

Throughout 2011 and 2012, RG **Archaeology and Spaces in Medieval and Modern Times** will develop the Centre's strategic course of action (archaeological investigation, the creation of theoretical and methodological tools for research, heritage study and promotion and the internationalization of research) with the following course of action for work and scientific activities:

- The Transition between Late Antiquity and the Islamic period. Continuity will be given to research in conjunction with the RG Archaeology of Lusitania: structures and dynamics. The results of the research will be made known by means of an international scientific meeting to be organized by Santiago Macias and Virgílio Lopes in Mértola in 2012, and also by various publications.

- Territories, borders, cultural identities and cultural inheritance in the Medieval and Modern period. Historical-archaeological investigation into border identities dating from Late Antiquity to the Modern period will continue to be developed in this course of action, with special emphasis on research being developed at Moura Castle.

- Archaeology and the Lower Marca territory – between the Douro and Tejo rivers, the border area (8th to 13th century). The study of the settlement strategies and the models for the organization of the territory between the 8th and 13th centuries, will continue to be analyzed in this course of action, especially the development of Coimbra and its relationships with the surrounding territories.

- Urban Topography – The city of Mértola. Special relevance in the study of the city of Mértola will be given to analysis of the historic evolution of Mértola's outskirts, on the one hand, and its functions throughout the centuries, whilst on the other hand, systematic archaeological excavations will be taken up once more in the citadel area, the Alcáçova. The task of making the results known to the general public will be channeled via the creation of a museum at the Beira Rio Guest house, focusing on the historic development of the riverside outskirts in Mértola.

- Funeral archaeology. Collaboration with the Anthropological and Health Research Centre at Coimbra University will continue throughout 2011 and 2012. Amongst the activities to be developed, the most important is the computerization and systemization of existing information on Mértola's burial grounds.

- Islamic ceramics in the Mediterranean – Continuity will be given to the project involving the systemization of the Gharb al-Ândalus Islamic ceramics (CIGA) which is being expanded to include the western territories in Spain. The collaboration of researchers from Spain, the U.K. and France working in these areas is counted upon. Continuity will also be given to the studies of particularly significant collections, especially the study of ceramics found on various excavations of archaeological sites in the Alentejo, as yet unpublished. Four main tasks of promoting this work will be carried out: open courses on "Ceramics from the al-Ândalus", the organization of the Xth International Congress on Medieval Ceramics in the Mediterranean, the scientific commission for the exhibition "Signs of Daily Life" by Susana Gómez Martínez and the development of activities on this theme for children and young people.

- Ethno-Archaeology. In this area, continuity will be given to research work on the rural Mediterranean way of life of Mértola's countryside community, via the case study of Cerro das Oliveiras, and also to research on rural architecture in the Algarve highlands, trying to give special significance to an understanding of the materials and the craft of construction, the organization of agglomerates in the territory and the specific phenomenon of the Alentejana Monte, studies being made from a multidisciplinary perspective. A new area of research related to food and the Mediterranean gastronomical heritage will be started that will give rise to an international meeting entitled "Flavours of the Mediterranean" in May 2011 and the creation of a museum of traditional food and gastronomy in Mértola.

- Language and history at the border. In this course of action, the Lexical Treasury of the border language will continue to be developed, leading to the elaboration of a dictionary of words of traditional use at the Portuguese - Spanish border, as well as the publication of the 3rd revised and enlarged electronic bibliography of language and history at the border.

On the editorial side, continuity will be given to the publication of the Medieval Archaeological Review (nº 11 and the preparation of nº 12), the publication of the minutes of the meeting "O Gharb al-Ândalus. Problems arising and new contributions concerning ceramics" and those of the "CEAUCP researchers meeting", plus the preparation of various papers namely, "Archaeological excavations in Moura Castle" by Santiago Macias, the re-edition of "Mértola Mosque-Parish Church" various catalogues from the different parts of Mértola museum (The Roman Museum, the riverside outskirts, the food museum etc)

Another of the group's aims is the creation and strengthening of infrastructures to support research, especially by means of improvement to the library at Mértola's archaeological site, CAM, incorporating Professor José Mattoso's bibliographic collection and enlarging its availability on the Internet, reinforcement of equipment in the laboratories at CAM and the creation of work space and accommodation for researchers and trainees.

Furthermore, the group wants to strengthen its activity in advanced training, by means of supervising and co-supervising theses in various universities, developing open courses with specializations, the Masters course on the Medieval Islamic Mediterranean organized in partnership with the universities of Coimbra, Lisbon, Évora and the Algarve and Mértola's archaeological site, and by promoting the creation of an Inter University Erasmus Mundus PhD organized by the Universities of Coimbra, the Algarve, Granada, Paris and Marrakech.