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LATE HISPANIC SIGILLATA FROM TERRONHA DE PINHOVELO (MACEDO DE CAVALEIROS, PORTUGAL)

Introduction

The research on Late Hispanic sigillata has been constantly omitted from studies of Roman pottery and for that reason it is still poorly known, which could also be due to the lack of study of this type of ceramics in its consumer sites. While in Spain there have been efforts to study the characteristics of the imports of this type of sigillata, in Portugal, especially in the North, where it should be represented better, in the available published studies of terra sigillata there are only some indications about the existence of these types of vessels. This setback could also be caused by the late identification of this sigillata type and the difficulty of finding good contexts to fix the chronology of this type of sigillata.

This paper is a small contribution to the development of Late Hispanic sigillata studies and presents the collection of those ceramics recovered in Terronha de Pinhovel, a small Roman site in the north-east of Portugal, where two campaigns of excavation took place in 2004 and 2005. Late Hispanic sigillata was the most significant ceramic imported to this site where it represents 91% of the total volume of sigillata recovered (**fig. 1**).

The two short campaigns carried out in Terronha de Pinhovel allowed the recovery of 783 fragments of Late Hispanic sigillata that represent 104 Minimum Number of Vessels (MNV¹) with a typological classification, including the small moulded or stamped decorated fragments. In spite of the high number of fragments and the small size of the pieces which made their study quite difficult, this collection provides a good sample of this type of sigillata, demonstrating its main characteristics in a small Roman inland site in Northern Portugal.

1. The archaeological site of Terronha de Pinhovel

The site of Terronha de Pinhovel is located in the Portuguese province of Trás-os-Montes, in the north-east of Portugal (**fig. 2**). Pinhovel is the name of the nearest village and Terronha means, in Portuguese, a geographic location on a mountain area. In the Roman period this region was part of the province of *Tarraconensis* and was integrated in the *Gallaecia* province after the administrative reforms of Diocletian.

Roman finds have been recorded in that place since the beginning of the 20th century but its investigation only be-

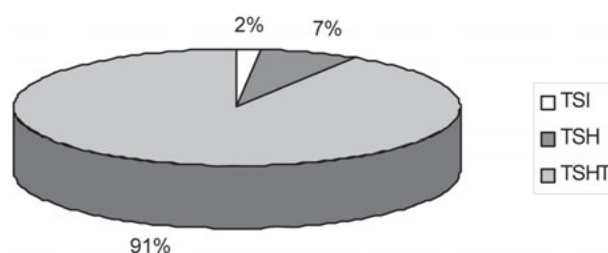


Fig. 1. Relative frequency of different types of sigillata at Terronha de Pinhovel. TSI Terra sigillata italica; TSH Terra sigillata hispanica; TSHT Terra sigillata hispanica tarda/late Hispanic sigillata.

gan only 1997, when a road was planned to that area. The discovery of well-preserved structures of the Roman period meant that the proposed road was transferred to another location².

After that first short campaign of archaeological work, excavations only took place again in 2004 and 2005, directed by Carlos Mendes, as part of a land survey for an archaeological map of the area of Macedo de Cavaleiros. In order to achieve a global understanding of the site this team defined different areas of excavation. Sectors A and B are the most important for this study since they provided all the classifiable Late Hispanic sigillata presented in this paper. Sector A (**fig. 3**), at the edge of the main platform, had an area of 73 m² and revealed three phases of occupation: one from the Iron Age, another one probably older than the Iron Age, and a Roman occupation. The largest area (about 113 m²), Sector B (**fig. 4**), was opened in the main platform and the dwelling structures found there belonged at least to two phases of the late Roman occupation of the archaeological site³, from the 3rd to the end of the 5th century. Further and deeper excavations might extend the chronology of sector B to the High Empire.

¹ This was done according to the Protocole Beauvray 1998 (P. ARCELIN/M. TUFFREAU-LIBRE [dir.], La quantification des céramiques: conditions et protocole [Glux-en-Glenne 1998] 141–157).

² P. CARVALHO/J. FRANCISCO/L. GOMES/I. BOTELHO, Assentamento romano fortificado da Terronha (Macedo de Cavaleiros/Bragança). Em Busca do Passado 1994/1997. Lisboa: Junta Autónoma das Estradas (Lisboa 1997) 124–149.

³ BARRANHAO/TERESO 2006, 15.



Fig. 2. Location of Terronha de Pinhovo in Portugal.

2. Fabric Groups

Late Hispanic sigillata has been generally identified with two main production areas. One is related to the Ebro Valley and exhibits, at least in the first phase, the same production technology as Hispanic sigillata of the 1st and 2nd centuries⁴. The other one is related to the Douro Valley/Meseta and shows different characteristics, strongly influenced by the African Red Slip ware productions⁵.

The macroscopic observation of the Terronha de Pinhovo collection allowed the identification of three different types of Fabric (fig. 5).

Fabric I corresponds to a light red fine fabric with small rounded inclusions in moderate frequency. This fabric appears in a small group of sherds that did not preserve their slip.

Fabric II has a very fine and soft reddish fabric with a very sparse frequency of inclusions. This fabric appears in a larger group of pieces with thin and dull reddish slips, sometimes dusky red, characterized by a burnished finish on the surface.

Fabric III is the most common and is characterised by a coarser reddish-yellow fabric, generally hard, with a red or yellowish red thicker slip, not always preserved.

According to the data from the production areas of this type of fine ware, Fabrics I and II should relate to the Ebro Valley productions and Fabric III represents the Douro Valley productions.

3. Forms

The researchers who have studied this type of pottery have proposed different typologies and therefore this study considers all the typologies currently used for this sigillata type, such as Mezquíriz⁶, Palol⁷, Mayet⁸, López Rodríguez⁹, Paz Peralta¹⁰ and Juan Tovar¹¹.

In Terronha de Pinhovo it was possible to identify nine forms of cups (Palol 9/11; Drag. 35; Hisp. 5/Palol 8A and Ritt. 8/Palol 10), plates (Drag. 15/17; Paz 83/Palol 5 and

⁴ MAYET 1984, 284.

⁵ MAYET 1984, 284–285.

⁶ MEZQUÍRIZ 1961 and 1985.

⁷ PALOL/CORTÉS 1974.

⁸ MAYET 1984.

⁹ LÓPEZ RODRÍGUEZ 1985.

¹⁰ PAZ PERALTA 1991.

¹¹ JUAN TOVAR 2000.



Fig. 3. Sector A (BARRANHÃO/TERESO 2006).

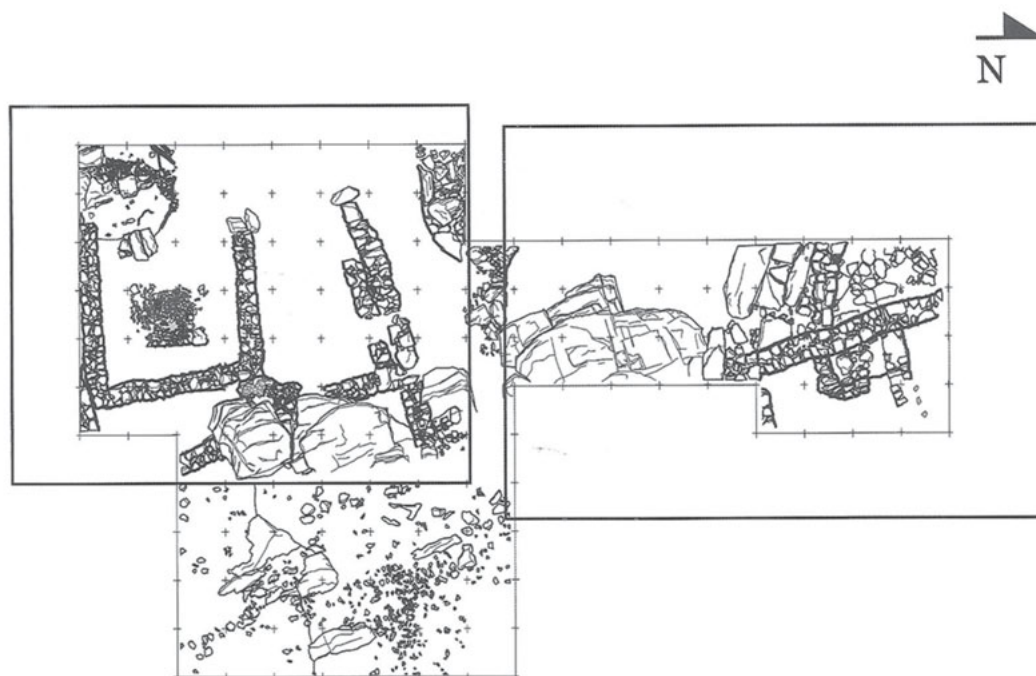


Fig. 4. Plan of Sector B (BARRANHÃO/TERESO 2006, 23).

Palol 4), lids (Hisp. 7) and bowls (Drag. 37), dated from the 3rd to the 5th century (**table 1**).

Cup n° 1 (**fig. 6,1**), very incomplete, may be a form Palol 9 or Palol 11¹². The upper straight wall could be associated with the form Palol 11, but the similarities between these two forms, already considered by L. Juan Tovar, make it advisable to consider them as form Palol 9/11, dating from the 3rd to the 5th century. This piece is in Fabric II¹³.

Another cup in Fabric II was classified as a plain Drag. 35 (**fig. 6, 2**). This cup with curved walls was produced in many types of sigillata, such as Hispanic or African Red Slip ware, but it derives from the Gaulish sigillata productions. This form has a long chronology, which Paz Peralta recently extended to the end of the 5th century and the beginning of the 6th century¹⁴.

Two items in Fabric III have been associated with the hemispherical cup with flaring rim, form Hispanic 5 or Palol 8A, because of their rouletted rims (**fig. 6, 3–4**). For Paz Peralta this characteristic of the rim is a late feature, not earlier than the 5th century¹⁵.

The survival of Gaulish morphological features is also present in the cup Ritt. 8/Palol 10, represented by five vessels in Fabric II (**fig. 6,5–6**). According to the variability of the rim and the wall pointed out by Paz Peralta, they can all be attributed to variant A, the most common in the archaeo-

¹² PALOL/CORTÉS 1974, 132–134.

¹³ JUAN TOVAR 2000, 81–86.

¹⁴ PAZ PERALTA 2008, 529 fig. 14 (5.2 and 6.3).

¹⁵ ID. 1991, 69; ID. 2008, 525 fig.13 (6.4).

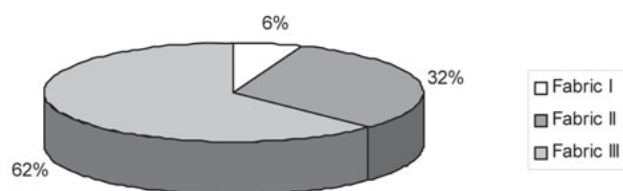


Fig. 5. Relative frequency of Late Hispanic sigillata fabric types at Terronha de Pinhovelo.

	Fabric I (MNV)	Fabric II (MNV)	Fabric III (MNV)	Total
Palol 9/11		1		1
Drag. 35		1		1
Hisp. 5/Palol 8			2	2
Ritt. 8/Palol 10		5		5
Drag. 35		1		1
Drag. 15/17	1	1?		2
Hisp. 5/Palol 8			2	2
Palol 9/11		1		1
Paz 83/Palol 5			1	1
Palol 4		1	15	16
Hisp. 7			2	2
Palol 4		1	15	16
Drag. 37	2	8	16	26
Dec. Ind.	3	16	29	48
Total	6	33	65	104

Table 1. Distribution of Late Hispanic sigillata forms by fabric types.

logical sites¹⁶. In the study of Quintanilla de La Cueva, Juan Tovar also analyses this form and subdivides Paz Peralta's variant A into three further types, possibly related to different potters. Our vessels correspond to variant A1¹⁷.

The thin and curved wall of this form was interpreted as an influence of the African Red Slip ware C (Hayes 45 and 50A). Even though these African Red Slip ware forms were produced since 230 AD, Paz Peralta considers that the absence of the Hispanic imitation of this kind of cup in the 3rd century could mean that the Hispanic workshops only produced it in the first half of the 4th century, when the African Red Slip ware C was widely spread in Zaragoza. Juan Tovar rejects this affiliation and argues that this form was produced from the 3rd to the 5th century. Variant A1 is present in contexts of the 4th and 5th centuries¹⁸.

The Drag. 15/17 form is fairly common in archaeological sites and is represented in Terronha de Pinhovelo by two dishes in Fabrics I and II (fig. 6,7–8). There are no well-dated examples of this form, but apparently it continues to be made in the 3rd century and probably lasts until the beginning of the 4th century¹⁹.

There is only one fragment of form Paz 83 A equivalent to Palol 5 and to Hisp. 6/77²⁰ (fig. 6,9). This dish with verti-

cal triangular rim, quite similar to African form Hayes 61A, is included in Fabric III and usually appears in contexts of the end of the 4th century until the end of the Late Hispanic productions at the beginning of the 6th century²¹.

A flat-based dish with broad more or less horizontal flat rim (fig. 6,10–14) is represented by sixteen individuals in Fabric III, and just one in Fabric II, and was the most difficult to classify. According to the typologies of late Hispanic sigillata, the rim no. 10, and probably a fragment of a base, could belong to the form Palol 4 equivalent to Hisp. 49/74²², in the first variant (A) defined by Juan Tovar. Other pieces (11–14) could be attributed to this form but were more difficult to classify because they could equally be attributed to form Palol 3 or Palol 4. Regarding their general characteristics, this group of large dishes seems to reproduce the African Red Slip ware D form Hayes 59, associated with the Late Hispanic sigillata Palol 4. Form Palol 3 has been related to the African Red Slip ware C form Hayes 45, but the similarities between this form and Palol 4 are strong and possibly derive from the same source²³. The chronology of these two forms indicates a phase in the 4th and the 5th centuries²⁴, but it could possibly continue until the first decade of the 6th century²⁵.

Only two lids of form Hisp. 7²⁶ were identified (fig. 7,15). They have the typical triangular shape rim that characterises variant C in the Paz Peralta typology, dated from the 3rd to the 5th century²⁷. They are both included in Fabric III.

The decorated hemispherical bowl Drag. 37t is one of the most common forms at Terronha de Pinhovelo with twenty six individuals (fig. 7,16–19 and perhaps fig. 7,20–30) and although it appears in all the fabric groups it is mainly produced in Fabric III. According to the typologies available for the study of Late Hispanic sigillata, this form can be divided in two main variants, A and B, depending on the inclination of the rim and the wall shape. The rims identified at Terronha de Pinhovelo have different characteristics, rims without lip, simple rims or thickened rims, all included in Paz Peralta variant B²⁸, were produced in the 3rd, 4th and 5th centuries. The rim no.19 has a decorative pattern of López Rodríguez type 1B/23²⁹. There were also two bases identified in this form, one of them with moulded decoration (fig. 7,20), of López Rodríguez type 2B/1.³⁰

¹⁶ PAZ PERALTA 1991, 57.

¹⁷ JUAN TOVAR 2000, 78.

¹⁸ Ibid. 78.

¹⁹ PAZ PERALTA 1991, 59–61; JUAN TOVAR 2000, 49; F. TUTSET I BERTRAN/J. BUXEDA I GARRIGÓS, La cerámica terra sigillata hispánica avanzada (TSHA) de Clunia: segunda mitad del II–III S.d.C. Congreso de Arqueología Peninsular 5. Trab. Arqu. e Etn. 35/1 (Porto 1995) 355–368.

²⁰ MEZQUÍRIZ 1961, 77; 165.

²¹ PAZ PERALTA 1991, 93.

²² MEZQUÍRIZ 1961, 85; 164.

²³ JUAN TOVAR 2000, 60.

²⁴ PAZ PERALTA 1991, 99; JUAN TOVAR 2000, 60–68.

²⁵ PAZ PERALTA 2008, 529 fig.14.

²⁶ MEZQUÍRIZ 1961, 78; ID. 1985, 145.

²⁷ PAZ PERALTA 1991, 77.

²⁸ Ibid. 117.

²⁹ LÓPEZ RODRÍGUEZ 1985, 53.

³⁰ Ibid. 67.

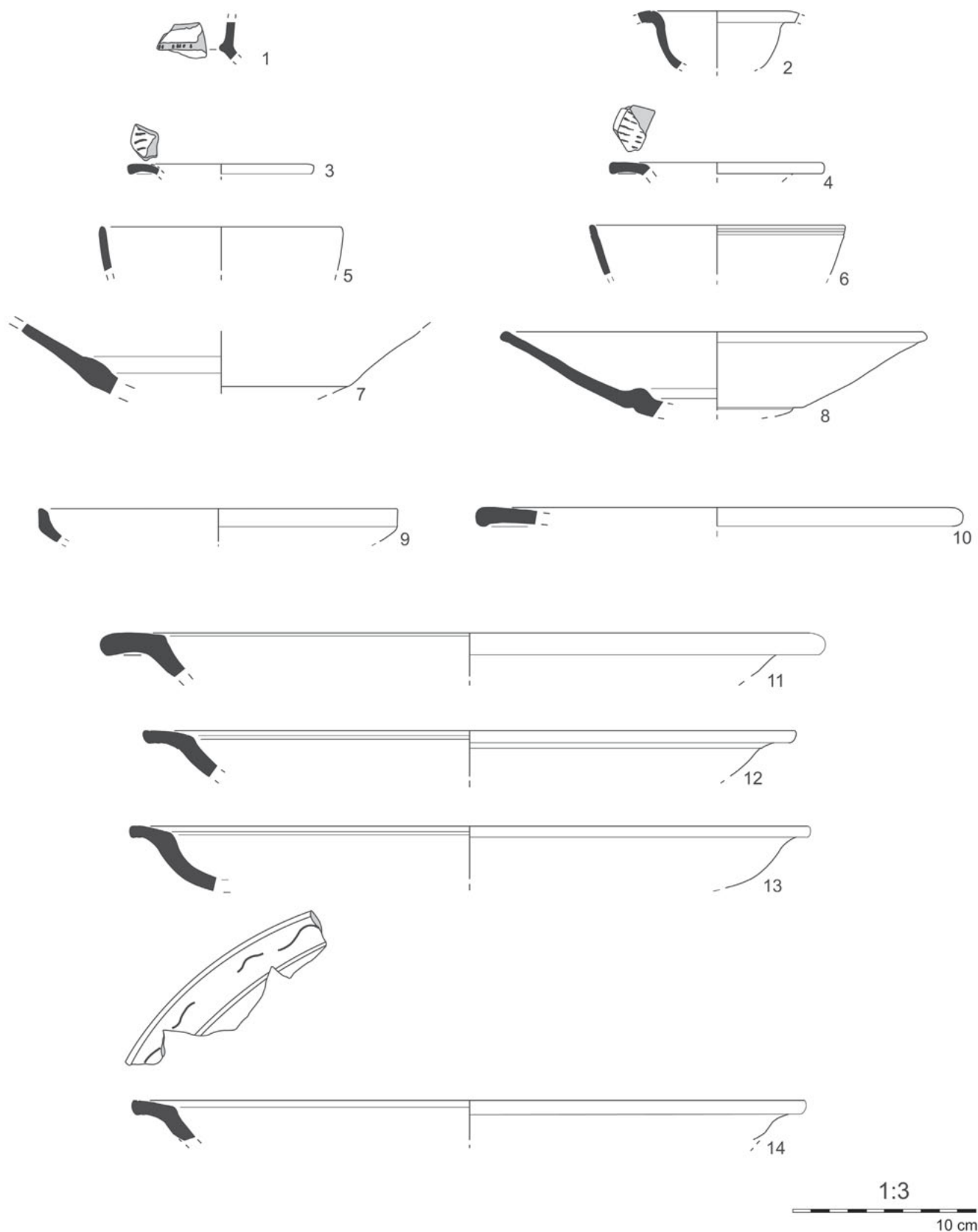


Fig. 6. 1 Palol 9/11; 2 Drag. 35; 3–4 Hisp. 5/Palol 8; 5–6 Ritt.8; 7–8 Drag. 15/17; 9 Paz 83/Palol 5; 10–14 Palol 4.

4. Decoration

There is a large group of body sherds with moulded decoration (46 pieces) which could be included in form Drag. 37t because it was the only decorated form identified in the Terronha de Pinhovelo collection. Although it is not possible to classify their original form, it is important to analyse the decorative patterns present in this site.

The typology of López Rodríguez (1985) helped to divide these small body sherds into group types. Six pieces in Fabric II have a decoration with rosettes: no. **21** (fig. 7) represents type 1A/2 and no. **22** (fig. 5) corresponds to 1B/2 with vertical motifs type 1C/20, both of them combined with circles type 1B/7; another one has a rosette type 1A/1, and the others have simple circles type 1B/4. Nine body sherds of Fabric III were included in López Rodríguez type 1B/23 (fig. 7,23); five others in Fabric II were associated with López Rodríguez type 3A/2/2 (fig. 7,24); two pieces in Fabric II presented López Rodríguez type 3A/3/1 (fig. 7,25); ten pieces in Fabric III were included in López Rodríguez type 1C/11 (fig. 7,26–27); four of the pieces in Fabric III were included in type 1C/9 because of the small dimension of their lines (fig. 7,28–29); nine pieces in all three fabrics corresponded to López Rodríguez type 2A1/1-3 associated with type 1C/5, common in pieces with type 5A/12 (fig. 7,30); one last small fragment was too deteriorated to be classified.

Paz Peralta and Mayet divide those different decorative patterns into two main groups³¹. The first is influenced by the High Empire examples and is present on six pieces in Fabric II of the Terronha de Pinhovelo collection (fig. 7,21–22). The second decorative style is the more common in Terronha de Pinhovelo, being present in forty body sherds (fig. 7,23–29), almost exclusively in Fabric III. For Paz Peralta and López Rodríguez the first style could appear in the 3rd century, but is mainly present in the 4th and 5th centuries with the second style productions. These decorations may still be produced in the beginning of the 6th century³².

The last two items in Fabric III depict stamped decoration. One of them is no. **31** (fig. 7) with a decoration similar to the pattern illustrated in piece no. 92 in the typology from La Olmeda³³ or in the large dishes from Conímbriga³⁴. The other one has a spiral or circle decoration similar to the Palol 4 with the no. 48 of the typology of La Olmeda³⁵.

5. The significance of Late Hispanic sigillata imports in Terronha de Pinhovelo

This study is based on a collection recovered in only two campaigns (2004 and 2005) in Terronha de Pinhovelo. Yet, even though the excavated area is not very large and the classified vessels all come from destruction/abandonment levels, the collection seems to be representative of the utilisation patterns in this rural site.

The sigillata recovered from the site indicates that both sectors A and B were occupied in the first phase of the Roman occupation, in the 1st and 2nd centuries, but since the late Hispanic sigillata comes almost exclusively from Sector B (100 MNV), it means that Sector A (with only 4 MNV)

was no longer occupied in the Late Roman period. In that phase the archaeological evidence recovered in sector A only points to small episodes of garbage dumping. This could mean a reduction of the occupied area on the main platform (Sector B) or a displacement of the occupation area to another part of the site still unknown. The study of all the sigillata recovered from the site indicates that both sectors were contemporary in the first phase of Roman occupation, 1st and 2nd centuries, but it seems that the imports of sigillata increased significantly in the Late Empire, being exclusively represented by Late Hispanic sigillata (fig. 1).

The exclusiveness of Late Hispanic sigillata as a fineware in the Late Empire in Terronha de Pinhovelo shows the importance of that commercial trend in this period. For Sande Lemos, the impact of this commercial trend in the Late Empire is reflected by the increasing development of some of the north-eastern rural sites, which had been much smaller in the High Empire³⁶. Future studies of commercial patterns in nearby archaeological sites³⁷ where the presence of Late Hispanic sigillata is known but not published, like Cramanchão, may bring new evidence to the import patterns of this type of ceramic in small rural sites of north-east Portugal.

The percentage of the imports to the Roman city of Conímbriga (Condeixa-a-Nova, Portugal) of the so called “sigillée tardive régionale”³⁸ (Late Hispanic sigillata) demonstrates the continuity of the commercial land routes used in the High Empire. The imports to other regions in the north of the Iberian Peninsula, as in several sites in Valdeorras (Ourense/Galicia, Spain, in the *Conventus Asturum*), with a 52% percentage of Late Hispanic sigillata, the most significant importation of sigillata in the area, clearly show the survival and the vitality of these land routes³⁹.

In Terronha de Pinhovelo, Late Hispanic sigillata, as mentioned before (fig. 1), is the most important group of imported pottery recovered and so far no African Red Slip ware has been found, but that type of pottery is attested in the nearby area of Valdeorras⁴⁰. In the nearby Roman city of Bracara Augusta (Braga, Portugal) Late Hispanic sigillata is the most significant import in the Late Empire, but the percentage of African Red Slip ware imports is also important, which shows the connexion with commercial land and sea routes⁴¹.

Mayet had already demonstrated the predominant presence of Late Hispanic productions in the north-east part of the Iberian Peninsula, particularly in the areas near the Ebro and the Douro production areas⁴².

³¹ PAZ PERALTA 1991, 104–113; MAYET 1984, 258–259.

³² PAZ PERALTA 1991, 104–113.

³³ PALOL/CORTÉS 1974, 129 fig. 39.

³⁴ DELGADO/MAYET/ALARCÃO 1975, 331–332.

³⁵ PALOL/CORTÉS 1974, 128 fig. 38.

³⁶ F. LEMOS, O Povoamento Romano em Trás-os-montes Oriental. Braga (Tese de Doutoramento Pré-Hist. e Hist. Antiguidade, Univ. Minho, Braga 1993) 380.

³⁷ BARRANHÃO/TERESO 2006, 14.

³⁸ DELGADO/MAYET/ALARCÃO 1975.

³⁹ MENÉNDEZ LLORENTE 2000, 83.

⁴⁰ Ibid. 83.

⁴¹ R. MORAIS, Produção e comércio de cerâmicas em BRACARA AVGVSTA. In: C. Fernández Ochoa/P. García Díaz, Unidad y diversidad en el Arco Atlántico en época romana. BAR Internat. Ser. 1371 (Oxford 2005) 125–138.

⁴² MAYET 1984, 274.

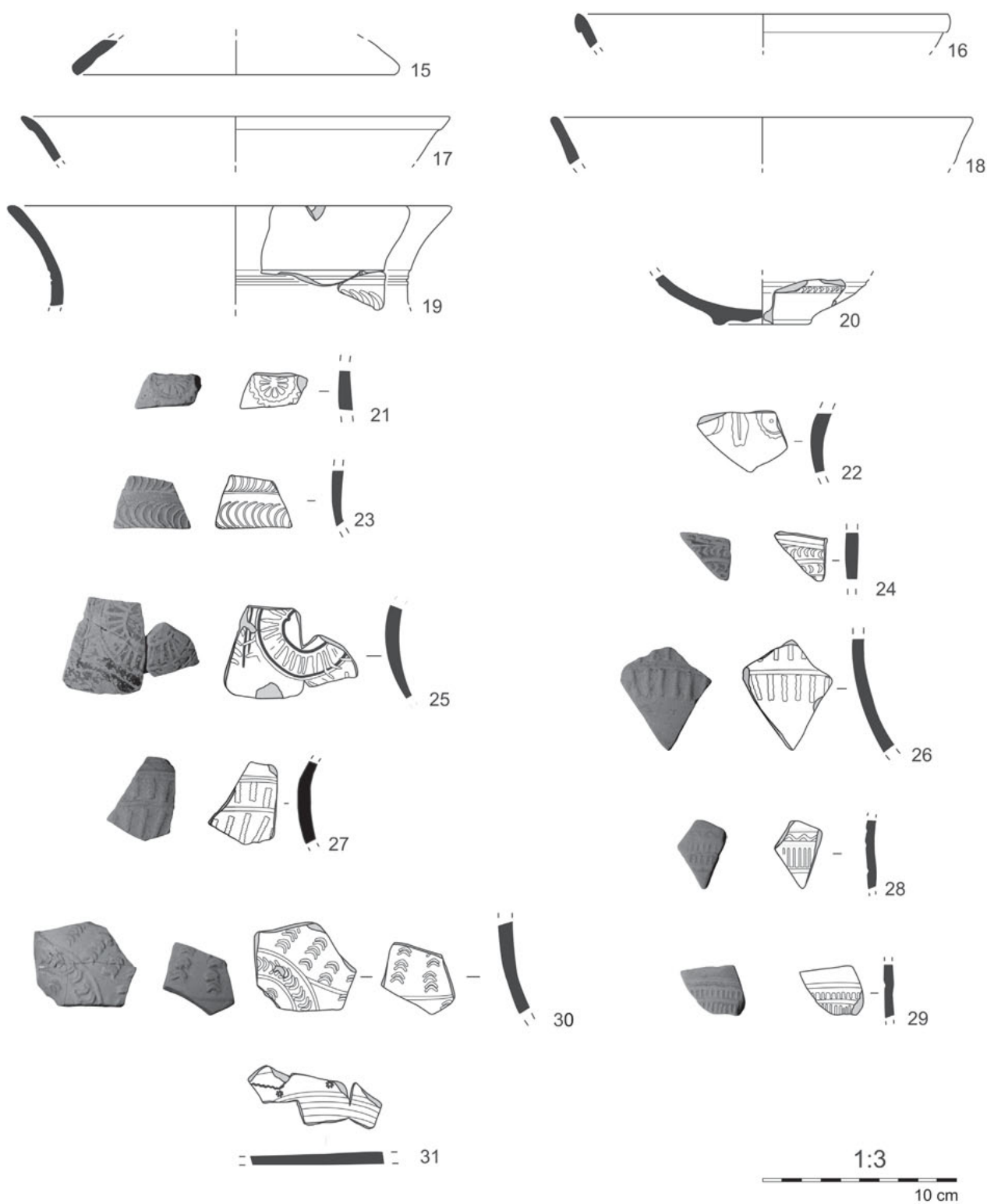


Fig. 7. 15 Hisp. 7; 16–20 Drag. 37t; 21–29 moulded decorations; 31 stamped decoration.

The significant imports of this type of terra sigillata from the 3rd to the 5th century also show that these small rural sites were not isolated or cut off from the main commercial routes and Terronha de Pinhovelo would certainly have benefited from the road that connected Asturica Augusta (Astorga, Spain) to Bracara Augusta (Braga, Portugal), the nearest cities⁴³.

The Ebro Valley production area is represented in Terronha de Pinhovelo (38% MNV) but the predominance of vessels in Fabric III (62% MNV) reveals that the Douro Valley production area was the preferential centre of production for fine tableware coming into the site.

The study of this collection seems to indicate two main phases of import. The first one seems to confirm the importance of the Ebro workshops in the first period of production of Late Hispanic sigillata, in the 3rd and 4th centuries. The forms Palol 9/11, Drag. 35, Ritt. 8/ Palol 10, Drag. 15/ 17 and some of the fragments of Drag. 37t were produced in Fabric I and II: these are connected with the Ebro workshops and show an import pattern similar to that observed in the study of the 1st- and 2nd-century sigillata⁴⁴.

The forms Hisp. 5/Palol 8, Palol 4 and Paz 83 and some of the rims of Drag. 37 are connected almost exclusively to Fabric III, associated with the Douro Valley productions; they

confirm the idea that those workshops adjusted to the arrival of the African and Gaulish late pottery productions⁴⁵. These vessels could be situated in the 4th and 5th centuries, probably extending even to the first decade of the 6th century.

These forms are also attested in nearby areas such as Valdeorras⁴⁶ or in the area of A Coruña⁴⁷ (Corunna, Galicia, Spain). Like these areas the most active period of importation at the Terronha de Pinhovelo site appears to be the 4th and the 5th centuries.

Acknowledgements

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⁴³ BARRANHÃO/TERESO 2006, 15.

⁴⁴ JUAN TOVAR 1997, 554–556

⁴⁵ Ibid. 558

⁴⁶ MENÉNDEZ LLORENTE 2000.

⁴⁷ M. C. LÓPEZ PÉREZ, El comercio de terra sigillata en la provincia de A Coruña. *Brigantium* 16 (A Coruña 2004).

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