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From *splendidissima ciuitas* to *oppidum labens*: Financial Problems and Material Ruin in Roman Provincial Cities at the End of the High-Empire. The Hispanic Provinces.

Panel 8.7

Javier Andreu Pintado (Ed.)

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Edited by

Martin Bentz and Michael Heinzelmann

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PREFACE

On behalf of the 'Associazione Internazionale di Archaeologica Classica (AIAC)' the 19th International Congress for Classical Archaeology took place in Cologne and Bonn from 22 to 26 May 2018. It was jointly organized by the two Archaeological Institutes of the Universities of Cologne and Bonn, and the primary theme of the congress was 'Archaeology and Economy in the Ancient World'. In fact, economic aspects permeate all areas of public and private life in ancient societies, whether in urban development, religion, art, housing, or in death.

Research on ancient economies has long played a significant role in ancient history. Increasingly in the last decades, awareness has grown in archaeology that the material culture of ancient societies offers excellent opportunities for studying the structure, performance, and dynamics of ancient economic systems and economic processes. Therefore, the main objective of this congress was to understand economy as a central element of classical societies and to analyze its interaction with ecological, political, social, religious, and cultural factors. The theme of the congress was addressed to all disciplines that deal with the Greco-Roman civilization and their neighbouring cultures from the Aegean Bronze Age to the end of Late Antiquity.

The participation of more than 1.200 scholars from more than 40 countries demonstrates the great response to the topic of the congress. Altogether, more than 900 papers in 128 panels were presented, as were more than 110 posters. The publication of the congress is in two stages: larger panels are initially presented as independent volumes, such as this publication. Finally, at the end of the editing process, all contributions will be published in a joint conference volume.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all participants and helpers of the congress who made it such a great success. Its realization would not have been possible without the generous support of many institutions, whom we would like to thank once again: the Universities of Bonn and Cologne, the Archaeological Society of Cologne, the Archaeology Foundation of Cologne, the Gerda Henkel Foundation, the Fritz Thyssen Foundation, the Sal. Oppenheim Foundation, the German Research Foundation (DFG), the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the Romano-Germanic Museum Cologne and the LVR-LandesMuseum Bonn. Finally, our thanks go to all colleagues and panel organizers who were involved in the editing and printing process.

Bonn/Cologne, in August 2019

Martin Bentz & Michael Heinzelmann

Rome: an Empire of Cities and a Sustainable Model of Urbanism? Preface

Aitor Blanco-Pérez

In the reign of Antoninus Pius, Rome was praised by Aelius Aristides for having created the conditions, in which the cities of its Empire "shine with splendour and grace, and the whole earth is adorned like a garden".[1] For the Mysian rhetor, this reality was obvious on account of the "*gymnasia*, fountains, *propylea*, temples, artistic works and schools of art"[2] populating provinces such as Asia, which, according to him, did not compare to any other region of the world in the number and size of its *poleis*.[3] Across the Greek East, indeed, many of these vast urban networks had a long tradition, with roots predating the Roman occupation and a civic culture based on Hellenistic ideals such as philanthropy and euergetism.[4] The Asian Aelius Aristides, however, was not only mesmerised by the continuity of this model sustained by competitiveness,[5] but also extolled the Romans for having educated and transformed non-Greeks into a civic population under their rule.[6]

Few places in the Roman Empire illustrate this transformation better than the Iberian Peninsula. Since its conquest, Hispania underwent a profound process of urbanisation that reached its climax with the grant of the *ius Latii* by Vespasian in the second half of the 1st century AD.[7] This imperial decision did not only impact the political organisation of the settlements, but also promoted new ambitious programmes of monumentalisation in the region. The present volume seeks to analyse whether the transformative nature of such changes was robust enough to survive the unfavourable circumstances that affected Roman rule between the end of the high Imperial period and the beginning of Late Antiquity.

The Roman Empire is commonly regarded as an "empire of cities". This concept, however, should be linked not only to the multiplication of urban centres, but also to the creation of civic structures that oversaw political life and fiscal productivity in the territories assigned to those centres. From the early stages of the Principate, there was a clear tendency to favour the promotion of communities with different degrees of autonomy and local elites, on which the Roman provincial control could be based. The provinces of Hispania participated of this balance between local self-government and central power, constituting a reality, in which the functionality of the model can be assessed.[8] Likewise, the provincialisation of the Iberian Peninsula after Augustus is rather unique with the universal extension of Latin rights in the Flavian period mentioned above. Vespasian's grant affected both areas already reasonably urbanised such as *Baetica* and those in the inner *Tarraconensis*, where the effects of the new system of political organisation could be even more intense.[9] A key concept in this process is that of *municipium*, a term with a complex history and etymology that entailed a status promotion for the majority of settlements in Hispania under Roman provincial administration.[10]

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Municipia were, above all, political communities regulated by a set of constitutional rules favoured by Rome and privileged with a certain degree of autonomy. The implications of this model of local organisation can actually be illustrated by its spread in the Iberian Peninsula and the production of bronze tablets in which the new constitutions were precisely carved. Documents such as the *lex* of the *municipium* of *Irni* (southern Spain) contain more than 90 chapters detailing a broad range of aspects, from the election of magistrates to the celebration of religious ceremonies, financial issues, courts procedures and, very significantly, the acquisition of Roman citizenship by those –the *decuriones*– reaching the highest political positions.[11] While a letter sent by Domitian and appended to the end of the *lex Irnitana* reveals that the local population was still struggling to fulfill all the marriage restrictions imposed by the new charter some years after its publication, the Roman emperor warned about his refusal for future indulgencies; in other words, he was confirming the necessity to comply with the laws of the *municipium*.[12] The general grant of the *ius Latii* to Hispania can, therefore, be perceived both as an act of status promotion with no precedents in other provinces of the Empire and as a challenge to many local communities that needed to quickly adapt to the impositions of the new civic model. For example, those aspiring to political offices first needed to provide pecuniary contributions (*summa honoraria*) and sureties (*cautiones*) before holding positions that required further contributions (*munitiones*).[13] The social costs of such positions could also be high,[14] and the risks of balancing the budget were always present particularly in small municipalities with meagre financial means.[15]

Against this background, the embassies that the Flavian *municipia* of *Sabora* and *Munigua* sent to Vespasian and Titus should be understood.[16] Despite the highly rhetorical tone employed in these diplomatic missions,[17] both documents reveal the difficulties that the recent promotion of status posed not only in terms of political organisation but also as regards the construction of the facilities in which such civic obligations could be undertaken. Vespasian, for instance, allowed the magistrates and decurions of *Sabora* to build an *oppidum* under his name following their request. The excavations conducted in many of the new Spanish municipalities have equally shown a significant increase in monumentalisation projects completed between the end of the 1st and the beginning of the 2nd centuries AD.[18] The same archaeological evidence, however, points towards the reuse and abandonment of some of these constructions at the end of the Antonine dynasty and, particularly, during the 3rd century.[19] Public areas could be usurped for private use; something contrary to the Roman civic order,[20] and many urban centres on the Iberian Peninsula suffered episodes of dismantling leading to the *deformatio ruinis*.[21]

This period between the high Imperial period and Late Antiquity was not only challenging for the provinces of Hispania but for Roman rule as a whole. The historian Cassius Dio famously described the reign of Commodus as the start of "an age of iron and rust",[22] when the Empire had already been affected by a mortal plague and wars that depleted fiscal surpluses.[23] Inflation ensued, military conflicts did not cease and the many

emperors struggled to guarantee the conditions, under which Roman urbanisation had previously managed to flourish according to Aelius Aristides. In this context, the *Historia Augusta* reports the existence of *oppida labentia*,[24] *ciuitates intermortuae* appear in the epigraphy,[25] and juridical sources document increasing episodes of people abandoning their civic obligations.[26]

It is under such circumstances that the real robustness of the system of *municipia* as self-governing bodies in Hispania should be assessed. In contrast to the Asian metropolis, where Aelius Aristides resided, the model of political communities present on the Iberian peninsula after the Flavians did not stem from Hellenistic traditions, and can principally be attributed to a Roman imperial policy of urbanisation. While Rome could barely sustain its power, could this system be sustainable? Would the *municipes* of Hispania still be willing to contribute to their local obligations when Roman citizenship was not such a distinctive honour after Caracalla's *Constitutio Antoniniana*? Was there any point in maintaining the public *splendor* enshrined in the Roman legislation?[27] To tackle such important questions, a project was launched by Javier Andreu at the University of Navarra with the support of the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Innovation and the papers presented in this volume are, essentially, a result of these investigations.

The reader will find in it contributions by Prof. Andreu on the financial problems and material ruin of *splendidissimae ciuitates* that could become *oppida labentia*. Along the same lines, David Espinosa seeks to explore the ideological and institutional causes that may have led to the urban crisis evidenced by the archaeological materials of some *municipia* of Hispania in the 3rd century AD. Luis Romero Novella focuses on one of the settlements central to the research project, Los Bañales (Uncastillo, Zaragoza), and analyses the remodelling and reuse of the forum area in the same period. Conversely, Diego Romero takes on walls, streets and sewers as signs of the urban endurance of Roman Spain in the 2nd century and compares the evidence of settlements from *Baetica*, *Lusitania* and the *Citerior* regions. Tamara Peñalver presents the site of *Lucentum* (Alicante) as a case study to investigate whether the decline of many public areas was also mirrored in domestic spaces and, in particular, in a city that was promoted to municipal status by Augustus. Finally, Clara Forn, Pepita Padrós and Jacinto Sánchez's paper is centred on the evolution of *Baetulo* (Badalona) from its foundation as a *municipium* in the Augustan age to the appearance of signs of crisis in the archaeological records of the city.

Such a combination of specific analysis and general questions aims to offer an approach into issues, which are fundamental for understanding the continuities and changes of Roman urbanism on the Iberian Peninsula between the high Imperial period and the beginning of Late Antiquity. Each of the papers is therefore not only concerned with evidence for the possible scenarios of a general crisis, but also includes discussions about the sustainability of the system in general. The reader will likewise be able to comprehend the challenges faced by the civic communities of Hispania and question whether the model particularly consolidated during the Flavian period managed to stay in place with stable institutions and the political commitment of the local population. As result, the study of Roman Hispania both before and after the mid-2nd century AD

can have implications in the success of Rome as the power, which, recalling Aelius Aristides, educated its subjects to become civic communities, adorned with monuments and competing against each for splendour rather than survival.

Notes

[1] Arist., Orat. 26, 99.

[2] Arist., Orat. 26, 97.

[3] Arist., Orat. 23, 8. Philostr. VS. 2, 548 stated the exaggerated number of 500 cities, also found in Josephus BJ II.6.4 (p. 366). Pliny the elder in the books IV and V of Historia Naturalis counts 176 settlements between Asia and southern Anatolia and, likewise, Ptolemy's Geographia just records 140. See, most recently, Hanson 2011.

[4] See Gauthier 1985 and Gygax 2016.

[5] Arist., Orat. 26, 97: "All the other rivalries have ceased, the only strife that remains for each of the cities is the following: to look the most beautiful and pleasant".

[6] Arist., Orat. 26, 96.

[7] Plin., Nat. 3, 30.

[8] Rodríguez Neila & Melchor 2006.

[9] Espinosa 2014.

[10] García Fernández 2001, 125–180 and Andreu 2004.

[11] See D'Ors 1986 and González – Crawford 1986.

[12] Irn. 98, 33–43: conubia conprehensa quaedam lege Lati scio et / postea aliqua si quit sollicitudo vestra indi/cat parum considerate coisse quibus in prae/teritum veniam do in futurum exigo me/mineritis legis cum iam omnes indulgen/tiae partes consumatae sint litterae datae.

[13] See Mentxaka 1993, 123–144.

[14] Duncan-Jones 1990, 161

[15] Corbier 1985 and Alföldy 1998, 18.

[16] CIL II2/5, 871 (77 AD); AE 1962, 288 (79 AD).

[17] See Blanco-Pérez 2019.

[18] Brassous 2015, 287.

[19] Melchor 2009.

[20] Dig. 43,8,1. 17; 50,10,5; Cod. Iust. 8,12,14. 17.

[21] See Irn. 62 [cf. Dig. 43,10,2. 17]. See Diarte-Blasco 2012.

[22] Cass. Dio 72, 33.

[23] See Lo Cascio and Potter 2004.

[24] SHA. Marc. 23

[25] CIL III, 352. See Arce 2015.

[26] Dig. 50, 2, 8. 50, 4, 2. 50, 5, 9; Cod. Iust. 10, 31.

[27] Dig. 50, 4, 6.

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From *splendidissima ciuitas* to *oppidum labens*: on the Causes of the Financial Problems and Material Ruin of Roman Provincial Cities at the End of the High-Empire*

Javier Andreu Pintado

Abstract

As literary sources sometime recalls the end of the 2nd century AD was a very complex and hard time for provincial administration and for the urban life and its development, at least in the West. The Roman provinces of Spain, which years before have been granted with the benefit of Latin Right by Vespasian and with many municipalities working there from the second half of the 1st century AD, offers to scholars a very remarkable area, in which the problems of the municipal model can be analyzed. According to archaeological evidence, this paper summarizes the main causes of the weakness and crisis of small and medium-size Roman *municipia* of Spain, trying to offer, also, a theoretical model for a better understanding of this complex process with local and general causes involved as well as circumstancial and structural problems of the municipium as model of local administration.

Over the past few years, there has been renewed interest in Roman urban life, at least in Hispania, not only from an archaeological point of view but above all from an historical and even legal perspective. Since the mid-1990s,[1] the city has become a preeminent field of analysis, from which to obtain information on the most significant historical processes of Rome, in both the complex times of the Republic and the more stable political and administrative reality of the High Empire. The works that have been published on monumentalisation, the prime movers behind this process[2] and the attention being paid lately to the phenomenon of euergetism,[3] the economic foundations of urban reality[4] and the keys to its legal functioning[5] thus evince this.

In this context, over the past five years and at least from the perspective of the Iberian Peninsula, there has been a tendency to favour a vision of the evolution of the urban phenomenon, which, to a certain extent, has broken with the traditional conception (fig. 1). The latter – excessively dependent on literary texts and historical accounts of events that, as is known, were complex – associates the end of the Roman-style urban world with a series of historical developments, the majority, of which took place as from the second half of the 3rd century AD, and, which have traditionally fallen into the historiographical category of the so-called 'crisis of the 3rd century AD'.[6]

According to this traditional vision, the ruin of some western cities would have been due to invasions – which, in turn, would have led to the process of fortifying or castellating many urban centres between the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 4th century –, to the economic woes and financial straits of the Roman state at the time, and also to the

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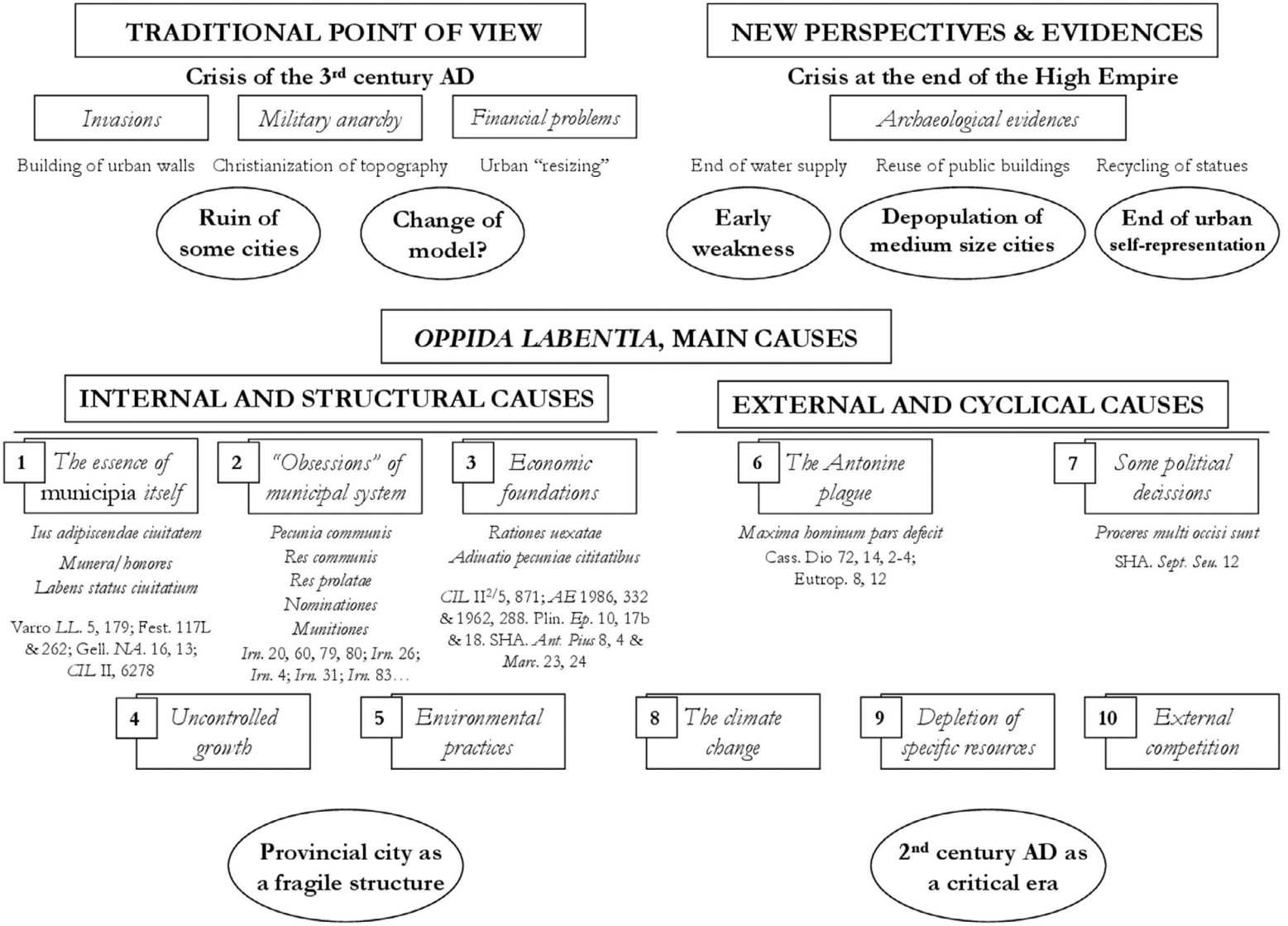

Fig. 1: Cities in decline at the end of the High-Empire: general approach.

effects of the well-documented military anarchy. The subsequent influence of Christianity, furthermore, with the consequent Christianisation of the urban topography,[7] would have ultimately resulted in a dual process, in which some cities would have become depopulated and impoverished in the critical 3rd-century context, while others would have been reshaped[8] producing the often-invoked 'change of model' in the late antique city, radically different from its high-imperial forerunner, and, on which we have already expressed our doubts in a previous work.[9]

This new perspective, founded on the confirmation of the chronological parameters of the archaeological material record,[10] has blamed the crisis and the transformation of many of those urban centres on processes that began to be felt at the end of the High Empire, thus endorsing, in this sense, Cassius Dio's poetical account of the transition of the Roman Empire, following the reign of Commodus, from a golden age to another of iron and rust.[11] If, in the traditional view, the invasions, the military anarchy and the tax pressure were presented as the manifestations and, at the same time, the causes of the phenomenon, with this new perspective other evidence, all of which has been clearly substantiated in excavations of ancient urban centres of different legal statuses and populations, point to a process of urban transformation that might have even begun in the Antonine period. Namely, the symptoms of economic, financial and political weakness evinced in some Hispanic communities as from the end of the Flavian period, the progressive depopulation and abandonment of some medium-sized communities and, lastly, a decline in the local elites' self-representation habit can now be understood as key phenomena with which to explain the material transformations, of which we are gradually gaining a better understanding thanks to archaeological excavations.[12]

The shutting down of urban water supply systems, the reuse or drastic change in the function of some public buildings, and the process of abandoning and recycling of official sculptural programmes are thus clear indicators of the lack of incentives in 2nd-century cities. It should not be forgotten, though, that it is impossible to talk about a widespread phenomenon all over the west. For any analysis of this process the local and regional dynamics should be taken into account by treating each urban centre as if it were a microcosm, in which it is essential to consider elements such as its legal status, its connectivity, its exploitation of resources, its economic activity, and the *potentia* and involvement of its elites, etc.,[13] as some of the following contributions indeed do.

Since both perspectives – the traditional and the most recent and novel – share the notion of the city as a juridical and political reality with precarious and, therefore, redundant foundations, it may be held that they have also denied the general value of historical processes and their necessary study based on an analysis of local casuistry. From both viewpoints, the provincial city has been presented as a remarkably fragile economic reality and the period prior to the years of the 'crisis of the 3rd century' has been determined as a critical age of changes, doubtless very attractive for researchers.

In light of the above, and as will be appreciated in the issues and cases addressed following this general approach and overview, the focus of the discussion should now shift towards

a reality poetically described in the *Historia Augusta* and in the Latin juridical epigraphy at the end of the 1st and at the beginning of the 2nd century AD, specifically the *oppida labentia*,[14] viz. cities in decline. While taking into consideration the phenomenon's unequal territorial impact, its causes should be identified, determining whether these were internal and structural or external and cyclic or of a one-off nature, without logically ruling out – as has been suggested recently – that both types of causes might have intervened in the decline of the urban system, as it had been known since the progressive spread of the Roman way of life in the Augustan age, or, in some cases, in its radical disappearance.

Of that set of causes and dynamics – which may seem like fertile ground for speculation, but in which we have no choice but to delve (fig. 1) – it is possible, to our mind, to single out 10 main ones: five relating to the structural causes, deriving from the very idea of the city and its own problems, and the other five to external and transitory processes that might possibly have been more destructive as from the second half of the 2nd century AD. The legal essence of the municipal model, its juridical obsessions and economic foundations, the material growth of many urban centres after having been legally promoted to municipal status and the environmental practices of many of them – the majority of which were, moreover, inherent to the Roman ideal of a provincial city – could be regarded as structural causes that might have impeded to such an extent the upkeep of the amenities and features of urban life of the High-Empire.

For their part, the effects of the Antonine plague, some political decisions of a general scope, the climate changes experienced during the reign of Marcus Aurelius, with their respective agricultural and, therefore, economic consequences, the depletion of certain resources, and the phenomenon of interurban rivalry number among the cyclic causes that, particularly felt in the mid-2nd century AD, might have been behind the process that transformed the ideal of *splendidissima ciuitas* – which the local elites contributed to dignify and monumentalise – into another much more convoluted but equally attractive one. Namely, that of the aforementioned *oppida labentia*, which, among other things, was characterised by a change in mentality of the local elites, now more, focused, as from the beginning of the 3rd century AD, on exhibiting their wealth in a personal, and essentially rural, context than on its socialisation in the urban setting.[15]

In the Hispanias, as explained in one of the contributions of this panel, it was during the reign of Augustus, perhaps from a more material perspective, and the Flavian period, from a completely juridical one, when urban life flourished most.[16] With the *ius Latii* decreed by Vespasian, the *ius adipiscendae ciuitatem per magistratum* – namely, the granting of Roman citizenship to those who became officials in their respective *municipia* – became a tool for accrediting and adapting the functioning of communities extraneous to Roman law.[17] However, that privilege, based on the perception of political activity as a *honos*, was associated with a series of *munera*, namely, the personal rendering of services by candidates, which apparently was only possible during the years of economic prosperity for the local elites and which, nonetheless, led to a *labens status*, according to the *epistula* of *Italica* (CIL II, 6278) and the progressive political absenteeism of many members of the ruling classes.

It is true that in some places there was still evidence of curiae, *decuriones* and, therefore, magistrates, in the second half of the 3rd century AD.[18] But as was argued many years ago, the ruin of many of these cities that had embraced the Roman legal system by obtaining municipal status was preceded by the local elites' disengagement.[19] For the *municipia Latina* was, to a certain degree, an extraordinarily voluntarist model, in which local initiative was given free rein, thus converting it, or not, into the guarantor of its own success.

In this connection, a detailed study of the most frequent topics envisaged in the legislation that articulated the functioning of these communities[20] – the well-known *leges* of *Salpensa* and, especially, of *Malaca* and of *Irni* (CIL II, 1963, 1964 and AE 1986, 332) – enables us to perceive the extent, to which the imperial administration itself conceived these centres as potential 'shooting stars' that had to meet a number of requirements, which, in view of the fact they often appear in Roman legal documents on bronze, could practically be described as obsessions. These obligations included the sustainability, growth and management of the municipal budget (*pecunia communis municipum*); the protection and promotion of the common weal (*res communis municipum*); the need to adapt the complex management of public affairs to an eminently agricultural calendar, for farming was the social base of the local elites and, therefore, of many Hispanic municipal communities (*res prolatae*); the need to co-opt, forcibly in necessary, candidates for the magistracies (*nominationes*) and, in particular, the decurionate, in the eventuality of a shortfall in the number stipulated by law; and, lastly, the need to make municipal manpower available for providing specific services on a regular basis (*munitiones*) all meant that the voluntarism characterising the makeup of the political cadres in charge of municipal management was forced onto to the civic body, both the *municipes* and the *incolae*.

To that list of shortcomings, which must have surely posed a threat to the smooth political running of many communities of municipal status, should apparently be added a series of problems that exacerbated, if possible, the model's demands and which, in many cases, made themselves felt at moments when the unique or cyclic circumstances, which we will examine later, were at their most virulent.[21] Firstly, thanks to early literary documents – especially the correspondence of Pliny the Younger[22] – we are fully aware of the massive outlays and the equally strenuous financial efforts that many communities in Asia Minor had to make to furnish themselves with – some maybe unnecessary – infrastructures that gave them *dignitas* but whose construction and subsequent upkeep were certainly demanding from both a technical and economic point of view. There are many accounts in the *Historia Augusta* about the financial support, with which the emperor necessarily had to provide many indebted communities.[23] This was a very grave matter when bearing in mind that, as already noted, the economic foundations of the communities in question were of an essentially primary nature. In this respect, determining the financial commitment and the sources of wealth of the cities affected by these processes of urban transformation is a key challenge if we want to know whether the phenomenon of the *rationes uexatae*, described by Pliny, was merely the result of uncontrolled growth or due to the problematic – or, at least, deficient – procurement of resources.

In many cases, to these political requirements the material demands per se must be added, in our opinion, that were linked to the very idea of the high-imperial city.[24] Both when the model of the *ciuitas* became widespread during the reign of Augustus and those of the first emperors of the Julius Claudius dynasty, and during its legal development in the Flavian period, cities undertook vast building projects, which, in part, were not only a consequence of the political demands discussed above (curiae, forums, etc.), but also in part the result of the desire of these urban centres to feel that they belonged to that great city-planning *oikoumene* engendered by Rome.[25] As has been frequently highlighted, the endeavours of the local elites to make the clearly indigenous ancient cityscapes meet the minimum—symbolic and practical¬—standards of Rome must have plunged local communities and their magistrates deeply in debt, obliging, in fact, municipal legislation to guarantee the upkeep and caretaking of buildings that were as spectacular as they were costly. In this regard, over the past few years, attention has been drawn, from the perspective of landscape studies, to the not always sustainable environmental practices of many of these provincial Roman cities and to the environmental impact that their economic and leisure activities[26] might have had. Albeit unexplored, this issue might have been behind the ruin and abandonment of many provincial communities in the peninsula's interior.

As a matter of fact, in daily political decision-making, in the functioning of the executive bodies, in the establishment of annual budgets and spending limits and in the maintenance of a series of minimum standards of urban comfort and architectural dignity, the foundations underpinning communities granted Roman municipal status must often have been shaky and fragile. These wobbly structural foundations could be shaken, as is only logical, by specific circumstances of an occasional or cyclic nature – mostly emerging in the second half of the 2nd century BC, some of which had already done so before although on a less intense scale.

Although it is impossible to gauge its real impact, the Antonine plague, on the one hand – which led to the death of most of mankind, as Eutropius dramatically puts it[27] – and the state repression of the revolt in favour of Clodius Albinus, on the other, could have been behind the massive depopulation of certain cities either because of the loss of their inhabitants or as a result of the curtailment of their privileges or the purging of their proceres.[28] Although these types of reasons have been invoked as causes of the early ruin of two well-known Hispano-Roman communities, namely, *Labitolosa* (La Puebla de Castro, Huesca) and Torreparedones (Baena, Cordova),[29] the documentary evidence that allows us to confirm these – at any rate, plausible – claims is far from being categorical.

It is therefore desirable that further studies be performed that enable us to determine what might have been the main and secondary causes – for it is clear that there was not just one – behind the processes described here. The same applies to the matter of climate change witnessed as from the reign of Marcus Aurelius, which would have led to a severe drought resulting in the destruction of the economic and agricultural foundations of many western communities. Admittedly, the crisis of the cities must have had economic roots,

for, as has been seen, they were also obsessed with the management of their budgets and with safeguarding the public coffers. It is possible that a process such as climate change did indeed accelerate this decline, but it should be recalled that, in many cases, it seems that Rome subjected the *territoria* of these cities to such an intense process of exploitation that this might have depleted specific resources or, at least, have made their exploitation more profitable in the countryside.

The process of *aemulatio* that many cities, vying with other neighbouring urban centres – some of which are covered in the following contributions – had experienced for centuries might have also resulted in an early selection of communities, thus reshaping the peninsula's urban map and allowing only those cities with wealthier elites and more diverse resources, which ultimately might have received external financial support as well – either from the Roman administration or, later on, from the Church – to survive a process that carried away a large number of them. In any event, archaeological research still allows us to catch glimpses of a greatness that, on many occasions, as we are seeing – and as some of the following case studies reveal – contained the seed of their own ruin.

Notes

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[1] Bendala 1993; Dupré 1993.

[2] Horster 2002.

[3] Melchor 1994; Goffin 2002.

[4] Le Roux 1999.

[5] Pereira 2011, with literature.

[6] Bravo 2012, with literature.

[7] Kulikowski 2004; Diarte 2018.

[8] Witschel 2009, with literature and discussion.

[9] Andreu forthcoming.

[10] Vaquerizo et al. 2014; Ramallo – Quevedo 2014; Brassous – Quevedo 2015.

[11] Cass. Dio 71, 36.

[12] A compilation of some cases in Andreu 2017.

[13] Arce 2015.

[14] SHA Marc. Aur. 23, 3.

[15] Alföldy 1998; Mata 2014.

[16] Curchin 2014.

[17] García Fernández 2001.

[18] Melchor 2017.

[19] D'Ors 1953.

[20] Andreu forthcoming; Mentxaka 1993.
[21] Jongmann 2007.
[22] Plin. Ep. 10, 17, 3. 18, 3 and many others listed in the figure.
[23] SHA Ant. Pius 8, 4 & Marc. Aur. 23, 24.
[24] Ando 2014.
[25] Martín-Bueno – Sáenz 2014.
[26] Ruiz del Árbol 2017 with references.
[27] Eutrop. 8, 12.
[28] SHA. Sept. Seu. 12.
[29] Magallón – Sillières 2013, 453 f.; Ventura 2017.

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From *splendidissimae urbes* to *infirmae ciuitates*. On the Crisis of the Latin Municipal System and Its Ideological and Institutional Causes

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Abstract

This paper provides a preliminary approach to the possible causes for an ideological shift among the members of the Latin municipal elites between the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. Such change would have been a part of the internal factors, which contributed to the decline of the Latin municipal system in the western provinces. This would have translated into the material and institutional crisis of this specific kind of privileged community. To this end, written, archaeological, and epigraphic evidence from Roman towns are analysed in order to infer some signs of the ideological shift. Then, a workable model for a historical explanation is offered, focusing on the lack of institutional sustainability of the Latin municipal system.

Introduction

There is strong written, archaeological and epigraphic evidence to support the idea that between the end of the 1st century and the middle of the 2nd century AD the Latin municipal system (at least in *Hispania*) started to face serious difficulties that compromised its continuity, leading to its transformation and final decline.[2] Early signs of such process can be noticed in the *epistula Vespasiani ad Saborenses* (77 AD), *epistula Titi ad Muniguenses* (79 AD) and *epistula Domitiani* at the end of the *lex Irnitana* (91 AD).[3] With a deep historical dimension and spatial and chronological differences,[4] this crisis reveals an undeniable material nature, which, according to the archaeological data,[5] allows us to explain it through a feasible model of signs and causes.

In this respect, the decay of the urban infrastructure and architecture since the middle of the 2nd century AD in many Roman towns in *Hispania* is correlated in a number of news present in the written and epigraphic evidence, which report (this time for the Roman Empire as a whole) on the financial and administrative problems that affected certain regions.[6] Such problems have been attributed to the lack of economic and institutional sustainability of the municipal system, especially concerning the Latin municipal status.[7] The result would have been a material and institutional crisis in a large number of *municipia* (but also *coloniae*) since the end of the Nerva-Antonine dynasty, arising in some cases *infirmae ciuitates* and *oppida labentia*, which could have well deserved the consideration of *ciuitates intermortuae*.[8]

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Focusing on the Internal Factors: the Ideological Shift

The origin of the material and institutional crisis of the Latin municipal system can be traced through a number of factors that led to a weakening of the social, political, and economic fabric of the Roman towns. Depending on their type, such factors can be classified as external and internal. While the former have been identified and analysed in depth by historians on ancient Rome,[9] the latter represent a complicated challenge to researchers due to problems in their identification, as they are less obvious but equally or even more decisive than the previous ones. This difficulty is worsened if we consider that their roots were related to an ideological shift, a change of values and a variation in the interests and priorities of the municipal elites, resulting in a transformation of their civic behaviour.[10]

Signs of Ideological Shift

The starting point for establishing the possible causes of this ideological shift is to consider the signs and effects that were brought about by this change. Unlike their causes, we have information about such signs from the written and epigraphic evidence. In general, they are a series of trends, behaviours and historical phenomena, which allow us to perceive certain aspects of the ideological shift. In particular, we are referring to six key-aspects: 1) the depreciation of munificent activity and the self-representing behaviour of the traditional municipal elites, 2) the passiveness of part of these elites with regard to civic responsibilities of an administrative and religious nature, 3) the political intervention by the Imperial authorities in financial issues through *curatores rei publicae* and provincial governors, 4) the economic intervention by the Imperial authorities through financially rescuing the *pecunia communis*, 5) the recruitment of decurions and the holding of civic magistratures by *alieni, municipes* who did not have the necessary legal age, and from a low socio-economic background, 6) the prevalence of the hereditary criterion to access to the decurionate, as well as the nomination in the appointment of magistrates.[11]

These six phenomena seem to constitute obvious symptoms of a lack of interest on part of the traditional municipal elites in the public spheres and the social projection of their *merita*.[12] In some cases, such as the political and economic intervention by the Imperial authorities, they are probably indicative of negligent practices in the management of the *res publicae* by magistrates and decurions, as is well known in the eastern Roman towns.[13] In addition, following the reign of the emperor Trajan, the ruling families in *Hispania*, would have been increasingly less willing to make their social prestige visible through official sculptural programmes, or paying for public spectacles or monumental works. This seems to have been a case of neutral attitude towards municipal affairs by local elites, in the grip of an unfavourable economic situation, especially if we consider that the reason for their excessive spending (access to positions of municipal responsibility) ceased to be a priority in the mind of them in a great many cases.[14]

Both of these situations can be found in two epigraphic testimonies. The first one is the *Oratio de pretiis gladiatorum minuendis* (177/178 AD), which refers to the satisfaction felt by the priests of the imperial cult due to the measures implemented by the emperors Marcus Aurelius and Commodus. These reduced the price of the *munera gladiatoria* that they had to cover at the cost of their own personal wealth,[15] wealth, which, based on the measures adopted by Marcus Aurelius to help the situation of the *Hispani exhausti*, was not precisely in its best shape.[16] The second is an inscription from *Barcino* dated from between 161–169 AD, which contains the legacy of *L. Caecilius Optatus* to the town.[17] One of his last wishes was to pay for an annual wrestling match and oil in the public baths, while his freedmen were excused from the charges of the *seviratus*. As stipulated in the *cautio legatorum*, if any of them were required to comply with the *munera* of such *collegium*, the legacy would be passed to *Tarraco*.

Causes of Ideological Shift

It is more complicated to identify the reasons that led to this change in mentality amongst the Latin municipal elites, as there are no sources that provide us with any explicit information about them. In order to define them, we have to use the aforementioned signs of ideological shift and carry out a process of historical reflection within the framework of the existing conditions at social, legal and economic level in the Roman towns. The result is a plausible new proposal that considers the following four key aspects: 1) the acquisition of Roman citizenship *per honorem* by the local elites through the *Latium*, 2) the new forms of social and economic promotion of the romanised municipal oligarchies, 3) the disappearance of the spirit of munificent civic group amongst the Latin municipal elites, 4) the growing fear in the city due to the degradation of urban living conditions.

With regard to the first one, the quick legal romanisation of the Latin ruling families could well have encouraged, after obtaining the status *optimo iure*, a lack of interest in public duty and munificence amongst certain local elites. As demonstrated by the epigraphic evidence from the *municipia Flauia* such as *Igabrum* and *Cisimbrium*,[18] the *ius Latii* granted by Vespasian to Hispania included enjoyment of the *ius adipiscendae ciuitatis Romanae per magistratum*, a privilege that was enjoyed by the parents, wife, children and grandchildren of the former Latin magistrate, establishing in six families (one for each ordinary magistrate) the maximum number of beneficiaries per year.[19] However, we do have to accept the possibility that after this prerogative had been in effect for a couple of years, this number was reduced to four, two, and then none, due to the post of magistrate being held by citizens who had already been romanised.[20]

The effects of this *beneficium*, known as *Latium minus*, were completed and extended as a result of the final reform made to the legal framework of the Latin municipal system. Promoted by the emperor Hadrian, and known by the jurist Gaius as *Latium maius*, this consisted of granting *ciuitas Romana* to all of the *municipes Latini* who accessed the *ordo*

decurionum or, as already established by the *Latium minus*, a civic magistrature.[21] According to the available sources, this measure does not seem to have been applied generally and automatically in the *municipia Latina* of *Hispania*, but instead, as can be read between the lines from epigraphic evidence preserved in Africa,[22] it would have been introduced individually in the peregrine and previous Latin communities at their own request.[23] In the case of the Hispanian *municipia Flauia*, it seems quite likely that they could have benefited from it, considering an inscription in the *municipium Latinum* of *Ilugo* in which can be read *conditor* or *restitutor municipii*.[24] This would have brought about an accelerated rate of romanisation amongst the Latin municipal elites (some of which, as in the case of *Ilugo*, took the *nomen Aelius*),[25] and may have contributed towards an increased number of dignitaries who were uninterested in holding local government posts once they had obtained the Roman citizenship.

In the case of the second one, obtaining the Roman citizenship and having significant wealth to meet the required levels would have allowed the members of the Latin municipal elites to access, within the framework of *potestas censoria* of the Emperor, the *ordo equester* or *ordo senatorius*.[26] The case of *M. Fidius [Macer]*, from the *municipium Flauium* of *Capera*, is an excellent example of what must have been the usual rate of promoting municipal dignitaries in the *ciuitas Romana* and the *ordines superiors*.[27] With a presumably peregrine origin, he would have formed part of the local elite prior to the application of the *Latium*, from which moment he served as *duumvir* on several occasions. Then, after paying with his own money for the construction of a monumental building, came to form a part of the *ordo equester*. Thus, the municipal administration and membership of the *ordo decurionum* would have passed to a second tier.

As regards the third key aspect, and partly as a result of the second one, the members of the municipal elites who formed part of the *ordo equester* and the *ordo senatorius* were excluded from the *munera* and the local *honores* for the granting of *inmunitas*.[28] The result was to inflict a major blow on the cohesion of the governing groups, as the existence of a system of exemptions led to an unequal share-out of responsibilities amongst the local elites, with the rest of the less wealthy families having to take over the running of the Latin municipal system, without the cooperation of the more affluent members of society. Therefore, the sense of civic solidarity of this group would have been affected, increasing the possibility of behaviours that fled of complying with municipal duties at both an economic and administrative level.

Also, the entry of dignitaries from *Hispania* in the *ordines superiores* may well have brought about a change with fatal consequences for the economic and social life of their communities of origin. Apart from leading to the loss of property by individuals without direct heirs (such as *Cornelius Nigrinus* or *Licinius Sura*),[29] from Trajan's time it became mandatory for senators of provincial origin to acquire up to one third of their assets in properties in Rome and Italy[30], with the subsequent loss of wealth for the communities of origin, and the obvious financial imbalance for their elites. Occasionally, this situation worsened due to the migration of the remaining elites to most dynamic towns.[31]

As regards the fourth and final possible cause, the interlinking and, in some cases, coincidence of adverse natural phenomena (such as earthquakes, floods, fires, droughts, and epidemics),[32] periods of recurring violence as a result of incursions by groups of outsiders (such as the *Mauri* in 171–177 AD, and the *Franci* or *Germani* in 260–272 AD),[33] together with military uprisings and political conflicts (such as the one protagonised by Clodius Albinus and Septimius Severus in 196–197 AD),[34] would have acted as a breeding ground for a demographic crisis, a quick deterioration of the urban living conditions and the likely appearance of a gradual desire to live and seek refuge in the territory of the towns. Added to this is the difficult situation for economic sectors such as industry, trade, and mining since the middle or end of the 2nd century AD.[35]

Conclusions

The change in mentality and values that occurred in the *municipia Latina* of *Hispania*, which in some cases could be extended to other types of Roman towns and provinces, would therefore have led to the members of the municipal elites no longer feeling the need to continue publicly demonstrating their *amor civicus*, their *amor patriae*,[36] through their munificent behaviour and the municipal administration, most likely because the *existimatio* it provided would no longer have yielded any political gain.[37] Instead, the love of the Emperor would have meant much more for the wealthy members of the Roman towns, than the praise of their fellow citizens.[38] The honour and prestige that they had previously acquired by serving the *civitas* were now obtained through service to the Empire.[39]

The rest of the community, exhausted by economic difficulties, and in some cases overwhelmed by the need of greater contributions to the municipal *decus* and *dignitas*, would have started to note a lack of interest in the management of public affairs, and to lay the bases of the crisis that affected the Roman city model.[40] The Latin municipal system, subject to a high level of stress, and without the necessary economic and social foundations, could have been very weak. In the words of F. Jacques, "*dans la première grande crise qui assaille le monde romain, le beau décor municipal se révèle de stuc et de carton*".[41]

Notes

[1] This work has been carried out within the research projects "Nuevas bases documentales para el estudio histórico de la Hispania romana de época republicana: onomástica y latinidad (III–I a.C.)" (HAR2015/66463-P) and "De municipia Latina a oppida labentia: sobre la sostenibilidad económica e institucional el expediente municipal latino en Hispania (siglos I–III d.C.)" (HAR2016/74854-P), as well as the research groups "Ciudades Romanas" (UCM/930692/HIST) and "Síncrisis. Investigación en Formas Culturais" (GI-1919).

[2] As is well known, the formal disappearance of the municipium Latinum happened in 212/213 AD by the enactment of the Constitutio Antoniniana.

[3] CIL II2/5, 871 (Cañete la Real, Málaga); CILA II, 1052 (Villanueva del Río y Minas, Sevilla); HEp 15, 330 (El Saucejo, Sevilla).

[4] These differences have been underlined by scholars such as Mata 2014 and Romero 2017.

[5] Gurt 2000; Gómez Espelosín 2006; Diarte 2012; Vaquerizo et al. 2014; Ramallo – Quevedo 2014; Mata 2014; Brassous – Quevedo 2015; Andreu 2017.

[6] The instability situation arising from the political, economic and social impact of the crisis of the municipia Latina could have affected the general balance of large territories, causing problems in other kinds of Roman towns by a possible contagion effect.

[7] Alföldy 1998, 27; Mata 2014, 243; Andreu – Delage 2017, 346–349. 367.

[8] Garnsey 1974; Sillières 1993; Alföldy 1998; Mata 2014; Andreu – Delage 2017.

[9] A general overview can be found in Alföldy 1998; Witschel 2009; Mata 2014; Andreu – Delage 2017.

[10] Melchor 1994, 78-81; Alföldy 1998, 24 f. 30; Mata 2014, 223. 241.

[11] All of them have been studied by scholars such as Garnsey 1974, Jacques 1984, Alföldy 1998, Witschel 2009, Melchor 2013. 2017. 2018, Mata 2014, Andreu – Delage 2017.

[12] Melchor 1994, 79. 81; Alföldy 1998, 22 f. 25.

[13] As an example, the authorities from Nicomedia spent substantial financial resources for the building of an aqueduct (Plin. Ep. 10, 37).

[14] Alföldy 1998, 24 f.; Mata 2014, 223; Andreu – Delage 2017, 368.

[15] CILA II, 339 (Santiponce, Sevilla): ll. 16-18.

[16] SHA, Marc. 11, 7; Alföldy 1998, 26.

[17] CIL II, 4514 (Barcelona). Different interpretation has been suggested by Melchor 2017, 228 f.

[18] CIL II2/5, 308 (Cabra, Córdoba); CIL II2/5, 292 (Rute, Córdoba).

[19] On the ius Latii, Asc. In Pis. 3 Cl; Str. 4, 1, 12; Gai. Inst. 1, 96; Irn. 21 (HEp 15, 2006, 330: El Saucejo, Sevilla); Salp. 21 (CIL II, 1963: Utrera, Sevilla); Lamberti 1993; García Fernández 2001; Andreu 2004.

[20] Sherwin-White 1973, 343 n. 3.

[21] On the ius Latii maius, SHA, Hadr. 21, 7; Gai, Inst. 1, 96; Sherwin-White 1973, 255; Zahrnt 1989a; Andreu 2004, 11; Bravo 2009.

[22] Sherwin-White 1973, 254 f. 361; Zahrnt 1989a; Jacques 1990, 39–41.

[23] Luraschi 1979, 322; Jacques 1990, 39–41.

[24] CIL II, 3239 (Santiesteban del Puerto, Jaén); Zahrnt 1989b; González-Conde 2015, 226–229.

[25] HEp 7, 362 (Beas de Segura, Jaén).

[26] Caballos 1990; Alföldy 1998, 17 f. 22.

[27] AE 2002, 705 (Oliva de Plasencia, Cáceres).

[28] Melchor 2013, 235 f.; 2017, 224–228.

[29] Alföldy 1998, 28 f.

[30] Plin. Ep. 6, 19, 4. This requirement was mitigated by Marcus Aurelius: SHA, Marc. 11, 8; Alföldy 1998, 29 f.

[31] Alföldy 1998, 27–29.

[32] For an overview on these phenomena, SHA, Marc. 13, 3-6; Eutr. 8, 12, 2; SHA, Verus 8, 1–2; Amm. Marc. 23, 6, 23–24; Duncan-Jones 1996; Monterroso 2002; Fears 2004; Nicols 2007; Gozalbes – García García 2007; Rossignol 2012; Quevedo – Ramallo 2015; Arteaga et al. 2015; Silva et al. 2016; Ruiz-Bueno 2017; Andreu – Delage 2017, 365 f.

[33] On these incursions, SHA, Marc. 21, 1; SHA, Seu. 2, 2-3; Aur. Vict. Caes. 33, 3; Eutr. 9, 8, 2; Oros. 7, 22, 7–8; Oros. 7, 41, 2; Alföldy 1998, 21 and 26; Witschel 2009, 477 f. 480 f.; Mata 2014, 239.

[34] For an overview on the Septimius Severus' repression, SHA, Seu. 12, 1. 5; SHA, Seu. 13, 7; RIT 130; Witschel 2009, 479; Mata 2014, 224. 237; Ventura 2017, 473–478; Andreu – Delage 2017, 365.

[35] On this matter, Alföldy 1998, 25; Chic 2005; Andreu 2017, 365 f.

[36] Brown 2016, 140. 162.

[37] Andreu – Delage 2017, 368.

[38] Brown 2016, 165.

[39] Melchor 1994, 80 f.

[40] Garnsey 1974; Melchor 1994, 81; Alföldy 1998, 22 f. 25.

[41] Jacques 1984, VIII.

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Walls, Streets and Sewers: Signs of the Urban Vigour in the Hispano-Roman Cities during the 2nd Century AD

Diego Romero Vera

Abstract

In this work we will review briefly the main features of the walls, streets and sewers of the Hispano-Roman cities during the second century A.D., this analysis takes part in a comprehensive approximation about the evolution and transformation process of these urban centres in the mentioned chronological period.

Introduction

We have no concrete knowledge about the evolution of the Roman cities of Hispania during the age of the Antonines. In this regard, the urban changes of each site have been studied separately, however the historical phase has not been analysed in a systematic and synchronic manner. To alleviate this situation, we checked about 30 Roman cities of the Iberian Peninsula, precisely those that provided greater amounts of archaeological and epigraphical information.[1] Furthermore, we have used the comparative method in order to draw analogies from the selected cities; this is a useful way to identify the urban patterns prevailing in the chronological and spatial framework of our research.

We have identified that in the first third of the 2nd century AD several Hispano-Roman cities concluded their urban image to the implementation of reforms and new constructions. Given this, it can be said that on the period of Trajan and Hadrian there was a level of continuity in the construction boom developed in the 1st century AD. However, since the reign of Antoninus Pius this situation changed, in most cities this building growth disappeared. Moreover, some settlements –not all of them– experienced a severe decline in the second half of the century. Precisely, the streets and sewers of most of the analysed cities were involved in this general thrust. Not in vain, the study of the urban equipment is a strong indicator for assessing the vitality degree of the cities during the second century AD.

Walls

The walls constituted one of the defining elements of the Roman urban landscape. Nevertheless, the walls played a subsidiary role in the urban topography of the 2nd century AD. As a rule, these *moenia* were inherited from previous historical phases.

In the 2nd century AD., at least in the analysed cities, no reform or building of walls has been detected.[2] Probably that was due to the loss of their defensive role at a time of long-

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standing peace and political stability. Moreover, we must take into account that walls were strong architectural structures and therefore they did not require much maintenance after their construction.

In some cities the walls and their ancillary parts were abandoned into the Antonine age due to their lack of defensive function. *Baelo Claudia* is a fine example of this dynamic. Concretely, the tower T of the walls was abandoned in a progressive manner. Firstly, blocks of stone belonging to the corner were spoiled. This progressive robbery of materials meant that the tower disappeared completely before the second half of the 2nd century.[3] Also, in *Baetulo* the so called *Domus* of *Quintus Licinius* was built at the end of the 1st century AD or the beginning of the next century over part of the line of the wall.[4] Finally, in *Lucentum* one of the towers of the walls, the tower VII, was dismantled at the end of the 2nd century or the beginning of the 3rd in order to use their building materials.[5]

The need of new lands, on which the city could grow, is another reason for the destruction of defensive elements. In *Augusta Emerita* there was a moat, it was dug into the own geological stratum in order to protect the east flank of the wall. This moat was filled with rubbish and debris in the late 1st century AD. Then at the beginning of the 2nd century, houses were built in this space.[6] For its part, in *Barcino* different constructions occupied and privatised the *intervallum* of the Augustan wall. Concretely, in the northeast of the colony the *intervallum* was taken over by a *tinctoria*, a *fullonica* and a *cetaria* in the 2nd century.[7]

Urban Road

In the index of cities that we have been studying there are very different situations, from the creation of new streets to the cessation of maintenance of others. This state reflects the value of the street network as an indicator of urban vitality.

On the one hand, in several cities an important building activity in the field of urban infrastructure has been recorded between the end of the 1st century AD and the first third of the 2nd century. This is a process of renovation and improvement of public infrastructure that affected not only the street, but also the sewage system was removed and new arteries were opened. *Lucus Augusti*,[8] *Asturica Augusta*[9] and *Valentia*[10] are the cities that better reflect this transformation process. In the three cases the actions were conducted in the entire urban fabric, as is documented by archaeological digs carried out in several point of these localities. The remodelling as executed in Flavian times, but it was not completed until the reign of Trajan or Hadrian.[11] In any event, it is clear that this is an only constructive phase.

On the other hand, in the studied cities the repair of streets was the more widespread phenomenon, something that is completely logical, since the continuous traffic of coaches, steeds and pedestrians necessitated this maintenance work. Normally, a sort of compact tarmac composed of soil, stone, lime and pottery's fragment was used, either river stone and clay or simply land layers of tamp earth. That is attested in *Barcino*,[12] *Lucentum*,[13] *Pollentia*,[14] *Carthago Nova*[15] and *Asturica Augusta*.[16]

Finally, another feature of the street network during the 2nd century, but in particular of the subsequent centuries, was the occupation of streets and porticoes on the part of private constructions, as well as the cessation of their maintenance. The carelessness of streets is part of the phenomena typical of the late antiquity such as the abandonment and pillaging of public building.[17] These alterations have been dated from the 3rd century AD, but the start began in the Antonine age. Equally, it is common to link these events with cities in decline, that is, *urbes* affected in varying degrees by the urban crisis. Nevertheless, these transformations also happened in full swing cities. This applies, for example, in *Augusta Emerita*. In this provincial capital the porticoes of the urban street began to be occupied by private buildings in the 2nd century AD. This is a gradual process, which started in this century but it reached its peak two centuries later. So the porticoes were turned into *tabernae* or they were absorbed by the houses themselves.[18] In the case of *Barcino*, as we have indicated before that various points of the *intervallum* were occupied by private structures, this fact meant the disruption of traffic on the street. It should be added that the *Domus* of the Plaza de Sant Miquel was extended with a *balneum* that was built partly on a *cardo minor*.[19] Also a *decumanus* of *Asturica Augusta*, located in the current street Alonso Garrote, was occupied in part by a private building in the middle of the 2nd century.[20]

The cease of the maintenance and cleaning in the streets is not an exclusive feature of the late antique cities. In *Baelo Claudia* the cleaning of a stretch of the *decumanus* close to the Gate of *Carteia* was interrupted before the third century.[21] Besides, at the end of the second century the alleyway located between the basilica and the *macellum* ceased to be cleansed.[22] For its part, in *Clunia* since the middle of the second century debris were deposited in a central area of this city, just next to the forum's baths.[23] Likewise, the eastern pavement of the *cardo maximus* of *Baetulo* was transformed into an unrehearsed landfill at the end of the second century.[24]

These examples demonstrate that in the Antonine age the deterioration of road space does not only affect to cities with problems, far from it, large *urbes* like *Barcino* or *Augusta Emerita* also record chapters of lack of maintenance and dismantling of the original urban space. Even so, logically these transformations also affected to cities less vigorous or with evidence of urban crisis. A good example is found in *Emporiae*, where since the end of the second century parasitic constructions took over the streets' porticoes, already collapsed at that time.[25] In this case, it is not surprising that in this *municipium* the maintenance of streets was interrupted in the middle of the 2nd century.[26]

Sewage System

On the one hand, we must refer to the cities, which created their sewage systems from the founding time of the city or at a subsequent time. These *urbes* had a waste-water disposal system in full force in the 2nd century, so this inherited equipment was in use during the whole high imperial period, until at least the 3rd century. That is the situation of most of

Hispano-Roman cities during the second century.[27] These sewage systems had regular maintenance. In fact these pipes did not have archaeological deposits corresponding to the 1st and 2nd centuries.

On the other hand, other cities completed their definitive urban equipment during the period from the Flavian age to the beginning of the second century. The sewers of *Asturica Augusta*, constructed in Julio-Claudian era, were replaced in this timeframe.[28] Just as in the case of *Baetulo*, its sewage system was largely carried out during the reign of Trajan and Hadrian.[29] And by the same token, in *Conimbriga* the urban renewal conducted in Flavian times entailed the adjustment of the pre-existing and also the construction of new ones.[30] This process was slow since it was not finished until the middle of the 2nd century.[31] Furthermore, the remodelling of the sewage system and the road network of *Valentia* took place at that very moment.[32]

In the 2nd century, but especially in its second half, it has been recorder another interesting phenomenon: the collapse of the sewage system. The earliest examples in the Hispano-Roman cities belong to the 2nd century. That did not affect the whole of cities, but only to a minority of them, which had signs of urban regression. Silting of sewage system starts when the network ceases of to be cleaned. Therefore, that is a long and gradual process, which does not alter the entire network equally. For instance, the local government of *Lucentum* ceased to maintain the section of the sewer, which dumped the wastewater outside the wall already in the Flavian epoch. The abandonment of the sewage system was not uniform, since the sewer pipe that drained the forum operated until the first half of the second century.[33] Similarly, the interruption of *Bilbilis*' central sewer is dated in the second century, likewise the waste pipe of the baths became clogged at the end of this same century.[34] Also the wastewater pipe of *Emporiae* became completely filled at the end of the second century, for its part, the piping of *Carthago Nova* ceased to be clean in the second half of this century.[35]

Finally, it should be noted that the lack of maintenance and the occupation of porticoes and streets are not hallmarks of urban crisis, from our point of view. In fact, this phenomenon took place in cities with relative vitality. To the contrary, the abandonment of sewage networks is an attribute of cities in decline, which highlights the inability of the local government to keep up the urban infrastructure.

Final Remarks

To conclude, important changes have taken place in the field of the urban infrastructure during the 2nd century. With regard to the urban road, the most widespread phenomena were road repairing and sewage cleaning. Both actions must be included under the trend of maintenance and reparation, which affects all elements of urban topography in this century. We suppose that this maintenance measures were quite frequent, however, they are likewise, hard to detect in the archaeological record. The minor role of the walls is another fundamental urban feature of the Hispano-Roman cities in this period, as is evident by the

fact that hardly any walls of the analysed cities had experienced a reform. In some instances, their own walls or their annexes were abandoned on a date so early owing to their lack of defensive role.

The occupation of streets and porticoes by private individuals is another phenomenon that caught our attention. Building abuse was a punishable offence according to the law, its emergence could be linked with the lack of building land and also especially with the over-tolerance of the local authorities. However, the privatisation of public space must not be directly conceived as an indication of the urban crisis because this fact also affected major cities whose vitality in the Antonine age is very clear.

Notes

[1] The analysed cities are as follows: A) Baetica: *Astigi, Baelo Claudia, Carteia, Corduba, Italica, Munigua, Regina Turdulorum.* B) Hispania Citerior: *Asturica Augusta, Baetulo, Barcino, Bilbilis, Bracara Augusta, Caesar Augusta, Carthago Nova, Clunia, Complutum, Emporiae, Labitolosa, Lucentum, Lucus Augusti, Pollentia, Saguntum, Segobriga, Tarraco, Valentia, Valeria.* C) Lusitania: *Augusta Emerita, Capara, Conimbriga, Mirobriga Celticorum.*

[2] *Munigua* is a unique case, the walls of this *municipium* were built between the end of the second century or the beginning of the 3rd. As is well known, the walled enclosure remained unfinished, it was interrupted in the north and southwest end. *Spolia* including funerary monuments were used to make it. It has been proposed that this wall could have a defensive role connected with the invasion of the *Mauri*. Vid. Grünhagen 1982, 315–321; Schattner 2003, 52–59.

[3] Bernal et al. 2007, 447.

[4] Cuyás 1977, 139–142; Padrós – Sánchez 2014, 103.

[5] Olcina 1990, 25–60.

[6] Pérez Maestro 2005, 238.

[7] Beltrán de Heredia 2000, 254; Beltrán de Heredia 2001, 98.

[8] González Fernández – Carreño 1999, 1176–1189; González Fernández 2011, 300.

[9] Burón 2006, 289–312; Orejas – Morillo 2013, 96 f.

[10] Ribera – Romaní 2011, 333. 337.

[11] Ribera – Romaní 2011, 333. 337; González Fernández 2012, 273.

[12] Beltrán de Heredia – Carreras 2011, 238.

[13] Olcina – Pérez Jiménez 1998, 64 f.; Olcina 2009, 78 f.

[14] Orfila et al. 2005, 99 f.

[15] Noguera et al. 2009, 274.

[16] Burón 2006, 295.

[17] Diarte-Blasco 2012, 23–25.

[18] Alba 2001, 407 f.; Alba 2002, 135 f.; Alba 2004, 75.

[19] Miró 2011, 71 f.

[20] Burón 2006, 295.

[21] Alarcón 2006, 67.
[22] Diderjean et al. 1986, 98.
[23] De la Iglesia – Tuset 2013, 109.
[24] Padrós – Sánchez 2011, 229; Padrós 2014; 108 f.
[25] Castanyer et al. 1993, 190–192.
[26] Mar – Ruiz de Arbulo 1993, 417 f.
[27] Remolá y Acero, 2011.
[28] González Fernández 2012, 273.
[29] Padrós – Sánchez 2011, 224–226; Padrós – Sánchez 2014, 99–101.
[30] Reis et al. 2011, 189–192.
[31] Reis et al. 2011, 181.
[32] Ribera – Romaní 2011, 333. 337.
[33] García Barrachina et al. 2009, 84 f.
[34] Martín-Bueno – Sáenz 2013, 367 f.
[35] Castanyer et al. 1993, 190–192; Egea 2002, 27.

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Lucentum: the Decline of the City Through Its Domestic Architecture

Tamara Peñalver Carrascosa

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to analyse the population's movements after the decline of the city of Lucentum through its domestic architecture. We will present several private examples (*Domus* del Peristilo, *Domus* de la Puerta Oriental, *Domus* del Mosaico) that confirm the early abandonment of the city. In order to understand the processes of abandonment, we will analyse the domestic decoration systems, the different phases of the houses (construction, remodelling and abandonment) and the state of the urban facilities related to them. On the other hand, we will study the interaction between the urban center and its ager, showing the complete symbiosis between them. Finally, we will examine the evolution of the neighbouring city of Ilici and the Portus Ilicitanus that seem to grow after the Lucentum's collapse.

Introduction

The Roman domestic spaces, understood as microcosms, were a reflection of the social transformations and changes that took place in ancient cities. Therefore, they are valuable instruments to analyse the phenomenon of cities qualified as „shooting stars". The various phases of a house, from its construction, reforms and abandonment (sudden or premeditated), could be connected with the state of their cities.

For this reason, our purpose in this paper is to study the phenomenon of the oppida labentia through the domestic spaces of the Roman city of *Lucentum*. Its private spaces show, through its construction techniques and its ornamental systems, a total symbiosis with the future of the city.

The Roman City of *Lucentum*

The ancient city of *Lucentum* (3ha), was located on a hill at 38 m above sea level, just 3.5 km NE of the current historic center of Alicante, and stands out as one of the few Valencian Roman cities that has not suffered a destruction and plundering by later constructions.

It was born in the 3rd century BC, fruit of Carthaginian intervention. This first foundation was destroyed around the 209 BC, when Scipio conquered the Iberian capital. Subsequently, there was a hiatus in the city, without signs of a habitat in the 2nd

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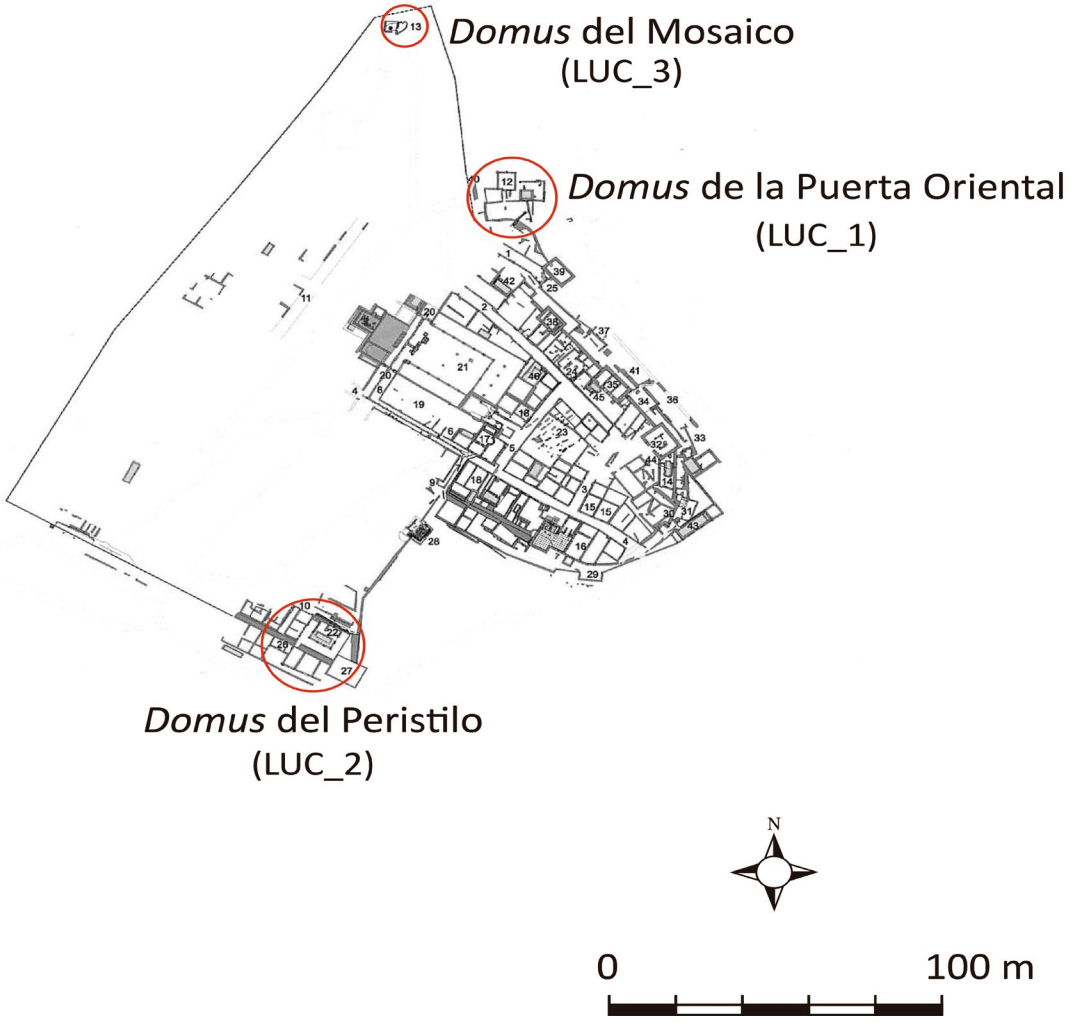

Fig. 1: The city of *Lucentum*.

century BC. In the first quarter of 1st century BC took place the first Roman architectural intervention, with the construction of a new military wall stimulated by the war crisis of the end of the Republic.

Its strategic position between *Ebusus*, *Dianium* and *Carthago Nova*, was decisive in the reoccupation of *Lucentum*, becoming an important settlement in the navigation routes.[1] The granting of the legal status has been proposed towards the 26–25 BC, coinciding with the second trip of Augustus to Hispania and the second colonial deductio of the neighbouring *Ilici*. Thus, it was with Augustus and the Julius-Claudian dynasty, when the city achieved the maximum splendor and with Tiberius it became a fully established civitas.

During this period, the two thermal facilities were erected; the military elements of the Eastern Gate were eliminated, turned into a symbol of urban prestige; the sanitation and water supply networks were remodeled and the urbanism was reordered. The new city did not surpass the previous walls, consequently it was not possible to design an orthogonal plan. The layout of two of the main streets, the street of Popilio and the street of the forum, possible cardo and decumanus maximus, would be fixing a first forum, which will determine the position of the later high-imperial forum (fig. 1).[2] Regarding the residential buildings, it seems that the houses were established in the Era change. As in the case of Ilici, it seems that private buildings were located in the limits of the city's pomerium.

The decline of the city begun just after its period of splendor, in the 1st century AD. One sign of this decadence was the silting of the Popilio Street's sewer, which would disable the thermal baths, proof of the lack of maintenance of the public infrastructures. In the middle of 2nd century AD, the plundering, the silting of cisterns, the change of spaces' functionality and the blurring of the high-imperial urban fabric became generalized.[3]

One of the problems that limit our study is that *Lucentum* was excavated at the beginning of the last century, and the material culture from the *domus* were not exhaustively treated and published, so we cannot work with this evidence to provide absolute dating of the moment of the *domus*' abandonment. For this reason, we have chosen alternative factors in order to assign a date to the useful life of the *domus*, although we are aware that the presence of material culture would bring much light to these processes. We will focus our analysis on three cases of study: the *Domus* de la Puerta Oriental, the *Domus* del Peristilo y the *Domus* del Mosaico.

Domus de la Puerta Oriental

The *Domus* de la Puerta Oriental was excavated by M. Tarradell and E. Llobregat, from 1965 to 1967, in unknown circumstances was partly destroyed by a backhoe in the late 70's. In the 1980's of the last century, were documented some of the panels discovered by the restorer M. Monraval Sapiña. In the 1990's, A. Fernández carried out new technical and stylistic analysis.[4] This *domus* had two phases, the first one at the beginning of the 1st century AD, when the sewer under the wall was destroyed, and the second one, at the end of the first century AD/beginning of the 2nd century, when the five rooms of the house were built (fig. 2).[5]

The room 4 is undoubtedly the space of representation, located on the axial axis with the main entrance and decorated with mural paintings. In this case, we can date the abandonment of the house through the study of the mural paintings carried out by A. Fernández. The pictorial decoration was divided, horizontally, into three parts: a plinth with marble imitations; a central part that alternates wide

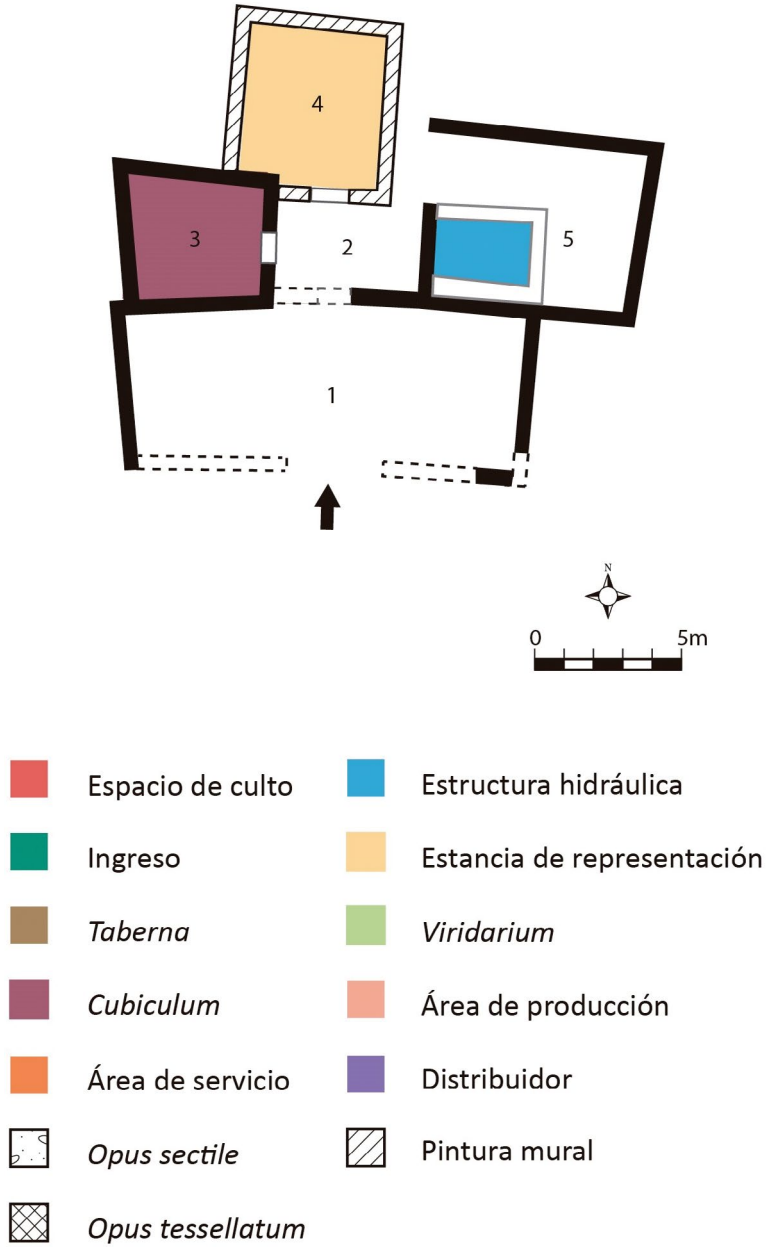

Fig. 2: *Domus* de la Puerta Oriental.

and narrow panels, the wide ones decorated with flat inks in red, yellow and green, and the narrow ones with vegetable chandeliers; and, finally, the upper zone was decorated with a moulding cornice of 15 cm in height. The ceiling stands out for its decoration with a network decoration in which vegetable elements, such as fleurons or garlands, and figurative elements, such as lunar masks and birds, appeared inside circles (medallions) (fig. 3).[6]

Fig. 3: Decorative motives from the room 4 (*Domus* de la Puerta Oriental).

We would like to emphasize the close relationship between the plinths from *Lucentum* and *Ilici*, specifically those of *Domus* 5F and 10D, dated from the middle of the 1st century AD until the middle of the 3rd century A.D. The great similarity contributes to the hypothesis of a possible itinerary workshop in the area.[7] The stylistic study of the different decorative motifs shows that, although the double bichromes fillets used to frame the panels were typical of the third style (first half of 1st century AD), they reappeared again in the 2nd century. These motifs were associated with the double knots (painted in the corners) of the Fourth Style, so we can establish the 2nd century, as terminus post quem. The panels' frames of blue bands were typical of the Adrian period, with several parallels in Cartagena, Mérida and Valencia. The roof system, used since the 1st century AD (Fourth Style) was hereditary of the "casetón" ceilings that reappears in the provincial painting between the end of 2nd century AD and

the beginnings of 3rd century. The example of *Lucentum*, as well as that from Cartagena (*Domus* de la calle del Duque 29), both from the beginning of the 2nd century, show the early imitations of this area in comparison with the rest of western provinces.[8]

Therefore, the evidences indicate that the splendor of this *domus* took place in the second century. However, these paintings were not repaired, as happened in the paintings of *Ilici*, where ornamental programs allow us to distinguish various periods in the lives of these houses.

In the *domus* 5F from *Ilici*, the parietal decoration had two phases: from the 50 to the 150 AD, contemporary to *Lucentum*, and from the 275 to the 350 AD. The first phase corresponded to the construction of the house and the second one was related to remodeling and repainting works. They were developed following the imperial style, with tripartite schemes in horizontal and vertical, figurative decorations and the use of tempera and fresco techniques.

Thus, although both cities share a contemporary origin, confirm through the existence of common workshops in charge of decorating the most luxurious private spaces, the absence of restorations in the *domus* from *Lucentum* contrasts with the *Ilici's* dynamism, that point out that both cities had a diverse historical evolution. After its excavation by J. Lafuente in 1931, the *Domus* del Peristilo, has been subjected to pillaging, alterations and inappropiate reconstructions that have favored the previous city walls.[9] The *Domus* del Peristilo was dated around the change of the era by indirect dating thanks to related constructions.

Even though the dating difficulties, we know that its construction would be after 20–15 BC, because it was related to the urbanization processes in the eastern part of the city and the repaving of the forum. In addition, there was not an urbanization process before the Augustan period. The house was built over the previous city wall, same processes were carried out in the eastern side of the site. It is important to note that the construction of the sewers would also take place on those dates, which would require raising the level of the streets, causing uncomfortable adaptations in the houses' accesses. The access to the *Domus* del Peristilo was made through stairs that descend into the interior; consequently, the construction of the *domus* should be before the repaving processes.

The peristyle's drain and the street sewer collapsed at the beginning of the second quarter of the 1st century AD. The structures were fully in use at that time, but they should decline at that moment, since sanitation was no longer maintained.[10]

Domus del Mosaico

This house has preserved two rooms, communicated through an opening of 70 cm wide. The state of conservation does not allow us to confirm its domestic character. However, the characteristics of the mosaic and its numerous parallels in private environments, reinforce the hypothesis that it was a domus.

The main room preserves a pavement of *opus signinum tessellatum*, whose design formed a reticulated central rosette, framed by a square of meanders (fig. 4).[11]

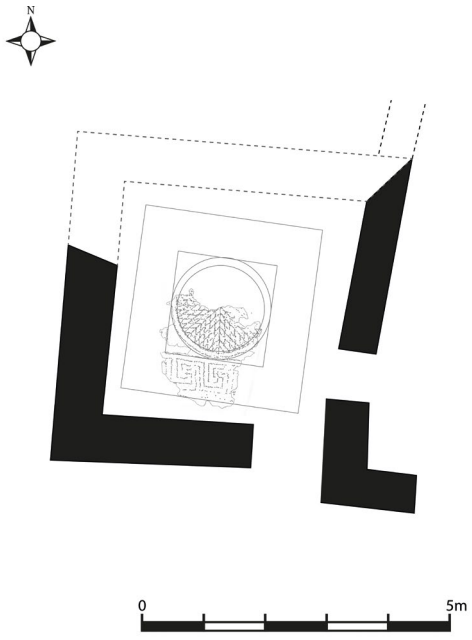

Fig. 4: *Domus* del Mosaico.

One of the particularities is the off-centre position of the mosaic with respect to the walls of the room. The adjacent room also had a pavement of *opus signinum tessellatum*. The continuity observed between both pavements and the decentralized position of the emblem with respect to the walls of the room are the reasons why, despite what has been indicated in previous publications, we propose two construction phases. The first phase should be when the *opus signinum* mosaic was built, simultaneously to the municipalization of Lucentum; it should pave a wider room, where the mosaic currently conserved, would be the central emblem of a much larger design. In a second phase, the construction of new walls would divide the space in two rooms. That would be the reason why the mosaic appears decentralized with respect to the walls that frame it. This hypothesis would correspond better with all the parallels. In addition, the last phase walls showed mouldings, typical from hydraulic pavements; so, these spaces could be open, after they lost its public character, as a decline symbol.[12]

This type of mosaic, with a large medallion filled with a grid of rhombus, converging towards the central point, and framed by a meander of swastikas and squares, was developed between the 3rd century BC and the 1st century AD, in areas of early Spanish Romanization.[13] Based on the stylistic criteria, L. Abad dated it between the 2nd century BC and the 1st century AD.[14] The existence of a pavement in opus signinum, whose technical and morphological characteristics were in use during the late Republica and High Empire, confirms the insertion of the Valencian territory in Romanization circuits and assumption of italic fashions, similar to those found in the Catalan area, the Ebro valley and Murcia.

The mosaic in Roman Hispania was an early event, with some parallels in other provinces of the Empire, and with a little time lag between the first Roman pavements in Hispania and its Roman-Campan prototypes. As we have already indicated, this decorative scheme was very frequent in the Roman world, since it has been found in *Glanum*, in the Maison du Capricorne; in *Herculanum* in the *tablinum* of the Samnitic House, dated around 30–20 BC;[15] in the Villa Grotta Rossa's mosaic (2nd century BC); and in the *tablinum* of the House VII. 6.28.[16] Also in Hispania, have been found parallels in the Casa de Likine in La Caridad de Caminreal; in the central emblem of the Arcedianato of Pamplona (1st century BC); in *Segeda* II;[17] in the *opus signinum* of room 7 from the Casa agrícola of *Contrebia Belaisca*;[18] in the Roman house nº1 of Ampurias, built at the end of the 2nd century BC.[19] And the mosaics of the Catedral Vieja, the Ruices, or the House of the Dolphins, all of them in Cartagena.[20]

The parallels show that the motif was widely spread in the areas neighboring the Valencian territory, indicating a specific chronology associated with the Roman conquest. The arrival of the Romans also affects the early introduction of italic decorative patterns in Lucentum, likewise the commercialization of models and materials for their execution.[21] Likewise, these parallels confirm our hypothesis about the possible existence of an original wide room, since it is strange to find the emblem isolated when usually it is part of wider geometric compositions. In addition, this kind of compositions was related to main rooms as *triclinia* or *atria*.[22]

Thus, the domestic spaces and its decorations were dated around the change of era and the 1st century AD. However, there are no signs of maintenance or restoration beyond the 2nd century, as we could appreciate in the *Domus* de la Puerta Oriental. In some cases, clear deceleration symptoms are preserved, such as the clogging of the sewer detected in the *Domus* del Peristilo or the construction of walls over sumptuous mosaics, like in the *Domus* del Mosaico. These phenomena confirm the early abandonment of the city of *Lucentum*. These data coincide with the material culture: the imports ceased around the 200 AD, likewise the last numismatic emissions registered were those of Trajan and Adriano.

The *ager*

Another interesting approach regarding the abandonment of the *civitas* is the study of the flows of population, once *Lucentum* was abandoned. We can analyze the parallel construction's processes of the urban *domus* and the founding of large villas, in the 1st century (fig. 5). The occupation of the surroundings of the city took place from its constitution as a Roman municipality, establishing an indissoluble binomial between urbs/territorium. At this time, villas such as El Molino or Parque de las Naciones were founded, as well as the new phase of the Villa Romulo.[23]

Likewise, when the urban decadence arrived, it had an effect on the suburban and rural villae, that were abandoned in the 3rd century AD, some of them not even reached the dawn of this century. Among the few that surpassed these years are the Casa Ferrer I, the

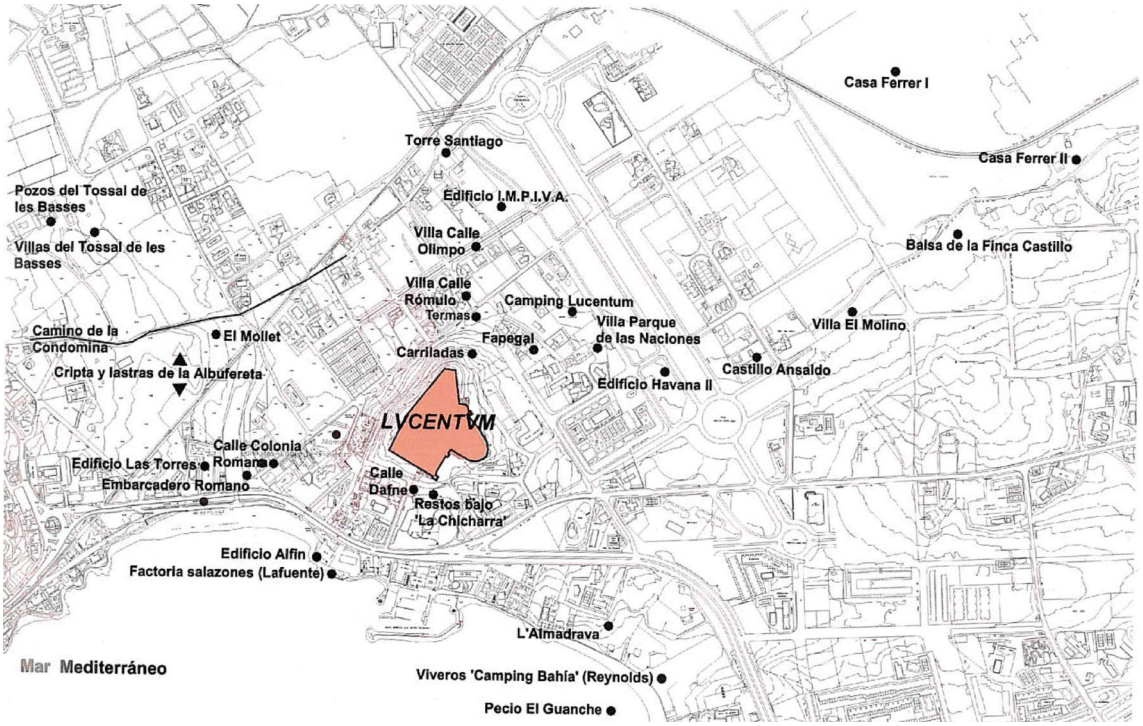

Fig. 5: *Lucentum* and its *villae*.

Parque de las Naciones (although the *pars urbana* belonged to the first phase, from the first to the second century AD). The Edificio Havana II and the Tossal de les Bases reduced their surfaces, losing their pars ubana. There are no signs of economic recovery in any of the Lucentum ager villas beyond the 3rd century AD; contrary to what happens in villas belonging to neighboring cities, such as Xauxelles (*Allon*), Banys de la Reina (*Dianium*) or Algorós from the *ilicitani's ager*.

Ilici and the *Portus Ilicitanus* as Recipients

Finally, the decline of *Lucentum* (at the end of the 2nd century AD) was simultaneously relative splendor of *Ilici* and *Portus Ilicitanus*, where was found one of the most luxurious late-antique domestic spaces of the Valencian territory.

In *Ilici* there was no crisis in the third century, the first symptoms of decline occurred between the end of 4th century and the beginning of the 5th. It has been verified the maintenance of the sewage system, the repaving of the streets, the management of the urban waste or the massive arrival of ceramic productions of the 4th century AD. It is in the first decades of the 5th century, when plunderings were recorded in order to recover building materials from large areas, including dismantling some public buildings such as the Termas Occidentales.[24]

Conclusions

To conclude, the useful life and the abandonment of domestic, urban and rural, spaces belonging to *Lucentum* is a valuable reflection of the processes of growth, splendor and decadence of the city. On the other hand, the study of the surrounding territory, as well as of nearby cities such *Ilici*, can shed light on the movement patterns of the population that used to inhabit *Lucentum*, after its abandonment.

Notes

[1] Olcina et al. 2015, 255–257.
[2] Olcina 2009, 45–53; Sarabia 2014, 171.
[3] Olcina 2009, 56.
[4] Olcina 2009, 108 f.
[5] Fernández Díaz 2000–2001, 215 f.; Olcina – Pérez 2003, 100.
[6] Fernández Díaz 2000–2001, 215–236; Sarabia 2014, 185; Olcina 2009, 108 f.
[7] Fernández Díaz 2000–2001, 218–220.
[8] Fernández Díaz 2000–2001, 215–236; Sarabia 2014, 185.
[9] Olcina et al. 2015, 258.
[10] Olcina et al. 2015, 258.
[11] Olcina 2009, 110–113.
[12] Olcina 2009, 110–113; Peñalver 2018, 570–572.
[13] Abad 1989, 161 f.; Olcina 2009, 110–112.
[14] Abad 1989, 162; Ramallo 2001, 179 f.
[15] Clarke 1991, 92 f.
[16] Joyce 1979, 254; Ramallo 1979–1980, 290–292; Ramallo 2001, 179 f.
[17] Uribe 2009, 157–160; Uribe 2015, 357–365.
[18] Uribe 2015, 394–296.
[19] Fernández Díaz 2003, 220–225.
[20] Ramallo 1991–1992, 204; Ramallo 2001, 179 f.; Uribe 2009, 157–160; Madrid 2004, 49 f.; Ramallo et al. 2007, 592.
[21] Ramallo et al. 2007, 596.
[22] Peñalver 2018, 141.
[23] Olcina – Pérez 2003, 91-108.
[24] Tendero – Ronda 2014, 241 f.

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Urban Transformations in the Roman Town of *Baetulo* from the Flavian Period

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Abstract

The roman town of *Baetulo* is placed in the underground of the actual city of Badalona, and is located 10 km north from Barcelona in the east bank of *Besos* river. Although more than ninety years of preventive archaeological excavations give us an important amount of information, the results are sometimes an incomplete view of the evolution of the Roman site. The purpose of this paper is to expose some historical reflection about the urban transformations of the roman town, by analysing the most important data from the archaeological interventions and reviewing some of the traditional interpretations for the *Baetulo's* urban development from the 2nd century to the 4th century AD.

Baetulo was in the Roman province of *Hipania Tarraconensis*. The town was an ex novo foundation and it could be part of the programme of urban foundations promoted from Rome at the end of the 2nd century-beginning of the 1st century BC. Pliny classifies it as an *oppidum civium Romanorum*, which means an urban settlement with a consolidated presence of Roman citizens. Its location had the specific purpose to be one of the main structures of the new territorial organisation of the *Laietania*. We establish the foundational chronology on 80–70 BC by the context of the early levels inside its urban limits. The sequence of occupation lasts until the 7th century AD.

At the time of the foundation of *Baetulo*, the town was surrounded by a wall that delimited an area about 11 hectares,[1] with an interior urban planning that responded to an orthogonal system with NW–SE orientation.[2] The Republican city experienced a first transformation in the Augustan and Julio-Claudian period, when part of the sewer system was built and different private houses as the Dolphins and Ivy *domus* (fig. 1.6), public buildings as *tabernae* complex (fig. 3), and also possibly the public bath (fig. 3) were remodelled.

At the end of the 1st century AD and the beginning of the 2nd century, archaeological evidence documents the erasure of some public and private buildings. An example case is the water conduct (fig. 2) built in barrel vault with about 1,5 m. max. width and located in the NE of the town, probably under one of the *cardines*.[3] The lining level that collapses the conduction has been dated by the pottery documented[4] and gives us a chronological date at the beginning of the Flavian period[5]. Another structure is the sewer of the *cardo minor* II in Fluvià Street 12–16 (fig. 1.2) where the materials documented in the abandonment and erasure lining levels[6] allow a data for the same period.[7] Finally, in the lower terrace next to the *forum*, at the *decumanus* and *cardo maximus* intersection, a commercial public building was abandoned. It is formed by five *tabernae* (fig. 3), each one divided into two areas that were

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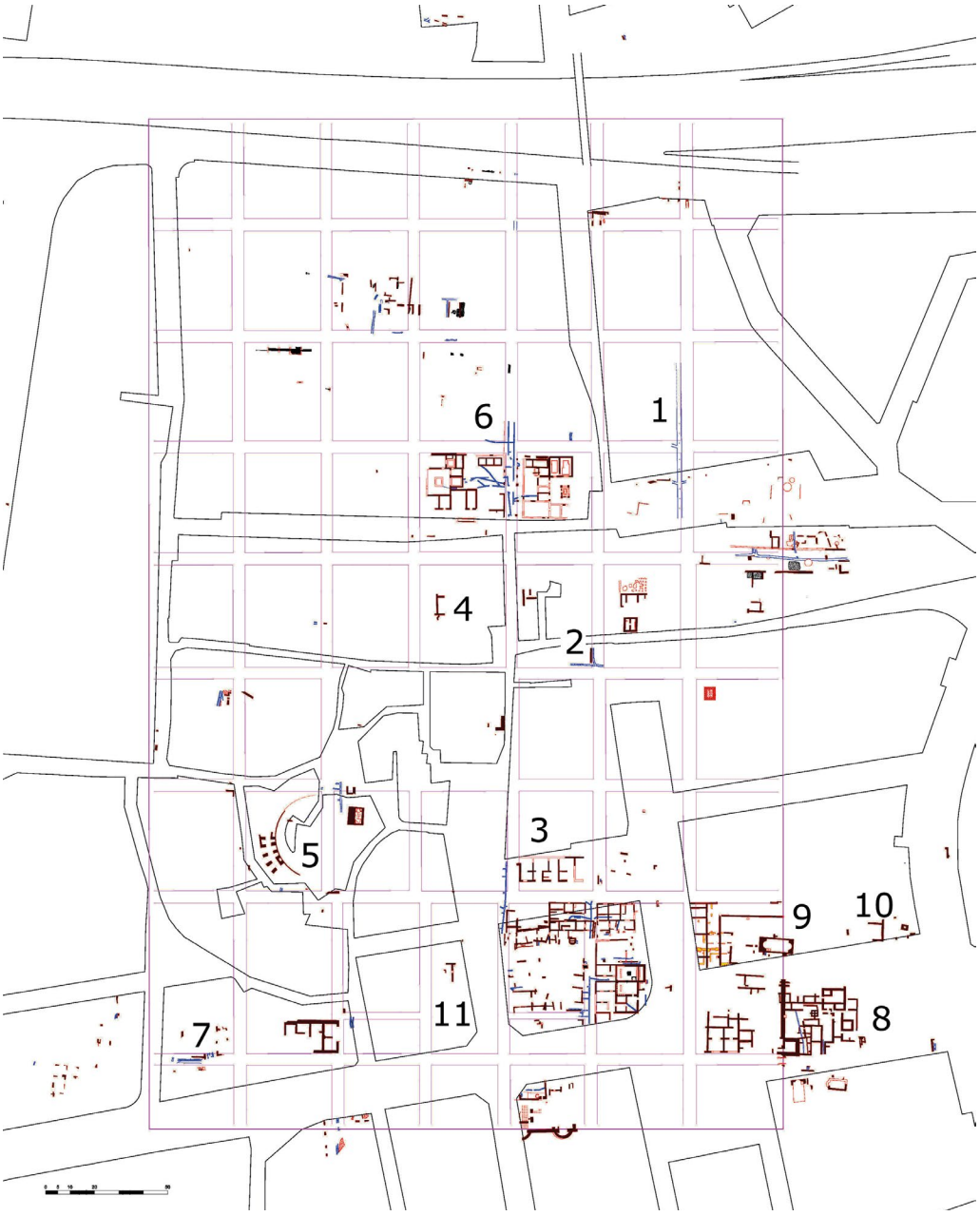

Fig. 1: Urban plan of *Beatulo* with the localisation of the archaeological intervention mentioned in the text. 1: Water conduct, Pujol Street. – 2: *cardo minor* II collector, Fluvià Street 12–16. – 3: archaeological area of *Thermae* and *Decumanus*, Museu de Badalona. – 4: private *balnea* complex, rectoria of Sainta Maria's church. – 5: Theatre, Eres Street 13–17. – 6: *domus* and *cardo maximus*, Lladó Street. – 7: *decumanus* I collector, Via Augusta Street, Jungfrau old school. – 8: *Via Augusta* and hinges of the main entrance town's door. – 9: *domus* of *Quintus Licinius*, Termes Romanes Street 2. – 10: *domus* of *Quintus Licinius*, Eastern sector, Assemblea Catalunya plaza, 8. – 11: *domus*, Temple Street.

Fig. 2: Water conduct. Pujol Street.

built at the time of Augustus and were repaired during the reign of Domitian.[8] Regarding the private sphere we underline the archaeological excavation at the Rectory of Santa Maria's church located behind the area of the *forum*[9] (fig. 1.4). There, a *domus* with a private *balnea* and an exedra pool built in Augustan times and abandoned in Flavian period based on the materials of its abandonment levels was found.[10]

Different hypotheses were pointed about urban transformations during the Flavian period. In the mid-70s of the last century, it was suggested that this process may be related to the concession of *ius Latii*.[11] Subsequently, other authors maintained this hypothesis, although they ruled out the disappearance of the town[12] and suggested that this abandonment process responded to a period of economic weakness and decline based on the rise of the Augustan colonies like *Barcino*.[13] Later data from archaeological interventions allowed to propose a new hypothesis that related the process of abandonments documented in the town with the development of the *villae* over the *territorium*, in which, at this moment of time, we found some buildings with a certain level of wealth and probably them could be the residence of the wealthy families coming from the old urban *nuclei*.[14] These hypotheses had remained until the present, but the results obtained in new excavations have allowed to document from the end of the 1st century to the beginning of the 2nd century AD, a new building momentum. This new constructive impetus has been evidenced in several points of the city

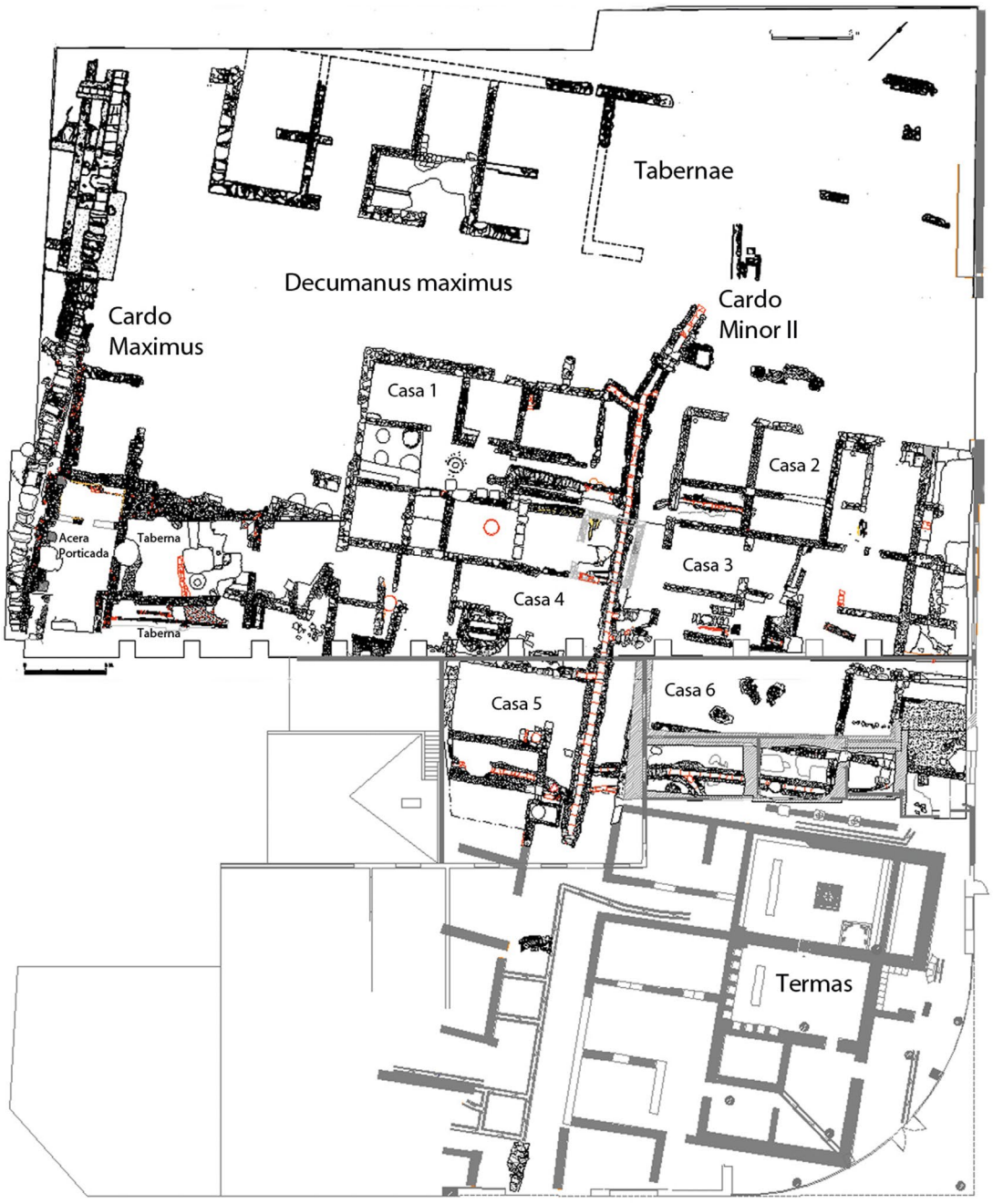

Fig. 3: Plan of the archaeological área of Thermae and Decumanus, Museu de Badalona.

in both the private and public buildings, at the same time and opposed to the process of abandonment and depreciation documented.[15]

The most representative public building of this new impulse is the construction of the theatre (fig. 1.5).[16] The building was placed in an *insula* at the SW angle of the *forum*, which

Fig. 4: Theatre. Eres Street 13–17.

is delimited to the E by the *cardo minor* V and to the S by the *decumanus maximus*. Prior to the theatre, we documented an open area with a metal workshop in the 1st century BC, and a house during the 1st half of the 1st century AD.[17]

Above the abandonment levels of the house, a new constructive phase of the *insula* was documented. The new building would maintain the same orientation as the urban fabric, which demonstrates a willingness to integrate the new structure into the pre-existing urban space. And also it shows an important transformation, which involved the occupation of spaces already built. The theatre was built upon their foundations and did not take advantage of existing topographic elements. From this public building a semicircular wall with an *opus signinum* pavement preserved more than 3,50 m. height, and several sections of radial walls adjoining the semicircular wall (fig. 5), five of which have been documented as a substructions for the *summa cavea*, is conserved. All these elements formed a building of 44 m. in diameter located near the *forum*. The theatre could be seen from the *Via Augusta*, from the outskirts of *Baetulo*, and also from the sea.[18]

The presence of TSA A as well as African common ceramics in the foundation trenches in the radial walls as well as in the constructive levels[19] of regularisation and the levels of circulation of the theatre, places the construction of this building in the 2nd century AD.

This new impulse of public buildings also affects, and importantly, the town's sewer system that was reformed and in some cases also expanded. At the middle of the 2nd century we documented the construction of a scupper in the intersection of *decumanus maximus* and *cardo minor* II, in order to drain the upper part of the town and lead wastewaters from the main street to the sewer (fig. 1.3). It was made with double ashlars of sandstone with a hole of 30 cm of diameter that lies directly on the walls of the collector. The reform of this structure would partially affect a section of the collector, and also, the plumbing that had to be reconstructed in part by making a constructive trench that cut the previous pavements of both streets and a part of the portico's foundations of the House 2 (fig. 3). The levels that

Fig. 5: *Via Augusta* and the hinges of the main entrance of *Baetulo*, Clos de la Torre nowadays Asssemblea Catalunya plaza.

were filling the constructive trench[20] give us a chronological range at least at the beginning of the 2nd century AD.[21]

Another example is in the *cardo maximus*, at the upper part of the town between the Dolphins and the Ivy *domus*, on *Lladó* Street (fig. 1.6). The reforms consisted in a new circulation pavement and a new collector that replaced the original with a different path. The residual waters from the street were driven into the sewage through a scupper that emerges from one of the pillars of the eastern portico of the *cardo maximus*. The levels[22] associated with this reform are dated at the end of the 1st century AD.[23]

Finally, an example of a new collector construction was located in the *decumanus* I, in the *intra muros* section of the *Via Augusta* (fig. 1.7).

The sewer construction trench crops the lower layouts of the street pavements. The sewer had 0.23 cm width and depth, and was made of masonry and the base and the covert of *tegulae*. In the SW edge of the sewer, a scupper made of ashlar with a hole of 20 cm of diameter was found. The chronology for this construction was given by a coin of Trajan located in the penultimate of the street levels, and for the pavement level of the new collector cover.[24] In the Via Augusta (fig. 1.8) at *extra muros* but next to the NE door entrance of *Baetulo* (fig. 5), a Nerva as embedded in one of the repaired pavements could be found. The coin, dated in the

Fig. 6: *Domus* of *Quintus Licinius*. General view of the archaeological excavation at the Termes Romanes Street, on top the western area of the *domus* and on the bottom the garden pond in the central peristyle.

97 AD, is low-wear, a fact that shows that it would have been short-lived and therefore, we can think that the refection would have occurred at a time not far from this date.

This building activity is documented also in private buildings. A significant example is the construction of a vast *domus* with a 1000 sqm *perystilum*, in an *insula* bounded in the N by the *decumanus maximus* and on the S by the *Via Augusta*. In the archaeological excavations of the 30s and 50s of the last century the house was largely discovered.[25] In the 70s, Guitart proposed a compositional scheme of the *domus*,[26] which was extended to the S within the *Via Augusta* as a limit. In the excavation campaign carried out in 2011 the remains of the rooms that formed the western boundary of this large building were found. The eastern limit was found on the other site of the same block (fig. 1.10) located at the opposite corner.[27] With the new data, a building with 80 m long and more than 3000 square m could be revealed. The portico of the peristylum, with almost 5 meters width, was built elevated from the garden, in which there was a 13 m. long pond with two apses at its edges. At the centre of the axial line, in the western part, there is a room with more than 9 m. in width, probably an *oecus* (fig. 6).[28] In one of the rooms, in the southern part of the house, the *tabula hospitalis* was found,[29] a bronze plate dated the 9th June 98 AD. with an inscription that documents the hospitality agreement established between *Quintus Licinius* and the *Baetulonenses* who accept him as a *patronus* (fig. 7).[30] The importance of this personality, the place where it was found the *tabula*, and the monumental building, makes us think that the *domus* could be property of *Quintus Lucinius* or his family. The fact that *Quintus Licinius* was the *patronus* of the *Baetulo* does not demonstrate euergetism actions but it makes it highly probable.

Parallel to the constructive process associate to the elites, some examples of new urban development in the houses were also documented that were built in the 1st half of the 1st century BC, which were located on the southern slope of the city and opened to the *cardo minor* II, in Font i Cussó Square. One of these cases is at the House 1, a rectangular building articulated around a yard and with two *tabernae* that open to the *cardo minor* II. At the end of the 1st century AD, several rooms and the central courtyard were paved in *opus signinum* and, furthermore, the *tabernae*, which open to the street, were expanded. The chronology for this moment is given by the ceramic used in the *opus signinum* pavement of one of the rooms[31]. On the other hand, at House 1 and House 2, located at the south of the *decumanus maximus* that opened to the *cardo minor* II (fig. 3), six rebuilding ritual offerings in ware containers two of them with a lid (fig. 7) were found. The material associated with the levels,[32] in which they were inserted, allow a chronology of these offerings at the end of the 1st century AD.[33]

In addition, there is epigraphic evidence that shows the municipal activity (fig. 8). It is an honorary inscription on a pedestal dedicated to Antoninus Pius and dated between 140 and 144 AD, in which the *decreto decurionum* formula appears.[34] It is the first testimony of the existence of municipal organisation in *Baetulo* and is since this moment when their magistrates are documented epigraphically.

We also know two more inscriptions, in which the municipal government is quoted. In the first place, a pedestal dated at the 1st half of the 2nd century AD. (98–138 AD.) dedicated to *Quintus Licinius Silvanus Granianus Quadronius Proculus* (fig. 8).[35] The second inscription,

dated at the 1st half or middle of the 2nd century AD is a pedestal dedicated to *Marcus Fabius Nepos*, a member of a family from *Iesso* (Guissona, Lleida). He was *aedil, duumvir* and *curator balinei novi* and it is the only testimony of the municipal career in *Baetulo*.[36] Other inscriptions that are also dated at the same period, one very fragmented[37] and an another votive inscription dedicated to the divinity *Lupae Augustae*, by *Tertius*, a *libertus* who was *sevir augustalis* could be uncovered.[38] Finally, there is an inscription engraved on a rock, dated at the 2nd century AD and that perhaps it could be related to the cult of *Mitras*.[39]

All this impulse in private and public buildings and personalities associated to the municipality and its government, give us an image of a flourishing town in the 2nd century AD.

But, at the end of the 2nd century and the beginning of the 3rd century AD, evidences of abandonment are partly documented in the urban layout, especially at the part near the forum and in the lower part of the city, which is closer to the coastline.

In the excavations of the area of Font i Cussó square (fig. 3), a large dump placed at the N edge of the *cardo maximus* portico sidewalk was documented. Its chronology gives us a range at the beginning of the 3rd century. The layouts of the dump were filling with domestic waste, the most common were African common ware, bones, marine malacology and waste.[40] The homogeneity on these types of material and the equality of the different layouts that conform this deposit, make us think that it could be used for a short period of time and evidences some kind of habitat.[41] It is an example of occupation of the public space, the sidewalk of the *cardo maximus*, at the beginning of the 3rd century. At the same time the *domus* located at the south of the *cardo maximus* and the *cardo minor* were abandoned too. This important evidence indicates the contraction of the town of *Baetulo*. Maybe the population left for a sort of time the S part of the town, near the seafront.

Besides the abandonment evidence that we just related, we also documented some urban development at this period of time. The most improtant evidence is the reform of the *Via Augusta* at the 2nd half of 3rd century (fig. 5). It was found an Antoninianus of Galienus (ca. 226 AD) in the last pavement of the *Via Augusta* at the part next to the enter of the town. At this point the bronze hinges of the wall door were removed, but the street was still in use without the door.[42]

In addition, the existence of archaeological layouts and some epigraphy document an occupation sequence of the town during this period. The pedestals dedicated to the emperors Gordianus III (238–244 AD),[43] to his wife Sabinia Tranquilina (238–244 AD)[44] and, finally, to Philipus I (244–249 AD),[45] by *decuriones Baetulonenses*, that probe the power of the city council are remarkable.

As a final conclusion, we can say that the occupation of the town of *Baetulo* from its late republican origins until at least the 2nd half of the 3rd century AD was continuous. It is evident that this occupation was not linear in time, since the city had successive transformations that would begin at the time of Augustus and would end at the reign of Philipus the Arab. During the Flavian period, a process of abandonment and depreciation that affected both the upper and the lower SE slopes was documented, and could be interpreted as a very

Fig. 7: Group of offerings related with foundational ritual vessels in houses and 2 in the archaeological area of *thermae* and *decumanus*.

Fig. 8: Group of most important epigraphy from the 2nd century AD: *Tabula Hospitalis* from *Quintus Licinius*, pedestal in honor to *Antoninus Pius* and inscription to *Quintus Licinius* Silvanus; and from the 3rd century AD: pedestals in honor to *Gordianus* III, to *Sabina Tranquilina* and *Philipus* I.

specific event that could possibly respond to a transformation period of the town but not a widespread abandonment. This hypothesis would be confirmed by the fact that in the same chronological period at the beginning of 2nd century AD or shortly thereafter, the town began an important urban transformation with the construction of the theatre, the reform of the sewer system and an important private reforms, one of the most outstanding example is the so-called *domus* of *Quintus Licinius*. Although the role played by this personality, *patronus* of *Baetulo*, has not been able to confirm it, is also logical to point as a very likely hypothesis, the direct connection of this flourishing moment that can be promoted by him or his descendants.

This building impulse was truncated at the end of the 2nd century or at the beginning of the 3rd century AD, when public and private buildings are abandoned and erased, both in the southern slope and in the upper part of the town. Besides of this important abandonment process, it was not total or general, so in the middle of the 3rd century AD there is a constructive recovery, especially in the public sphere, materialised in the repaving of some streets and, in addition, the activity of the city government is confirmed epigraphically by dedicating pedestals to the emperors.

Notes

[1] Meanwhile this article is been writing the plan of the roman town is under revision. AN.

[2] Guitart et al. 1994, 188–191.

[3] Padrós 1985, 20–22.

[4] TSS Drag. 27 and Drag. 37, TSH Ritt. 8 and Drag. 27 and African common ware Lamb. 10B, Ostia II:312 and Ostia III:332.

[5] Guitart 1976, 132–134.

[6] TSH Drag. 37, African common ceramic ware Lamb. 10, thin walls Mayet XXXVII, XXXVIII and Marabini LXVIII and TSS Drag. 18.

[7] Comas et al. 1986.

[8] In the amortization levels was documented TSS Drag. 27c, Drag. 33, Drag. 35/36, Dra, 29, Drag. 37 and Dechelet 67, TSH Drag. 27, Drag. 29, Drag. 37, Hispanic 2, Hispanic 4 and Hermet 13, the first closed forms of TSA A and African common ware of Lamb. 10B, Ostia II:312 and Ostia III:332. Aquilué 1987, 16–71; Madrid 1999, 162.

[9] Guitart 1976, 89–112.

[10] TSH Drag. 37 and African common ware as Lamb 10B, Ostia II:312 and Ostia III:332.

[11] Guitart 1976, 244 f.

[12] Padrós 1985, 83 f.

[13] Aquilué 1987, 207 f.

[14] Guitart 1984, 38; id, 1987, 150; Guitart et al. 1991, 46.

[15] Padrós & Sánchez Gil de Montes 2014.

[16] Padrós 2001, 15–31; 2002; Muñoz 2003.

[17] Muñoz 2003.
[18] Padrós – Moranta 2001, 15–31; Padrós – Moranta 2006, 205–222.
[19] TSA A Lamb. 7b, Lamb. 2nd and Lamb. 19, TSS Drag. 18, Drag. 27b, Drag. 29 and Drag. 37a, African common ware Ostia I: 270, Ostia III: 267, Ostia III: 332, Lamb. 10A and Lamb.10B and TSH (Muñoz 2003).
[20] TSA A Hayes 34 and Hayes 20, abundant African common ware Ostia I:261 and Ostia III:267
[21] Ferrer – Sánchez Gil de Montes 2012.
[22] TSS Drag. 24/25, Drag. 27b, Drag. 29b and Drag. 37, TSH Drag. 27, Drag. 37 and Hermet 13, thin walls Mayet XXXVIII and XL / XLII and African common ware Ostia II: 306, Ostia II:303 and Lamb. 10.
[23] Comas et al. 1985; Madrid 1991, 157–158; Bosch de Doria – Padrós 1999.
[24] TSS Drag. 24 f. and Ritt. 8, TSA A and African common ware Lamb. 10A.
[25] Serra Ràfols 1939, 268–289; Cuyas 1977, 281–293.
[26] Guitart 1976, 139–142.
[27] Caballero 2005.
[28] Sánchez Gil de Montes 2011.
[29] Font i Cussó 1980, 58–67.
[30] *IRC* 139.
[31] TSS Drag. 29 and African Common ware Ostia III: 332.
[32] African common ware of Lamb. 10B, Ostia II: 314, Ostia III:332. One of the lids was an African common ware Ostia III: 332 and one of the ritual vessels was a ceramic of thin walls Mayet XXIV.
[33] Comas – Padrós 2004, 221–225.
[34] *IRC* 134.
[35] *IRC* 138.
[36] *IRC* 141.
[37] *IRC* 142.
[38] *IRC* 132.
[39] *IRC* 133.
[40] TSA A Hayes 2, Hayes 6b, Hayes 8, Hayes 34, Lamb. 4, and African common ware Ostia I: 261, Ostia III: 267, Ostia III: 332, OstiaII: 302, Ostia II:312, Lamb. 10A, Lamb. 10B and Bonifay 21.
[41] Padrós – Sánchez Gil de Montes 2011, 229.
[42] Comas et al. 1998, 45.
[43] *IRC* 135.
[44] *IRC* 136.
[45] *IRC* 137.

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The Roman *forum* of Los Bañales (Uncastillo, Zaragoza): Building, Remodelling and Reuse of a *forum* from the *Conuentus Caesaraugustanus* at the End of the High-Empire*

Luis Romero Novella

Abstract

The Roman city of Los Bañales shows a *forum* complex that was built, at the latest, during the early Augustan Age. The site suffered a series of remodellings, one of which can be linked to the Flavian promotion of the city into a *municipium*. It was reused early, between the end of the 2nd century and the beginning of the 3rd century AD, as can be seen from the pottery found at the reutilisation levels in the east cryptoporticus and the southern area. We will study the techniques applied to transform the old public spaces of the *forum* into spaces with different purposes, by means of compartmentalising areas, adapting it to these new usages. In this process, ashlars as well as architectural decorations from the previous stages were reused.

The Building of the *forum*

The *forum* (fig. 1) of the Roman city of Los Bañales's was built during the early Augustan age, according to the material found under the public square, and to its first assembly of sculptures, which dates to this period.[1] The unit under the *forum's* area consists of a significant level of fill, which made the reutilisation of the preexisting pre-Roman structures possible. It also served to unify the layer beneath the open area. The first epigraphic programme consists of equestrian statues dedicated to Gaius[2] and Lucius Caesar,[3] grandsons and adoptive sons of the *Princeps*. Their respective equestrian statue-bases have been found; Lucius Caesar's was unearthed from the basilica's cryptoporticus, and Gaius Caesar's was discovered some years ago in the nearby town of Rivas. Both must have been presided by quite a larger statue of Augustus himself, as can be deduced by the foundations of these monuments, which are placed in the *antae* that give access to the northern *porticus* duplex.[4] This first enclosure was articulated around a limited open area, of 13.5 × 22 m, which means that it is one of the smallest public squares of Hispania, together with the forums of *Iuliobriga* and *Munigua*.[5] It displayed a double *porticus* at the north and west flanks, and the latter was taken up by the judicial basilica,[6] erected over a deep cryptoporticus, with a two-aisle floor and dimensions of 7.5 × 26 m. The south of the *forum*, of greater slope, shows a considerably large terracing wall, built as a potent *opus quadratum*. The city's curia was placed at the end of the western *porticus*, and had also modest dimensions, of 4 × 7 m indoors.

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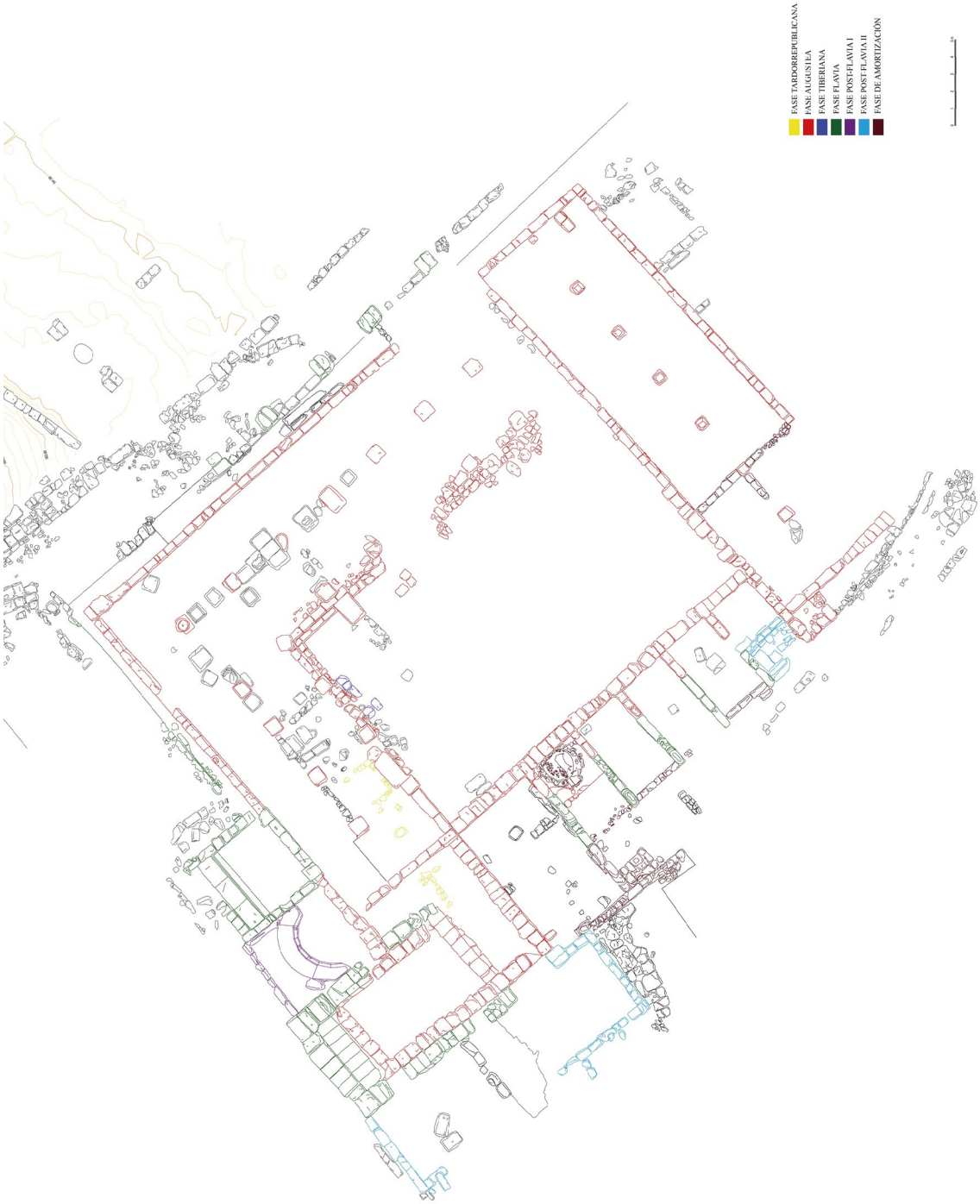

Fig. 1: Plan of the *forum*.

Fig. 2: Reutilisation processes of the forum's structures.

The Remodellings of the Complex

By the time of Tiberius, the sculptural decoration of the square's open area was completed, with the addition of another triple equestrian cycle. It consisted of a statue of Tiberius[7] and two statues dedicated to *Sempronius Vitulus*, *subpraefectus cohortis*. The first two had been erected through a testamentary disposition of *Sempronius Vitulus* himself,[8] while the third one was promoted by his freedman *Aesopus*.[9] This phase only equipped the *forum* with a new equestrian group, and did not modify the floor or the decorative programmes of the complex by means of any construction works.

During the Flavian period, the whole set was altered through significant works (fig. 1), which coincide with the historic moment in which the city was judicially promoted into a *municipium*.[10] In the *forum*, a cult enclosure was built, dedicated to the Victoria Augusta, and promoted by *Marcus Fabius Novus* and *Porcia Faventina*.[11] Recently, through the revision of architectural material, it has been verified that a small Tuscan capital – very possibly from the forum's earliest phase – was reworked as a cylindrical altar dedicated to the Victoria Augusta, for this very place of worship.[12] Also during this phase, the monumentalisation of the curia took place. Its walls and height doubled in size, although its indoor dimensions remained unaltered. In the southern area, taking advantage of the large terracing wall from the Augustan period and of the slope level, a series of *tabernae* were built. They face a *decumanus*, which surrounds the *forum* by its southern flank. Structures like these must have existed in the public square at its height, following a pattern similar to the one at the colonial *forum* of Tarraco, where there are *tabernae* at the street level, and enclosures at the

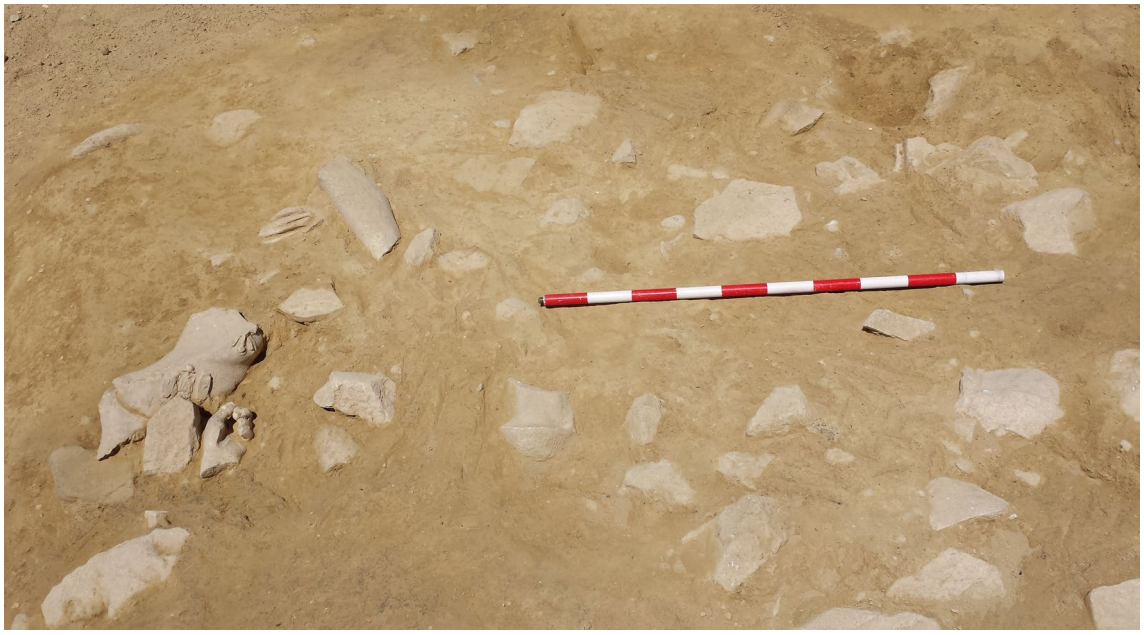

Fig. 3: Recycling of sculptures program.

area level.[13] In addition, during this phase we also have a refurbishment, which gives more monumentality to the forum's north access through the *porticus duplex*.

In the post-Flavian period, we encounter a series of remodellings, which affect two areas of the *forum* (fig. 1). A space between the *Victoria Augusta* enclosure and the curia is used to build a second worship enclosure. It was erected through *Pompeia Paulla's* testamentary disposition, and dedicated to a number of deities.[14] The other refurbishment affects the southern part of the *forum*, where one of the *tabernae* is reused to build an access from the *decumanus* that surrounds the *forum* from the south, up to the square's level. In order to make it possible, a monumental staircase was built, of which only the first three steps remain.

The Reutilisation of the Enclosure

In the southern part, we can observe reutilisation processes of the forum's structures through the compartmentalisation of spaces for purposes different to the original ones. For instance, the wall that divides the first and second *tabernae* is an actual witness of the different architectural phases of this part of the *forum*, as it shows the Augustan terracing wall, the vertical buttresses from the Flavian enlargement, and the final compartmentalisation of the wall, when it did not have a public function anymore.[15] Also in this area, facing the *tabernae* nº 2 –and invading what used to be a *decumanus*– remains a wall, in which an architectural acroterion was reused (fig. 2).[16] It is similar to another pair of acroteria unearthed from the *forum*, and

Fig. 4: Compartmentation of the substruction in the basilica's cryptoporticus.

which might have belonged to the curia. Furthermore, a considerable stratigraphic unit from the forum's reutilisation phase was located, placed over the first two *tabernae*. In the mentioned level, numerous sculpture fragments appeared,[17] carved from fine-grained white marble (fig. 3). All of the pieces had been intentionally cut, very likely to be turned into lime, although the kiln linked to this process has not been found. However, above the *tabernae* nº 2 two ovens were built, but with different purposes, one of them associated with baking processes.[18] Among the sculpture fragments, a series of portraits stand out. Some of them are linkable to Julio-Claudian princes,[19] from which we can highlight a bust of Germanicus.[20] There are also some outstanding pieces made from *marmor Lunense*, which belong with each other, reconstructing part of an Imperial *thoracatus*, linkable to a portrayal of Domitian.[21] Other fitting fragments show a second *thoracatus*,[22] a number of robed figures,[23] and dressed femenine portrayals.[24]

In the basilica's cryptoporticus there is also a wall, which divides part of the substruction for different purposes from those originally public that the building had. Specifically, an uneven brick wall was built over the fifth central pillar of the cryptoporticus (fig. 4).[25] The choice of place indicates an intention to save as much structural material as possible, taking advantage of the area originally occupied by the pillar, which supported the building's upper floor. In this cryptoporticus, plenty of bronze appeared over the building's pavement. Apparently, they are what remains of some of the *forum's* bronze statues. A number of fragments have been identified as linkable to Imperial portrayals, such as the ones that decorated the square and of which we know both cycles mentioned earlier. The remains of three other equestrian monument's foundations, which were located at the north *porticus duplex*, are still in place as well, so we do not know where

exactly these very fragmentary pieces came from. Above this level, we encounter once again proof of reutilisation processes: four equestrian pedestals mentioned earlier were unearthed from this unit, as well as the architectural decoration of the judicial basilica,[26] which used to be located in the building's first floor. Both elements had been introduced inside the cryptoporticus on purpose, and had nothing to do with the structure's first floor collapse. Although the architectural decoration is believed to have belonged to the basilica, the equestrian pedestals must have been placed outdoors, on top of the foundations preserved at the antae which give access to the north and west porticos, or else, inside the north *porticus duplex*.

The whole enclosure must have been reutilised early, around the end of the 2nd and the beginning of the 3rd century AD,[27] after what can be deduced from the pottery found in the reutilisation levels, both from the east cryptoporticus and the southern area of the *forum*. This chronology, although very early, has a number of parallels in other forums through Hispania, such as the ones of *Carthago Nova*, *Clunia*, *Emporiae* or *Labitolosa*, *Lucentum*, *Saguntum* or *Valeria*.[28]

In the household-artisanal district, new evidence of the forum's reutilisation has been found. A column's shaft, which probably came from the forum's *porticus duplex*, was reused as a bench. The proof of its origin is the shaft's diameter, similar to those preserved of the porticos, and its proximity to the *forum* itself, which would make easy the carrying of construction materials. The dating of this area is given by two *terra sigillata Hispanica* fragments. One of them had been cut in the shape of a game token, and both have an imprinted stamp of coins from the first issues of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus. The final phase of this complex's dating is based on a bronze Antoninianus of Caracalla, from 214 AD, unearthed from the last inhabitancy level of what seems to be the main room of the said complex.[29] The dating of the earliest phases at this area is, therefore, concordant with the first evidences of the forum's early reutilisation since the end of the 2nd century AD.

Conclusions

The Roman *forum* of Los Bañales (Uncastillo) had quite a short life, as it was built during the early Augustan age, and by the end of the 2nd or the beginning of the 3rd century AD, it suffered the first signals of reutilisation, as it was being used for non-public purposes. This chronology is even shorter if we take into account that the enclosure suffered significant refurbishments during the Flavian period, in coincidence with the judicial promotion of the city into a *municipium*. Further post-Flavian remodellings also affected a number of areas in the *forum*.

The processes that have been mentioned imply the dismantlement of the epigraphic, sculptural and decorative programmes, the compartmentalisation of public spaces for different purposes, not always clear, and the presence of kilns and ovens invading

tabernae in the southern area. These changes do not mean that the city was abandoned, rather, they show the transformations that took place when structures were reutilised for purposes different from the original ones, following patterns well known and studied in Hispania. This new evidence sheds a new light over the transformation processes, which must have affected many communities throughout Hispania in very early times. All of this indicates the decay of the municipal institutions, and how buildings, which used to be fundamental for the civic organisation, such as the curia or the basilica, were no longer needed.

Notes

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[1] Romero – Andreu 2018, 366–368.

[2] *HEp* 5, 916; Andreu – Jordán 2003–2004, 558 n. 21.

[3] Andreu 2016, 510–515.

[4] Ventura et al. 2018, 43.

[5] Romero 2014, 167–169.

[6] Romero 2016a, 199 f.; Romero 2016b, 376–378; Romero 2017b

[7] Andreu 2015, 296–302; Andreu – Felice 2016, 553–556.

[8] Andreu 2015, 296–302; Andreu 2017, 230.

[9] Andreu – Felice 2016, 553–556; Andreu 2017, 230.

[10] Andreu 2003, 173.

[11] Jordán – Andreu 2014, 247–259.

[12] Andreu – Romero 2018.

[13] Mar et al. 2015, 255–259.

[14] Jordán 2012, 75–92.

[15] Romero 2017a, 253; Romero 2016b, 375 f.

[16] Romero 2016b, 375 f.

[17] Andreu et al. 2014, 191 f.; Andreu 2014, 254 f.; Romero 2017a, 253.

[18] Andreu – Delage 2017, 352.

[19] Romero – Andreu 2018, 368–370 nos. 1–4; Andreu et al. 2015, 42–45 nos. 1–3.

[20] Romero – Andreu 2018, 368 f. n. 1; Andreu et al. 2015, 42 f. nos. 1.

[21] Romero et al. 2014, 197–216; Romero – Andreu 2018, 370–372 n. 5.

[22] Romero – Andreu 2018, 372 n. 6.

[23] Romero – Andreu 2018, 372–374 nos. 7–10.

[24] Romero – Andreu 2018, 374 n. 11.

[25] Romero 2017a, 253; Romero 2016b, 377 f.

[26] Romero 2017b, 117–123.
[27] Andreu – Delage 2017, 351–363.
[28] Diarte-Blasco 2012, 247–251; Romero 2017a, 258 f.
[29] Andreu 2011, 45 f.; Andreu et al. 2014, 181–183.

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Fig. 1: Arqueocad S. L. – Fig. 2–4: L. Romero.

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Ancient Roman writers used to think of the Classical city as a durable, even eternal, structure and to recognize and underline its symbolic value as a reflection of the *maiestas Imperii Romani* and an image of the Romanization itself. On the other hand, different sources, from Pliny the Younger to the *Historia Augusta*, in addition to some inscriptions relate the weaknesses and problems of the local governments in maintaining the urban way of life and in supporting the financial system of those centres, in particular after the second half of the 2nd century AD, right before the much-discussed 'crisis of the 3rd century'. This phenomenon turned many former *splendidissimae ciuitates* that possessed all the facilities and equipment of a Classical Roman city into *oppida labentia*, cities in decline and in process of abandonment. This exciting process is only visible through the appropriate analysis of the archaeological evidence. This book deals with some of the juridical, historical, institutional and political factors and facts, which can contribute to enlighten us about the elements of this decline of some of the small towns in the Roman West, in particular some paradigmatic evidence and case studies from Roman Spain.

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