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SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON THE TRIPARTITE *FORUMS*  
OF THE ROMAN CITIES IN ANCIENT *LUSITANIA*

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**RESUMO:** Neste artigo procuramos realizar uma análise comparativa das cidades romanas da Lusitânia, onde, no estado atual dos estudos, as escavações arqueológicas trouxeram à luz o mesmo tipo de centro monumental, que é o chamado “fórum tripartido” ou “bloco-fórum”. Iremos focar a atenção em seis cidades: *Augusta Emerita*, *Ebora Liberalitas Iulia*, *Ammaia*, *Pax Iulia*, Bobadela e *Sellium*. Embora o conhecimento fragmentário e incompleto que ainda caracteriza os centros monumentais da Lusitânia não permita uma visão global do tema, analisaremos a comparação entre os fóruns aqui descritos, a fim de compreender quais são os elementos comuns e quais os diferentes. As recentes escavações realizadas no sítio arqueológico de *Ammaia*, em particular, prestaram novos dados relevantes, que contribuirão para aumentar o nosso conhecimento sobre este assunto. Graças a uma abordagem comparativa, podemos traçar a evolução comum no projeto arquitetónico e na ordem cronológica progressiva.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Lusitânia romana; urbanismo romano; fórum.

**ABSTRACT:** This paper attempts to undertake a comparative analyse of the Roman cities of *Lusitania* where, at the current state of studies, the archaeological excavations have brought to light the same kind of monumental centre, which is the so called “tripartite forum” or “block-forum”. We will focus the attention upon six towns: *Augusta Emerita*, *Ebora Liberalitas Iulia*, *Ammaia*, *Pax Iulia*,

*Conimbriga*, 51 (2012) 35-74

Bobadela and *Sellium*. Although the fragmentary and incomplete knowledge that still characterizes the monumental centres of *Lusitania* does not allow a global view of the topic, we will examine the comparison between the *forums* here described in order to understand what are the common elements and what the different ones. The recent excavations carried out in the archaeological site of *Ammaia*, in particular, provided new relevant data, which contribute to enhance our knowledge about this issue. Thanks to a comparative approach, we can delineate common developments in the architectural project and in the chronological phasing.

KEY-WORDS: Lusitania; Roman urbanism; forum.

## SOME CONSIDERATIONS ON THE TRIPARTITE *FORUMS* OF THE ROMAN CITIES IN ANCIENT *LUSITANIA*

### **Introduction**

The topic that will be discussed in this paper is part of an on-going research project, started in March 2010, concerning the Roman monumental centres of the Iberian Peninsula<sup>1</sup>. Thus, the considerations expressed in the article are the results of investigations in progress: the

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first phase of the research, regarding the ancient province of *Lusitania*, has been completed, while the other provinces of ancient *Hispania* are currently under examination. The central topic of this contribution is the type of monumental centre usually defined as a “tripartite forum” or a “forum block” and all the towns analysed belong to *Lusitania*, whose history and boundaries represent quite well-known elements (<sup>2</sup>) (Fig. 1).

Since the late republican age, especially in connection with the building of the *Forum Caesaris* or *Forum Iulium* in Rome (perhaps started in 51 BC), a new typology of monumental centre began to develop. The complex was characterized by the combination of three sectors with different functions: a temple or a *aedes*, often raised on a terrace, a central courtyard and a *basilica* hall (GROS, 1996: 212–213). This plan, characterized by the temple facing the *basilica* from the opposite end of an elongated rectangular forum enclosure, was called the “*basilica*-type forum” by Ward-Perkins (1970: 1-19). Thus, this basic model, regulated by strict symmetry, had a long period of elaboration, probably starting with the Augustan age, which led to a lot of different adaptations. It spread throughout the Roman Empire, including also *Lusitania*, but unfortunately here knowledge about the Roman monumental centres is still poor, especially as several ancient towns have remained in occupation, removing much of the old evidence or burying it under modern structures. However, if we consider that it is less than 30 years since great progress began to be made in acquiring knowledge of the *forums* (in the 1970s *Conimbriga* represented the pioneer investigation for its high quality and relevance), we understand the reasons why this kind of research is still at an embryonic stage.

Although this analysis is strongly conditioned by vast gaps in our knowledge, also due to the fact that only some cities have been excavated and publicised, we think that the complexes which, at the present stage of the studies, can be identified as tripartite *forums* (or *basilica*-type *forums*) in *Lusitania* are the following: *Augusta Emerita*, *Ebora Liberalitas Iulia*, *Ammaia*, *Pax Iulia*, *Bobadela* and probably *Sellium*. This does not mean that they are the unique identifiable cases of tripartite *forums* in *Lusitania*, but only that, among the centres till being investigated in that province, they have provided more archaeological

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<sup>2</sup> See, among others, RICHARDSON, 1996; OSLAND, 2006.

data and so the reconstruction of their plans seems to be more reliable than others.

After describing the monumental centres of the above mentioned cities, thanks to a comparison between these *forums* we will analyze the similarities and the differences. The aim of this study is to try to delineate common developments in the architectural projects and in the chronological phasing. It can be said in advance that it is likely that the towns we are going to examine were all founded in the Augustan age: it is probably not a mere coincidence, and after analysing the features of each monumental centre this should be clearer.

## AUGUSTA EMERITA

It is generally known that the colony of *Augusta Emerita*, corresponding to the current Mérida, in Extremadura, was set up on the right bank of the river Guadiana by veterans of the legions V *Alaudae* and X *Gemina*, possibly between 25 and 19 BC (*Dio Cassius*, 53, 26, 1). It is believed to be the last one to be founded among the first five colonies established in the Augustan age in the province of *Lusitania* (PL., *Nat. Hist.*, 4, 117)<sup>3</sup>. It was a foundation *ex nihilo* and it performed a different function than the other colonies, because it was not intended to be a defensible site: it served to display the power of the Roman empire and to control the routes by road and river (RICHARDSON, 1996: 53). It was a medium-sized western city, conceived as a provincial capital. What is clear is that Rome, especially through the agency of Agrippa, planned *Augusta Emerita* as a mirror-image of Rome itself: it was designed as a symbol of Roman power on the periphery of the Empire.

The town had an orthogonal plan from the beginning and it had a double monumental centre: a colonial forum and a municipal one. The latter, which is also called the “Marble forum”, was built later, in the Claudian age (MATEOS CRUZ & PALMA GARCÍA, 2004: 41) or more plausibly in the Tiberian age (NOGALES BASARRATE & ÁLVAREZ MARTÍNEZ,

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<sup>3</sup> The first colonies in *Lusitania* were the following: *Caecilia Metellinum* (modern Medellín), that probably was the earliest; *Norba Caesarina* (modern Cáceres); *Colonia Pax Iulia* (modern Beja); *Colonia Scalabitana*, also called *Scallabis Praesidium Iulium* (modern Santarém); *Colonia Augusta Emerita*.

2010: 238–239). It was a juxtaposition of public areas, articulated at different levels and dominated by the central square with the imperial cult temple.

The colonial forum was located in the eastern sector of the ancient city (at the opposite end to the provincial one), in the *locus celeberrimus* which Vitruvius mentioned (*De Arch.*, 1, 7, 1). It had three different monumental precincts: the sacred sector of the modern Calle Viñeros, which is in the western platform n. 1; the public complex located in the current Calle John Lennon, which coincides with the western platform n. 2; the so-called temple of Diana and the associated precinct, which correspond to the central platform. It is important to stress that, after the second half of the first century AD, the whole area of the colonial forum underwent a deep renovation and an enlargement of its precincts, especially on the eastern side. Thus, it had two different building phases: the first in the Augustan age and the second in the Flavian age.

In this paper, we will focus exclusively on the central platform of the colonial forum, not only because it was the real core of the complex, but particularly because it had the typical plan of a tripartite forum. This platform occupied the crossing between the two main urban axes: in fact, it was bounded on the north by the so-called *decumanus maximus* and on the west by the so-called *cardo maximus*, where there was an entrance with a monumental arch (AYERBE VÉLEZ, BARRIENTOS VERA & PALMA GARCÍA, 2009: 807–809). In the Augustan age, this rectangular sector extended over an area of 7.80 m in a NW/SE direction and an area of 103.52 m in a NE/SW direction, but its internal measurements were 65.36 by 93.60 m (Fig. 2).

With regard to the so-called temple of Diana, the deity to whom it was consecrated is actually still unknown. It was an impressive building, oriented NE/SW: constructed on a platform 2 m above the surrounding area, it was probably 22 m high and it was raised on a *podium* 3.25 m high. Built with local granite covered by stucco, it was a pterital and pycnostyle temple: the six columns of the short sides and the eleven columns of the long sides were topped with marble Corinthian capitals. The column bases did not have plinths, but they rested on the cornice of the *podium* through a kind of stylobate course. With regard to the *cella*, although there is not much surviving evidence, it is probable that it rose from the fourth row of columns and it measured about 15 by 9 m (135 m<sup>2</sup>). The archaeological excavations have shown that the original floor was carried out with a concrete which has been

wrongly qualified as *opus signinum*, because its correct name is *cocciopesto*<sup>4</sup>. This floor was later replaced (maybe at the time of Tiberius) by marble slabs (AYERBE VÉLEZ, BARRIENTOS VERA & PALMA GARCÍA, 2009: 681). The temple had the main entrance to the south, where there was a frontal staircase (maybe composed of 13 or 15 marble steps). This staircase was flanked by two smaller side staircases (composed of ten steps), which are no longer preserved (AYERBE VÉLEZ, BARRIENTOS VERA & PALMA GARCÍA, 2009: 672–673). These side stairs encased a tribune or a platform, measuring 19.40 m long, 7.80 m wide and 3.27 m high. It was typical of the Augustan age or of the beginning of the Julio-Claudian period and it had a clear sacred-political function. It has been hypothesized that this temple, with a tribune on the façade, belonged to the typology of the *templa rostrata*, such as the temple of *Venus Genetrix* in Rome (AYERBE VÉLEZ, BARRIENTOS VERA & PALMA GARCÍA, 2009: 674–675). In the Flavian age, to the tribune was added an *exedra* (built in *opus quadratum* and *opus caementicium*), which can be interpreted as an expansion of the tribune used by *oratores*. In this way, the frontage of the temple was completely closed towards the square. Some soundings have brought to light the remains of a floor made with granite slabs: thus, it is conceivable that the central platform was paved with them.

The symmetrical position of the two large and equal *piscinae* placed along the two long sides of the temple is worthy of note: it is believed that they were built in the Augustan phase of the forum and their presence stressed the religious function of this area.

The temple was surrounded on all four sides by a *temenos*, whose inner dimensions were 59.06 by 49.20 m. The *temenos* was bounded on three sides by closed walls, without porticoes. These walls delimited a double building: they were two adjacent structures, which ran parallel to each other; they had an inverted “U” shape and their function is still unknown (Fig. 3).

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<sup>4</sup> Cocciopesto is often confused with *opus signinum*, but they don't have the same composition: the former is an hydraulic concrete composed of lime mortar with crushed terracotta and it was applied as an impermeable layer in the structures exposed to water; by reading carefully the ancient sources, as Vitruvius and Pliny the Elder, it is possible to understand the difference between them (for a description of *opus signinum* see VITR., *De Arch.*, 8, 6, 14) and this distinction has been recently stressed by R. Ginouvès and R. Martin (1985, I, s.v.); GIULIANI, 1985: 171-174.



The building directly bordering the *temenos* had no access to it: it was 8 m wide, 56.76 m long on both the eastern and western sides and 76.81 m long on the northern side. The archaeological excavations have brought to light a semi-underground gallery below it: it was a “π”-shaped *cryptoporticus*, oriented NW/SE. Its rectangular plan, measuring 49.20 m long and 8 m wide, was divided into two naves by a line of pillars supporting a vaulted roof.

The other building, which marked the outer limits of the platform, was constructed over another “π”-shaped *cryptoporticus*. This semi-underground gallery, very similar to the inner one, also ran on three sides and had a rectangular plan: it was 65.36 long on the eastern and western sides, 93.60 m long on the northern side and 8 m wide. Just like the other *cryptoporticus*, it was divided into two naves by a line of granite pillars and it was covered by a vaulted roof.

Apart from their sustaining function, we still ignore the use of these structures, but we cannot exclude the possibility that they were exploited as public storage, such as has been observed in other similar edifications.

According to the traditional model of the tripartite forum, in *Augusta Emerita* the *basilica* was placed on the short (southern) side of the central platform, and the administrative area was separated by the sacred sector, located on the northern side. Unfortunately, due to the lack of systematic excavations in this area of the central platform it is not possible to reconstruct the appearance of the *basilica* in the Augustan age and to understand if, in the original complex, this building had really a juridical function. We only know that, while the area of the temple of Diana built shortly after the foundation of the city remained almost unchanged during the Flavian remodelling of the forum, the sector of the big *basilica* was deeply monumentalized. In this phase, on the eastern, southern and western sides of the Colonial forum, new buildings were erected: in addition to the *basilica*, also the *curia* and a possible *aerarium* or *carcer* have been identified. The *basilica* and the *curia*, in particular, located in a corner of the new monumental centre, generated an administrative area.

The *basilica*, which dates back to the first century AD, was 63.10 m long and 30.60 m wide (a proportion of 1:2), covering a total area of about 2.000<sup>2</sup> m. It was built with *opus incertum* and it showed a clear elevation above the level of the square. The division of the internal space into three naves using ten columns on the long sides and four col-

umns on the short sides belongs to the Flavian age. The position of the *tribunal* is unknown. The *basilica* was preceded by a big colonnaded nave, which was 13 m long and 5.44 m wide and it flanked the whole southern side of the central platform. This nave had a marble floor raised above the level of the surrounding space and it was open onto the square. A *propylaeum* detached from the central part of the nave, functioned as an access platform to the *basilica*: it was 16.20 m long and 30.60 m wide.

The *curia*, located on the western side of the forum, was divided into three parts: a *vestibulum* (5.25 by 10.70 m) facing towards the square and presumably decorated with two statues; the *curia* itself approximately quadrangular in shape (10.25 by 9.15 m); a *podium* placed in the centre of the rear wall (AYERBE VÉLEZ, BARRIENTOS VERA & PALMA GARCÍA, 2009: 711–713). The *curia* had a raised floor and the access from the *vestibulum* may have been by means of a staircase. Next to the *curia*, all along the western side of the platform, there was an underground space (14.10 by 10.55 m): it was oriented SW/NE and was divided into three rectangular naves. This space, with a low ceiling covered by a vaulted roof, has been identified as the *carcer* or, in all probability, as the *aerarium* (AYERBE VÉLEZ, BARRIENTOS VERA & PALMA GARCÍA, 2009: 714–715).

## EBORA LIBERALITAS IULIA

The Roman town of *Ebora*, the current Evora, in the Alentejo region, received the *status* of *oppidum Latii antiqui / veteris Latii* from Octavian between the years 31 and 27 BC (PL., *Nat. Hist.*, 4, 117); then, it was likely promoted to *municipium* in 12 BC (FARIA, 1999: 33; FARIA, 2001a: 352; FARIA, 2001b: 72). Although it was not a *civitas ex novo*, it had a regular pattern, with the main north-south urban axis (*cardo maximus*) today following the line of the Rua Soares Lusitano, while the main east-west urban axis (*decumanus maximus*) seems to line up with the Rua 5 de Outubro.

The dating of the forum is still a matter for debate: it was completed or remodelled in the late first century AD, in the Flavian age, along with the forum of *Conimbriga*. But W. Mierse has suggested an earlier date for the restoration of the temple in the reign of Claudius (1999: 99, 102). Actually, Vasco Mantas has a different opinion: he believes that

the temple was reconstructed later, between the first and second centuries AD, e.g. under the reign of Trajan (2010: 174). If so, the building would have been inserted into a pre-existing urban plan.

The monumental centre was placed on the highest point of a hill, to the north of the crossroads of the two main urban axes. It was built on a wide platform measuring about 63.74 by 120 m and had a north-south orientation (Fig. 4). If we compare these data with the measurements provided by Vitruvius in reference to the proportions of a Roman forum, we realize that in this forum the relationship between the width and the length is not 2:3. In fact, in the complex of *Ebora* there was a divergence of 7 m in length: it has been suggested that this could be due to the changes made in the later phase, when the forum was also monumentalized by means of the introduction of marble decorations (HAUSCHILD, 2010: 33–34). Although most of it is today buried under some later buildings, a relevant part of the plan can be reconstructed.

The temple, located on the northern side of the complex (on its central axis), was perhaps devoted to the imperial cult (*Idem*: 28). It was a peripteral hexastyle temple, quite large for *Lusitania* as it measured about 25.50 by 15.20 m. It had six columns along the front and the rear, plus nine or, more probably, ten other columns along each side (HAUSCHILD, 2002: p. 218) (Fig. 5). Today, only fourteen are still in position. Their height is 7.70 m: 6.19 m for the drum, 0.48 m for the base and 1 m for the capital; the diameter is 0.90 m (GONÇALVES & SARANTOPOULOS, 2010: 39). They are topped with marble Corinthian capitals: the use of the marble for the capitals and for the bases of the columns dates back to a period before the Flavian age, but the exact date is uncertain (HAUSCHILD, 2010: 28). The location of frieze blocks directly over the columns is unattested elsewhere in *Hispania*. The architrave, resting on twelve columns, was 1.70 m high. Hauschild has suggested that the total height of the *Ebora* temple was 16 m (1982: 145–156).

The *podium* was constructed of large stone blocks encasing *opus incertum*, which was covered by white plaster; today it stands roughly 3.45 m above the level of its surroundings. The base of the structure and its cornice were constructed with large granite blocks (HAUSCHILD, 2002: 218). We have very little information about the *cella*, but it has been suggested that it was a single chamber of roughly 8 m (east-west) by 10 m (north-south) (OSLAND, 2006: 35). Some traces of plaster are

still visible on portions of the temple walls and on the granite columns, indicating that the whole structure may have been plastered and painted in ancient times.

The temple was surrounded on the three sides (to the west, the north and the east) by a big water tank, about 5 m wide and 1 m deep: since it leaned against the foundations of the temple and its substructures were deeper than those of the *podium*, it has been deduced that the water tank belonged to a different building phase than the *podium* (HAUSCHILD, 2010: 28). Some finds from that area have proved that it is likely to have been finished in the middle of the first century AD. This hydraulic system is reminiscent of similar evidence in the temple of Luni or also in that of *Venus Genetrix* in the Forum *Iulii* of Rome (*Ibid.*). In addition, the temple at *Ebora* was surrounded on three sides (to the west, the north and the east) by a “π”-shaped *cryptoporticus* that held up a portico: together with the water tank, they were the first structures to be excavated between 1989 and 1995 (*Ibid.*; MIERSE, 1999: 101).

Originally, a front staircase provided access from the south, but later it was replaced by two lateral ascents, allowing the construction of a pilastered block wall, which cut across the façade of the temple (HAUSCHILD, 2010: 28–30). This transversal wall extended for 20 m and it had a thickness of 1.43 m. It could be coeval with the water tank because they were made with a mortar of the same quality (*Idem*: 28). Its function was to separate and support the temple precinct (*temenos*) and the square located at a lower level. In this way, it served to raise the temple precinct above the rest of the forum, just like the front wall of the temple of Diana at Mérida.

Hauschild has stated that this wall was decorated with large marble slabs in a later construction phase (*Ibid.*). The confirmation of the validity of this theory comes from some findings: inside an earthy layer placed beneath the marble slabs of the pavement, at the point where the base of the aforementioned wall joined the pavement, a coin of the emperor Claudius (41/42 AD) and some fragments of pottery datable to the Flavian age have been discovered. In the front surface of the wall there is still a 1.30 m wide opening in the pavement of the forum which could indicate the existence of a base, maybe an altar or a pedestal. The probable width of the square in front of the temple was 35.44 m, corresponding to 1 *actus* (120 *pedes*) (*Idem*: 30).

With regard to the central courtyard, some fragmentary remains

have been found by taking soundings and a portion of the marble-flagged courtyard is still preserved inside the current museum of Évora. On the western side, the presence of side porticoes and a series of buildings or halls, such as *curia*, *comitium* and *tabernae*, which departed from the western portico of the temple precinct and extended until the area of the museum, has been hypothesized. The western wall of the museum seems to be in alignment with the outer wall of the portico. On the eastern side, many remains have been discovered under the northern side of the Cathedral. There are other fragments of the Roman pavement of the square, like some lines that joint the marble slabs and the foundations of a wall, seated on the bedrock and running north-south. This wall has been interpreted as the eastern limit of the monumental centre, but actually it differs from the general orientation of the square: this has been explained by the existence of an older structure in this area.

Several small excavations were carried out on the southern side, uncovering the remains of the floor of the Flavian complex under the street, both in front of the museum and beside it, as well as below the current library. Also, beneath the museum there are many fragments of the forum pavement, especially on the eastern side of this building. In addition, in the old kitchen of the Episcopal Palace, under a group of medieval burials, several pieces of marble with architectural decoration have been brought to light. In the patio of the museum there was another interesting discovery: a fragment of Roman floor, 30 cm high, which showed a different placement of the marble slabs; it could suggest a relationship with the neighbouring buildings or with a portico. Furthermore, the remains of a large sewer built with a strong side wall (whether or not above ground is not explained) have been interpreted as the end of the forum (*Idem*: 33).

The location of the *basilica* is still uncertain, but it is conceivable that it was on the southern side of the complex, according to the typical model of the tripartite forum. In fact, evidence relating to this building has been discovered in a room in the southern sector of the museum, where there is still a large Ionic capital, which was reused inside a medieval burial (*Idem*: 34).

With regard to the forum entrances, on the western side of the complex there was another wall covered by marble slabs, connected with the one in front of the temple and running southwards: in this wall there are the remains of an opening, which could correspond to the western doorway of the monumental centre (*Idem*: 30). That potential

gate was 3.51 m wide (12 *pedes*). Therefore, if the square had a symmetrical plan, it is plausible that on the eastern side another entrance may have been inserted.

## AMMAIA

*Ammaia*, placed in the current municipality of Marvão, district of Portalegre, within the region of Alto Alentejo, may have been founded *ex nihilo* early in the first century AD, possibly during the reign of Augustus (VERMEULEN & TAELEMAN, 2010: 313). The inscription dating from 44 or 45 AD and coming from São Salvador de Aramenha (IRCP 615), which calls the town “*civitas Ammaiensis*”, could testify that *Ammaia* was one of the many *civitates* in *Lusitania* without a Roman *status*. Further confirmation of the simple *status* of *civitas peregrina* (at least until the reign of Claudius) seems to come from another epigraph, mentioning the *quaestor duovir* P. Cornelius Macer (CIL II, 159 = IRCP 618): in fact, he received Roman citizenship as a personal concession. A third relevant ancient source is represented by an inscription dating from 166 AD and dedicated to *Lucius Verus*, which proves that the town was given municipal *status* no later than the second century AD (CIL II, 158 = IRCP 616). Thus, at present we can only hypothesize that this flourishing town may have been promoted to *municipium* at an early date (as confirmed by the data acquired through the archaeological excavations carried out in Porta Sul). Then, it was included in the *conventus Emeritensis*.

*Ammaia* was located on the western slope of the fertile valley of the Sever River: the exact extent of the town is still under investigation, but it has been hypothesized that its small urban area extended over circa 21 hectares (CORSI & VERMEULEN, 2008: 183; CORSI, DE DAPPER & VERMEULEN, forthcoming).

The plan of the forum has been reconstructed via the integration of the results of the stratigraphic archaeological excavations, started in 1994, with the results from the topographic fieldwork and the geophysical prospections. The combined use of all these methods has provided remarkable data about the setting of the Roman monumental centre: whereas previously the forum was assumed to be simply rectangular, the GPR survey revealed a more complex shape with slightly different measurements (VERDONCK, TAELEMAN & VERMEULEN, 2008: 35) (Fig.

6). In addition, the fieldwork carried out in 2010 and in 2011 revealed a different plan of the complex than the one proposed in the recent past by V. G. Mantas (2000: 391-420) and also gave many details about the forum buildings.

It was a typical tripartite forum, with a northern religious sector, a central commercial square and a southern *basilica* or courthouse. This centrally located complex had a NW/SE orientation and its outside perimeter was in the region of m 65 wide and m 88 long: these are not usual dimensions for a Lusitanian city, but they correspond to the proportion 2:3 indicated by Vitruvius (*De Arch.*, 5, 1-2) (MANTAS, 2010: 175). Unfortunately, the current road connecting Marvão with Portalegre (EN 359) destroyed the south-eastern edge of the complex (*Idem*: 175-176).

The sacred part of the forum was dominated by a probably *capitolium*-type temple, which was erected on a large podium with a monumental staircase on its short south-eastern side, directed towards the square. The *podium* of the temple, still standing above ground and preserved to a height of about 2.50 m, was about 9 by 17.30 m. It was built in *opus caementicium*, originally almost completely covered with lost granite blocks on three sides, while the frontal wall was maybe constructed in *opus incertum*. There are few remains on the upper part of the podium, which was divided into the *pronaos* and the *cella* by a still visible wall: the former was 7.50 m long, while the *cella* was 9.50 m long.

The fieldwork conducted in the temple area have revealed that the southern part of *podium* was flanked by two rectangular foreparts, attached to the two *pars antica* corners (so that they have a sort of thick “L” shaped plan). The temple was plausibly surrounded by a floor of beaten earth, as no traces of stone flooring were found in the limited excavation areas (CORSI, DE DAPPER & VERMEULEN, forthcoming). On the eastern side of the eastern forepart a drainage floor made of river pebbles has been brought to light: it has been identified as a basin, maybe having a rectangular shape, which covered the north-eastern corner of the probable base of a monument.

The excavations performed in July 2010 have supplied relevant information about parts of the portico and the *cryptoporticus* surrounding it (the northern part of the forum). The portico, which had an average internal width of 4.40 m, was used to create a more or less horizontal surface for the forum walking area. Its north-eastern side, in particular,

served as a terrace wall for the whole complex, as this was the lower part of the slope. Around the temple area only the north-eastern wing of the portico was exploited as a *cryptoporticus* with two levels of use, while the other wings acted as simple porticoes with only one level of real use (*Ibid.*). The standing walls were made in *opus incertum* with a facing of roughly cut granite building blocks of unequal sizes.

With regard to the central area of the forum, we know that the south-eastern part had less free space (32 m wide) in comparison with the north-western sector around the temple (53.5 m wide), because it was occupied by two rows of *tabernae*: they were maybe seven, or more probably six, identical shops. Both blocks of *tabernae* opened onto a corridor, which was believed to be colonnaded towards the square.

Furthermore, several structures were observed within the inner open area of the monumental centre, maybe relating to water supply or drainage, or to small monuments or statues (VERDONCK *et al.*, 2008: 35).

One of the most important points to stress is that the geophysical prospection definitively proved the presence of a monumental *basilica* on the south-eastern side of the forum: this building, of some 46 by 17 m, was characterized by a double row of internal roof-supporting columns (CORSI, DE DAPPER & VERMEULEN, forthcoming). The naves were perhaps unequal in width. On the short south-western side the *basilica* was flanked by three elongated rooms, whose function is still unknown, but it is believable that they were linked with the administrative functions of the building (*Ibid.*). The *basilica* probably had a few entrances: the main access was plausibly in the north-western longitudinal wall (VERMEULEN & TAELEMAN, 2010: 315).

Thanks to the recent geophysical surveys carried out by the researcher P. S. Johnson in the framework of the Marie-Curie IAPP project “Radio-Past”, whose results will be presented in a forthcoming publication (CORSI, JOHNSON & VERMEULEN, forthcoming), it has been reconstructed the regular urban planning of *Ammaia*: it was composed of rectangular insulae and the forum likely occupied the area of about two of them, fitting well within the rectangular street pattern of the city (Fig. 7). In fact, the road running immediately outside the monumental centre, along its longitudinal eastern side, can be interpreted as the main north-south axis of the town (*cardo maximus*), which was clearly connected with the excavated southern gate of the town (Porta Sul) (VERMEULEN & TAELEMAN, 2010: 315).



In conclusion, although the exact chronology of the forum of *Ammaia* is still unknown, a remarkable element comes from the preliminary study of the materials collected in the excavations 2010: the chronology of the pottery is very coherent, around the mid first century AD, in any case no later than the Flavian age. This (early) chronology should be applied to the second phase of the monument. However, we expect further information from the study of the materials collected during the excavations 2011, which are still under investigations.

## PAX IULIA

The Roman city, corresponding to the current Beja, in the Alentejo region, was mentioned by Pliny the Elder as *colonia Pacensis* (*Nat. Hist.*, 4, 117). Actually, there was a long debate about the exact chronology of the *deductio* of this *colonia civium romanorum*, because it was not clear whether the Roman settlement was established by Caesar or Augustus. This question is strictly connected with the double name of the colony attested by the ancient sources: Ptolemy calls it *Pax Iulia* (2, 5, 4), while Strabo cites it as *Pax Augusta* (*Geogr.*, 3, 2, 15). In 2001 A. Faria argued that all of the available evidence points to an Augustan foundation between the years 31 and 27 BC, with much plausibility as a part of the post-*Actium* celebrations (FARIA, 2001: 351-352). Thus, during the reign of Augustus the thriving town was chosen as the capital of the Lusitanian *conventus* called *Pacensis*, which encompassed the southern half of modern Portugal.

It was not a foundation *ex nihilo* and the pre-Roman occupation has been documented since the Iron Age (LOPES, 2002: 113). The Roman town was situated on a hill (277 m high) and it had a strategic position over the vast plains of the Baixo Alentejo. It underwent a significant urban improvement campaign in the early years of the first century AD, but unfortunately a great deal of information about the nature of the urban development is still unknown and most of the monuments of the ancient site remain buried beneath modern structures.

We do not know when the forum was built: it probably had two different building phases, one in the Augustan age, when the city was founded, and another maybe in the second half of the first century AD. Actually, the buildings mentioned herein were probably erected in dif-

ferent times: some can be dated after the end of the second century BC and others around the half of the first century AD (LOPES, 2010: 198). One of the few elements that can be used to hypothesize a possible chronology of the complex is the capitals, both Corinthian and Composite: their style suggests a dating to the last third of the first century AD (HAUSCHILD, 2002: 49). However, it is presumed that this is the dating of a second construction phase of the forum, when there was probably a renovation.

The monumental centre was placed within the confines of the modern Praça da República, at the highest point of the city. Since it is mostly unexcavated and the relationships between all the structures brought to light are not clear, it is impossible to reconstruct the general plan of the complex. It was believably rectangular, measuring 80 by 60 m, and it was crossed by the so-called *cardo maximus*, which coincided with its short axis (ALARCÃO, 1990: 49) (Fig. 8). It has also been suggested that the so-called *decumanus maximus* coincided with the eastern limit of the forum, but this is only an hypothesis. Despite the lack of knowledge, on the basis that the temple was located in the middle of a porticoed area, together with the presence of a *basilica* on the opposite side, we can hypothesize that it was a tripartite forum.

The most prominent remain of the Roman town is the temple, which in 1939 Abel Viana brought to light at a depth of 6 m, in the northern corner of the excavated area (although he did not understand that it was the forum temple) (VIANA, 1942, 1947). This building, with a north-south orientation, was slightly larger than that of *Ebora*, measuring 29 by 16.50 m (ALARCÃO, 1990: 48). Unfortunately, the *podium* and a number of Corinthian capitals were all that remained of the building at the time of its discovery.

Abel Viana spoke about powerful foundations placed directly on the bedrock: they consisted of a strong wall with a thickness of 4.70 m on the eastern side and 2.20 m on the northern and southern sides (HAUSCHILD, 2002: 219). While the lower level was built in *opus incertum*, the upper part of the wall was covered by *cocciopesto* (wrongly qualified as *opus signinum*), which was 4.5 m wide (LOPES, 2010: 193). In fact, now we know that the temple was surrounded on three sides (to the north, to the west and to the east) by a floor made in *cocciopesto*: this means that, in all likelihood, a water tank ran parallel to that floor (Fig. 9) (*Eadem*: 193-194). The water tank was a strong structure, with a rectangular section, built with stones joined by mortar; it was

7.20 m long, 2.40 m wide and it had an average thickness of 20 cm (*Ibid.*).

Hauschild has suggested identifying the sanctuary as a hexastyle prostyle temple (2002: 219), but not everybody agrees and it has been hypothesized that it was a pseudo-peritperal building (ALARCÃO, 1990: 49). Unfortunately, not much remains of the *cella*.

Alarcão has hypothesized that the *basilica* was a big rectangular building, measuring 80 by 160 m (in the proportion of 1:2) and that the *curia*, rectangular in shape 25 m long, was adjacent to the outer long side of the *basilica* (*Ibid.*). According to his reconstruction, the *curia* detached itself from the central part of this side and was perpendicular to the *basilica*.

Recent excavations have brought to light two other buildings: one of them was surely built in the Roman age, while the second could be pre-Roman or may be datable to the Republican age, but the chronology is still uncertain (LOPES, 2010: pp. 194-197). Excavations to the west of the temple and very close to it and the floor in *cocciopesto* have brought to light the remains of the base of a building, which was oriented north-south. It was built with a robust and solid structure of stones connected by a clay mortar, very hard and compact. It rested directly on the bedrock and it reached a depth of 3.0 m on the northern side. In some places the negative traces of the floor slabs, resting on the mortar, are still visible. Since the building extended beneath both the wall that separates the Conservatory from Rua dos Escudeiros and the water tank, it is not possible to determine its overall dimensions. There are no doubts that it was a large building, but unfortunately, both the exact chronology and the function are still unknown.

Another edifice of unknown function was placed beneath the same filling covering the aforementioned building: oriented north-south, it was 15.20 m long and it was externally limited by walls 1.20 m wide (built with medium and smaller sized blocks) (*Eadem*: 196). The structure extended under the pavement in *cocciopesto* connected to the water tank. The outside of this second building is preserved to a *maximum* height of 2.80 m. It has been suggested that it could be identified as a *capitolium*, constructed in the Republican age (*Eadem*: 197), but the absence of a *podium* and especially the lack of any remains of the eventual *cella* make this hypothesis improbable.

It is very plausible that all these monumental buildings were enclosed by a precinct.

## BOBADELA

The current village of Bobadela is in the district of Oliveira do Hospital, north-east of Coimbra, in Central Beira. The inscription *CIL* II, 397 defines the Roman town “*splendidissima civitas*” and its Latin name may have been *Elbocoris* or *Velladis* (ALARCÃO, 2002-2003). Recently, it has been proposed that it could be identified as the capital of the *Interannienses* (MANTAS, 2002: 233). It was first a *civitas* capital and then a *municipium* (*CIL* II, 397, 401). Since the most ancient remains of the city date back to the Augustan age, it is very much presumed that the town was a *civitas ex novo* founded by Augustus, but we are still ignorant of the exact date of the *deductio*. We also do not know if it obtained municipal *status* in the Julio-Claudian age or in the Flavian age.

With regard to the forum and the temple, the chronology remains somewhat insecure. We only know that in the Julio-Claudian age there was much expansion work in the monumental centre, which peaked under the Flavian emperors with a great urban renovation (FRADE, 2010: 54). In the 1980s a series of excavations unearthed some of the precinct walls of the complex, besides the remains of an amphitheatre (built in the last quarter of the first century AD). The forum was placed near this building and, having collected much data about it, new excavations were carried out in 2006/2007. Although there is still little knowledge of this monumental centre, the recent digs have confirmed that it was a typical tripartite forum, with the main temple on the opposite side to the *basilica* (Fig. 10). It had an approximately square plan, measuring 56.20 (170 *pedes*) by 45.30 m (153.5 *pedes*) (*Eadem*: 48). The complex, with a north-south orientation, was bounded by walls built with a building technique that has been qualified as *opus vittatum* (*Eadem*: 50).

There were three temples in this monumental centre, but the main one, dedicated to the imperial cult, was centrally located: it was a pro-style tetrastyle temple, which was 20.70 m (70 *pedes*) long and 8.18 m (27.5 *pedes*) wide (in the proportion 1:2) (*Ibid.*). This rectangular building, with a north-south orientation, had the frontage facing the north and the *pars postica* leaning against the southern wall of the forum. A central staircase with ten steps, located in the northern frontage, led to a platform: it corresponded to the *pronaos*, which was 17 *pedes* wide and was decorated with six Ionic columns. The *cella* was 35 *pedes* wide

and it was built on a high *podium*, which may have had a crypt below (*Ibid.*). In front of the temple a particular structure was discovered: it was composed of stones held together by mortar (*opus caementicium*) and it may have served as the foundation of a pedestal for a statue or for an honorific inscription.

Thanks to the discovery of two inscriptions, we know that one of the other two smaller temples was dedicated to *Victoria* (*CIL* II, 5245) and the other one to the municipal *Genius* (*CIL* II, 401). Both of them were built by *C. Cantius Modestinus*. Unfortunately, only one of them has been brought to light: it was a small building located in the western sector of the square (not leaning on the edge of the complex). The structure uncovered has been interpreted as the foundation of a *templum in antis*, with a west–east orientation. This building had a rectangular plan: it was 3.25 m wide (11 *pedes*) and 6.50 m (22 *pedes*) long. A staircase with three or four steps led to a small rectangular *cella* (*Ibid.*). We still do not know whether this temple can be identified with the one dedicated to *Victoria* or with the other dedicated to the municipal *Genius*. Although there is no evidence of the third sanctuary at the moment, it has been hypothesized that it was located north of the one just described, it was parallel to it and may have had the same plan.

The archaeological excavations have uncovered the remains of a portico located east of the temple: oriented in a north-south direction, it was 8 m wide (27 *pedes*). It had a double colonnade: one located in the middle of the construction and based on small stones joined with weak mortar; the other one rested on the western wall. In both of them the distance between the columns was equal to 3.20 m. Along this wall of the portico, the negative trace of a probable threshold has been discovered: it was located exactly in front of the famous Roman arch of Bobadella, corresponding to one of the forum doorways (*Eadem*: 51-52). This structure, very similar to that of *Augusta Emerita*, may date back to the early imperial times and it was used at least until the Trajan age.

With regard to the *basilica*, placed in the northern sector of the monumental centre, there are few remains of the two spaces into which this building is usually divided. The excavations have revealed that in the north-eastern corner there was an area bounded by floor tiles: the point of a bronze lance has been discovered here, inside a layer of earth mixed with ashes (*Eadem*: 50). The lance still preserves traces of the gilding and it has been interpreted as an offering for the foundation of

the forum. Although there is no evidence of a colonnade inside the *basilica*, we can suppose that it existed.

On the western side of the complex, only the section of a wall is still preserved and thus there are no remains of a precinct. The absence of evidence of a portico or of a colonnade has suggested that the western side may have had direct access to the interior of the forum. Unfortunately, the Roman arch which was visible until the end of the 19th century is no longer conserved.

## SELLIUM / SEILIUM

The current city of Tomar, situated in the district of Santarém, in the Ribatejo region, was founded by Augustus on the left bank of the River Nabão. Although *Cassius Dio* (53, 12, 4–5) refers to *Sellium* speaking about the political-administrative reorganization carried out by Augustus in 27 BC, we still do not know the juridical-administrative *status* of the town under this emperor. However, even if Pliny the Elder does not mention it (*Nat. Hist.*, 4, 118), Mantas has supposed that it was one of the 34 *oppida stipendiaria* established between the years 16 and 13 BC and that it received the *Ius Latii* probably during the Julio-Claudian age (under Tiberius or Claudius) (1989: 33). In all likelihood, it obtained municipal *status* in the Flavian age and it became the capital of the *Conventus Scallabitanus* under Vespasian (PONTE *et al.*, 1993: 511-514).

Thanks to Ptolomeus (*Geogr.*, 11, 5, 6) and the *Itinerarium Antonini Augusti*, we know that *Sellium* played the role of *caput viarum* in the region of Roman *Lusitania*: all these sources cite it between *Scallabis* and *Conimbriga*.

Although it has been estimated that the Roman town extended over an area of about 37 ha (PONTE, 1989b: 27), only a small part of this wide surface has been unearthed. The history of the archaeological excavations of the city started between 1981 and 1985 with the discovery of some public buildings of the Augustan monumental centre (PONTE, 1986: 43-44). Actually, only a portion of these investigations has been published so far, but there is enough information to provide a reconstructive plan of the southern half of the complex. As the studies stand, nothing is known of the forum temple, because no ancient architectural evidence has been found. Nevertheless, it is plausible that the sacred

area was located in the northern portion of the monumental centre, on the opposite side to the *basilica*. This is the reason why we hypothesize that this was a tripartite forum and we have decided to examine it in the present paper.

As testified by the finding of a monumental head of Augustus (about 0.60 m high) (SOUZA 1990), probably datable to the first century AD, the construction of the complex was started by Augustus in the first half of the first century BC, probably between the years 16 and 13 BC (PONTE, 2010: 325-326) <sup>(5)</sup>. However, some archaeological remains have suggested a Tiberian date for the completion. Unlike other cities, such as *Conimbriga*, in *Sellium* there is no evidence of a deep renovation of the forum in the Flavian age: if it were remodelled, it is more likely that it happened later, maybe between the end of the first century AD and the beginning of the second century AD (ALARCÃO, 1990: 52). However, at present, there are no archaeological data documenting two building phases with certainty.

The monumental centre was fitted into the orthogonal urban plan carried out by Augustus and it was located in the north-east corner of the crossroads between the two most important city streets: the axis which is usually named *decumanus maximus* ran to the south of the *basilica* and the so-called *cardo maximus* ran along the western side of this building (PONTE, 1989c: 100). It is verisimilar that the Augustan forum extended over a larger area than that occupied by today's visible Roman ruins: it has been estimated that this complex covered a surface of about 2.420 m<sup>2</sup>. The Roman ruins brought to light have an inverted "U" shape and they are bounded by three modern streets: Rua de Santa Iria on the west, Avenida Norton de Matos on the north and Rua Carlos Campeão on the east. It is conceivable that the access to the monumental centre was made through galleries or porticoes, which crossed the *basilica* and the square to the west and to the east. In fact, some evidence of the foundation walls of the *basilica* have made possible the reconstruction here of the entrance to the complex. On the western side there was probably a series of *tabernae* opening towards the forum precinct (PONTE, 1989a: 12).

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<sup>5</sup> The posthumous portrait probably suggests the existence of the imperial cult of Augustus at the time of Tiberius.

A votive inscription dedicated to the *Genio Municipii* is preserved in the external wall of the tower of the Templar Castel (*Eadem*: 11): it documents the municipal cult and its dating to the middle of the first century AD (or the beginning of the second century AD) probably coincides with the granting of municipal *status*. It is thought that the inscription belonged to the pedestal of a statue: the question is whether it came from a temple placed in the forum precinct or from an honorific/votive monument located in the vicinity of the Church Santa Maria dos Olivais. In fact, it has been hypothesized that the large tower situated in front of this church may stand over the foundations of a Roman temple, or some other important Roman constructions, as suggested by the large stone masonry and the building's orientation along the same axis as other civic structures of *Sellium* (ALARCÃO, 1988: 169; MANTAS, 1990: 228-230; 235-238, 245-248).

The *basilica* and the *curia* occupied one of the short sides of the monumental centre, the southern one, forming an architectural complex of about 54.60 by 85.30 m (PONTE, 1989a: 13; PONTE, 2010: 327) (Fig. 11 a-b). The *basilica* was a large rectangular hall, measuring about 18.20 by 54.60 m, so that its long side was equal to the short side of the forum (PONTE, 2010: 327). It had an inner portico with twenty columns, probably eight along the long sides and four along the short ones; thirteen of these columns are still preserved (ALARCÃO, 1990: 50). According to an hypothesis based on some findings over the northern adjacent wall, in this area of the *basilica* a portico provided access to the forum courtyard. It is also thought that, in the portico, each column facing the temple was a pedestal for a sculpture, presumably a commemorative statue, because two bases are still preserved. The *tribunal* was placed on the western side of the *basilica*: on the southern side of the *tribunal* a large doorway is still visible (about 2.5 high) and it may have been one of the main entrances to the complex. One can imagine that on the eastern side there was another access to the building. The doorway to the *curia* and to the two adjacent rooms (*tabularium* and *aerarium*) was placed on the southern wing of the *basilica*. The rectangular room of the *aerarium*, with a surface area of about 116 m<sup>2</sup>, provided access to the quadrangular room of the *tabularium*, which occupied an area of about 20.25 m<sup>2</sup>. The presence of traces of masonry (parts of foundations and elevation walls) and a few pieces of the roof enable us to calculate the approximate height of the *basilica*: it may have been about 11.21 m (or 11.87 m) (PONTE, 2010: 329). It is possible that the total height of



the monumental centre, including the top of the unknown temple, may have reached 15.96 m. The only decorative pieces of the *basilica* that can suggest a possible dating are a Ionic capital, a few column bases and a piece of cornice entablature.

The forum, especially in sector of the *basilica* and of the central courtyard, was paved with floor tiles made of limestone.

## COMPARISON AMONG THE TOWNS

### Urban planning

The first element to analyse is the fact that, although only three of these six Roman towns were foundations *ex nihilo* (*Augusta Emerita*, *Ammaia* and Bobadela), almost of all them had an orthogonal plan: only the urban layout of Bobadela is unknown, but it does not mean that future excavations will not document a regular grid here also. In fact, all these cities were founded in the Augustan age and, in the whole Iberian Peninsula, Augustus employed the typical Roman urban layout. It is general knowledge that it spread rapidly in the urbanization of the West during the later part of the first century BC (MIERSE, 1999: 92). The reason is that this ideal model was aimed at promoting the homogenization of the western provinces. In this perspective, the forum became the organizing device for the new foundations, as an imposed element, such as for the rebuilt older cities, where it was inserted into existing urban units (*Idem*: 55). In fact, in the towns founded *ex nihilo* the monumental centre was not only the core of the Roman town, but it sometimes seems to represent also the *nucleus* around which the sectors of the city could be laid out (*Idem*: 95). Furthermore, all the cities examined in this paper testify that the forum had a strict connection with at least one of the two main urban axes, even when the complex was not centrally located (such as at *Ebora* and *Pax Iulia*).

### Temple

As the excavations at *Pax Iulia*, Bobadela and *Sellium* were only partial and limited, our knowledge about their monumental centres is incomplete, but on the other *forums* we can make some assumptions.

With regard to *Augusta Emerita* (such as at *Barcino*), Mierse has suggested that the religious aspect was predominant over the administrative and commercial functions (*Idem*: 98). This hypothesis may or may not be shared, but it is quite clear that in this forum the architects placed emphasis on the temple as the primary structure of the complex (*Ibid.*). The validity of this theory may be confirmed by some changes carried out in the monumental centre of *Conimbriga* in the Flavian age: in that period the *basilica* and the *tabernae* were destroyed and matching porticoes were erected over them (*Idem*: 214). The aim of this modification was to remove the civic and administrative roles from the complex and to focus attention on the temple at the north end (*Ibid.*). In the central platform of *Augusta Emerita* the role of the temple was stressed through its elevation above the rest of the forum: the dividing line between the two areas was first marked by a raised platform and later accentuated by adding to it an *exedra*. Something similar was made at *Ebora*, where the separating wall between the sacred sector and the lower square was transformed by covering it with a decoration of large marble slabs (HAUSCHILD, 2010: 28). Unfortunately, the results from the recent excavations have not clarified whether the *Ammaia* forum had direct access to the temple area or not: actually a possible dividing wall, running parallel to the temple, appears south of the podium in the geophysical surveys, but it has not been discovered in the excavations performed till now (CORSI, DE DAPPER & VERMEULEN, forthcoming).

In conclusion, five of the six described temples (with the exception of *Sellium*, about which there is no evidence) were rectangular buildings, located in central positions and standing on high *podia*. With regard to the dimensions, the temple of *Augusta Emerita* was clearly the largest: it is worthwhile stressing that it was roughly the same size as the temple of *Barcino* (32.80 by 21.90 m) (MIERSE, 1999: 99). The ones of *Ebora* and *Pax Iulia* were a bit smaller and they had similar dimensions, while the temple of *Ammaia* was most certainly the smallest. It is interesting to underline that three of these buildings, the largest, were all hexastyle temples, with columns decorated by Corinthian capitals: *Augusta Emerita*, *Ebora* and probably *Pax Iulia*.

The last point of note about the sanctuaries concerns the several similarities that link the temple of *Augusta Emerita* and that of *Ebora*. They have these important elements in common:

- as anticipated, they were both peripteral hexastyle, probably

- belonging to the same phase as the temple of *Barcino* (MIERSE, 1999: 119) <sup>(6)</sup>;
- the rhythm of the intercolumniation changed on the long sides from that on the short sides;
  - the columns had marble Corinthian capitals (the details, which were in plaster, have been lost);
  - at the front there was a deep porch;
  - around the temple there were water tanks;
  - the religious sector was surrounded on three sides by porticoes and a *cryptoporticus*;
  - a frontal wall separated the temple area from the lower square.

In conclusion, we can say that that *Ebora* temple was a smaller version of that of *Augusta Emerita* (*Idem*: 102): the marble capitals and bases of *Ebora* may belong to the completion of the temple, or could be evidence of a remodelling of it, in the later first half of the first century AD, probably in the Claudian age, when also the temple at *Augusta Emerita* was renovated (*Idem*: 119). However, “the establishment of a Romanized *Ebora Liberalitas Iulia* in *Lusitania* belongs to the same period as the foundation of *Augusta Emerita*” (*Idem*: 102).

### Porticoes and cryptoporticoes

The temple was sometimes surrounded by porticoes, which contributed to the solemnization of the sacred space: if we exclude the two cities only partially excavated, *Pax Iulia* and *Sellium*, where this kind of structure has yet to be discovered, all the other four towns have porticoes in their *forums*. At *Augusta Emerita*, *Ebora* and *Ammaia* the temple was enclosed by porticoes resting on a *cryptoporticus* (like in *Conimbriga* and *Aeminium*), while at Bobadela the remains of a portico have been uncovered only on the eastern side (the western side is not well preserved). The porticoes sometimes hosted *tabernae*, like at *Ebora* and *Ammaia*, or they could have religious functions.

*Augusta Emerita*, *Ebora* and *Ammaia* have in common a relevant aspect: the presence of cryptoporticoes. These underground construc-

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<sup>6</sup> Peripteral temples were never popular in the West.

tions had different locations, dimensions and also functions in these three cities, but it is important to stress that in all these cases they caused elevation of the overlying structures and were sometimes used to compensate for differences in levels and inclinations, such as in *Ammaia*. This solution links the Iberian architecture with the Roman models: maybe it is not a mere coincidence that the colony of *Norba Caesarina* was probably founded by italic contingents.

### ***Basilica***

In Roman architecture the *basilica* was a relatively large construction: according to the Vitruvian rules, it should have had a rectangular plan, more or less elongated, and its length should have been twice its width. At *Pax Iulia* this building perfectly matched the Vitruvian model: as we have seen, it measured 80 by 160 m on average and it was separated by a quadrangular *curia*. Also the *basilica* of *Augusta Emerita* had an exact proportion of 1:2, but it is particularly different from the others due to its huge dimensions: about 2,000 m<sup>2</sup>, which is a similar size to the buildings of *Tarragona* and *Clunia*.

Ultimately, although these *basilicae* were not completely equal to each other, in five of the six cities described (*Augusta Emerita*, *Ebora*, *Ammaia*, *Pax Iulia* and *Sellium*) they were placed on the southern side of the forum and four of them (*Augusta Emerita*, *Ebora*, *Ammaia* and *Sellium*) were three-aisle buildings.

### **Hydraulic systems**

In *Lusitania* and the Iberian Peninsula there are several examples of hydraulic systems connected to the temple areas and perfectly integrated into the sacred complexes: among the towns here examined, we can mention the two *piscinae* of *Augusta Emerita*, the two pools of *Ebora*, the probable basin at *Ammaia* and the water tank of *Pax Iulia*. This means that in all the cities where more extensive investigations have been carried out, the forum and the temple area in particular were characterized by structures in *cocciopesto*, used for water conservation. The presence of water was obviously connected with worship and probably with the religious ceremonies (REIS, 2010). It is worthwhile stress-

ing that there are many other similar examples in *Lusitania* and in the rest of the Iberian Peninsula: *Civitas Igaeditanorum*, *Conimbriga* and *Colonia Augusta Firma* in *Lusitania*; *Ampurias*, *Astigi*, *Barcino*, *Baelo Claudia*, *Bilbilis*, *Clunia*, *Valeria*, *Termes* and *Carteia* in *Hispania*. The use of water tanks in the sacred sector of the monumental centre is well documented also in Italy and it has been suggested that it is connected with the temples of Imperial cult, as testified by the forum temple of Ostia (PENSABENE, 2004, 185).

### **Building materials**

The use of local stones as building materials, especially granite, employed in the *opus quadratum* and in the *opus incertum* (which was often covered by plaster), was very frequent in *Lusitania*: the use of granite is certainly documented at *Augusta Emerita*, *Ebora*, *Ammaia* and *Pax Iulia*. In the monumental centre of these three towns, the excavations have documented a second building phase, which coincides with the introduction of marble in the decorative programme of the complex (NOGALES BASARRATE, 2009: 140). The paving of the various areas of the forum represents a different matter, because “poor materials” like floor tiles were more often used than marble slabs.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

The remarkable amount of similarities among the Roman *forums* examined in this paper finds the only explanation to be the common architectural planning carried out by Augustus: it cannot be a mere coincidence the fact that the *deductio* of all these towns and the construction of their monumental centres dates back to the same period, the Augustan age, especially between the years 31 and 13 BC. From the available evidence we can deduce that even the Roman *forums* erected in remote parts of the empire underwent a monumentalization, which coincided with the administrative reorganization carried out by Augustus. It is certain that in all the complexes described there were two building phases, but this is due to the fact that the changes of the juridical-administrative status of a town often corresponded to the renovation of the monumental centre. In fact, the archaeological remains of these complexes prove

the existence of later transformations, often dating to the Flavian age and more rarely to the post-Flavian age.

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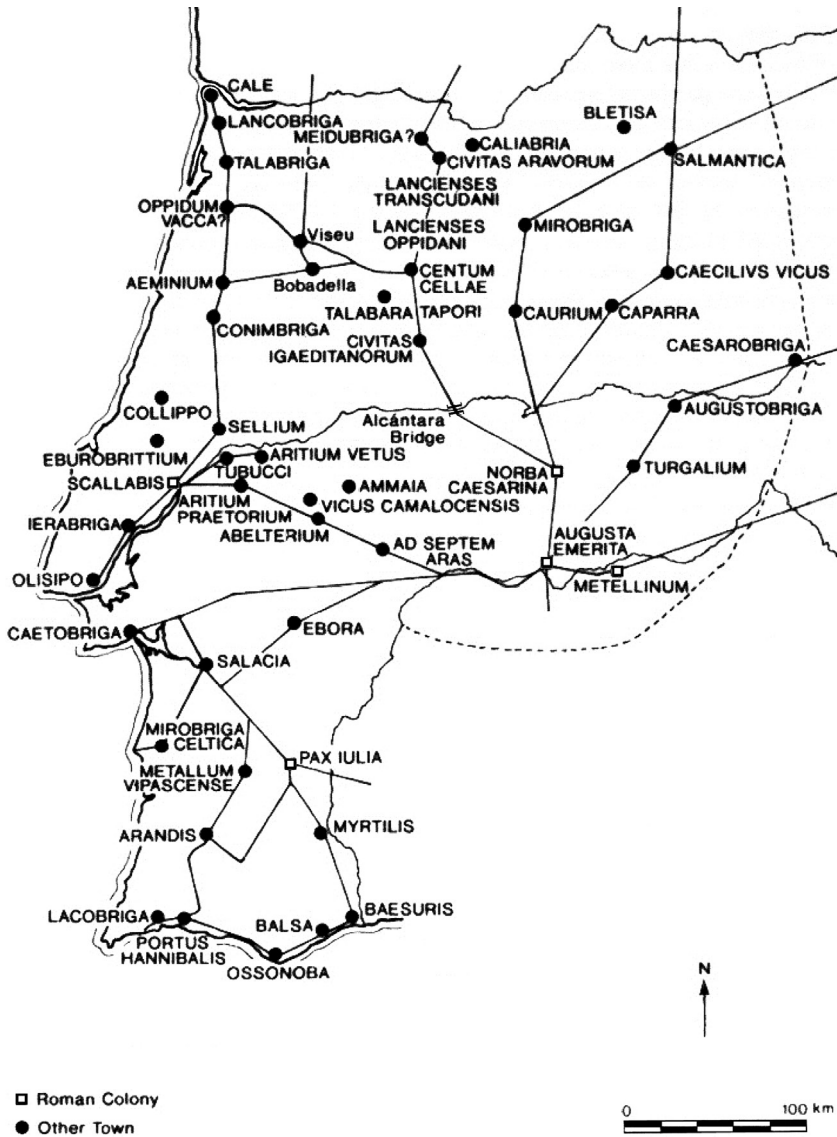


FIG. 1 – Map of Lusitania (EDMONDSON 1990).

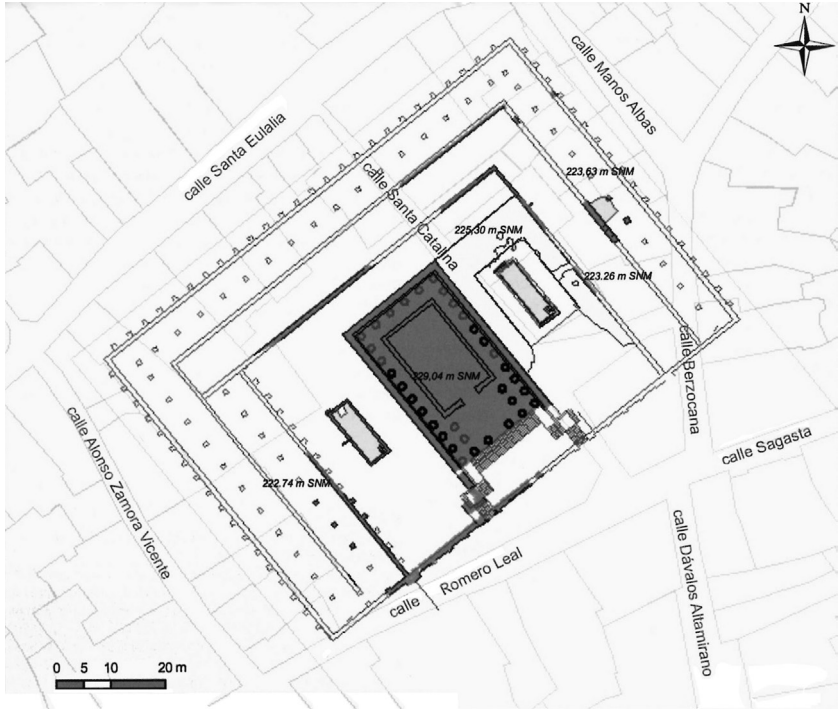


FIG. 2 – Colonial forum of Augusta Emerita: reconstructive plan of the central platform in the Augustan age (AYERBE VÉLEZ, BARRIENTOS VERA & PALMA GARCÍA 2009).

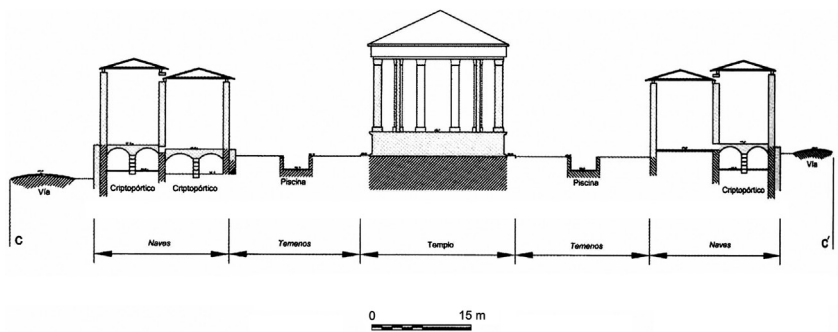


FIG. 3 – Section of the temple area of the central platform at Augusta Emerita (AYERBE VÉLEZ, BARRIENTOS VERA & PALMA GARCÍA 2009).

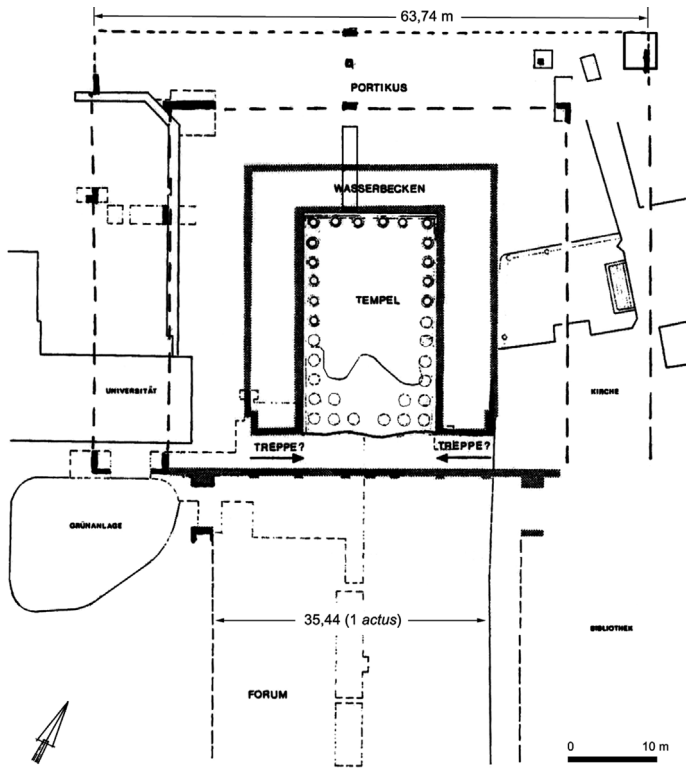


FIG. 4 – Plan of the forum at Eborac (HAUSCHILD 1994).

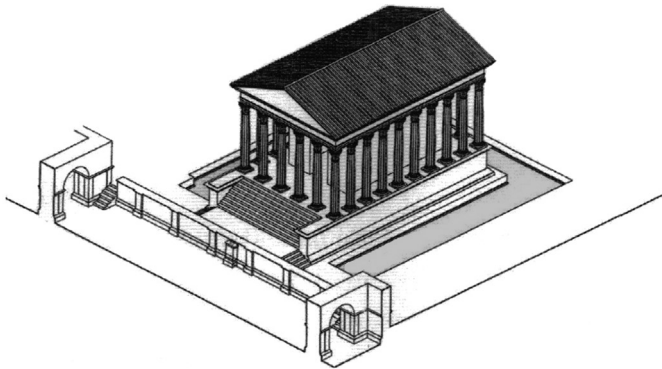


FIG. 5 – 3D Reconstruction of the forum temple at Eborac (HAUSCHILD 2010).

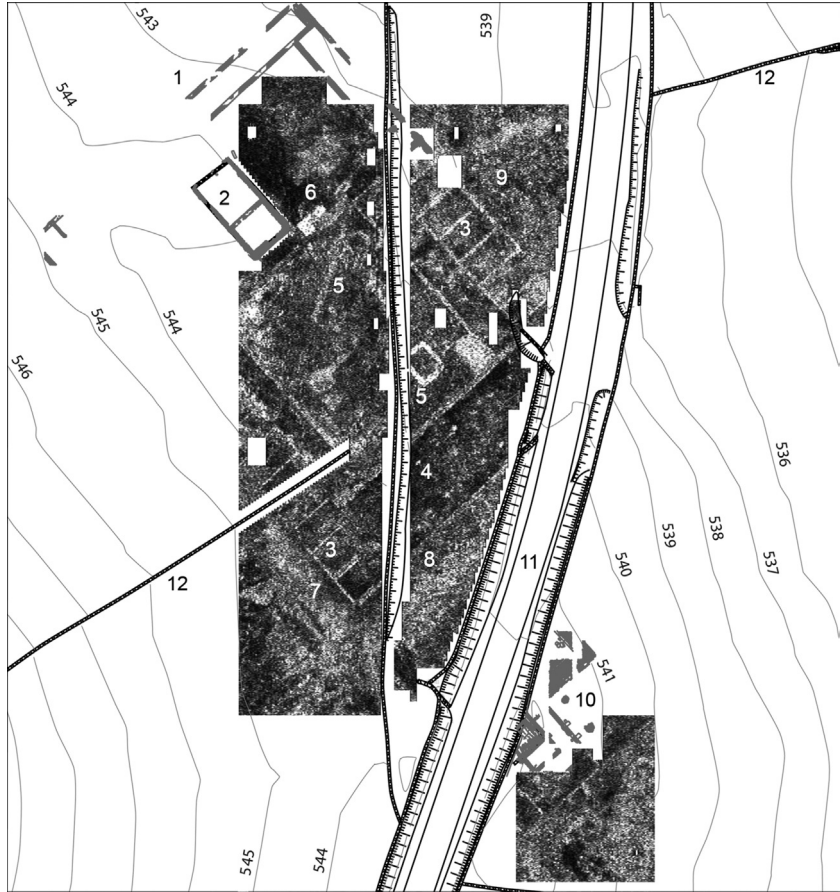


FIG. 6 – Image of the GPR survey carried out in 2008 in the forum area of Ammaia and its nearby *thermae* (depth of ca. 70 cm below the surface): 1. Portico, 2. Temple, 3. Tabernae, 4. Basilica, 5. Forum square, 6. Temple platform, 7.-9. Streets, 10. Bathouse, 11. Modern road, 12. Modern field boundary (VERDONCK et al. 2008).

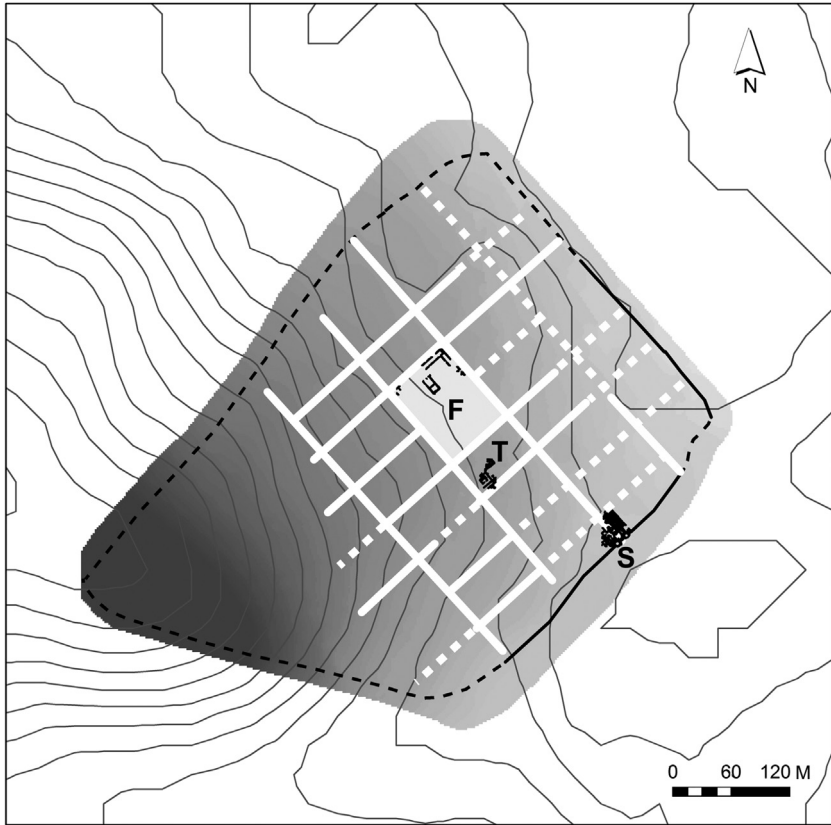


FIG. 7 – Archaeological map of the urban centre of Ammaia with the reconstruction of its orthogonal plan: “F” location of the Forum; “T” Thermae; “S” Porta Sul (elaboration of CORSI C.).

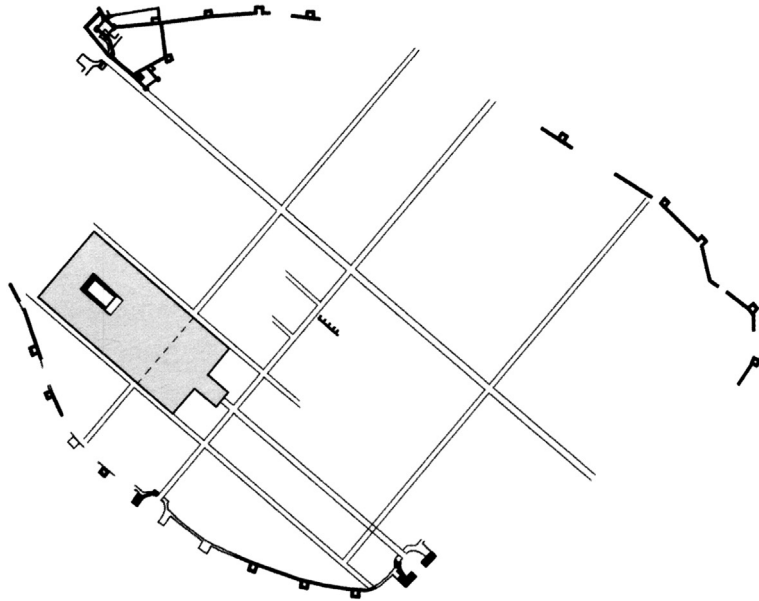


FIG. 8 – *Reconstruction of part of the urban layout with the location of the forum at Pax Iulia (ALARCÃO 1990).*

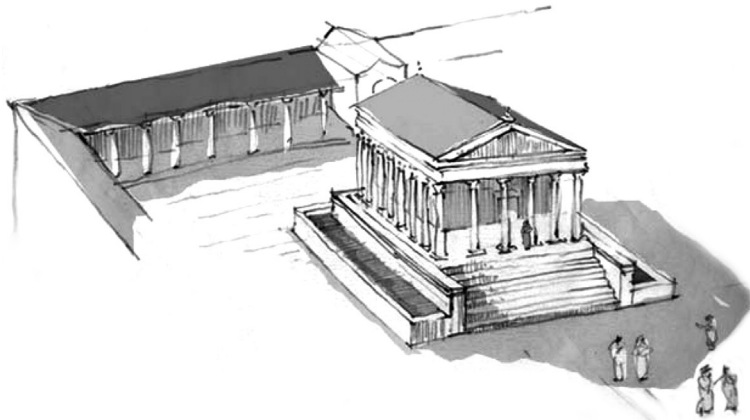


FIG. 9 – *Hypothetical reconstruction of the temple area at Pax Iulia (LOPES 2010).*

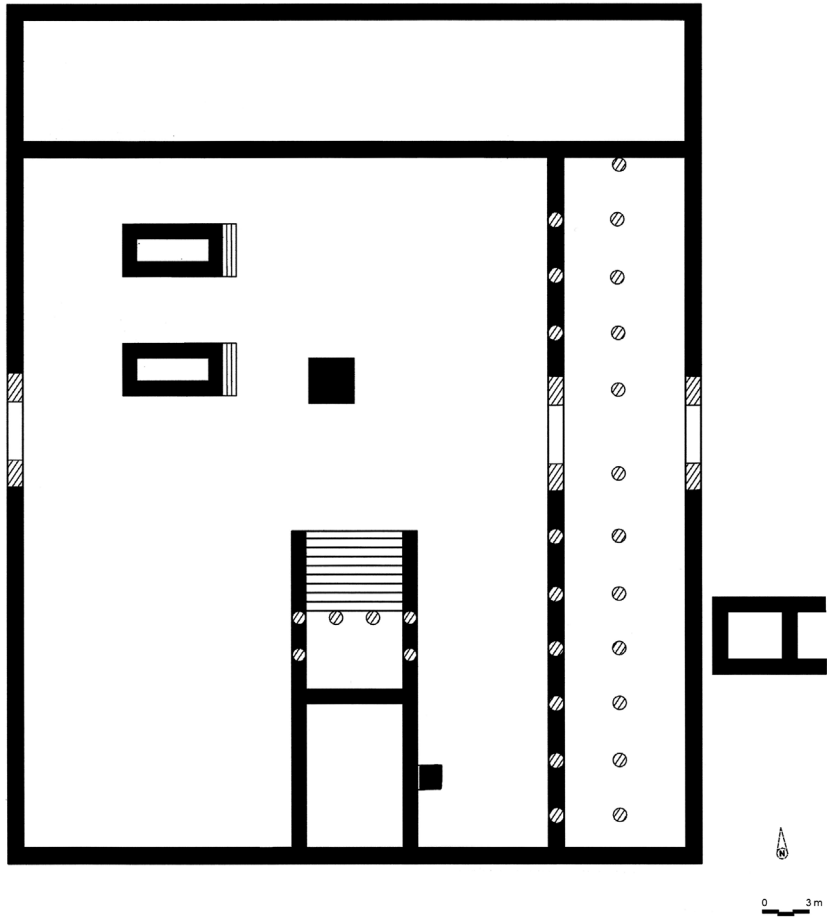


FIG. 10 – Plan of the forum at Bobadela (FRADE 2010).



