

5th- and 6th-century African and Phocaean Red Slip wares from *Ossonoba* (Faro, Algarve, Portugal): the assemblage from Horta da Misericórdia

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1. Roman and Late Antique import trade to *Ossonoba*

Faro, the ancient city of *Ossonoba*, is located in the south-eastern Portuguese coast. An important urban center from at least the Roman period, it has, since the Early Modern period, been the capital of the Algarve - once a kingdom under the Portuguese monarch, now the southernmost region of Portugal.

The import trade to *Ossonoba* during Roman and Late Antique times was studied by Catarina Viegas in her doctoral thesis dedicated to the Roman settlement and economy in the central and eastern Algarve, completed in 2009 and published in 2011. As for two other key sites in the region - the ancient cities of *Balsa* (near modern Tavira) and *Baesuri* (Castro Marim) -, Viegas analyzed the amphorae and the fine wares present in assemblages from two areas in modern Faro: one within (Municipal Museum) and the other outside (Oceanus Mosaic) the walls of ancient *Ossonoba*. Being the first and only study on amphora and tableware imports to *Ossonoba* in a systematic and comprehensive way, Viegas' work is crucial to understand the import trade to this area of southern Lusitania during the Roman and Late Antique periods.

While 4th-century ARS is still very common in the assemblages studied by Viegas, 5th-century ARS is scarce, particularly the forms dated to the second half of the century. The only exception to this picture would be Hayes 67, well represented with 31 vessels (see Viegas, 2011: 158, table 15). Despite the rarity of ARS forms dated to the late 5th and the 6th century, it is clear from the assemblages studied by Viegas that the import trade on fine wares did not cease before at least the mid-6th century, as proven by the occurrence of a rim of form Hayes 104B and two decorated fragments of Style E (ii) (*ibid.*: 164, 169).

2. The excavations at Horta da Misericórdia

Horta da Misericórdia is an area within the ancient walls of *Ossonoba*/Faro that was given to the Holy House of Mercy ("Santa Casa da Misericórdia", name of several Portuguese lay social institutions of Catholic inspiration) of Faro as a vegetable garden ("horta") in the early 20th century. It is located next to the Municipal Museum of Faro and it is adjacent to a square behind the cathedral. In 1984, 1992-1993 and 1997-2000, Teresa Júdice Gamito conducted archaeological excavations in Horta da Misericórdia (Gamito, 2007: 50).

Thanks to the description made by Gamito, we know that Sector A was probably filled with soil coming from Largo da Sé (the cathedral's square). Sectors B and C had only a thin archaeological layer above the bedrock that yielded Italian majolica and Chinese porcelain. In Sector D, a medieval house, an Islamic house and a Roman sewer were discovered. In Sector E, two Islamic houses, a cistern or well and a cobbled street, as well as Roman sewers and some Roman earthenware, were found. The courtyard to the cistern, with stones *in situ* for washing clothes, was located in Sector F. During the 16th century, a storage facility was built on the courtyard pavement. There was also an olive oil mill nearby. This courtyard was a working, public area, connected to the rest of the city. It was also connected to another area of private housing. Under the pavement of the cistern courtyard, either in Sector F or G, the ruins of a possible Late Roman house were discovered. Another courtyard, paved with bricks and surrounded by column bases, which was interpreted as a possible *peristylum*, was also found (*ibid.*: 50-57).

3. 5th- and 6th-century African and Phocaean Red Slip wares from Horta da Misericórdia

This poster deals with the 5th- and 6th-century ARS and PRS found in Horta da Misericórdia. Therefore, only the tableware corresponding to these productions and chronology is addressed here. In addition, only rims, bases and decorated fragments that may be attributed to the 5th and 6th centuries were analyzed. 4th-century forms that may continue only into the very beginning of the 5th century were not considered. The statistical method of the minimum number of vessels (MNV), established by the protocol of Mont Beuvray (Arcelin and Tuffreau-Libre, eds., 1998), was followed. The fluctuations in the ARS and PRS import trade to *Ossonoba* during this period are represented by means of a linear graph containing the import probabilities per decade, according to the method proposed by Elizabeth Fentress and Philip Perkins (1988). Finally, the results may require minor corrections in the future, but these shall not change the overall picture presented here.

4. Conclusions

The analysis of the 5th- and 6th-century ARS and PRS from Horta da Misericórdia gives us a different new perspective on the Late Antique import trade to *Ossonoba*. It is now clear that ARS continues to be acquired in significant amounts until the mid-6th century. Its purchase increases throughout the 5th century, with a small recession in ca. 450-480 AD, and reaches the apex in ca. 480-520/530 AD. PRS is imported from the mid-5th to the mid-6th century and, despite a slight peak in ca. 490-510 AD, it has a very constant import probability during this period.

In her key study on Roman and Late Antique fine wares and amphorae from *Ossonoba*, Viegas (2011: 164, 169) had already noticed the existence of some later tableware fragments whose form and decoration suggested a 6th-century date. By showing amounts of 5th- and 6th-century ARS and PRS vessels greater than the two assemblages studied by Viegas, the material from Horta da Misericórdia adds some relevant information to the broader, more comprehensive pattern established by this researcher for the trade in *Ossonoba* during the Roman period and Late Antiquity.

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All errors and shortcomings remain my own.

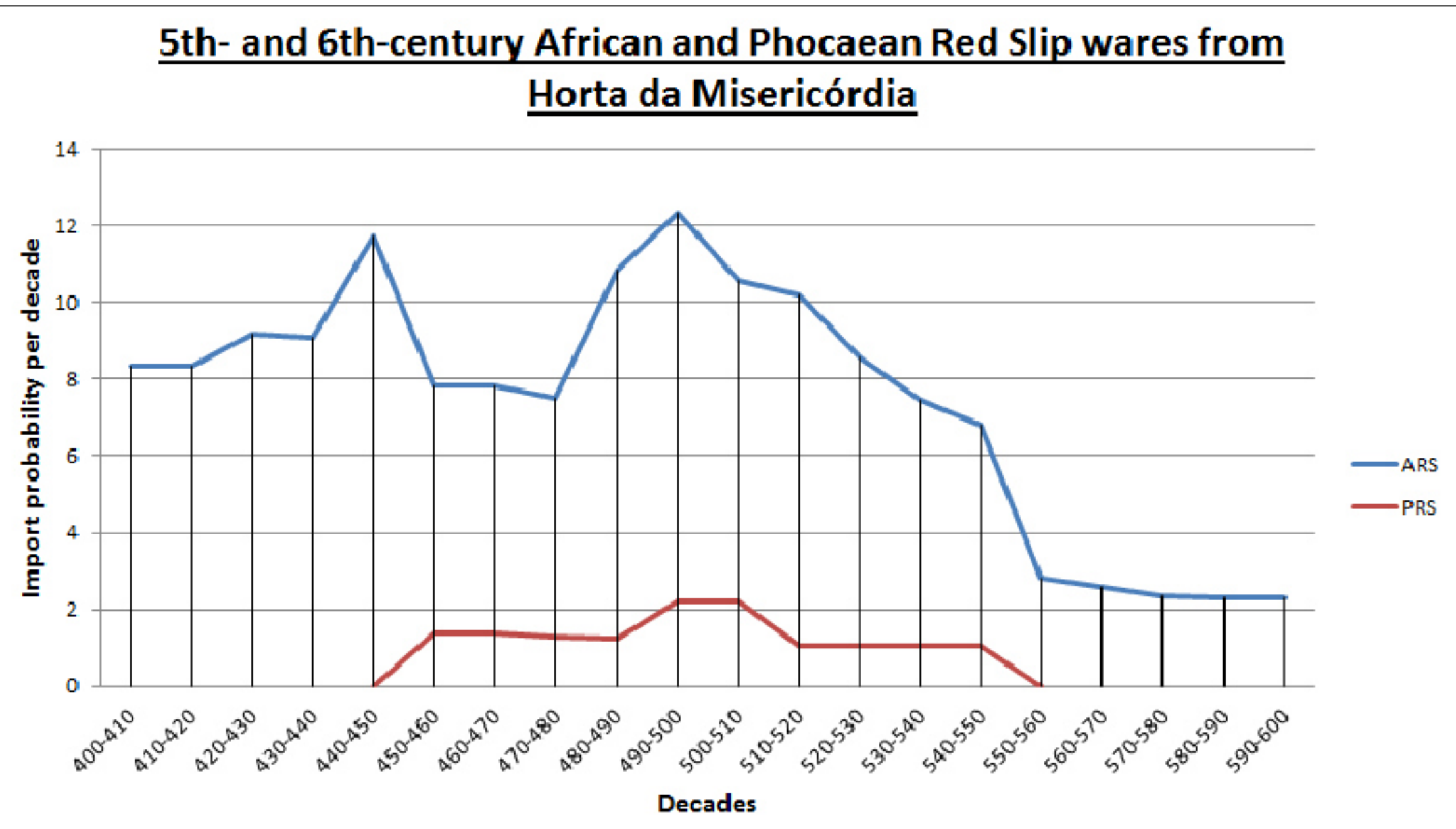


Fig. 6 - 5th- and 6th-century ARS and PRS from Horta da Misericórdia: import probabilities per decade.

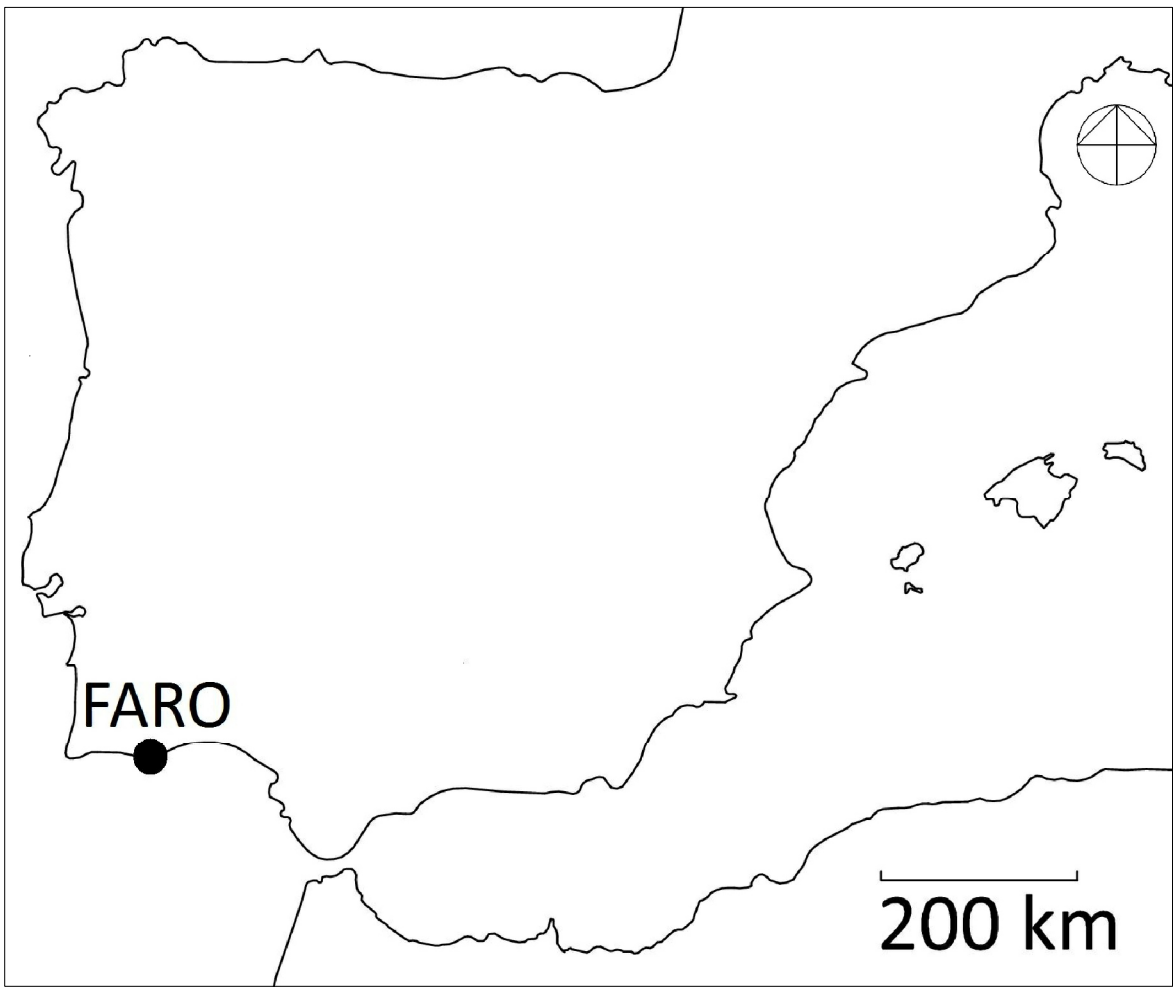


Fig. 1 - Faro in the Iberian Peninsula (adapted from Google Maps).

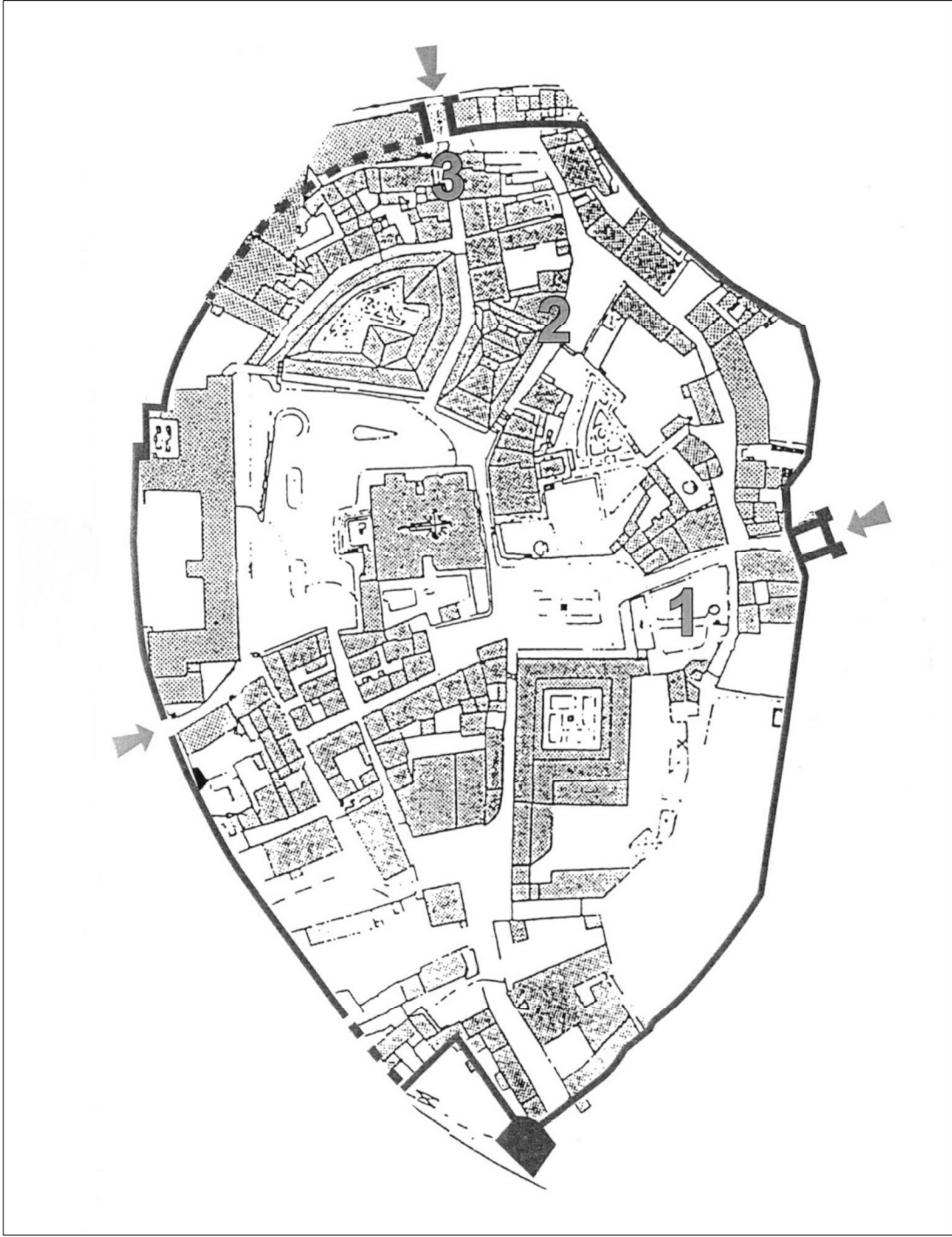


Fig. 2 - Location of Horta da Misericórdia [1] within the walls of *Ossonoba*/Faro (Gamito, 2007: 47, fig. 3.1).

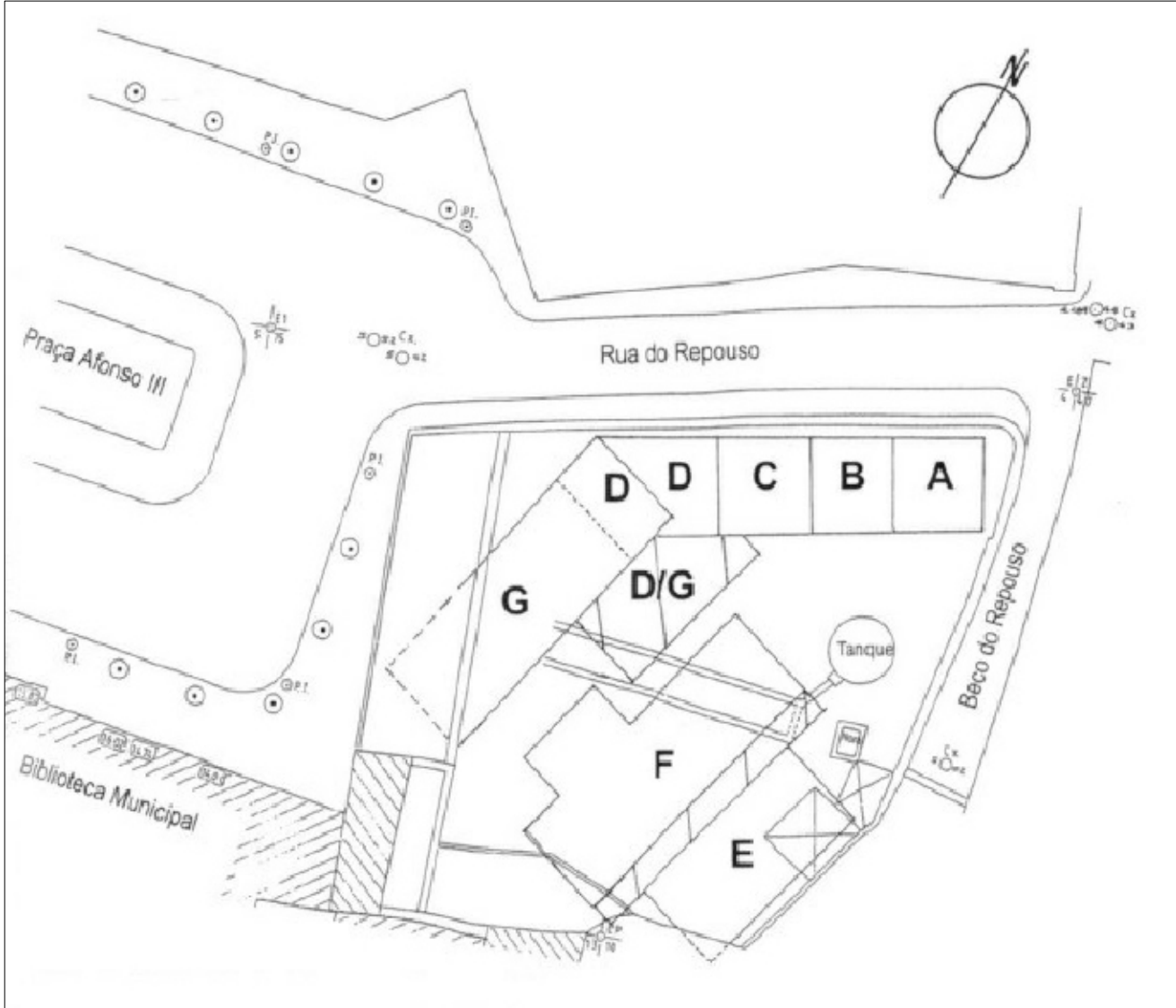


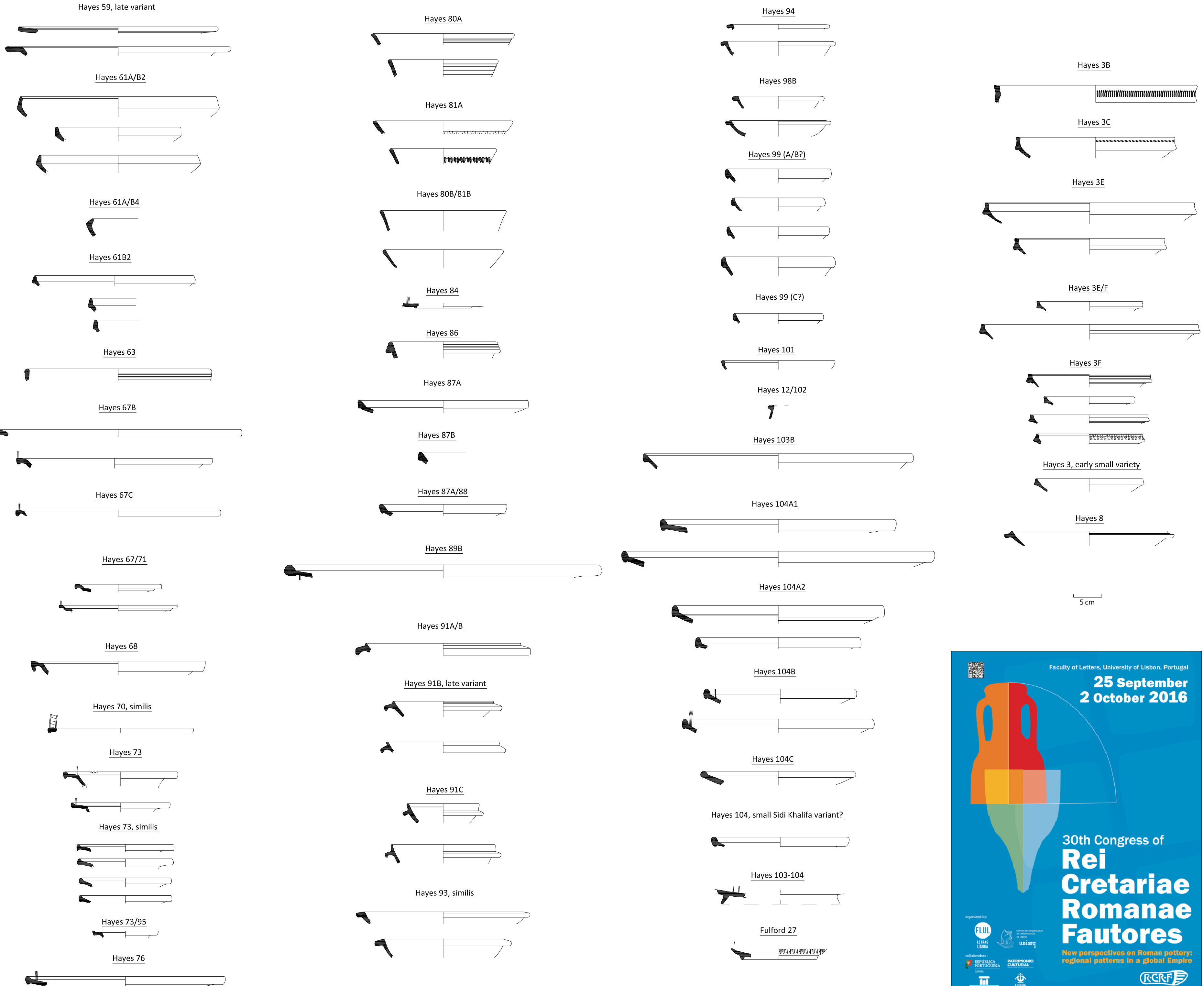
Fig. 3 - General plan of the excavations at Horta da Misericórdia (Gamito, 2007: 51, fig. 3.4).

PRS FORMS	HORTA DA MISERICÓRDIA (MNV)
Hayes 3B	1
Hayes 3C	1
Hayes 3E	2
Hayes 3E with offset	2
Hayes 3E/F (no offset)	1
Hayes 3E/F (no offset), small varieties	1
Hayes 3F	2
Hayes 3F, small varieties	2
Hayes 3, early small varieties	1
Hayes 8	1
Rouletted base with ring foot (Group IIA)	1 fragment
Other bases with ring foot	9 fragments

Fig. 5 - 5th- and 6th-century PRS forms and decorated fragments from Horta da Misericórdia.

ARS FORMS	HORTA DA MISERICÓRDIA (MNV)	ARS PRODUCTION
Hayes 59, late variant	5	ARS D1
Hayes 61A/B	2	ARS D1
Hayes 61A/B2	4	ARS D
Hayes 61A/B4	1	ARS D1
Hayes 61B2	3	ARS D1 and D2
Hayes 63	1	ARS D1
Hayes 67B	4	ARS D1
Hayes 67C	3	ARS D1
Hayes 67, <i>similis</i> (lip like 67B or C)	4	ARS D1
Hayes 67/71 (like 67B)	13	ARS D1; possibly ARS C4
Hayes 68	1	ARS C-like or E
Hayes 70, <i>similis</i>	1	ARS D1
Hayes 73	12	ARS D1
Hayes 73, <i>similis</i>	3	ARS D1
Hayes 73/95	1	ARS D1
Hayes 76	1	ARS D1
Hayes 80A	4	Finer and coarser ARS D1
Hayes 80B	1	Finer ARS D1
Hayes 81A	2	ARS D1
Hayes 80B/81B	5	Finer and coarser ARS D1
Hayes 82	1	ARS D1
Hayes 84	1	ARS C5
Hayes 86	1	ARS D1
Hayes 87A1	1	ARS D1
Hayes 87B	2	ARS D1
Hayes 87A/88	2	ARS D1 and D2
Hayes 89B	5	ARS C5
Hayes 91A/B	12	ARS D1; possibly ARS D2
Hayes 91B, late variant	5	ARS D1
Hayes 91B, late variant, or Hayes 91C	4 fragments	ARS D2
Hayes 91C	3	ARS D2
Hayes 93, <i>similis</i>	3	ARS D1; possibly ARS D2
Hayes 94B	2	ARS D1
Hayes 93/94, <i>similis</i>	5	ARS D1
Hayes 96, <i>similis</i>	1	ARS D1
Hayes 98B	2	ARS D1
Hayes 99 (A/B?)	10	ARS D and D2
Hayes 99 (C?)	2	ARS D and D2
Hayes 101	1	ARS D1
Hayes 103A	2	ARS D
Hayes 103B	1	ARS D
Hayes 104A1	7	ARS D and D2
Hayes 104A1/2	3	ARS D and D2
Hayes 104A2	6	ARS D, D1 and D2
Hayes 104B	4	ARS D and D2
Hayes 104C	1	ARS D2
Hayes 104, small Sidi Khalifa variant?	1	ARS D
Hayes 12/102	2	ARS D1 and D2
Hayes 12/110	1	ARS D1
Fulford 27	1	ARS D1
Decorated bases (late 4th century and 5th century)	12 fragments	ARS D1
Decorated bases - Style E	2 fragments	ARS D1; possibly ARS D2
Base with polished decoration - Group 1B	1 fragment	ARS D
Base with ring foot (Hayes 99?)	1 fragment	ARS D1
Base with ring foot and 'triple groove' (Hayes 103-104)	1 fragment	ARS D2

Fig. 4 - 5th- and 6th-century ARS forms and decorated fragments from Horta da Misericórdia.



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