

# The Greek Trade in Extremadura

## 6th -4th centuries B.C.

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### Introduction

In the last years, as part of a set of research projects focused on the Iron Age of Extremadura<sup>1</sup>, we have been working in the study of Greek pottery found in this territory. The result is a critical *corpus* published in late 2004 as part of the Roman Art National Museum of Mérida series<sup>2</sup>. After the release of this volume, some interesting developments have emerged in this topic. Along with some new ideas and data gathered in the archaeological activities conducted in nearby regions, they have encouraged us to elaborate this updated summary and bring it forward in this Congress.

Research work on Greek imports is not new in Spanish archaeology, as the first catalogues were produced in the Second Spanish Republic period<sup>3</sup>. Since these early generic *corpora*, the available data and syntheses have so exponen-

tially grown, that the difficulty of completing a comprehensive consolidation of the collections is recognised today. However, despite of the unquestionable interest of some of the oldest discoveries, such as the famous lip's cup from Medellín, the number of such studies has not touched the region of Extremadura. For instance, in the general catalogue of Greek pottery in Iberian Peninsula conducted by G. Trías in the late 60's, there is not a single entry from Extremadura<sup>4</sup>, and twenty years after, in the latest general study of peninsular scope by P. Rouillard, only three sites are included<sup>5</sup>. At the same time, the nearby territories have conducted regional syntheses. Andalusia, Portugal, and Castille-La Mancha<sup>6</sup> were creating a certain gap between the regions in terms of investigation that we have tried to solve.

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1 - Projects El Territorio Emeritense, 2000 años de Historia (1PR00A006) and Jerarquía Paisaje y Territorio en la Extremadura Orientalizante (2PR03B006) funded by the Consejería de Educación, Ciencia y Tecnología of the Junta de Extremadura. This essay is part of these projects.

2 - Jiménez Ávila & Ortega 2004.

3 - García y Bellido 1936.

4 - Trías 1968.

5 - Rouillard 1991. For a síntesis in english see Shefton 1982.

6 - Cabrera 1997; Arruda 1994; García Huertas & Morales 1999.

This does not mean that no attention has been paid to the Greek discoveries in Extremadura. There are vestiges in some sites, such as Pajares (Villanueva de la Vera) and, in particular, Cancho Roano (Zalamea de la Serena), which have been the subject of monographic essays, if only in later dates<sup>7</sup>, and the fragments found in other sites like Medellín, Capote, Alcántara or Botija have been included in various essays dedicated to these locations. However, a general study was missing which should include, besides, new sites and new data that we had been retrieving through the years. This study should allow a more focused approach on the importance of Mediterranean trade in the Iron Age Extremadura, and on the role of this region in the commercial routes in the “Far West” of the *Oikoumene*.

## The Sites

The Iron Age sites with Greek pottery in Extremadura almost reach the number of twenty, if only their distribution is not homogeneous either geographically —the concentration is higher in the Guadiana Valley than in the Tagus Valley— or in terms of research efforts, with sites which have been almost completely excavated —e.g. Cancho Roano— and others only now first published; or in quantity and quality of the data, with most evidence collected on the surface as opposed to a few sites where more abundant samples come from archaeological excavations.

We have ranked the sites on the basis of their chronology, grouping them in three time blocks and ordering them internally, *grosso modo*, from North to South (Figs. 3, 5, and 7).

The sites are listed as follows:

1) (Guadajira, Badajoz). The Guadajira site must have comprised of a settlement and a necropolis —El Cuco— located in their vicinity. In the habitat area, a new Attic black fragment was found on the surface. It was not included in previous work<sup>8</sup> and must be from the 5th century B.C. In El Cuco, some Greek origin fragments have been collected, the most outstanding being an Attic dish from the 6th century B.C. and several black bowls and cups from the 4th century B.C. This new fragment discovered in the village closes the chronological cycle of the arrival of imports to the site that we had supposed.

2) Medellín (Badajoz). The Medellín site is a well known reference in the Iron Age of the Guadiana area, and one of the essential centres in Extremadura. The Cerro del Castillo (Castle’s Mound) hosted a sizable village by which a well known cremation necropolis was installed. The Greek pottery

vestiges come mostly from the necropolis, where prior to the excavations an Attic lip’s cup by the ceramist Eucheiros was found. During the scientific works were locate a Corinthian aryballos —in one of the tombs— and several fragments of black cups (Castulo cups) from the 5th century B.C. More such fragments have emerged in further research done in the Cerro del Castillo<sup>9</sup>.

3) Cancho Roano (Zalamea de la Serena, Badajoz). Like the previous site, this monumental complex is one of the main Protohistoric archaeology references in Extremadura. This monumental construction hosted one of the rural dynasties that populated this territory during the 5th century B.C. It is included among the oldest sites due to the finding of a Naukratian aryballos of faïence (6<sup>th</sup> century) but found in a context belonging to the 5th century B.C. The set of Greek Pottery from Cancho Roano is undoubtedly one of the greatest collections of these assets found in the south of the Iberian peninsula, with more than 400 vases mostly devoted to drinking, the most outstanding of them decorated with red figures<sup>10</sup>.

4) Pajares (Villanueva de la Vera, Cáceres). More recent, though, the studies on this site from Cáceres had been already published, including a monographic study on the Greek ceramic pieces, only a few superficial fragments of cups from the 5th and 4th centuries. Most of them were found in the habitat areas, spanning several hectares of plains and slopes, but some cremation necropolis have been spotted and excavated, revealing some rich household furnishings<sup>11</sup>.

5) Castillejo de la Orden (Alcántara, Cáceres). This is a typical site from the Second Iron Age in the region i.e. a stronghold hillfort located on the meanders of river Tagus, in difficult access and scarce visibility areas. At the bottom of this hillfort lay a necropolis with the same characteristics of this historic and cultural setting: cremation tombs in urns accompanied of different kinds of furnishings, mostly iron weapons. In a few of these tombs, fragments of Greek cups were found in a very bad conservation condition, apparently from the 5th century B.C. They could be pervinences in this context<sup>12</sup>.

6) Sierra del Aljibe (Aliseda, Cáceres). This site is a elevated location like other known examples from the First Iron Age in the Tagus area. It must have been the habitat associated to the tomb where the famous Treasure of Aliseda was found in 1920. The emergency excavations of 1995 have revealed an interrupted occupation from the 8th century B.C. to the 1st century B.C. In this sequence, a fragment of Greek cup from late 5th century was retrieved, identified as the rim of a castulo cup<sup>13</sup>.

7) Sierra de la Muela (Badajoz). It is the elevation located on the Guadiana, where the Islamic *Alcazaba* and the high quarters of the city of Badajoz are currently settled. The Pro-

7 - Sánchez Moreno 1999; Gracia 2003.

8 - Material under research. Thanks to J.M. Jerez for providing this fragment.

9 - Almagro-Gorbea 1977; Almagro-Gorbea & Martín Bravo 1994; thanks to Dr. Almagro-Gorbea for his contribution of some previously unpublished fragments.

10 - García y Bellido 1936.

11 - Celestino ed. 1999; Sánchez Moreno 1999.

12 - Esteban et. al. 1988.

13 - Rodríguez Díaz & Pavón 1999.

tohistoric occupation of this place, which must have been a large *oppidum*-type village, has been confirmed by many excavations, if only the Iron Age horizons are largely altered by mediaeval and later buildings. Fragments of Greek pottery from the 5th and 4th centuries B.C. have been collected, and catalogued by L. Berrocal in his studies<sup>14</sup>.

8) El Turuñuelo (Mérida, Badajoz). It is an artificial mound with a diameter of 40 m, located 1.5 km from the Guadiana bank, which was cut across during the construction of an irrigation canal for the Plan Badajoz. The materials appeared as a result of the works, now part of the Municipal Prehistoric Collection, must belong in the 5th century. They include two fragments of castulo cup bases. Their physical features and location allow them to be associated with a monumental building like Cancho Roano<sup>15</sup>.

9) El Turuñuelo (Guareña, Badajoz). Although the archaeological vestiges collected on the surface are not as evident, this tumular formation can be associated, as the latter case, with a monumental complex of the kind frequently seen in the Middle Guadiana flow in the 5th century. Only one Greek fragment has been recently published as part of this site, a fragment of an attic red-figure cup. However, other black fragments may have been collected in earlier periods<sup>16</sup>.

10) La Mata (Campanario, Badajoz). Recently published, the Greek cups from La Mata, 9 fragments in total, strongly resemble the forms of the Cancho Roano typological table. However, the way this site was abandoned must have been very different, hence the relative scarcity and fragmentary nature. The final display of results equally confirms the post-orientalizing monumental nature of the site, which can be identified as an aristocratic residence in a rural area<sup>17</sup>.

11) Castro de la Burra (Trujillo, Cáceres). This site comes first on the list of Late Iron Age sites to provide Greek ceramic fragments. It is a typical hillfort on a river bank, surrounded by a strong wall made of slate stone. Although it has never been surveyed by archeologists, a fragment of Greek red-figure cup from the 4th century is kept in the Museum of Cáceres<sup>18</sup>.

12) Villasviejas del Tamuja (Botija, Cáceres). The hillfort of Villasviejas is one of the best known Pre-Roman sites in the province of Cáceres, which has undergone systematic archaeological excavations during the 70's and 80's in the 20th century. It features two strongholds surrounded by a moat that exceeds the usual extension in villages of this period.

Greek fragments have been found in various areas of these sites, from the 4th century B.C. on, usually in later strata<sup>19</sup>. The site remained populated until the Roman period.

13) El Pico (Lobón, Badajoz). Below the village of Lobón and the area known as "Extremadura's Balcony", lies an archaeological site with important Iron Age settlement. Evidence of this are the large amount of material collected during landslides that happened in the 90's, now scattered among various public and private collections. These include two fragments of 4th century Greek vases: a red-figure cup and the only sample of pelike collected in Extremadura<sup>20</sup>.

14) El Charro (Lobón, Badajoz). It is a settlement on a plain only a few metres of the Guadiana bank, where a fragment of black Attic skyphos from the 4th century B.C. was found. Other materials belong to earlier settlements. Perhaps this site is a necropolis<sup>21</sup>.

15) Cogolludo (Navalvillar de Pela, Badajoz). The municipality of Lacimurga was founded in the Roman period above this point, located between the council districts of Navalvillar de Pela and Puebla de Alcocer. On the Guadiana bank, at the top of a hill, it must have played a central strategic role in the territory, of similar importance to Medellín or the Cerro de la Muela in Badajoz. The materials found at some necropolis in the lower part of this hill are now subject to damage from the fluctuation of water in the La Serena reservoir. During yet unpublished excavations in this lowland in 1992, a fragment of a red-figure cup from the 4th century, (belonging to the Vienna -116 group) was found<sup>22</sup>.

16) Cerro de la Barca (Herrera del Duque, Badajoz). This site, located in the intersection of the Guadiana and Guadalupejo rivers, is a typical fortified habitat from the Late Iron Age. On the surface, as a result of the washing of the García Sola reservoir waters, a great deal of material from this period have been collected, including a black fragment from the 4th century B.C.<sup>23</sup>.

17) Jardal (Herrera del Duque, Badajoz). The archaeological complex of El Jardal consists of a habitat topping a small hill (named the Castro de la Duquesa) and a cremation necropolis at the bottom, partially excavated and previously altered by illegal surveying<sup>24</sup>. This area falls within the bottom of the García-Sola reservoir, and the village emerges like an island above the water level. The materials from the spoils were recovered for the Badajoz Provincial Museum of Archaeology, which include an Attic black bowl, with stamped decoration,

14 - Berrocal 1994.

15 - Jiménez Ávila & Domínguez de la Concha 1995; Jiménez Ávila 1997.

16 - Jiménez Ávila & Ortega 2004.

17 - Rodríguez Díaz (ed.) 2004.

18 - Jiménez Ávila & Ortega 2004.

19 - Hernández et al. 1988; others unpublished before our studies - we very much appreciate D<sup>a</sup> M. Ongil's kind contribution.

20 - Jiménez Ávila & Ortega 2004; thanks to J.M. Jerez for contributing with information on this material.

21 - Jiménez Ávila & Ortega 2004.

22 - We appreciate Dr. A. Aguilar's contribution of this piece for study.

23 - Personal communication of Dr. D. Vaquerizo, whom we thank for this information. For the site: Vaquerizo 1990.

24 - Jiménez Ávila 2001; 2003.

25 - Jiménez Ávila & Ortega 2004.

from the 4th century B.C.<sup>25</sup>.

18) Castrejón de Capote (Higuera la Real, Badajoz). Capote is one of the best known and most extensively excavated Extremaduran Iron Age hillforts. Its location in the crossing of the Ardila and Sillo rivers marks the northern boundary of Andalusia. This is part of the territory of the Celts, a Pre-Roman ethnicity mentioned in the Classical sources. The excavations in this village have produced several fragments of Greek pottery, in their majority already published, all from the 4th century B.C.<sup>26</sup>.

## Phases Of The Greek Trade

### 1. The Archaic Phase (6th century)

The earliest evidence of trading in products from Greece in Extremadura occurs in the mid-6th century, in parallel with which is called Archaic Period in terms of Greek archaeology. The archaeological evidence from this period is extremely scarce, as expected in such an early stage and, as in almost every Iberian site, especially in the inland ones. Only a few sites, such as the Greek city of Ampurias or the Huelva emporium, have provided a considerable amount of imports from this period. It is precisely with the commercial development of the port of Huelva that the presence of these Greek elements along the Guadiana river must be linked. The recent publications of several fragments from Castro Marim (Portugal)<sup>27</sup> support this statement. They bridge the existing gap of this kind of imports in the site, which we had remarked in amazement. The site must have served as a bridgehead for this type of materials into Extremadura and the inland<sup>28</sup>.

Despite the small number of Greek pottery pieces imported at this period, their variety is significant, and they cover different usages. They also come from various origins (Athens, Corinth, Naucratis...), in contrast with later stages, where there is an absolute prevalence of containers devoted to the ritual drinking of wine, exclusively from Attic workshops.

The first shape to be recognised during research was the lip's cup from the Medellín necropolis, found before the excavation work would start (Fig. 1.1). Since this slim cup is well known and documented<sup>29</sup>, I will only highlight some of its most outstanding features. The most outstanding of all is its iconography, with a finely worked Zeus figure at the front, and the traces of a rider on a galloping horse figure at the back. Below the divine figure, traces of an inscription in Greek characters [N : ΕΙΜΙΠΟΤΕΡ], reconstructed as "KALON ΕΙΜΙΠΟΤΕΡΙΟΝ" (I am a beautiful cup). This kind of inscriptions is usual in

Greek cups of this series, and they usually have their counterpart in a second inscription that includes the ceramist's signature. Although the cup from Medellín does not keep this second epigraph, enough formal and iconographic elements are available to attribute the making to Eucheiros, one of the Athenian Little Masters, who made high quality objects like this<sup>30</sup>.

Even more innovative is the inclusion of an Attic dish in the table of Greek pottery forms in Extremadura. This is the attribution we have proposed for a fragment of rim decorated with a sequence of polychrome lotuses, found in superficial surveys in El Cuco (Guadajira) (Fig. 1.2). Dishes being a rare form in Greece itself, this makes it a unique piece in the range of Greek imports to the Iberian peninsula, since none of them had been found yet in the Western corner of the Mediterranean.

The poor conservation condition of this cup –only a fragment is left– does not allow a chronologic and iconographic analysis as in the case of the cup from Medellín. However, the style of the scant remaining decoration can be related with the work of the so-called Painter of London B-76, in the middle 6th century B.C., roughly the same period as the cup of Eucheiros<sup>31</sup>.

The third ceramic shape to be recognised in the repertory of Archaic Greek containers found in Extremadura is the aryballos, a variety of perfume bottle with wide mouth and spherical body. In contrast with the previously mentioned types –cups and dishes–, the presence of these oil bottles is more frequent, with not only a single container, but two, although very different in nature. The earliest container comes from a Corinthian factory of LCI. The other must have been manufactured in a workshop in Naucratis, a Greek colony in the Nile delta, in Egypt, around the second half of the 6th century, from the development of this type in the Iberian Peninsula.

The Corinthian aryballos was found in the 1985 excavation of the Medellín necropolis, in a cremation tomb<sup>32</sup>. It is kept incomplete and very damaged, missing the handle and the rim, and with mere traces of paint (Fig. 1.3). Nevertheless, the carvings of a winged figure, perhaps a siren, allow it to be linked to the painter of Kalauria, one of the most conspicuous artists of LC. This kind of vases lack the quality of the finely painted Athenian cups or dishes, and are much more widespread. However, in remote markets like this being analysed, they must have been seen as luxury merchandise, given their usage as containers of expensive scented substances. This must be a reason for the relatively scarce presence of Corinthian aryballoi documented in the Iberian peninsula. In the study we recently summarised here, we introduced a disper-

26 - Berrocal 1989. Special thanks to Dr. Berrocal for his contribution of the unpublished materials from Capote.

27 - Arruda 2003.

28 - Jiménez Ávila & Ortega 2004. 104.

29 - Jiménez Ávila & Ortega 2004. 24, includes bibliography.

30 - Almagro-Gorbea 1977.

31 - Ibidem: 68-76.

32 - Jiménez Ávila & Ortega 2004. 24, erroneously attributed 58C instead of 85C.

sion map of this kind of objects. The expected “concentrations” of Ampurias, Málaga and Huelva were joined by only a few more containers, mainly on coastal areas<sup>33</sup>. This map must include recent discoveries in the Cádiz Bay and the Tagus Estuary to enrich the scenario, and also take into account the presence of Corinthian features in Castro Marim<sup>34</sup>. The importance of materials discovered in Castro Marim lies in the fact that they support the existence of a commercial route for this kind of trading along the river Guadiana. This route is maintained through the following centuries. Despite the new discoveries, the presence of a Corinthian aryballos in an inland site such as Medellín is still unusual in a dispersion map almost exclusively focused on coastal areas.

Quite a different case is the Naucratan aryballos, more frequently found in inland sites. Our container was found on the surface in Cancho Roano, although the evidence of cremation on the surface can lead to thinking that it was in use during the final fire, in late 5th century. Like the case of Medellín, only fragments of it are left. The handle and rim have been restored lately. The external surface displays the grid pattern and traces of glossy finish which define these Greek-Egyptian creations (Fig. 1.4). The aryballos is therefore a unique case in origin and chronology with the rest of the Cancho Roano collection, mainly comprised of drinking cups from Attic workshops. Hence its traditional consideration as an evidence of the older stages of the site. However, due to the burnt condition the piece was found in and the chronology of these cups in the Iberian peninsula, it must be considered not too remote a pervivence. Then the pieces are found in Hispanic territory in further horizons, preferably in the context of Iberian Culture, on the verge of the 5th century and even within. This is the case of the tomb 1 in Bobadilla (Jaén), where a vase with elements similar to those of Cancho Roano was discovered. Besides the ceramic containers, the role of Archaic Greek objects in Extremadura must add an ivory fragment with embossed decoration from El Turuñuelo in Mérida. It is a fragment of plate located at the upper left corner of a descriptive scene. This composition features the head of a bearded character, a muscled arm holding a club, and what can be interpreted as the incomplete figure of a centaur (Fig. 2). This attribution, and its embossing style, allow us to suggest the manufacturing of this object in an Archaic Greek (maybe Ionian) workshop. This makes it an exceptional discovery, being the only evidence of Greek ivory carving of this period registered in Iberia. However, for the chronologic assessment of this piece we must produce similar comments to the ones about the aryballos from Cancho Roano. It comes from a site –El Turuñuelo in Mérida– that may be associated with a monumental complex, and therefore likely to belong in the 5th century. As a result, it would be a pervivence, although the archaeological remains of this site are only known through superficial discoveries.

For a general evaluation of the Archaic Greek imports into Extremadura we must first highlight their restricted number and, secondly, the high quality of production (Fig. 3). In this period, the pottery items are in great demand for their exotic and luxurious nature, not because of their usage. This is proved by the decoration, and even the epigraphy, of some of them, and the functional diversity, in spite of their limited amount –drinking, eating, toiletry–. All these features allow the characterization of a commercial profile for the Archaic phase, which starts to be exclusive of Extremadura and in particular of the Guadiana Valley. With this behaviour, the region is far from other peninsular territories, which are not affected by this kind of products, especially Western Andalusia (with the exception of Huelva, of course).

The recent discoveries of Castro Marim have provided even more judgement elements that lead us to believe that the Archaic Greek elements come from the port of Huelva, at least the oldest. The Archaic pottery in Extremadura is present due to the splendour of Phocian trade in this Atlantic town. When this trade is affected by the crisis, the Greek imports start to dwindle in the region of Extremadura. To such extent is that so, that possibly the Naucratan aryballos of Cancho Roano is not to be attributed to this South-western trade, but to the first contacts with the markets of Ampurias and the peninsular Southeast, as indicated by the distribution of such containers and their Hispanic contexts.

## 2. The ‘Ampuritan Horizon’ (5th century)

Undoubtedly, the 5th century is the highest time for the Greek pottery in Extremadura, with more than 90% vases documented in this period. This can be associated in a great extent to how the discoveries of the Cancho Roano palace were made. The whole place was burnt down with furnishings virtually intact, including a collection of more than 400 Attic black and red-figure vases.

However, the materials from this period are not regularly distributed throughout the century. The first fifty years lack completely Greek imports into the region, probably due to the adjustments of Greek trade in the Western Mediterranean. The results are in particular the displacement of commercial activity from the Huelva focus to the opposite end of peninsula, in Ampurias and the NE. The importance of Ampurias as a driving centre of these transactions into the peninsula has forged the denomination of “Ampuritan Horizon” for the most characteristic set of containers from this period.

The first Greek vases to arrive in Extremadura on this second phase are the old generation castulo cups, featuring certain parts of their external surface with reserve areas of red clay, typically the inside of the handles with the space between the two arms and the vertical section of the base. These cups begin their production in Athens in 475 B.C., but they arrive

33 - Jiménez Ávila & Ortega 2004. fig. 24.

34 - Arruda 2003.

at the Iberian peninsula at a later time, around the middle century<sup>35</sup>.

Examples of these old cups have been found in Pajares (Villanueva de la Vera), Cancho Roano (Zalamea de la Serena) and, more recently, in La Mata (Campanario)<sup>36</sup>. One of these cups, whose fragments have been found in Cancho Roano, are of special relevance because they are associated to Phase B strata and contribute to evaluate their chronology. Therefore, the end of Phase B in Cancho Roano falls back to middle 5th century.

Strangely enough, the base of two of these ancient cups appeared with the outer layer bare, without any finish, among the ruins of La Mata. In statistical terms, they constitute a rather high proportion of the total Greek pottery rests, if only the total number found in La Mata is only 9 fragments of 3 different forms<sup>37</sup>. These occurrences help demonstrate the trend to thesaurization of ancient products from these centres, and object their value as commercial distributors. Their relative numeric importance in La Mata must be due to the process of leaving this building, where the entire luxury material was recovered. Since only fragments were left, naturally the oldest containers were part of them.

As a continuation of the first contacts with the Ampuritan trade, the last decades of the 5th century saw the massive import of Attic black pieces. Containers from this generation have been found in sites of the Cáceres (Pajares, Alcántara, Aliseda) and Badajoz provinces (Medellín, Cancho Roano, Badajoz, Turuñuelo of Mérida, Turuñuelo of Guareña and La Mata). Without question, the best approach to this horizon is reached through the Cancho Roano palace, where more than 400 vases were collected, many of them complete (Fig. 4.1). The forms of Cancho Roano pottery are quite monotonous, the vast majority being Attic black drink containers, with an absolute prevalence of the castulo cup, the dominant fossil in this period. In this phase, the castulo cup is entirely covered in black slip, except the external bottom, and it is the most common container –virtually the only type– in the rest of documented sites.

Apart from this conspicuous type, the rest of the typological table is not particularly ample, with 6 more types. At this stage, the territory of Extremadura is out of bounds for the more sophisticated and rare species that constitute the Ampuritan horizon: the “delicate classe” decorated with fine radial carvings or the Saint Valentin serie, painted all over the surface of the pieces. These types usually appear along the coastline, and naturally are missing in the inland territories. However, we can include some quality types. In particular, the ever growing group of plain rim cups, decorated with red

figures arranged in central medallions. The already known luxury production from Cancho Roano is now complemented with pieces from El Turuñuelo of Guareña and, more recently, La Mata, always associated to monumental complexes. We have already commented on these cups and the preference for some of the decorative types represented (Fig. 4.2). We mentioned the relative abundance of women wearing *sakkos* in Cancho Roano, and the intentional absence of other frequent topics such as the nude athletes<sup>38</sup>. During the presentation of the book we are now summarizing, where we mentioned these facts, Dr. Olmos Romera contributed with an idea which is worth repeating here. It is the possible assimilation of these mostly individual representations with a sort of *imagines maiorum*, on the line of ancestral cult which justifies and explains the emergence and development of monumental settlements like these<sup>39</sup>. These hypotheses can be backed with the illustration of the subjects represented in a new red-figure plain rim from La Mata. Once more, the subject is one of these individual persons, a male figure in *himation* doing offerings or libations in front of an altar. This topic is already present in Cancho Roano with one of the cups from the first excavations, and very likely to be recognised in another incomplete cup from the same site, and even in the damaged fragment from El Turuñuelo of Guareña, in the light of how the reserved space is set up<sup>40</sup>. As far as we know, this motif of a young man before the altar must have been the most widespread among the local aristocratic centres. This is not opposed the local *reinterpretatio*, with representations of mythified or heroified antecessors previously mentioned.

The rest of subjects is less frequent, with representations of various animals: a duck, possibly a feline, and a typical Athenian owl. The first two constitute with the male figures a group of its own in style. Due to their frequent use in the Cancho Roano site, they have been associated with a so-called “painter from Zalamea”<sup>41</sup>. However, “painter” must be understood as a group of artisans rather than individuals. The owl cup, with surprisingly parallel pieces, is included in another production group precisely named after this animal: owl vases, including skyphoi and, more rarely, cups and other forms.

The rest of forms in this period are much more limited. The plain rim skyphoi have expanded again their scattering field, thanks to a non-figurative fragment found in La Mata, as it seems. In Cancho Roano, however, there is a prevalence of decorations with garlands in reserve, including a sample in red slip which is very rare in the Iberian context.

The other types are present here in an episodic manner. The only examples worth mentioning are seven one handler

35 - Sánchez Fernández 1991. Domínguez & Sánchez 2001.

36 - Rodríguez ed. 2004.

37 - Although the published study of La Mata recognises 4 forms, they are only 3 actually: castulo cups, plain rim cups and “A” type skyphoi.

38 - Jiménez Ávila & Ortega 2004

39 - Olmos, personal communication.

40 - Jiménez Ávila & Ortega 2006.

41 - Gracia 2003.

blacks and one lamp, more frequent in Punic environments, which can condition the origin of a part of the imports. Besides, a small bowl and one or two lekane complete the list of forms.

The Greek pottery of the 5th century is completely different to the previous phase. In the 6th century the pieces were extremely rare. Now we find vast accumulations of vases which, by themselves, hardly have any value. The Archaic containers covered a wide and scattered functional spectrum. Now there is clear tendency to the ritual consumption of wine, with an absolute prevalence of the low cups. However, some traditions of the previous century remain now in the geographic and social aspects. The highest concentration of discoveries occurs around the Guadiana flow (Fig. 5), still the most important route to enter the Iberian peninsula; on the other hand, the majority of contexts fall under the category of aristocratic social environments.

The river Guadiana remains the dominant commercial route in this period. However, there are signs of diversification of the supply areas, perceived in the singularities of the set of vases documented. For example, the presence of one handle cups or lamps suggest the South Western origin of a part of these productions, directed through the Cadiz circuit, Huelva, and Castro Marim. Plenty of such evidence has been found in the latter. However, the Greek product trade volume in the South West does not seem as high in the late 5th century as to explain accumulations like Cancho Roano's, with more than 400 items. Therefore, the great demand drawn by these power centres may explain the opening of a second supply route across the High Guadiana flow and the now more dynamic Iberian area. New types must have been incorporated, such as lekane or red-figure cups, unusual in South Western environments, in parallel with the presence of other elements (bronze, ivory, gold...), the best examples of these found in Iberian settlements of the East and High Andalusia. The monumental complexes on this trade route along the Guadiana act as final destination of the almost exclusive Greek products, but then they are not re-distributed from these points. In this context of large accumulations of objects in palace-like environments, even if the multi-focal nature of this supply is admitted, it proves difficult to accept an *osmotic* or *dendritic* trade pattern as suggested for such products in Extremadura. Obviously, this is an *arterial* pattern, based in large stocks, channelled across the river Guadiana.

### 3. The end of Greek trade in Extremadura: The 4th Century

The updated inventory of Greek pottery in Iron Age Extremadura contributes a new presence of vases from the 4th century, in contrast with the traditional conception of Greek trade in the region. Now the sampled sites outnumber the 5th century cases, if only the documented fragments are far less.

Without question, these trends have been influenced by archaeological depositional factors, but especially historical

factors. In the first place, we should bear in mind the derelict conditions of sites like Cancho Roano, very specific and unusual. Since these monumental complexes disappear in the late 5th century, similar accumulations of potteries are not expected beyond that period. On the other hand, the 4th century sites are quite different in morphology –usually fortified hillforts, spanning a larger extension–, have been never completely excavated, and the materials were retrieved mostly in superficial surveying. However, the end of the monumental complexes must have been produced a substantial decrease in the demand of Greek luxury earthenware. This should be one of the historical reasons to be considered in the current state of the registry.

The typological table for this period shares some elements with the 5th century's table, mainly its restricted nature and its functionality, primarily devoted to the ritual consumption of wine. In their diverse formats, the drinking containers almost reach the 90% of documented material. There are only episodic cases of different forms like *pelike* and lamps, just one sample of each (Fig. 6 and 7). The basic types of drinking cups are still the same as in the previous century, with a few modifications to accommodate the fashion of the Athenian 4th century workshops. For example, the low base cups (still the most frequent) adopt the painted decorations from the Vienna-116 group style, and the skyphoi embrace the characteristic double curve profile and, occasionally, also painted decorations resembling the 'Fat Boy' group style. The drinking set is also enriched with new forms out of the Attic workshops, such as bowls with incurving or outturned rims, decorated with stamps inside (Fig. 6.9). They are invariable very common in shape, and bear fast and careless decorations. This is a feature of the best part of the Athenian ceramic production to be exported to distant destinations, since these objects are rare in Greece.

These Greek cups are primarily targeted at the Pre-Roman hillforts of the Second Iron Age, in the provinces of Cáceres and Badajoz, where they are found in habitat areas and in necropolis also, which proves how valued they were among the people living in this period. In sites that have undergone systematic excavations (Capote, Botija, Badajoz...) these articles start to appear frequently. It is worth noting that some discoveries are made outside the original contexts of the 4th century.

Another trend that remains from the previous period is the proximity of the finds to the Guadiana, which proves that the river is still the dominant commercial route. The polarization of settlements around the river is even higher than in the previous phase, probably due to the lower volume of material circulating at this stage. However, there are significant discoveries far from the river flow, such as the Botija o Capote castros, both in Cáceres and in Badajoz (Fig. 7).

The decreased quantity of Greek vessels in Extremadura in the 6th century is evident: more than 400 containers in the 5th century, only 26 fragments in the following century. We have already outlined the singularities of the process of abandonment of Cancho Roano, which may have played a role

on these enormous differences. However, the historical reasons are much more likely, since the end of the monumental complexes and the social system they represent, with rural aristocrats demonstrating their rank through the accumulation of luxury items, means a significant decrease in the demand of these objects.

Other arguments play a role now, like the typological profile of the table of types existing in the 5th century. In this period, different cultural areas in the Iberian peninsula show a specific behaviour. A differential selection of possibilities can be documented, which can only be explained by the local singularities. For example, the studies on the Murcia region document a special incidence of *kantharoi*<sup>42</sup>, while in other regions like High Andalusia prevail the bell-shaped kraters, used as cinerary containers<sup>43</sup>. In this context, the table of types documented in Extremadura in the 4th century, limited by the small number of inventoried vessels, is defined more by absences than presences. It is the most common vases that constitute the list of types. This general feature, and the lower volume of imports and the always reduced presence of some forms like lamps—especially frequent in the South West—allow us to associate Extremadura with the general behaviour of the South Western region. Some absences can be linked to the interior location of Extremadura, far away from the coast. The end of the monumental complexes may have caused the closing of the route that used to connect the Low Extremadura with the South Eastern Iberian ports in the 5th century. This helps explain the steep decline of imports and the adoption of the commercial profile of Cadiz and the South West in general during this period.

The decrease in the number of Greek imports in this period can also help explain the polarization around the Guadiana flow. It replicates the large scale phenomenon of low circulation products being accumulated at ports and markets. Other causes of this situation can also be cited, like the excess of attribution of Pre-Roman hillforts stratigraphies to the first half of the 4th century, despite the absence of dominant fossils in this period. The presence of significant sets of Greek pottery in the 4th century at sites such as Botija or Capote suggests that their circulation must have been slightly wider. Perhaps the phenomenon of Pre-Roman settlements becoming hillforts in Extremadura is something more gradual and late than what has been proposed until now.

Some notes on chronology must be added. The majority of Iberian vases associated with the Vienna 116 groups, or the Fat Boy group skyphoi have been related to the second quarter of the 4th century B.C. Some evidence suggest, though, that this production must have begun at the turn of the century, in parallel with the late 5th century production. Both share some technical and morphological analogies. In Extremadura there is a singular significant element, the incurving rim bowl found in El Jardal (Fig. 6.9). It combines

decorative techniques from the first quarter of the century (u-shaped stamped crowns) and others that become usual from 375 B.C. on (the “guilloche”). Then the most likely date is around 380 B.C., which means the presence of such objects even in the first quarter of the century.

Around the middle of the century, the Greek imports are cut off permanently Extremadura behaves exactly as the rest of the peninsular territory in this respect, as a result of the cultural and social-economic transformation that affected the entire *oikoumene*.

#### 4. Summary and conclusion

During the middle centuries of the Iron Age, Extremadura took an active role in commercial and cultural contacts with the Mediterranean world. One remarkable evidence of this is the presence of Greek imports in the archaeological sites from this period, both in the Cáceres and the Badajoz provinces.

The earliest evidence of Greek trade falls back into the first half of the 6th century—the Archaic period—and include some very scarce, though enormous individual value, elements. From this period we have Attic pottery of high quality, such as the vases from El Cuco or Medellín; Corinthian scents, and even ivory pieces, perhaps from an Ionian workshop. They are quite extraordinary not only in the Iberian context but in the whole Western Mediterranean area.

Objects from this period cover a variety of functions, in contrast with their reduced number. This leads us into thinking that it is their exotic and luxurious nature, not their original function, what made them attractive for the local aristocracy, as proved by their presence in the aristocrat's tombs.

The presence of these Archaic objects in stratigraphy done in Extremadura must be attributed to the spreading of Phocian trade from the Huelva port. However, this commercial profile is extremely specific. Other areas in the Iberian peninsula were not included in this commercial activity. The absence of Greek trade is especially visible, for example, in the Low Guadalquivir, the nucleus of the Tartesian culture, in spite of the substantial archaeological work done in that area. Therefore, Extremadura shows a very specific behaviour in this respect.

Activity in the Huelva port seems to show symptoms of crisis from the middle 6th century onwards, as a result of the large scale adjustments operated in Greek trade in the Western Mediterranean, whose clearest example in the Iberian peninsula is the foundation of Ampurias and the displacement of commercial activity to the Northeast.

As a result of this process, during the second half of the 6th century the Greek imports into Extremadura virtually disappear until the middle 5th century.

At this point we have the incipient presence of the first castulo

42 - García Cano & Page 1994.

43 - Sánchez 1991.



cups, with the handles and bases reserved. The Pajares and Cancho Roano pieces have been followed by the recently published discoveries of La Mata. They emphasize the aristocratic destination of these products, aimed in particular to the monumental complexes from an early stage.

But the prime of Greek pottery in Extremadura is the last third of the 5th century, with the arrival of the Athenian production from the so-called 'Ampuritan horizon'. Most of the ceramic products found in Cancho Roano belong to this period. With more than 400 cups, they are primarily used for drinking wine. The most remarkable of them are the red-figure cups depicting characters that may be interpreted as images of antecessors from the aristocratic families that inhabited these residences. The accumulation of Greek cups –among other objects– in Cancho Roano is unusual, since it was abandoned with the entire furnishings virtually intact. However, fresh data obtained in La Mata prove that these accumulations should have been frequent in the monumental complexes. In a limited space that has been abandoned over time, nine containers of this type have been documented.

The large number of potteries accumulated in Cancho Roano shows a contrast with the relatively scant quantities documented in the Southwest. Perhaps the demand from the Monumental Complexes must have been favoured the opening of a trade route with the Iberian markets of the Southeast, much more dynamic at this period, upstream of the Guadiana river. The typological profile of this phase is comprised of Gaditan trade elements (lamps, one handle cups, etc.) and other elements usual in the Southeast, which support this possibility.

The accumulations of Greek cups in the monumental buildings should be seen as aristocratic thesaurizations rather than commercial stocks or presumed offerings. The collections are too heterogeneous in form and chronology to credit the first option. Besides, they seem not to be circulating in the surrounding locations, and they are almost exclusively retained at these centres of power. As a consequence of the survival of oriental organization ways in a time when the individual value of luxury objects decreases, and their circulation increases, the compelling accumulation of these objects is a sign of social distinction.

By the end of the monumental complexes around late 5th century, there is a strong decline in the trading of Greek products in Extremadura and the import rate returns to the usual South-western parameters. However, the number of sites which import these products increases in the 4th century –less vases are documented, but they are more widespread. Some of the previous trends are maintained in this phase, such as the primarily convivial function of earthenware, with a prevalence of low base cups and Red-Figure skyphoi, decorated using the fast techniques of this period.

The destiny of the latter ceramic Greek products are the Pre-Roman hillforts (the *castros*). They are to be found both in residential areas and necropolis, supporting commercial and cultural relationships which had been little known so far. Their

presence in outstanding tombs proves that they are still valued by the warlords of Second Iron Age. However, its present manifestation is a sign of the social changes that took place over more than 200 years of circulation all over Extremadura.

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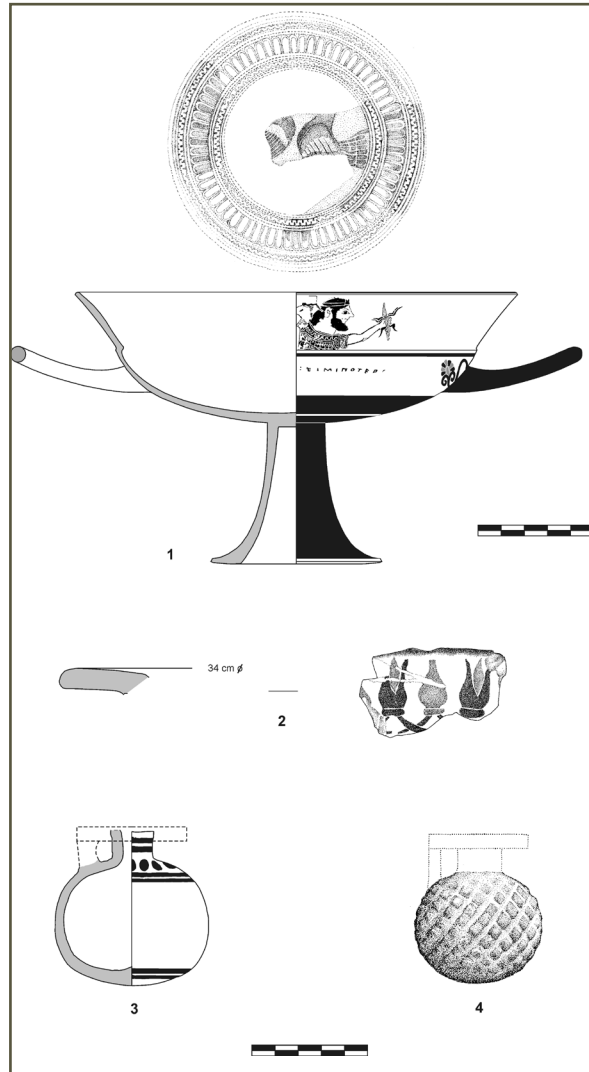
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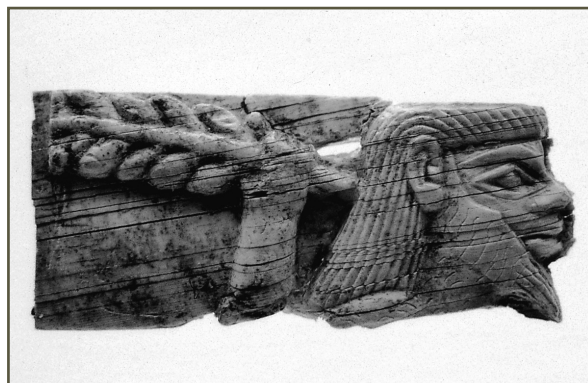
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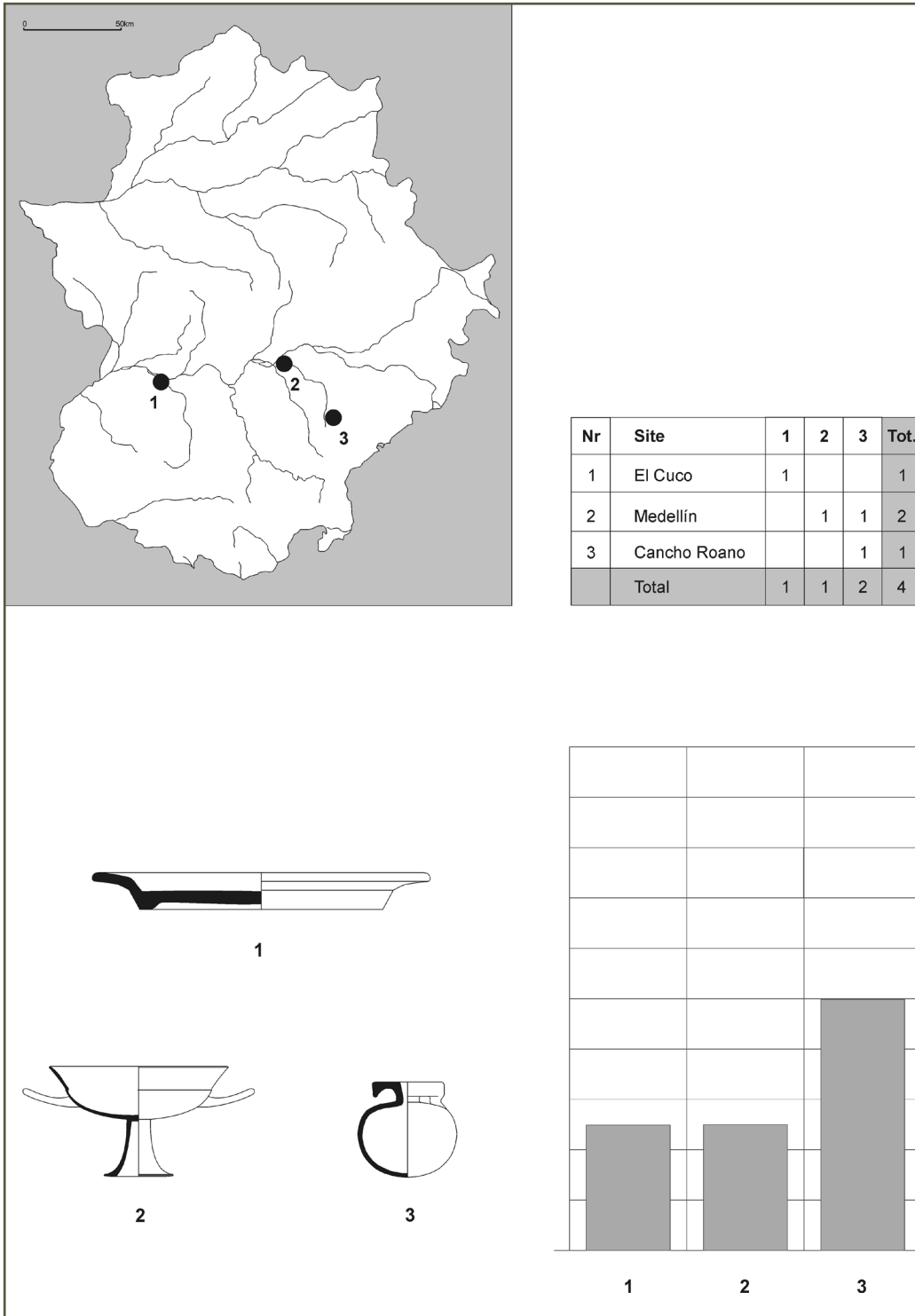
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1 - Greek Archaic Pottery from Extremadura. 1: Lip's cup of Eucheiroi from Medellín (Badajoz); 2: Attic plate from Guadajira; 3: Corinthian arybalos from Medellín; 4: Naucratic arybalos from Cancho Roano (Maluquer 1984)



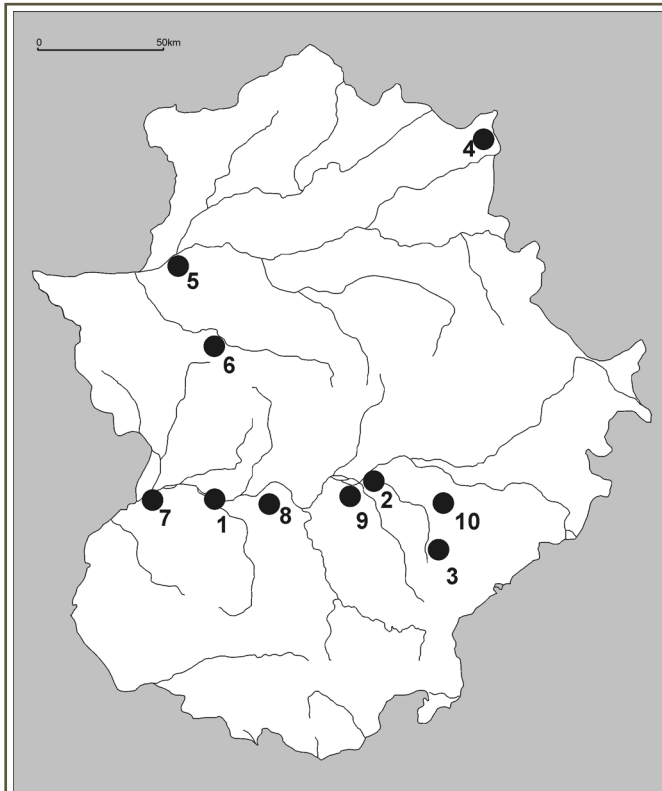
2.- Engraved Ivory plate showing a beard Centaur from El Turuñuelo de Mérida.



3.- Archaic Phase (6th Century BC): Distribution, typological repertory and diagram of frequencies.

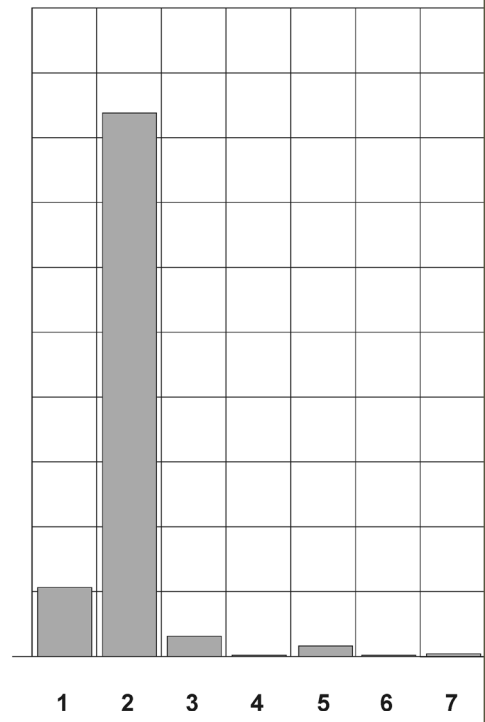
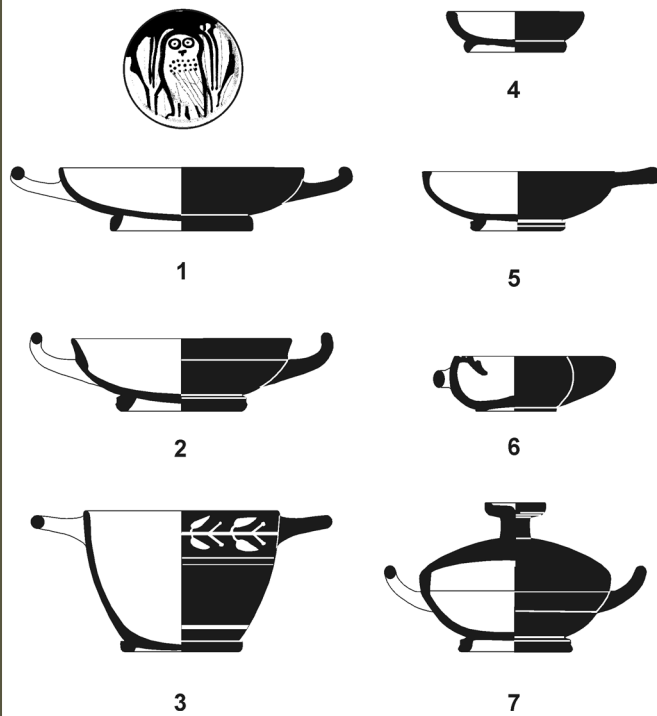


4.- Greek 5<sup>th</sup> Century Pottery from Extremadura. 1: selection of vases from Cancho Roano (Zalamea de la Serena, Badajoz); 2: Most useful decorative patterns on the Red-Figure cups (plain rim) from this chronological phase.

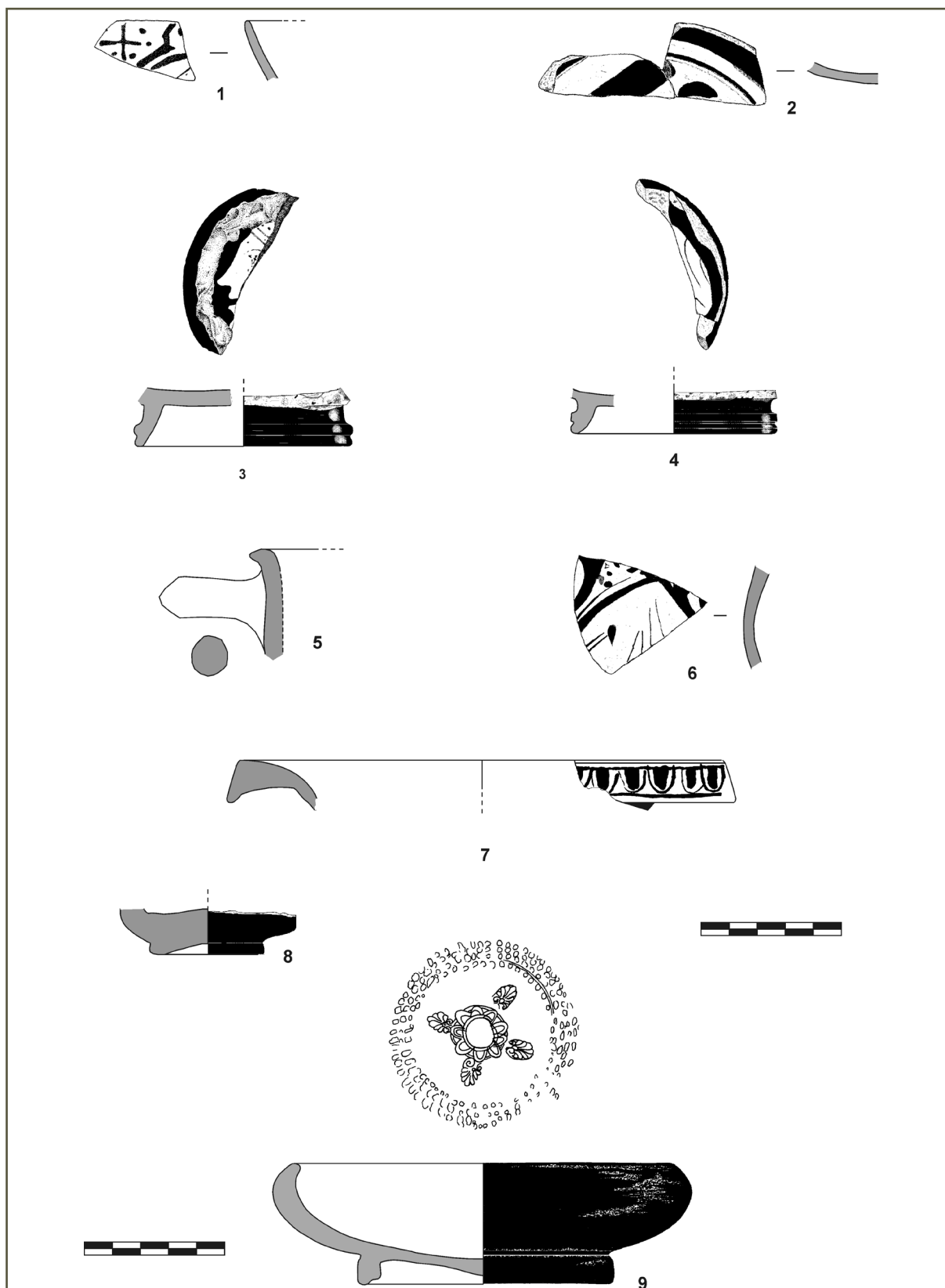


Nr	Site	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	?	Tot.
1	Guadajira								1	1
2	Medellín		4						5	9
3	C. Roano	45	375	14	1	7	1	2	n.c.	445
4	Pajares		3						1	4
5	Alcántara	1	1						2	4
6	Aliseda		1							1
7	Badajoz		3						1	4
8	T. Mérida		2							2
9	T. Guareña	1							1	2
10	La Mata	3	5	1						9
Total		50	394	15	1	7	1	2	10	481

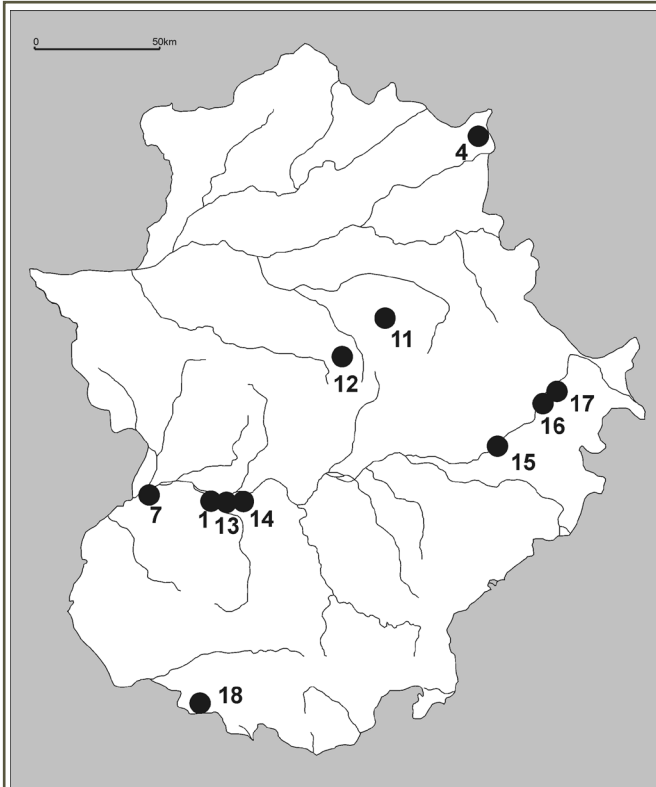
n.c.= no cuantificable



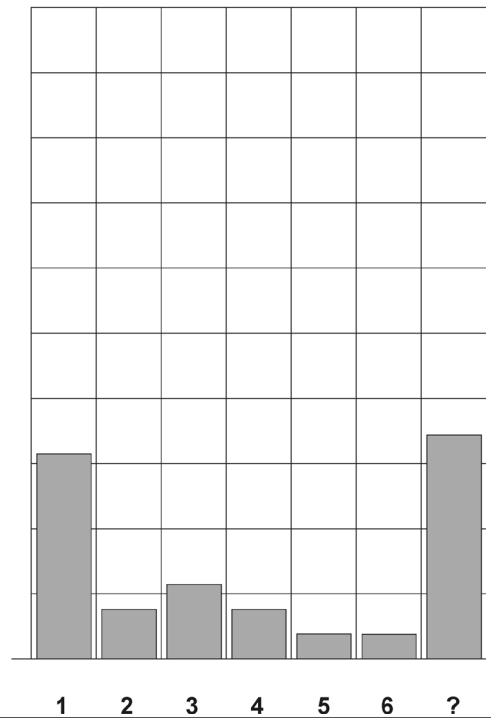
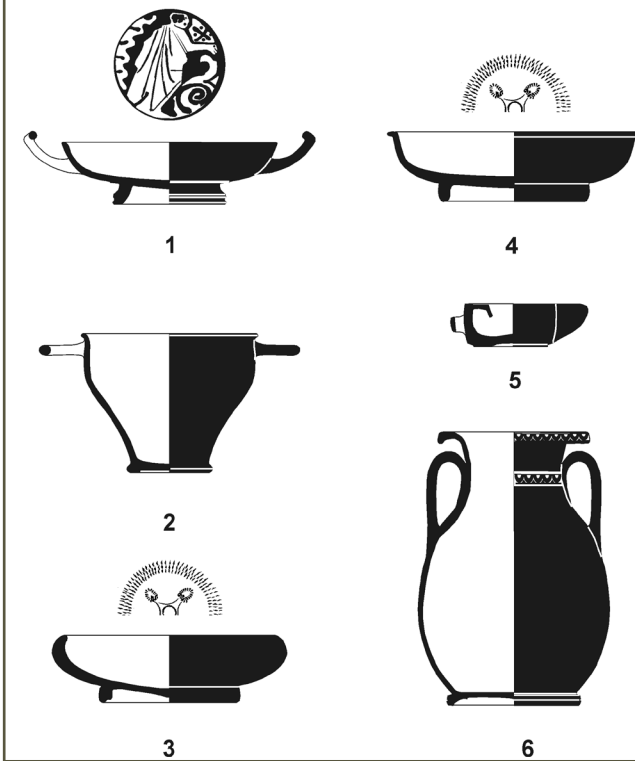
5.- Second Phase (5<sup>th</sup> Century BC): Distribution, typological repertory and frequencies diagram.



6.- Greek 4<sup>th</sup> Century Pottery from Extremadura. 1-4: Vienna-116 cups from Cogolludo (Puebla de Alcocer, Badajoz); Villasviejas del Tamuja (Botija, Cáceres); Lobón (Badajoz) and Castro de la Burra (Trujillo, Cáceres); 5-6: skiphoi from El Charro (Lobón, Badajoz) and Botija; 7: Pelice from Lobon (Badajoz); 8: Attic Lamp from Capote (Higuera la Real, Badajoz); 9 Incurving rim bowl from El Jardal (Herrera del Duque, Badajoz).



Nr	Site	1	2	3	4	5	6	?	Tot.
1	El Cuco	1		2				1	4
4	Pajares				1				1
7	Badajoz				1			4	5
11	La Burra	1							1
12	Botija	3	1					1	5
13	Lobón	1					1		2
14	El Charro		1						1
15	Cogolludo	1							1
16	La Barca							1	1
17	El Jardal			1					1
18	Capote	1				1		2	4
<b>Total</b>		<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>26</b>



7.- Third Phase (4<sup>th</sup> Century BC): Distribution, typological repertory and frequencies diagram.