

Early evidence of the military roman conquest. The Atlantic coast of the *ulterior* province*

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Abstract

The Roman conquest of *Hispania*, although well-known through written sources, still requires many clarifications at the archaeological level. Apparently, no trade contacts were made with the western Atlantic territories during the early stages of the Italic presence in the Iberian Peninsula. In this paper, we try to accomplish a transversal reading of the main data available on the older contexts that confirm the presence of the Roman Republic in this territory. *Decimus Iunius Brutus* undoubtedly played a decisive role as governor of *Ulerior* between 138 and 133 BCE, revitalising the Romanization of western Iberia. Archaeological data from the area of Lisbon and the Lower *Tagus* peninsula, as well as elements from the Mondego valley, seem to support this interpretation.

Keywords: Atlantic coast; settlement; conquest; army; provisioning; amphorae; economy

Resum. *Primers testimonis de la conquesta militar romana. La costa atlàntica de la província Ulerior*

La conquesta romana d'Hispania coneguda per fonts escrites continua, tanmateix, amb moltes àrees per aclarir en l'àmbit arqueològic. Durant els primers moments de la presència itàlica a la península Ibèrica, els territoris de l'Atlàntic occidental semblen haver quedat al marge de qual-sevol contacte comercial. En aquest treball intentaré fer una lectura transversal de les principals dades disponibles sobre els contextos més antics que testimonien la presència romana republicana en aquest territori. *Decimus Iunius Brutus* assumeix un paper decisiu com a governador de la província d'*Ulerior*, entre 138 i 133 aC, vitalitzant la romanització dels territoris occidentals. Les dades arqueològiques de la zona de Lisboa i el baix Tajo, així com alguns elements de la vall del Mondego, estan en la línia d'aquesta interpretació.

Paraules clau: façana atlàntica; assentament; conquesta; exèrcit; subministrar; àmfores; economia

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1. Introduction

The westernmost territory of the Iberian Peninsula was where the ancient world ended; classical sources convey a notion of *finis terrarum* (Guerra, 2019a). This is the context in which we interpret a whole series of references mentioning this fact, such as observations of fantastic realities, the sun, the tides, the ocean, and geographical details such as the description of the main rivers and capes (Guerra, 2019b). These Atlantic territories were not touched by the early stages of the military conquest of Hispania. Even though the discovery of some Hispanic-Carthaginian coins in pre-Roman settlements suggests a presence during the Punic Wars, no data proves there was an effective occupation, or that the conflict extended to such northern lands (Ruivo, 1999: 106). These territories only joined the Roman world during the Lusitanian Wars, specifically in their final phase. After the definitive defeat of Viriato's Lusitanian forces in 139 BCE by general *Quintus Servilius Caepio*, the Roman Senate organized a well-structured campaign in the following year, aiming to suppress some rebellions. Led by the new governor of Rome's *Ulerior* province, the proconsul *Decimus Iunius Brutus* (138-137 BCE), it had the purpose of "pacifying" and making an example of the region where the former rebellion had been born. This campaign may be considered the first great Roman military attack on the westernmost territory of the Iberian Peninsula (Fabião, 1989: 42).

The geographer Strabo was the first to make a direct reference to the integration of the *Tagus* valley into the Roman sphere (Geography III, 3.1). According to his account, in 138 BCE *Decimus Iu-*

nus Brutus used the *Tagus* valley as the main axis of his campaign in the peninsula's northwest, using two of the most important native settlements as bases: *Móron*, at the bottom of the estuary, approximately 90 km from the river entrance, was used as an operational base, with *Olisipo*, near the river's mouth, as a rear-guard city controlling the river mouth and ensuring free navigation and provisioning to the armies. This choice of the *Tagus* valley, specifically its right bank, as a rear-guard line, suggests that the area was relatively well controlled and the territories behind it had been previously pacified (Fabião, 1989: 42). We should remember that *Brutus's* campaign aimed to enter deep into the territory, reaching the lands of the *Gallaeci*, the people he conquered and whose name inspired the cognomen for which he became historically known – *Galaicus* (Cavada Nieto, 2009).

In the last few decades, urban archaeological works consistently carried out in the main urban nuclei of the *Tagus* valley, particularly in Lisbon, have demonstrated for the first time the existence of solid evidence that may potentially be associated with the early contacts with the Roman world (Pimenta, 2005 and 2014).

2. *Tagus flumen*

The river *Tagus*, one of the widest and most navigable in Iberia (approximately 1,000 km long), was a "central artery of the peninsula" (Gaspar, 1970: 154) from early times. According to archaeological findings, it became extremely important for transporting people and goods from the Bronze Age onwards, and remained so until the arrival of the railways in the 19th

century (Vilaça and Arruda, 2004; Vilaça and Cardoso, 2017).

In his *Geography*, Greek author Strabo, aware of the river's importance to the process of Roman expansion, described the main Iberian rivers in some detail. Describing the western and northern coasts of Iberia at length, he highlighted the potential of the *Tagus* estuary and its navigability (Strabo, III, 3.1).

It was precisely the river's width and navigability, as well as its direct access for seagoing vessels by using the power of tides at the end of the estuary, that gave the area around the city of Santarém a strategic military position during the conquest phase. These attributes, certainly long known by Atlantic sailors – from

Phoenicia, Carthage and Cadiz – led the military strategists who planned Brutus's expedition select the *Tagus* as an axis of his campaign.

2.1. Olisipo - Lisbon

The port town of *Olisipo* is mentioned in many classical sources and from early on has been considered the origin of the current city of Lisbon. In fact, the idea of the antiquity of its historic centre, overlapping the Roman city, never disappeared.

The native settlement was founded on the hill of St. George's Castle. Its unique topographic design gives it exceptional defensive capabilities, with steep cliffs that could be easily defended. The

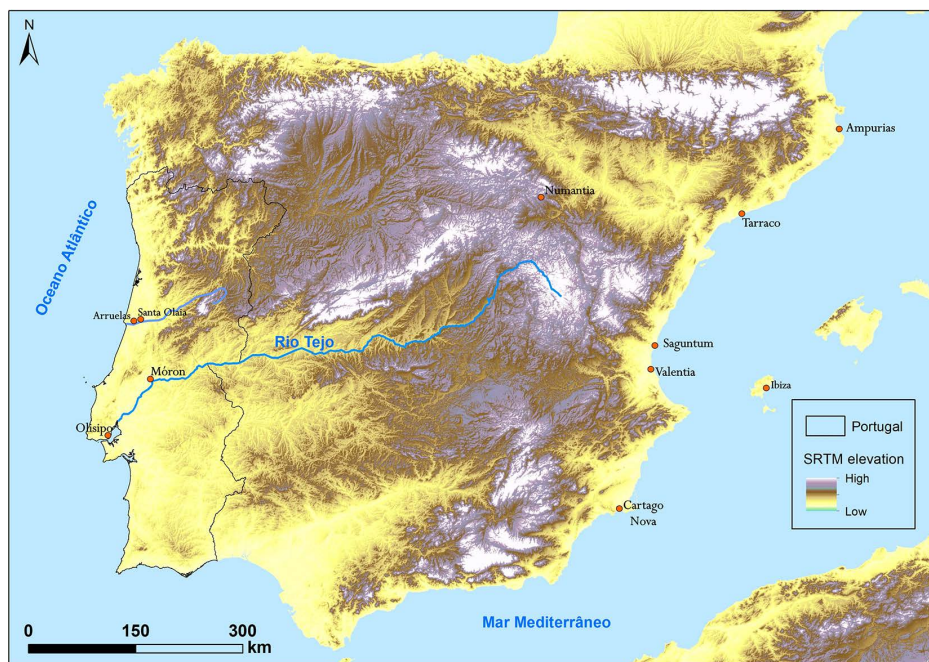


Figure 1. Map of the Iberian Peninsula, with the location of *Olisipo* and *Morón*, as well as the main sites at the entrance of the *Tagus* valley in the Roman territories. Cartographic base João Fonte.

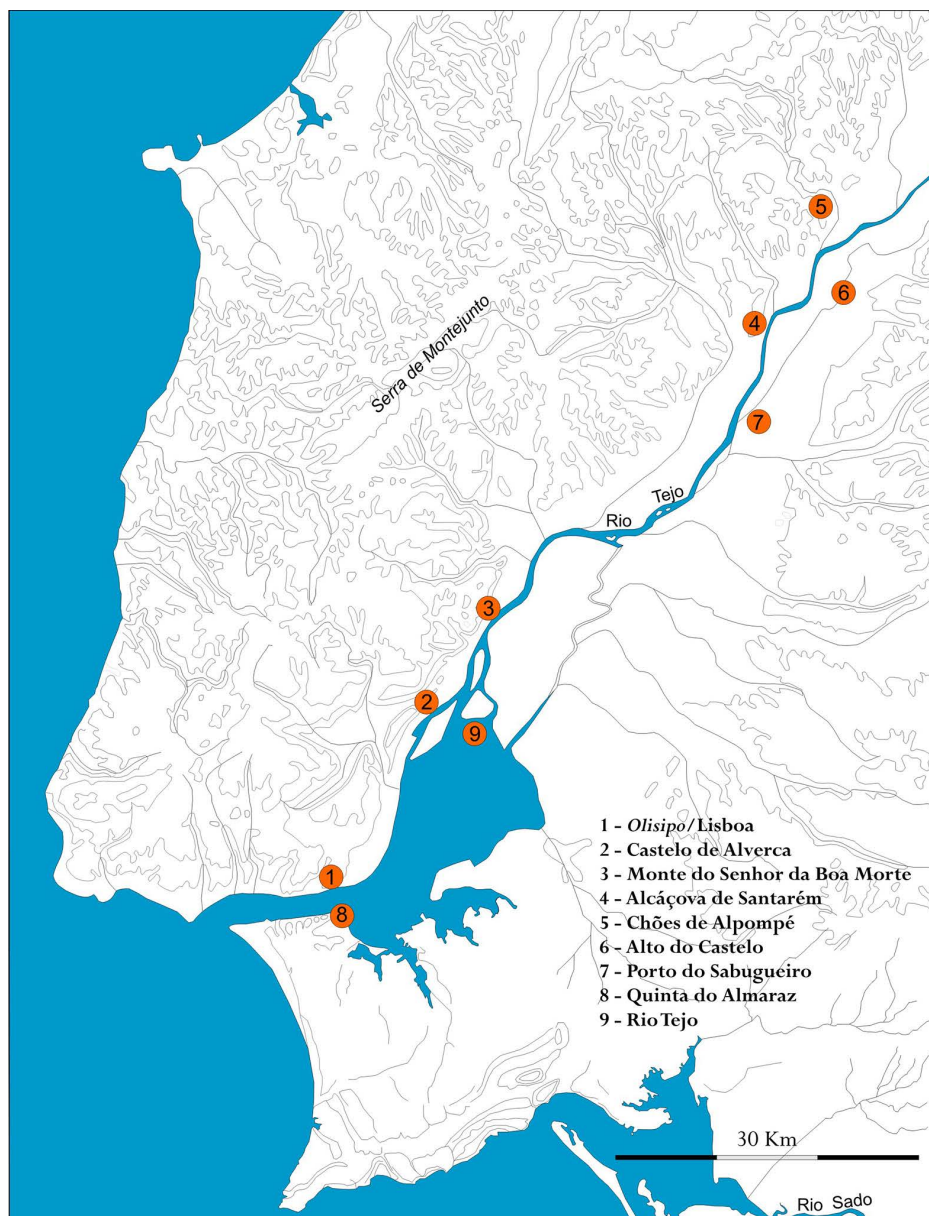


Figure 2. Map of the *Tagus* valley and the mouth of the Sado, with the location of the main sites in the 2nd century BCE.

clear view of the *Tagus*'s river and estuary, as well as of the south bank and a significant part of the valleys around it, offers strategic domination of the mouth of the river and control of access to areas inland. Its fortifications and natural characteristics as a port area gave this settlement exceptional strategic importance (Fig. 4).

Recent archaeological research on the castle's mound, hill and port area have made it possible to establish the settlement's early contacts with the Italic world (Pimenta, 2014; Pimenta et al., 2014a; Mota, Pimenta and Silva, 2014; Silva, 2014; Carvalhinhos, Mota and Miranda, 2017; Filipe, 2021). In every reading, one cannot escape references to the importance and economic dynamism achieved by this great urban centre from the mid-8th century BCE onwards, while it also maintained strong contacts with southern Iberia (Sousa, 2016a and 2016b). When we study the city's stratigraphy, however, we are struck by the sudden massive presence of the first Italic imports in the mid-2nd century. This ubiquitous evidence enables us to further stress the importance of this moment in the subsequent development of the city (Pimenta, 2019 and 2020).

The study of contexts excavated from different sites in the city, but especially around St. George's Castle, has enabled a clear definition of the first phase of Roman presence (Fig. 3). The contextual study of these artefacts and a detailed analysis of ceramic imports provides a chronology centred on the third quarter of the 2nd century BCE (150-125 BCE), and more precisely 140-130 BCE, supported by numismatic findings, the coherence of fine ware from different parts of the Mediterranean, and their compari-

son with results from similar contexts in locations with well-established chronologies (Pimenta, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2014).

Gathering data from the different archaeological excavations, it is important to focus on the general features of the artefacts corresponding to this phase and that allow it to be identified individually (Figs. 5 and 6). We must stress that there had not been any trading tradition with the Italic Peninsula before this period, as clearly evidenced by stratigraphic sequences analysed. At the level of fine ware, we see a massive arrival of black-glaze ware made in the Italic Peninsula. Among these, we find there is a clear prevalence of Campanian A ware, made around the gulf of Naples, particularly Lamb. 27 cups in their variants ab, Ba, Bb and c. The Lamb. 31 cup, with a floral decoration painted in white, is the second most documented shape, along with the Lamb. 6 and 36 plates. The ornamental repertoire is rich, consisting of palmettes printed on the background (Pimenta, Ribera and Soria, 2018; Soria, 2018). We also find Campanian B ware from the Latin colony of *Cales*, Lamb. 5 and Lamb. 3,6 Types, and Etruscan Campanian B, namely the Lamboglia 8/F 2653 cup, and the Lamb. 3 *pyxis* (Fig. 6, No. 20 to 27). In addition to these, we find good representation of delicate Italian-made thin-walled glasses, Mayet shapes I and II, ceramic unguentaria, and lucernes of Hellenic tradition (Pimenta, Ribera and Soria, 2018) (Fig. 6, No. 14 to 18). The importation of food products in amphorae is particularly well represented, being an eloquent datum of the role played by the port of *Olisipo* as a regional distribution hub, as well as in the larger context of the *Tagus* valley (Pimenta, 2005; Filipe, 2015, 2019, 2021). Wine receptacles

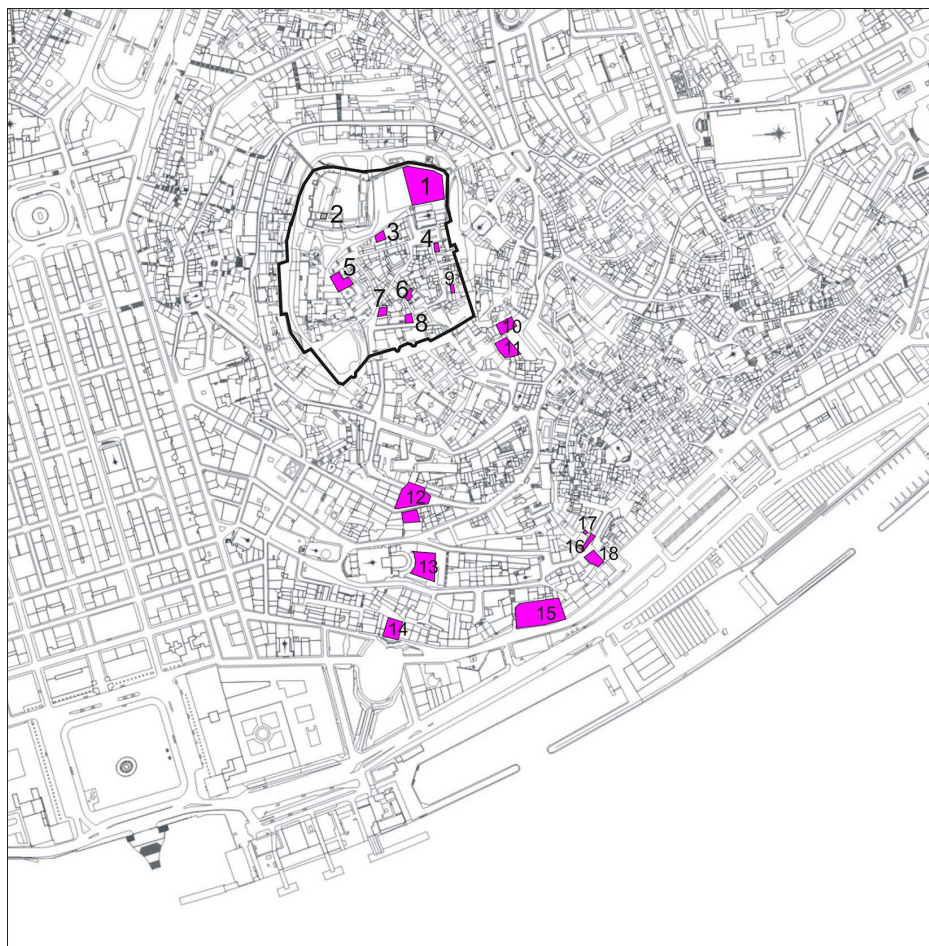


Figure 3. Plan of Lisbon with the location of the interventions where Roman republican levels were detected: 1 – Praça Nova; 2 – Castelejo; 3 – Grupo Desportivo do Castelo; 4 – Rua do Recolhimento N.º 70; 5 – Palácio das Cozinhas; 6 – Beco do Forno n.º 16-20; 7 – Rua de Santa Cruz; 8 – Beco do Forno n.º 1; 9 – Rua do recolhimento n.º 36; 10 – Largo das Portas do Sol; 11 – Fundação Ricardo Espírito Santo; 12 – Teatro Romano; 13 – Claustro da Sé; 14 – Casa dos Bicos; 15 – Armazéns Sommer; 16 – Rua de São João da Praça; 17 – Pátio Senhora de Murça; 18 – Palácio Angeja.

from the Italic Peninsula clearly dominate the products from the Tyrrhenian coast, bottled in late Greek-Italic, or transition, amphorae, and in Dressel 1 amphorae (Fig. 5, No. 1 to 8). Although in

smaller quantities, we also find amphorae from the Adriatic coast of the Italic Peninsula of late Greek-Italic and Brindisian types. Along with Italic products, we find a close connection to the Punic world of

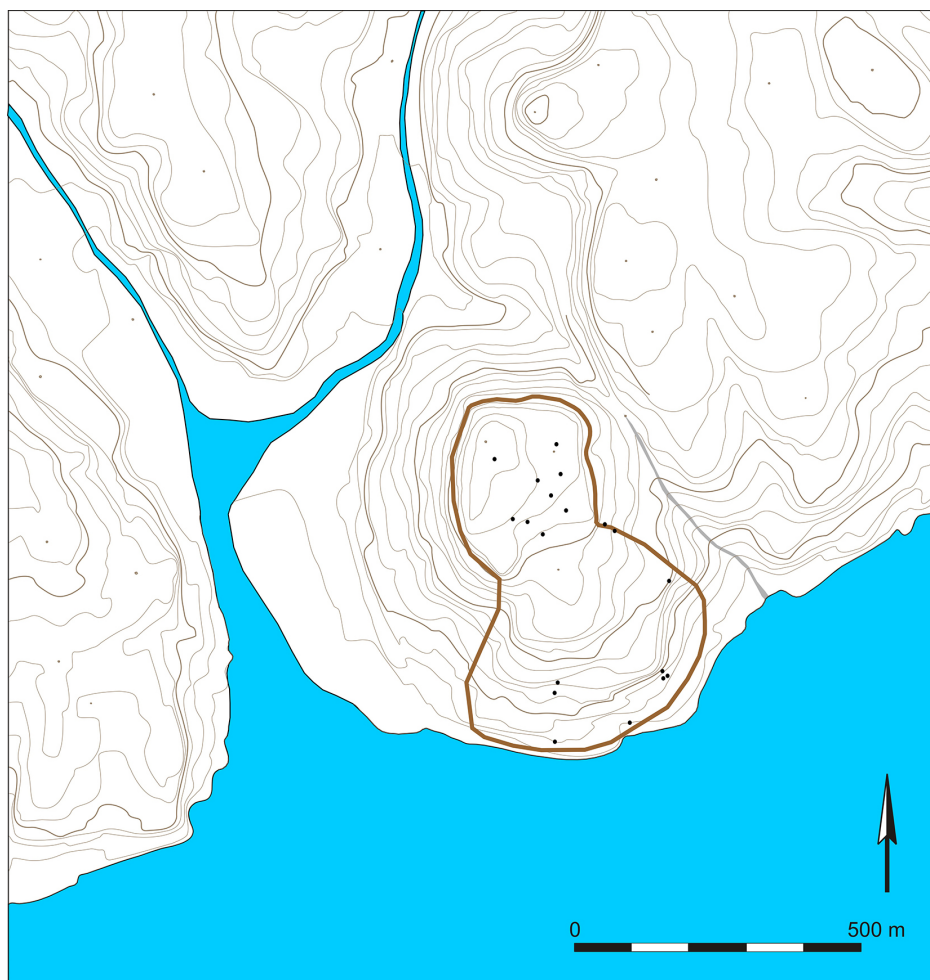


Figure 4. Topographic plan of the Lisbon castle hill, with the hypothetical reconstitution of the *Tagus* estuary in the Baixa valley and the location of the interventions where structures and stratigraphic sequences from the 2nd century BC have been detected. The presumptive limits of the urban core are drawn in brown.

the south of the peninsula, particularly to the Bay of Cádiz and the Libyan-Tunisian area. Fish products from the area around the Gibraltar Strait are well represented, transported in 9.1.1.1. Type (CCNN) and T. 7.4.3.3. amphorae of

Ramon Torres (1995) (Fig. 5, No. 10 to 12). We also find imitations of the Italic models but reproduced in the urban area of the Bay of Cádiz (Fig. 5, No. 13). The importation of olive oil from the Libyan-Tunisian area is documented by the

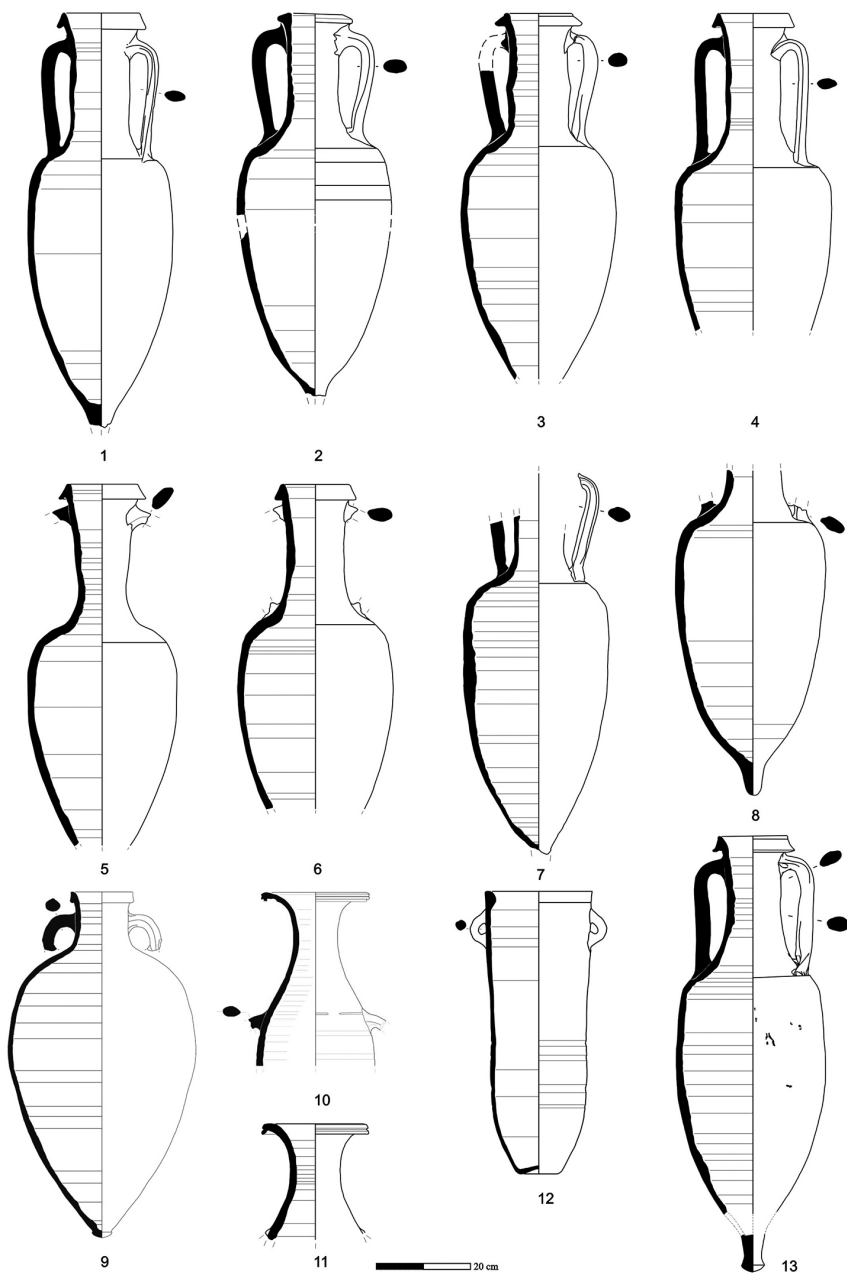


Figure 5. Amphorae from the Roman republican contexts from Lisbon. (From Pimenta, 2005; Filipe, 2019 and Silva, 2014, modified).

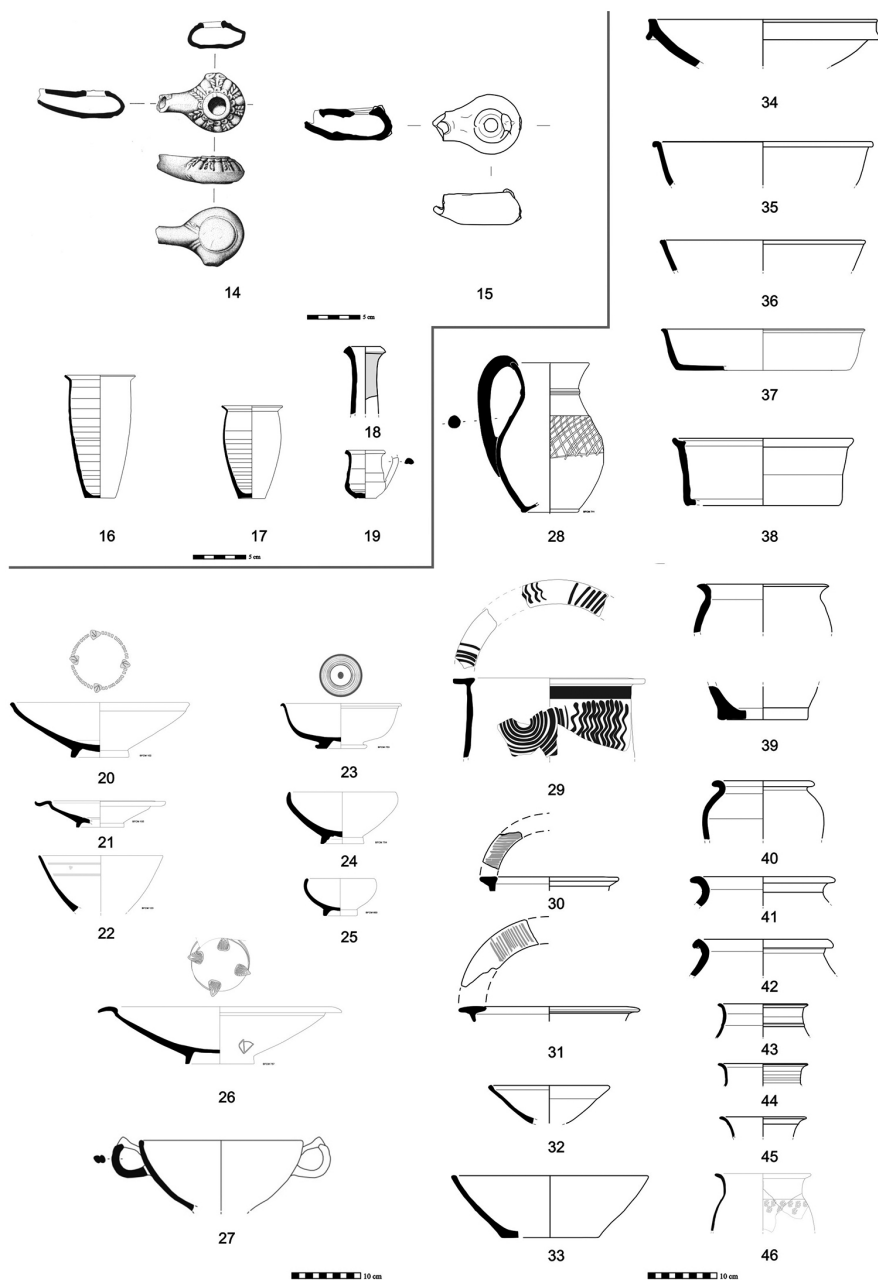


Figure 6. Material from the Roman republican contexts of Lisbon. (From Pimenta, 2005, 2014; Pimenta et al., 2014a; Pimenta, Ribera and Soria, 2018, modified).

presence of several oil amphorae called Ancient Tripolitanian (Fig. 5, No. 9), and amphorae from the Eastern Mediterranean, namely Dressel 4 type of Cos (Filipe, 2019).

Italic amphorae found in Lisbon preserve a key epigraphic tradition that allows for some brief remarks on their provenance. Approximately two dozen marks are preserved on wine amphorae and two on oil amphorae from Brindisi (Fabião et al., 2016). Although the discovery of amphorae with marks from this time is not unusual, their concentration in the port of Lisbon gives them an increased interest due to the role played by the city as an army supplier. One of the most interesting elements, two sets of marks directly connected with two important *Gens* of Republican Italy stand out: the set of marks C.L.SEX, attributed to *Gens Sexitilia*; and those attributed to *Gens Anicia*, consisting of four marks made in a small circular panel. Three of these consist of a profile bust facing right, with part of an inscription of which one can only read L. ANI. However, the piece identified during the excavation at Casa dos Bicos shows the representation of an elephant and the beautifully preserved engraved legend L.ANICI, thus clarifying the previous readings (Fig. 7).

Iberian ware is documented in these levels, most commonly in the form of *kalathoi*, and large *tinajas* with framed mouth (Fig. 6, No. 29 to 31). Among common ware, although local native ware prevails (Fig. 6, No. 28, 32, 33, and 39 to 46), we find ceramics made in the Italic Peninsula with typical Campanian pastes (Fig. 6, No. 34 to 38). Among these, we highlight the Italic Common *Patina* Lt 6 C and C E, and *Couvercle* 7 A, and the pestles (Pimenta, 2014). In

addition to these ceramic associations, Italic coins appear in the daily life of the city, as confirmed by many pieces in copper alloy. We also find examples of grey ware imports possibly produced in the city of Ampurias, represented by a *guttus* (Fig. 6, No. 19) of the D-I shape of Ampuritan grey ware typology, from the 2nd-1st century BCE (Barberà, Nolla and Mata, 1993).

The date proposed for this phase corresponds with what we know about the Roman conquest of what corresponds to modern-day Portugal, as its timeframe matches the first great Roman military campaign in westernmost Iberia, which began in 138 BCE. In historical terms, *Olisipo* contexts enable us to identify specific chronological moments with parallels in all ways identical to the founding levels of *Valentia* (Valencia), which, according to Titus Livius, was founded during the consulate of *Decimus Iunius Brutus* in 138 BCE. Considering the shipwrecks in the Mediterranean, these would be combinations of materials like those found on the ships *Giannutri* and *Pedrosa*, the first dated 150-140 BCE and the second 140-130 BCE (Ribera, 2009). This phase of the city's life, which eloquently shows the arrival of Roman armies in the *Tagus* valley, is thus chronologically placed half way between the destruction levels of the city of *Carthage* in 146 BCE and the military camps around the Celtiberian city of *Numancia* in 133 BCE (Ribera, 1998).

Data regarding the city's urban planning are relatively scarce and many questions remain unanswered. However, it makes sense to highlight some general ideas and research perspectives. From the standpoint of continuities or discontinuities with the indigenous settlement, avail-



Figure 7. Marks in Italic wine amphorae L.ANICI.

able data clearly state there is a rupture. This means there is no reusing of pre-existing infrastructures from pre-Roman times; instead, new ones are built, following orientations of the Roman model, and using innovative construction techniques previously unknown in the West. This new urban design, associated with a full array of artefacts of foreign provenance, enable us to state that the arrival of the Italic armies had a strong impact on the settlement. Data from St. George's Castle are enlightening and it is reasonable to suppose that this privileged area,

where the elites would live, now sees the implementation of a new urban design that erased previous existences. Can this interpretation correspond to the installation of a military contingent inside the indigenous city of *Olisipo*, aiming to control it and its port? We think so, even though we should take into account the absence of material directly related to the army, namely weapons and *militaria*.

One of the best-known buildings is the one found at Beco do Forno do Castelo, no. 16-20 (Fig. 3). Here, structural evidence consists of a large building



Figure 8. Italic numismatic set, identified in the Roman republican contexts in excavations in Lisbon.

with a rectangular floorplan, its floor having a waterproof mortar in *opus signinum*. In westernmost Iberia, this type of mortar was introduced by the Romans, although it had previously been known in the Iberian and Punic worlds in other parts of the peninsula: its origin is the Italic centre (Pimenta et al., 2014a). Interpreting this building is a hard task, as it is an isolated compartment. The excavation of the surroundings did not reveal any other related structures from this time, which may mean that the development of more complex constructions could be found at higher levels and was removed by more recent human action. Nonetheless, its features show it could have had aquatic purposes, such as baths or facilities for water collection and storage. Scarce data are available for determining the building's date of construction. The date when it was phased out is easier to establish, evidenced by an extensive level of refuse, with imports from the third quarter of the 2nd century BCE. Everything suggests that this building was prematurely deactivated and deliberately covered with rubbish. (Pimenta, Mota and Baptista, 2021).

Excavations at the Roman Theatre Museum have revealed the presence of structural traces corresponding to a building of the Roman era preserved beneath the landfill over which the monument was built (Fig. 3). It corresponds to a compartment with a rectangular floorplan with dry stone walls, using its own limestone geological substratum in the construction; the land was excavated for this purpose. As regards its abandonment, we detected an interesting context from the late 2nd century/early 1st century BCE. At this level, an element of rhomboid pavement was discovered, thus

confirming the existence of floors in *opus spicatum* (Pimenta, 2020).

We now begin to glimpse a new design of Italic matrix stretching downhill to the banks of the *Tagus*, showing the urban organization of the Republican city. We did not know much about its defensive system, but scientific knowledge is cumulative and in continuous development; recently the public presentation of new and old data, which had remained unpublished for decades, revealed the existence of a broad negative structure, with a V profile, from the Republican era, identified in three different excavations on the Eastern side of the old pre-Roman city, suggesting a defensive moat and the possible existence of a related wall (Fig. 3). This is the case with excavations on Fundação Ricardo Espírito Santo Silva/ Largo das Portas do Sol (Silva, 2014) and Rua Norberto de Araújo (Carvalhinhos, Mota and Miranda, 2017).

2.2. *Amphorae from the Tagus river*

Over the years, fishermen have found several ceramic elements from the river and handed them in to the municipal museum of Vila Franca de Xira. They come from the riverbed and are strong proof of the river's importance as a communication route. Among the collection with this provenance, ceramics from the Roman era stand out and have already received some attention, namely the amphorae (Diogo, 1987/1988; Quaresma, 2005).

Amphorae were the quintessential receptacles for food products for long distance travel, either maritime or fluvial, and so it is only natural that we find them at a place which enjoyed heavy trade. The *Tagus*, a genuine artery to the hinterland of Lusitania province, with a large estu-

ary, extensive navigability and dynamic ports, would have been traversed by several ships, providing an intricate supply network. Thus, amphorae are the best represented receptacle in these collections, even though other artefacts from the same period have been found, such as common ware, fragments from Italic black-glaze ware and lucernes (Pimenta, Mendes and Correia, 2016/2017).

The first studies on amphorae sets found in the Lower *Tagus* and donated to the museum immediately showed two different nuclei of material, different both in location and in time (Quaresma, 2005). We are interested in discoveries from two sites, located near Alhandra and Alcochete. Here the amphorae belong chronologically to the period of the Roman republic, the 2nd century BCE. A contemporary set of Italic wine amphorae of the Greek-Italic and Dressel 1 types and one amphora of the 7.4.3.3. Type (Mañá C2B) are particularly well documented, and may correspond to a wreck area from the third quarter of the 2nd century BCE (Fig. 9).

2.3. *Chões de Alpompé* (CNS - 245)

The archaeological site of *Chões de Alpompé* (Santarém) is located on a broad plateau of over 20 hectares, approximately 96 meters high, artificially erected by the Alviela River a scarce distance from its confluence with the *Tagus*. The oldest reference to the archaeological importance of the Alpompé plateau goes back to 1883, when the discovery of “foundations of great walls,” several coins and many valuable Roman objects was reported (Diogo, 1993). Despite this reference, the scientific community only recognized the site in the 1950s, when

Amorim Girão and Bairráo Oleiro classified the Chões plateau as a Roman military camp, proposing its identification as Strabo’s *Móron* (Girão and Oleiro, 1953: 79). Recently, we had the chance to summarize and reflect on the long history of the work already done and the different interpretations of its findings, so we refer to that study (Pimenta and Arruda, 2014). However, we should remember that the site was an indigenous settlement dating back to the Iron Age, with strong connections to the Mediterranean world since at least the 7th century BCE.

The sizeable dimensions of the archaeological site and the quantity and quality of the artefacts retrieved, as well as a visible and still well-preserved defensive system in the form of an embankment, have made this site very famous in the archaeology of the Iberian peninsula (Fabião, 2002, 2004, 2006).

The various ceramic finds must be highlighted, especially the several amphorae discovered and published by many authors. (For an extensive list of relevant studies, see the summary in Pimenta and Arruda, 2014). Special mention should be made of the amphorae found, as they seem to confirm a context of institutional provisioning typically associated with consular armies. We also highlight a group of items with an ancient profile, namely Greek-Italic amphorae, Dressel 1e receptacles of Type 9.1.1.1. (CCNN), which point to the well-defined contexts of Lisbon and Valencia (Ribera, 1998; 2002), dating from the third quarter of the 2nd century BCE (Fig. 9).

The fact that we are working with surface data explains the scarcity of fine ware, but the first studies on the site already mentioned them: Italic black-glaze ware of the Campanian types A and B,

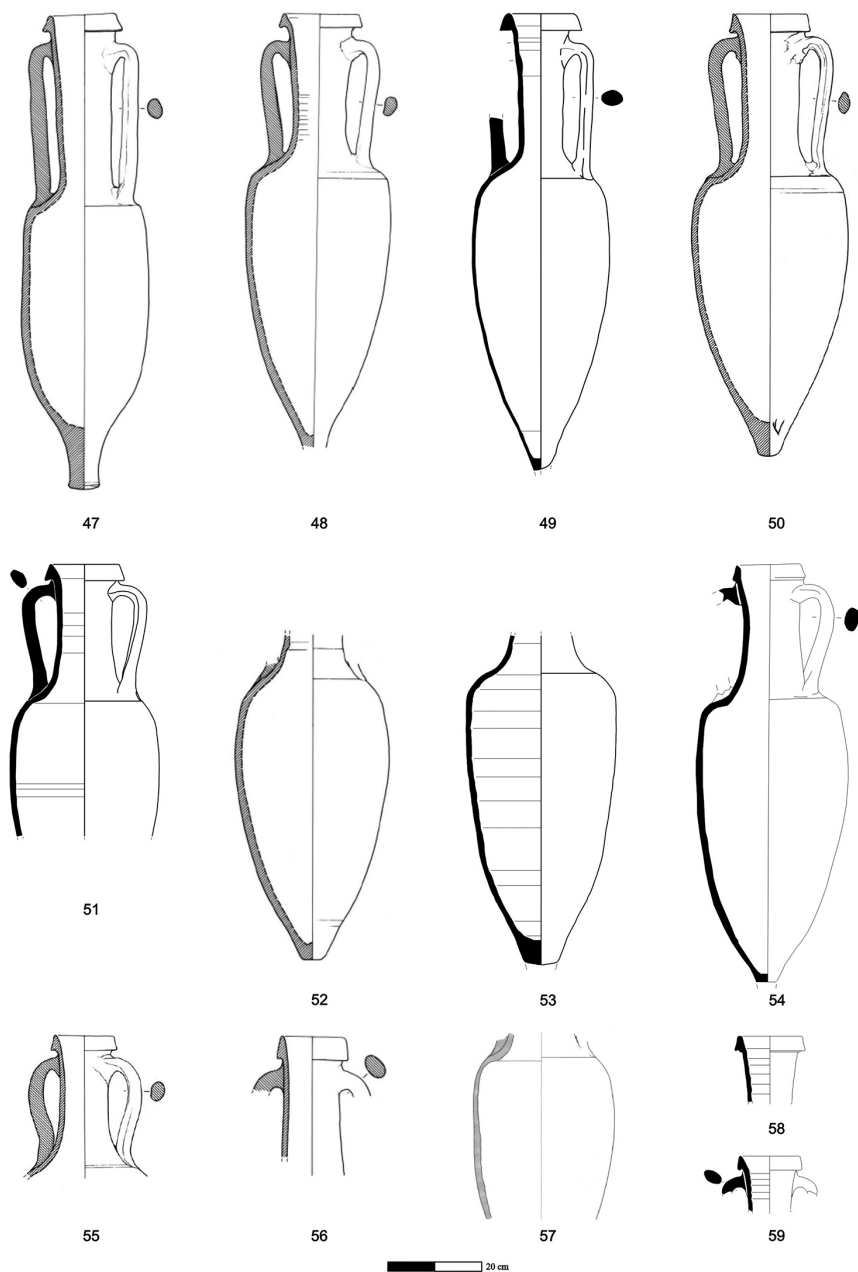


Figure 9. Amphorae found on the *Tagus* riverbed and donated to the Museum of Vila Franca (from Quaresma, 2005; Pimenta, Mendes and Correia, 2016/2017, modified).

Italic thin-walled ware and lucernes were found. In recent archaeological excavations on the Alviela plateau, conducted for the Archaeological Map of Santarém, an almost complete lucerne was found; only the handle is missing (Matias, 2018) (Fig. 10). It is a Type E from Ricci, although its manufacturing makes us question its origin; it may have been made locally (Ricci, 1973: 216-218).

Another important component of the set of artefacts found at the site is the significant presence of metals, namely coins, weapons and *militaria*. The known numismatic set is plentiful, consisting of a small trove of 20 *denarius* and 131 units corresponding to isolated finds (Ruivo, 1999). Of these, 128 predate 80 BCE. Considering these, José Ruivo suggested that the site could have been abandoned during the Sertorian conflicts (Ruivo, 1999: 106). Also pointing to a military presence at the site from the third quarter of the 2nd century BCE, we find other metallic artefacts, namely those under the category of *militaria*, weapons and projectiles (like *glandes plumbeae* [lead sling-shots]), which are very plentiful at the site (112 samples), and also components of military belts (*Balteum militare* or *balteus*); buttons with ring; fibulae; saddle elements related to cavalry and agroforestry utilitarian tools (Fabião, Pereira and Pimenta, 2015). Special reference should also be made to the identification of two *glandes plumbeae* still in the manufacturing process, created by casting and never used, since they are preserved within the burrs. This piece fully demonstrates the existence of a workshop of *glandes plumbeae* at the site (Fabião, Pereira and Pimenta, 2015: 114-129).

Despite the importance of Chões de Alpompé in understanding the process of

the Roman conquest of modern-day Portugal, the first archaeological excavations at the site did not take place until 2015 and 2016. Although they were part of a research project with a different set of challenges, the three stratigraphic vertical readings confirmed the following hypotheses, previously based on the surface items found at the site:

1. The site had a large population in the Iron Age, predominantly from eastern Europe, during the entire first millennium of our era;
2. The plateau was intensely occupied in the second half of the 2nd century, with a strong Italic component;
3. The defensive features of the site are strengthened by a defensive system comprising an embankment wall and a moat.

However, the most important result of the archaeological intervention was undoubtedly identifying the many research possibilities that this unique site may still offer (Arruda et al., 2018).

One aspect of Chões de Alpompé still under discussion concerns its defensive systems, both in terms of chronology and planimetry (Fig. 12). A study was recently made, in collaboration with other researchers, to redress this issue (Fonte et al., 2020). In fact, analysis of the embankments (in earth and stone) located at the site's perimeter and duly identified at an early stage (Girão and Oleiro, 1953) has always been complex. This was partly due to the dense forest that covers it and the comprehensive erosion of the terraces where the site is situated. The recent availability of airborne laser scanning data of this area of the Lower *Tagus*, in addition to historical aerial photographs, has made it possible to identify and map new archaeological structures, providing

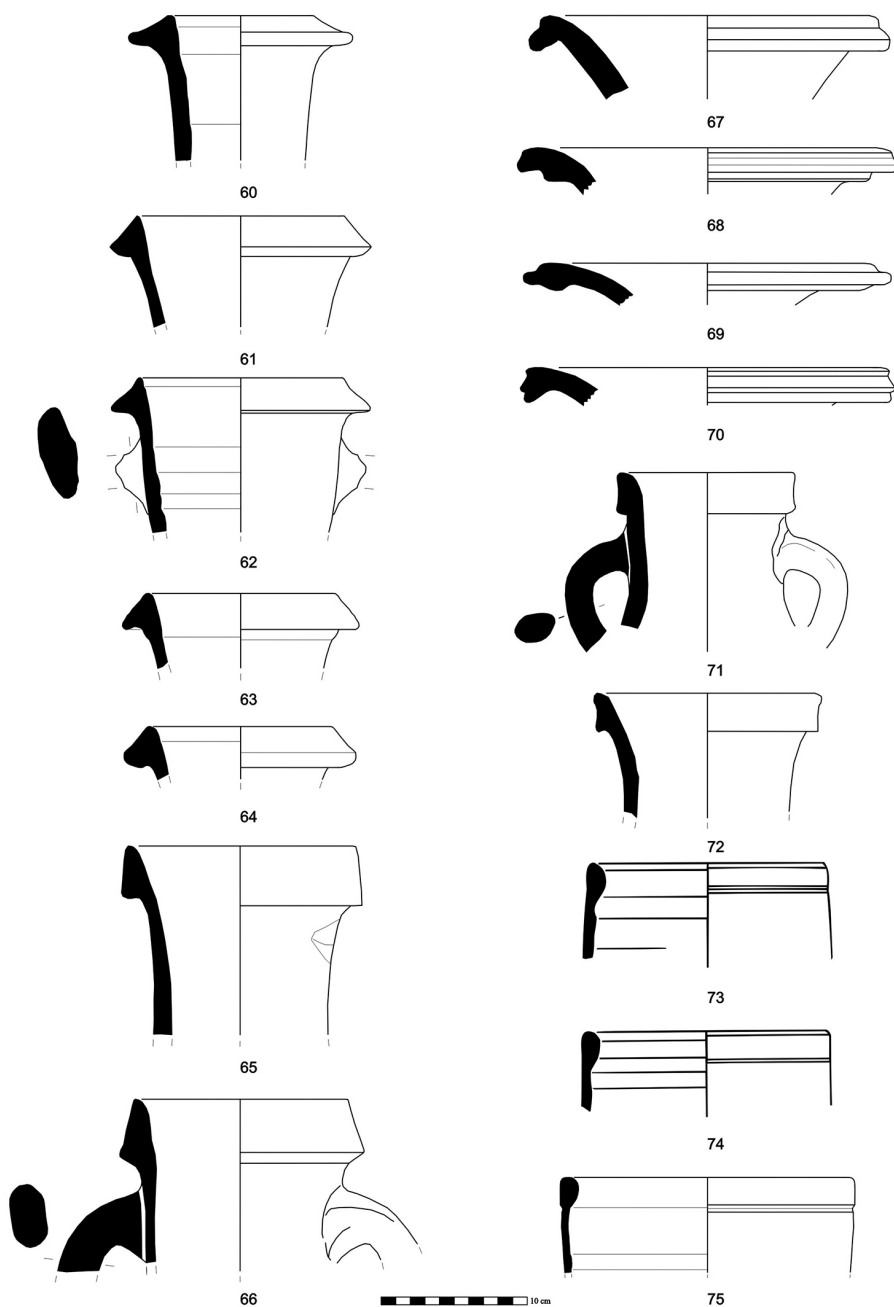
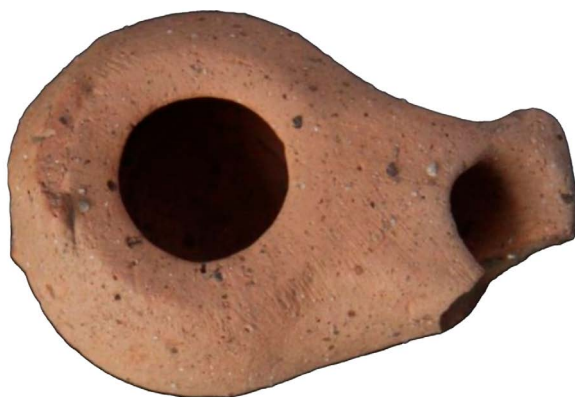


Figure 10. Material from Chões de Alompé, according to Pimenta and Arruda (2014), modified.



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Figure 11. Lucerne from Chões de Alpompé, according to Matias (2018), modified.

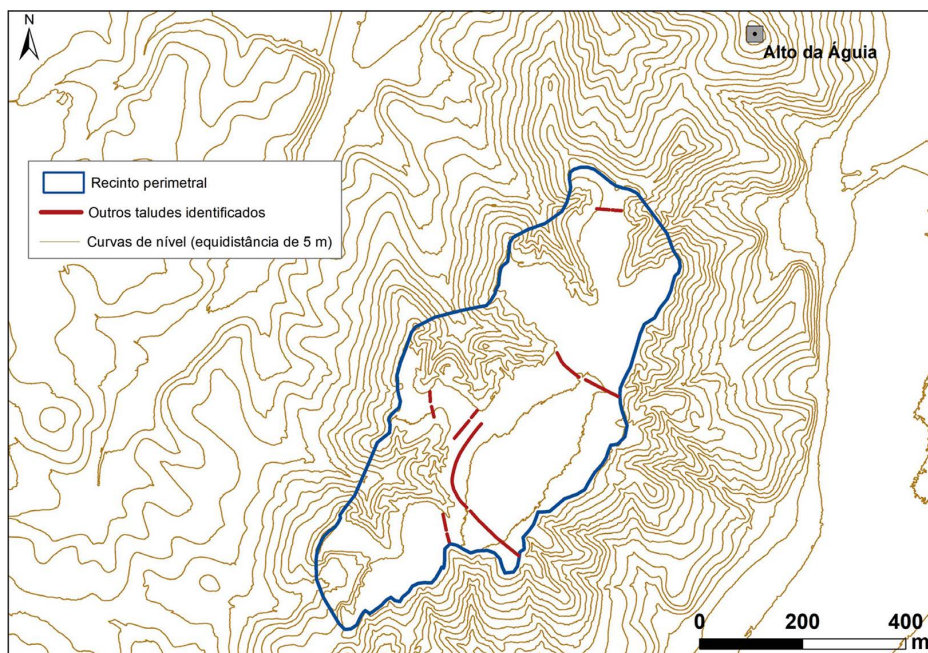


Figure 12. Planimetry of the new archaeological evidence identified at Chões de Alpompé plateau, relating to the existence of two possible Roman military bases, (according to Fonte et al., 2020, Fig. 19).

a new understanding of the site's structures. This new understanding has enabled us to propose the existence of at least two Roman military bases: a larger more irregular camp covering the entire plateau, which may very likely be associated with Brutus's campaign; and another smaller and more regular camp, occupying the central part of the site, which may hypothetically be related to the Sertorian conflict. This hypothesis still lacks archaeological validation and only future works can clarify it.

3. *Munda flumen*

The defensive elements visible in the organization of the rear-guard and support line suggest that the consular armies faced a hostile and unknown territory. The actions of the troops clearly express the daring nature of an attack in such distant places (FHA, IV: 139-140). Leaving the *Tagus* and heading for the Minho River, *Decimus Iunius Brutus* led a dazzling campaign, focusing his action on the conquest and submission of the main Lusitanian settlements (Gomes, 2017). We do not know his exact route, but Jorge de Alarcão convincingly proposed that it followed the course of the road that was later built between *Olisipo* and *Bracara* (Alarcão, 1987: 36). However, despite much effort, all attempts to identify military bases that can safely be associated with the conquest have so far been unsuccessful.

In recent years, the valley of the river *Munda*/Mondego has received some attention, and this has demonstrated its importance in the early phase of the conquest, especially in the area of its broad estuary. The large bay that had existed during the 1st century BCE and up until

the Roman era was vastly transformed into alluvial land by powerful geomorphological dynamics. Before that, however, this area was a shelter for Atlantic shipping, and provided easy access to the inland areas.

3.1. *Santa Olaia*

Approximately 13 km from the mouth of the Mondego, on its right bank, is the settlement of *Santa Olaia*, a pre-Roman site with strong influences from the Western Phoenician world which was first identified at the end of the 19th century (Almeida and Vilaça, 2020). A recent study based on a revision of documents and artefacts from excavations at the site found new data on its accuracy during the early phase of the conquest (Silva, Almeida and Pereira, 2021). Artefacts, although scarce, are coherent and consistent with a chronology centred on the third quarter of the 2nd century. The Italic black-glaze set is dominated by Neapolitan work, with a plate of the Lamb. 36 shape, and two ceramic bases, one of which bears a stamp (Fig. 14, no. 99 to 101). Italic wine amphorae are well documented (Fig. 14, no. 86 to 91), as well as two amphora nozzles of the 7.4.3.3. type (Mañá C2B). Finally, special mention should be made of the expressive set of Iberian *Kalathoi* (Fig. 14, no. 94 to 98).

3.2. *Arruelas (Maiorca, Figueira da Foz)*

Just 2 km from *Santa Olaia*, the discovery of *Arruelas* (Maiorca, Figueira da Foz) should be directly associated with this port outpost. The discovery was made during construction work for Highway A14, at a depth of approximately four metres, in deposits of alluvial formation

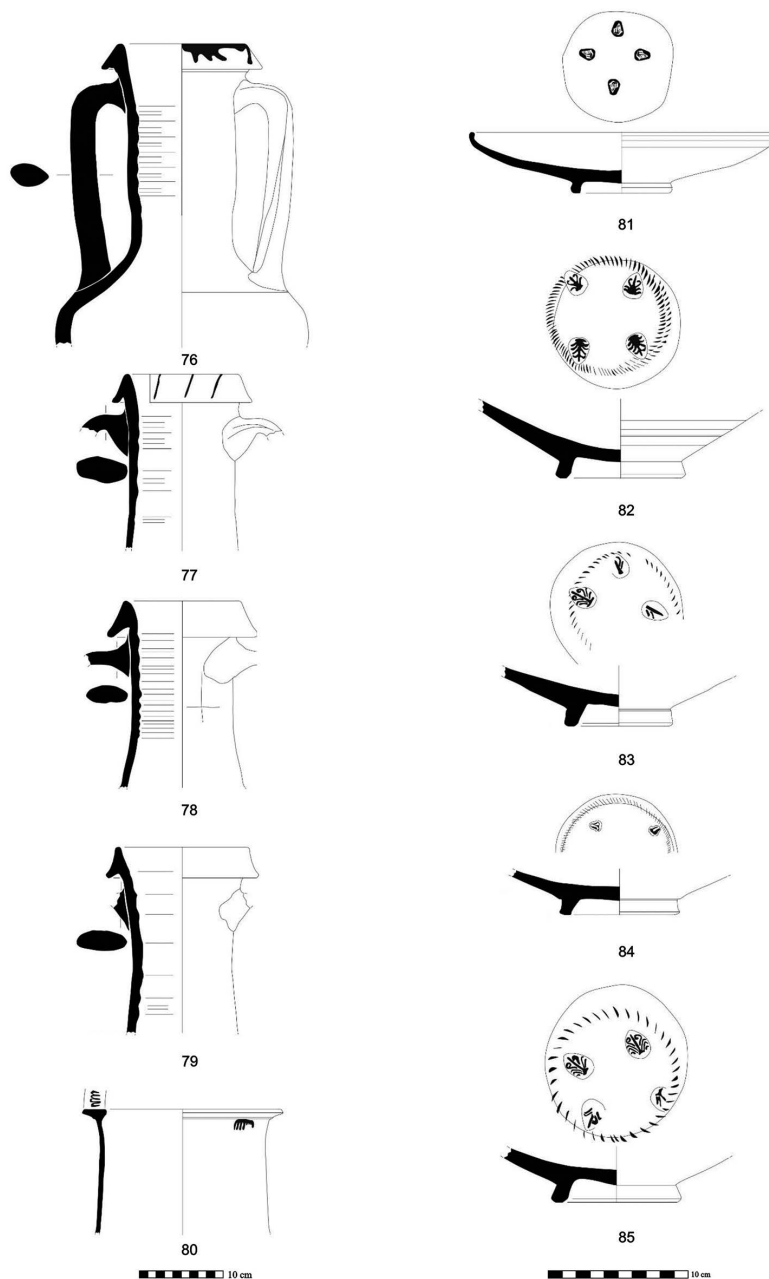


Figure 13. Artefacts from *Arruelas*, Maiorca, according to Soria (2018), Figs. 12 and 14, modified.

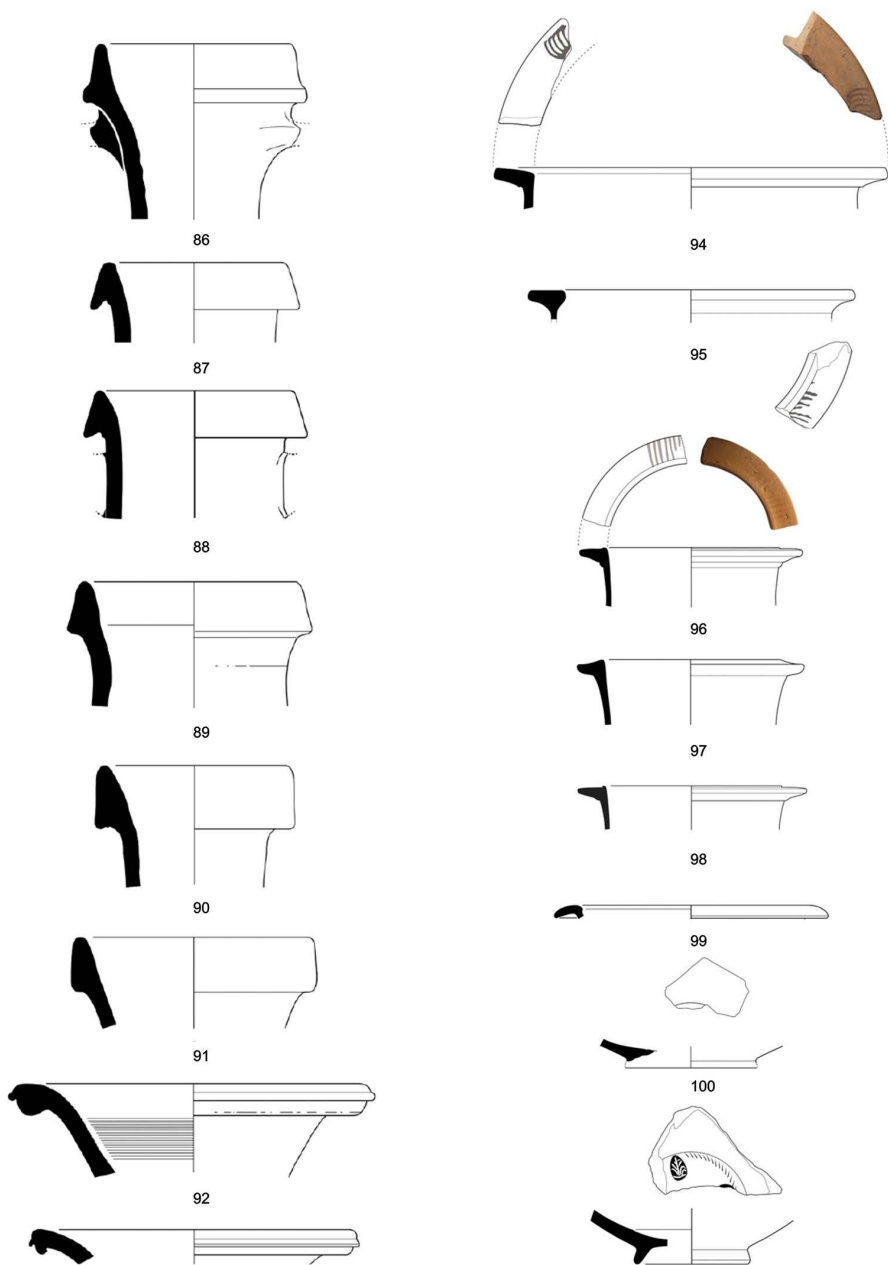


Figure 14. Artefacts from *Santa Olaia*, according to Silva, Almeida and Pereira (2021), Figs. 7, 8 and 9, modified.

(Imperial, 2017). A consistent ceramic set was found, along with wood fragments which indicated they were remains from a shipwreck or the cargo of a ship carrying provisions to support military action during the Roman Republican era, dated between 140 and 130 BCE (Imperial, 2017: 57; Soria, 2018: 57). The artefacts discovered were: four Italic Dressel 1 amphorae, six Campanian A ware receptacles (Lamb. 5, 27, 28), most notable of which, due to its rarity, is the set with printed decoration (Soria, 2018), and one *kalathos*, possibly Iberian (Fig. 14).

4. Final remarks

Decimus Iunius Brutus undoubtedly played a decisive role as governor of *Ulterior* between 138 and 133 BCE, energising the Romanisation of western territories (Salinas de Frías, 2010). Archaeological data from the area of Lisbon and the Lower *Tagus* peninsula, as well as the elements from the Mondego valley, seem to confirm this interpretation. In fact, the older archaeological contexts around St. George's Castle in Lisbon are well documented, dating from the third quarter of the 2nd century and thus coinciding with the time when Callaicus's armies were here (Pimenta, 2005). The importance and consistency of the data from *Olisipo* even support a strong military presence associated with this phase, demonstrated by the volume of imports and their alien nature (Pimenta, Ribera and Soria, 2018; Pimenta, 2014, 2020).

Information from the upper section of the estuary, namely the data from *Chões de Alpompe*, despite still lacking reliable archaeological contexts, apparently follows the same pattern of imports

found in Lisbon, with a significant presence of Italic products (Pimenta and Arruda, 2014). Data seemingly confirms the identification of this large settlement as Strabo's *Móron* and recognises in it the operations base of Brutus's campaign in the northwest of the peninsula (Fabião, 1989; Fonte et al., 2020).

The chronology of the foundation of the large camp at *Alto do Castelo* (Alpiarça) is still under discussion, although a recent revision of the available data offers new elements. Located on the left bank of the river *Tagus* not far from Chões de Alpompe, its occupation during this phase has been proved. Only future archaeological works, however, can clarify if it was founded in this context or if it corresponds to a previous base linked to the Lusitanian wars (Kalb and Höck, 1984, 1988; Arruda et al., 2014).

The first Italic imports also date from this phase, e.g., Neapolitan Italic black-glaze ware and Greek-Italic amphorae documented in pre-Roman settlements, including Alcáçova de Santarém (Arruda and Viegas, 2014; Soria, 2018), Castelo de Alverca, Monte do Senhor da Boa Morte and Porto do Sabugueiro (Pimenta and Mendes, 2008; Pimenta et al., 2014b). We should point out that this evidence is mostly located in the vicinity of the river *Tagus*.

A reference to the foundation of the city of *Brutobriga* is possibly associated with this campaign and the figure of *Decimus Iunius Brutus* (Schulten, 1937: 140). It has been suggested that this city was situated in the *Tagus* valley, namely around Santarém. The only information available is that this city minted coins during the Roman Republican period, i.e., a unique series of bronzes, well executed and dating from the second half of

the 2nd century BCE, showing a male head with the name of the magistrate T. MANLIVS T.F. SERGIA on the obverse and a ship on the reverse, with BRUTO-BRIGA written below (Ruiz López, 2010: 619-620). Considering the dispersion of these coins, namely in the province of Cáceres and Badajoz, it has recently been suggested that the city could be located around La Serena-Castuera (Heras Mora, 2018: 75).

The site of Lomba do Mouro (Melgaço) was recently discovered in northern Portugal itself, corresponding to a very large military base of approximately 21 hectares; although merely as a working hypothesis, it has been associated with this campaign (Costa-García, Fonte and Gaco, 2019).

Following Brutus's campaign, the *Tagus* valley was finally integrated into the Roman sphere. However, after this period there was no consistent effort to unite these territories (Cadiou, 2008). In fact, analysis of the sources clearly shows that the process of conquest was neither linear nor uniform, and did not follow a planned strategy. Instead, it was a heterogeneous, asymmetrical model, marked by

advances and setbacks. Military objectives were often defined by the interests and desires for personal prestige of the Roman generals (Heras Mora, 2018). Adding to this, the internal struggles of Roman politics expanded and spread to the peninsular territories, further complicating the Hispanic panorama. In the years after Brutus's campaign, classical sources clearly shift their attention away from these territories (Edmondson, 2014). However, some reports and other notable epigraphic elements show that these territories were far from being pacified (López, Sánchez and García, 1984).

The contexts and material associations found in the well-preserved stratigraphy of *Olisipo* confirm that this harbour, although located in the westernmost region of *Hispania*, was well integrated in the dynamics of institutional provisioning in the Mediterranean. In fact, in a detailed analysis of the imports of fine ware, and even of receptacles for food products, this provisioning profile is very similar to the one found on the *Citerior* coast, where the example of Valentia emerges as a model for the *Olisipo* contexts (Ribera, 1998).

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