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INTRODUCTION

The fundamental goal we set ourselves when developing this study is to try to characterize, both technically and formally, ceramics made in the city of Braga and its territory from the initial moments of the Late Antiquity to the Middle Ages.

Thus, we will focus on analyzing some own productions that appear attached to the phases of late antique occupation—ceramics of red engobes and late gray—as well as in the early medieval containers identified in different archaeological interventions practiced in the Braga environment. Concretely, we will analyze the material from various excavations conducted recently at the Theatre in the solar number 20/28 and 36/56 from the Afonso Henriques Street and the former District Hostel as well as the church of São Martinho de Dume.

1. SPATIAL AND TEMPORAL FRAMEWORK

In his origin history, the foundation of the city of Braga date back to the Augustan period and archaeological remains identified in the various excavations conducted so far have concluded that this is a perfectly planned city and has a urban project since its founding.2

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1. This work is part of the research project entitled “Landscapes change. Bracara Augusta and its territory (I-VII centuries)”, which is directed by Professor Manuela Martins and is funded by the structural funds of the EU and the MCTES of Portugal (Ref. PTDC/HIS-ARQ/121136/2010) and PAB2013-16 (Projeto Arqueológico de Braga. Topografia, Urbanismo e Arquitetura) ruled by Unit of Archaeology of Minho University.

From then it will be provided with a number of public buildings —forum, theater, amphitheater, baths. Also it already has two main axes of communication: the cardo maximo extending in the N / NNW-S / SSE direction and the decumanus in the O / OSO-E / ENE direction. It was also identified a number of necropolis located along the major roads that surround the city, as part of the sanitation network built below the cardo maximo.

At the end of the first century, early second century a major construction program and monumentalization of the city started, documented in the archaeological record with the discovery of remains belonging to public buildings such as the baths of Alto da Cividade, the theater and the amphitheater and a presumable macellum (Figure 1) Also the excavations in different areas of the city allowed to locate several high imperial domus. Some have arcaded areas overlooking the street, whose lower
parts were devoted to retail spaces. In addition, field works have confirmed the presence, in some cases, of private baths. At the end of the third century and early fourth century, *Bracara Augusta* registred some growth, associated with its conversion into capital of the new province of *Gallaecia* created by Diocletian. However, the most significant change is the erection of a powerful wall with building characteristics similar to those of the same dates, built in Lugo, Astorga, León and Gijón. (Figure 2).

From the fourth century the city became an episcopal see, which favors the appearance of both new public buildings, like remodeled residential blocks suited for the population that is enjoying a positive economic environment. (Figure 2)

During Late Antiquity happens the establishment of the Suevic dominance in this territory, becoming Braga in the capital of the kingdom. From this moment, proliferate Christian cult buildings located within the late Roman fortified enclosure

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(Cathedral) and suburban areas (São Victor, São Vicente and São Pedro). From this same period dates the construction of the palace complex of Falperra, associated with the Swabian court and located in the vicinity of the ancient Roman city.\textsuperscript{10}

At the same time, begins the construction of a number of monasteries in the surrounding area of the city, among which are those of São Martinho de Dume and São Fructuoso of Montélios. The first is built reusing existing buildings of the villa in this enclave dating from the high imperial time.\textsuperscript{11}

In the middle years of the sixth century, the Swabian monarch Charraico built a primitive basilica in this space, located below the current parish church. This is dedicated to Saint Martin of Tours, while it rises to episcopal see, relying shortly afterwards near it a monastery.\textsuperscript{12}

\textsuperscript{10} Luís Fontes, Manuela Martins, Maria do Carmo Ribeiro, Helena Carvalho, “A cidade de Braga e seu territorio nos séculos v-vii”, \textit{Actas del Congreso Espacios Urbanos en el Occidente Mediterráneo (s. VI-VIII)}, Toletum Visigodo, Toledo, 2010, p. 255-262.

\textsuperscript{11} Luís Fontes, \textit{A Basílica Sueva de Dume e Túmulo Dito de São Martinho}, Unidade de Arqueologia, Universidade do Minho, Braga, 2006.

During the last quarter of the sixth century a political change of vital importance to this region occurs: the Swabian kingdom with its capital at the helm, will be under Visigothic rule. During the sixth and seventh centuries, archaeology shows that many of the spaces within the city walls of Braga are still inhabited. Indeed, there is a reuse of most of the existing public areas, like the theater, whose structures are reused and transformed in an area of presumably artisan use.\textsuperscript{13}

The Early Medieval period begins, begins with building of a new walled city in the northwest quadrant of the low empire core. Within its small space is the primal Romanesque cathedral, which became the epicenter of political and religious power of the city. This marks the beginning of a strong alteration of inherited urban fabric of the Roman period, both the streets and housing existing structures. In this period the transformations experienced by the former pre-Romanesque building of pre-Christian temple settled on the Romanesque cathedral fall.\textsuperscript{14}

As for the surround area of the city, the excavations in the archaeological zone of São Martinho de Dume have highlighted the importance managed to reach the monastery between the seventh and ninth centuries, in effect becoming an important center of religious and culture dissemination of the Christian West.\textsuperscript{15} After the construction of the church and the transformation of the city into a monastery in the sixth century appear to have been no major renovations here. A continued occupation is evident until at least the last quarter of the ninth century, when the Galician Monastery Mondoñedo eventually became an episcopal see of these territories, including São Martinho de Dume which would be rebuilt as a parish church.\textsuperscript{16}


\textsuperscript{14} Luís Fontes, Francisco Lemos, Mario Cruz, “Mais velho que a Sé de Braga. Intervenção arqueológica na catedral bracarense: notícia preliminar”, Cadernos de Arqueologia, 14-15, (Braga, 1997), p. 142-143.

\textsuperscript{15} Luís Fontes, A Basílica Sueva de Dume e Túmulo Dito de São Martinho, Unidade de Arqueologia, Universidade do Minho, Braga, 2006.

2. STUDY OF THE CERAMIC MATERIAL

This study focuses on the analysis of pottery found in archaeological interventions in different areas of the city of Braga and its territory in recent years, such as: solar numbers of 20/28 and number 42/56 of Afonso Henriques street, the former District Hostel and the Theatre and also the church of São Martinho de Dume.

In this regard, we note that the classification of clays is based solely on macroscopic examination of registry pastes. In this way, we aim to know more precisely the various local productions of late antique and early medieval pieces found in these enclaves in order to try to see if there are similarities with those already studied in other archaeological sites in Braga and its surrounding area. To do this, we have a significant amount of ceramic containers of that period, perfectly stratified and that highlight the importance that this village had along the entire Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages.

Finally, we must add that the presence of these containers associated with a clarifying stratigraphic sequence will allow us to date much more precisely the contexts in which they appear attached.

3. CHARACTERIZATION OF THE CERAMIC MATERIAL

As regards the later productions, first, we must differentiate between those that have a foreign origin as the Gallic forms (DSP), African (ARSW) Phocian (Late Roman C) and Hispanic (TSHT) from those of actual local processing — red engobes and late gray.

On the import side, very few are original types of DSP, which so far, have been located in Braga and its surrounding area. We can only refer the presence of a Rigoir 1A plate fragment, another of a Rigoir 3B cup and, finally, a Rigoir 6C cup. From a chronological point of view, these imported parts are manufactured during the fifth century.

Copies of ARSW (Hayes 58A, Hayes 59, Hayes 59A, Hayes 59B, Hayes 61, Hayes 76, Hayes 91, among others) are frequently in the excavations of the city and its surrounding area. The chronology of these ranges from the final moments of the fourth century to the late sixth century.

Late Roman C ceramic productions are less frequent, but some fragments of Hayes 3 and Hayes 8 types have been found, developed between the fifth and sixth centuries.

In regards to the TSHT containers they usually appear in the archaeological excavations of Braga such as: fonts Palol 1, Palol 2, Palol 3 and 4 and cups Palol 8 Palol 9/11, Ritt 8, Drag. 15/17 or Drag. 37T, among others. These are made for a rather broad space of time, ranging from the fourth century to the late sixth century.

On the other hand, we should mention the presence of a considerable number of ceramics copied from the imported ceramic types previously referred. There are two productions of local character dating from late periods; First the known red engobes and, secondly, the late gray. The former are characterized by light-colored pastes, which have few degreasing and small size. They are modeled using fast turning, and mostly undergo cooking processes of oxidative type. Are characterized by having engobes of various shades of red appearing covering both the inner and outer parts. It is also common that they possess smoothed surfaces.

In the case of the late red engobes studied so far, in the city of Braga and its territory we find that they mimic imported sigillata ceramics such as ARSW and TSHT, along with some form of DSP. This production dates from the final moments of the fourth century and the middle of the fifth century.

The raw materials from which the late gray are made are very unsettled clays including non-plastic inclusions rather scarce and of small size. From a technical point of view the pieces are modeled using fast wheel and have both inside and outside smoothed walls. The cooking was subjected to reducing environments, which makes that the surfaces are colored greyish and blackish. Morphologically most mimic types of DSP, ARSW, Late Roman C and TSHT. These are containers whose original productions are made between the final moments of the fourth century and the sixth century.

We also find common parts, with a broader chronology (v-vii centuries). These are made with less unsettled pastes than before, where tempers are more plentiful and of a larger size. Technically, the pieces are modeled alternating the fast and slow wheels and are characterized by very irregular funds and the inner and outer surfaces smoothed, although in a much more crudely way than the previous case. As regards the cooking, reducing also predominate but the alternate also make an appearance.

Finally, we should mention the presence of early medieval ceramics that are made with little decanted clays where degreasing abound. They are modeled by a mixed technique, combining the use of slow and fast wheels. Moreover, the cooking atmospheres that are mostly subjected reducing and presumably were performed on very rudimentary furnaces.
4. Study of the ceramic productions of Braga and its territory

Late imitation productions

In Late Antiquity takes place the proliferation of local productions that emulate ceramic pieces of great quality with a foreign origin, a phenomenon which is becoming very common in the Iberian Peninsula from the fifth century.¹⁸

In the late Gallic ceramics case we should note that, as discussed previously, very few original copies are known in the city and its territory. What is clear is that, at this time, they are being imitated in Braga. So far, there is only one documented red engobe piece which mimics the form Rigoir 3B. This is a copy that was located in the later levels of the Theatre. (Figure 3.1)

In our study area, most forms of DSP that are found resemble to types such as Rigoir 5A, 5B, 6B cups (Figure 3. 2-4) and the Rigoir 3B, 16, 18 or 22 bowls (Figure 3. 5-8). From a chronological point of view the originals of these are made throughout the fifth century.¹⁹

At the same time, we found red engobe containers that mimic pieces of ARSW of the Hayes 52 types produced between the fourth and fifth centuries (Figure 3. 9). Another of the most common forms of this production are the Hayes 59B dishes, dated to between 320 and 420 (Figure 3. 10). Alongside these,


Figure 3: Late ceramic imitations.
also appear 67/71 bowls (Figure 3. 11), manufactured in the period between the years 360 and 470.

In turn, there are located emulations of ARSW both in red englobes, as in late gray. In fact, there are very frequent imitations in red engobe and late gray forms like Hayes 61A dishes, made between 325 and 400, and Hayes 61B, whose originals date between 400 and 450 (Figure 3. 12). We must also mention the dishes that resemble Hayes 76 type also produced in both productions and are manufactured between the second quarter and the third quarter of fifth century (Figure 3. 13).

Furthermore, one of the most copied types are the late gray cups that repeat the ARSW Hayes 73 form (Picture 3. 14), with originals dated in the fifth century. At the same time, other variants are identified as foreign productions like the Hayes 12/102 bowls made between the third quarter and the end of the fifth century (Figure 3. 15) or imitations of Hayes 97 that are made between 490 and 550 (Figure 3. 16).

Also are identified copies of other pieces of ARSW little traded on the mainland such as the feet of the Hayes 170 cups. The originals of this type are made between the second half of the fifth century and throughout the sixth century (Figure 3. 17).

In turn we found imitations in local production traditionally known as late gray of Late Roman C. The most common form of these is the Hayes 8 bowl, whose original dates from the second half of the fifth century and the sixth century (Figure 3. 18). Also make an appearance several variants of phorian Hayes type 3 produced between the fifth and late sixth century (Figure 3. 19).

Finally, we must refer to the presence of copies of THST in red engobe and late gray, as in the case of the 9/11 Palol bowls (Figure 3. 20) the Paz 82A (Figure 3. 21) and the Paz 83B bowls (Figure 3. 22). In this regard, we have to add that, both the originals in THST as the red engobe imitations of this are very abundant throughout Braga, but were not known until now copies in late gray. These date from the second and third quarter of the fifth century. Other types of THST which are, in turn, imitated in both Braga’s late productions are Ritt. 8 (Figure 3. 23) and Drag. 37T bowls (Figure 3. 24).

**Late common productions**

As for the common productions, whose chronology goes between the fifth and seventh centuries, we have identified a limited repertoire of forms only in late gray ceramics, such as: the pitchers, pots or plates, among others.
Undoubtedly, the most abundant type is the pitcher (Figure 4.1). Next is the form called jar that morphologically has rounded lip, straight neck and globular body tending (Figure 4.2). After the jars quantitatively are the pots (Figure 4.3). We must also mention the presence of a significant number of bowls, mostly ovoid, although some of them have a strong hull about half of the body (Figure 4.4). Alongside these, we recorded the presence of a series of high feet cups (Figure 4.5). The dishes are containers generally with everted rim, rounded and straight lips or with outer tab (Figure 4.6). Another type present in this city and its territory are pans that are characterized by two handles of rectangular section (Figure 4.7).

Regarding the other forms, first, we will refer to the discoidal pieces, which were made with reused ceramic. They are flat ceramic pieces with rounded form. Although with an indefinite functionality its small size makes us think what was their use, among others, such as gambling chips (Figure 4.8). Also appear some specimens identified as possible spindle whorl, which are characterized by a hole in its center. Although we can not ensure its use, the parallels known mainly medieval, suggest a textile utility character associated with manual spinning (Figure 4.9).

**Early Medieval ceramics**

First, we must consider that, typologically, there is very little variety, predominating, especially the closed shapes. The reduced formal number may be related to the fact that many of the pieces have had a polyfunctional use and, at the same time is very likely that it would have wooden tableware completing the ceramic repertoire.

Furthermore, it is common to locate pieces with evident traces of repair made by stapling system. To make these holes a perforator was drilling two holes, one on either side of the break. Then a staple fit into them while it was pressed to make it secure. After that clay was placed over the fracture and allowed to dry.

From the formal point of view, the most abundant type are the jars having narrow and high collars, beveled lips, globular bodies designed to handle one or two tabs that start from the edge itself (Figure 5.1).

Then there is the medium size pots with edges that have huge similarities with those of common late gray productions. But high medieval have more varied -thickened, rounded, beveled lips, exterior tab, inner tab — (Figure 5.2).

A number of discoidal pieces of different sizes are also identified. The fact that the walls are polished indicates that were performed after firing, using the waste for other ceramic containers. Although with an indefinite functionality, the smaller ones could serve, among other uses, to cover containers with narrow mouth, made of materials that are not conserved or as gambling chips. The pieces
Figure 4: Late common pieces.
with larger diameters could be employed as one of the lids alluded —pots, pans, among others (Figure 5. 3).

Were also identified several crucibles fragments, used to melt materials at very high temperatures. These have an ovoid shape, concave base and although his mouth is not retained, they possibly would be trilobal to facilitate the discharge of its contents. Have adhered to the outer wall of the container remains of what appears to be metal concretions. These data reveals sufficient information to suggest the existence of some metal production (Figure 5. 4).

Typologically several lids of flat base and rounded beveled lip are located. They are characterized by having a vertical handle appendix in the middle. Given its size, they should be used to cover both small and medium size containers.
Regarding the dishes they have flared rim and rounded to slightly beveled inside lip, presumably to accommodate a lid. Furthermore, we should refer the presence of flared edge and hemispheric body bowls. The lips are usually straight, rounded or beveled inside to also place a lid (Figure 5. 5). As for the pots (pans) they have flared edges, thick lips, slightly curved and flat base body. These have two handles of rectangular section born from the height of the rim to go to rest halfway through the body (Figure 5. 6). The platters (sleepers) are very similar to the plates, although slightly bigger. They present gray paste and reducing cooking, while possessing everted rims, rounded lips and flat bottoms (Figure 5. 7).

Finally, we found part of a possible small size mold, with light gray paste and reducing burning, whose use could be related to metal casting and modeling. It also could be used as matrix to decorate pottery and even foods like bread (Figure 5. 8).

**Conclusions**

This study highlights the important role played by the city of Braga and its territory since the Roman period to the Middle Ages. The archaeological remains analyzed from different archeaological sites, confirm the idea that this area had a continuous occupation throughout that long period of time.

On the hand, the location of late materials imported with its imitations manufactured locally, demonstrate the existence of trade during the Late Antiquity. It is very probable, in this aspect, that the proliferation of imitations registered a consequence of the inability of foreign productions to meet local demand. The difficult political, social and economic situation of these moments could retract the trade flows of these products, taking Braga’s artisans to fill that gap with a demand that still existed.

Within the *sigillata* ceramics imported are highlighted by its abundance the ARSW, TSHT and Late Roman C productions. Although numerically less abundant, there are also some examples of DSP. All these foreign productions are reflected in the emergence of local imitations known as red engobes and late gray. Also of the late period have been located a number of common ceramics of lower quality.

In other matters, the study area is home to an appreciable volume of high medieval material, circumstance that has helped significantly to know more precise information about the productions of this period. In fact, the knowledge we have, to date, of these containers is very fragmentary, given the difficulty in fully identify urban contexts.
The early medieval containers, mostly from Dume appear attached to the levels corresponding to the last moments of using this space as a monastery in the late ninth century. The ceramics of the Early Middle Ages located present clear formal similarities with common gray of the previous period.