

GEOCHEMICAL FINGERPRINTING OF ROMAN POTTERY PRODUCTION FROM MANTA ROTA KILNS (SOUTHERN PORTUGAL)

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The Roman site of Manta Rota, located in Algarve region, Portugal, is known from the XIXth century when Estacio da Veiga recovered a few pottery fragments and identified the foundations of Roman structures. References in early XXth century refer to a pottery kiln and to the remains of both amphorae and lamps.

In 1992, emergency excavations directed by Cristina Garcia excavated a structure identified as a kiln and recovered abundant amphorae fragments of a locally produced Dressel 14 type. There is evidence of production of tiles, common ware and amphora. The study of the remains collected (terra sigillata and amphorae) in the excavations shows that Roman occupation of the site covers a period from the middle of the 1st century until the 5th century AD. The major production of the kiln area was the Dressel 14 fish sauce amphora centered in the middle/second half of the 1st century but the production of Almagro 51c is also attested. A preliminary macroscopic analysis of both the amphorae and the common ware show identical features. The aim of this paper is to present chemical characterization of the production of Manta Rota and to compare the results with different workshops in the Algarve region as Quinta do Lago, near Faro or S. Bartolomeu de Castro Marim, in the proximity of the studied area, in order to establish geochemical fingerprints of Manta Rota ceramic production center.

Preliminary results point to a fine geochemical differentiation of the Manta Rota ceramics in comparison with the other two roman production centers of Algarve region.