outside of the walls.
 - Mouth diameter: 15 cm
 - Wall thickness: medium (0.5 cm)
 - Height of whole vessel: unknown
 - Illustrations: 1 b

Marques Crema Type: Marques Variety

Group:	Marques
Phase:	Murcielagos
Period:	Late Classic
Provenience:	Groups I and C
Frequency:	Abundant
Established by:	San Roman, this study

Main Characteristics

1. Orange-colored paste with fine to medium texture.
2. Well-polished surface finish and covered by a cream-color slip.
3. Tripod vases with nubbin supports, cylindrical body and direct rim; dishes with thin, out-flared walls and flat base.



Photo 1: Dish from Burial 18, Group I

General Description

The paste is of fine to medium texture and is orange-colored, including a broad spectrum of shades, among which the following stand out: reddish-yellow (7.SYR 6/6, 7/6; 5YR 6/6), light brown (7.5YR 6/6) and yellowish-red (SYR 5/6). The presence of a light gray core (bluish-black GLEY 22.5/1; very dark bluish-gray GLEY 2 S in the sections is indicative of a high percentage of phytoliths in the composition of the paste.

Surface finish shows good smoothing and in some cases a cream-colored slip that often covers both the exterior and interior sides of walls. The most characteristic shades of this slip are as follows: very light brown (10YR 8/2, 8/3, 8/4), pink (7.SYR 7/3, 7/4), and reddish-yellow (7.5YR 7/6). It is likely that in some cases a good polishing of the surfaces resulted in a finish with a different color from that of the paste, which might be mistaken for a slip (Rands, personal communication 2003).

The most characteristic forms in this type are vases, of which we find two variants. On the one hand are tripod vases with nubbin supports, cylindrical body with thin walls and direct rim (see Figure 3 a-o), and on the other hand are cylindrical vases with thin, slightly curved walls, direct rim and no supports (see Photo 2). This vessel form can be found in both Murcielagos and Balunte phases, although it is more common in the first one. The difference between each one lays in the fact that the walls tend to be more straight in the Balunte phase than in the Murcielagos phase, in the latter moment the rim tends to curve to the outside.



Photo 2: Vase from Burial 18 of Group I, belonging to the Murcielagos phase.

Another form which is characteristic of this type are dishes with thin walls and, in many cases, lower than in other phases of the ceramic sequence. The rim can be direct (see Photo 1 and Figure 3 p-q, t) or slightly out-flaring and thickened (see Photo 1 and Figure 3 p), although most commonly rims are lacking. Lastly, for the moment we have detected another form which is characteristic of this type: thin-walled jars with high necks, and direct rim (see Figure 3 v-y), or with a slight rounded thickening (see Figure 3 u).