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**THE FLAVIAN *OFFICINA LAPIDARIA* TARRACONENSE:
COLOUR AND TEXTURE IN THE SERVICE OF ROME**

Abstract

We present a reflection on the workshops charged with shaping the public image of Flavian Tarraco through its epigraphic monuments. For this purpose, we undertook a detailed analysis of the materials and media used to decorate the areas of representation of the *Concilium Provinciae*, established at the beginning of Vespasian's reign, contrasting them with the epigraphic production of the preceding periods. The study is compared to other archaeological relics from the same area.

Key words

Tarraco, *officinae lapidariae*, tripartite pedestal, *marmor* of Tarraco, Lunense marble, provincial *flamines*, Vespasian, Julio-Claudian, magistrates, Narbo, imperial cult, public architecture, monumental epigraphy

INTRODUCTION

The epigraphic heritage of the city of Tarragona will always owe a great debt to Géza Alföldy. In an article published posthumously¹, he unravelled the evolution of the epigraphic technique used in the urban workshops, defining in many cases their formal standards. One of the most emblematic assemblages was, without doubt, that of the tripartite pedestals characteristic of the local Flavian-period production. Years of experience and his profound knowledge of the archaeology of Tarraco shaped a fundamental work for current epigraphic research, focusing on the holistic analysis of the text and its context².

Under his aegis was conceived the *Officinae Lapidariae Tarraconenses* project for the study of the workshops that manufactured the epigraphic artefacts of the ancient town³. Among the first results we find the revision of the local materials used in the first phases of the colony⁴ and the reconstruction of the epigraphic landscape based on the public epigraphy⁵. These investigations are devoted to analysing the uses, materials, media and formulas contained in the monuments to then be able to study the configuration of the public image of the town in its diverse historical phases.

In a heartfelt homage to Alföldy's studies, we wish to present a revision a revision of Tarraco in Flavian times, whose epigraphic aesthetic imposed

¹ G. Alföldy, *Officina lapidaria Tarraconensis*, [in:] A. Donati, G. Poma (eds.), *L'officina epigráfica romana*. In ricordo di Giancarlo Susini, Faenza 2012, pp. 429-471.

² In this regard cf. S. Panciera, W. Eck, D. Manacorda, C. Tedeschi, *Il monumento iscritto come punto d'incontro tra epigrafia, archeologia, paleografia e storia*, *Scienze dell'Antichità* 13, 2006, pp. 633-660.

³ This study is part of the research project *Officinae lapidariae Tarraconenses*. Canteras, talleres y producciones artísticas en piedra de la provincia Tarraconensis (HAR2015-65319-P, MINECO/FEDER, UE). It is also included in the framework of the doctoral thesis by Julio C. Ruiz, entitled „Paisaje epigráfico y topografía urbana: la epigrafía de los espacios públicos en el *Tarraco* altoimperial”, undertaken thanks to an FI-DGR predoctoral contract granted by the Agència de Gestió d'Ajuts Universitaris i de Recerca (2017FI_B00618). We also wish to express our gratitude to Hernando Royo (geologist from the Unitat d'Estudis Arqueomètrics of the Institut Català d'Arqueologia Clàssica) for his indispensable help in identifying the lithotypes, and to Hugo Feliu, for the implementation of the epigraphic database. We thank Paul Turner for his careful translation into English.

⁴ D. Gorostidi, J. López Vilar, A.-M. Gutiérrez Garcia, *The Use of Alcover Stone in Roman Times (Tarraco, Hispania Citerior)*. Contributions to the definition of the *Officina Lapidaria Tarraconensis*, [in:] IX ASMOSIA International Conference (Split 2015), in press.

⁵ J.C. Ruiz Rodríguez, *El uso del mármol lunense en la epigrafía de ámbito público. El caso de Tarraco en época altoimperial (siglos I y II n.e.)*, *Cuadernos de Arqueología de la Universidad de Navarra* 24, 2016, pp. 103-120.

itself on all the monumental types, coinciding with the great urban reform that formed the scenarios of power around the Temple of Augustus and the Provincial Forum. The Flavian *officina lapidaria* defined the colour and texture of the public epigraphic landscape beyond the capital itself, as a powerful icon of the power of Rome. That style, characteristic and easily identifiable with the town itself, and also perpetuated in the private sphere, can be documented well into the second century.

BRIEF REFLECTIONS ON THE URBAN TOPOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

As is well known, some of the most relevant indicators of the importance of Roman Tarraco can be found among the considerable number of preserved Latin inscriptions. The count currently stands at around 1,600, although it increases every year with the finds from new archaeological excavations, both planned and rescue⁶. This ratifies Alföldy's solemn pronouncement in this respect, when he stated that Tarragona had the richest epigraphic heritage of any town or city, not only on the Iberian Peninsula, but in the whole western Mediterranean, with the exception of Italy⁷. Moreover, Tarraco does not only hold the record in quantitative terms,

⁶ An update in D. Gorostidi, Géza Alföldy y las inscripciones romanas de Tarraco (1975-2011): novedades y nuevas perspectivas, [in:] J. López Vilar (ed.), Tarraco Biennial. Actes del 1er Congrès Internacional d'Arqueologia i Món Antic. Govern i societat a la Hispània Romana. Novetats Epigràfiques. Homenatge a Géza Alföldy (Tarragona, 29-30 de novembre i 1 de desembre de 2012), Tarragona 2013, pp. 135-143. For recently discovered inscriptions, see: I. Teixell, J.F. Roig, D. Gorostidi, El santuari romà de les nimfes del carrer Cristòfor Colom de Tarragona, *Butlletí Arqueològic* 34-35, 2012-2013 (2015), pp. 115-131; M. Díaz García, M. Gimeno, D. Gorostidi, Inscripcions recentment trobades al solar núm. 27 A-B del carrer de Vidal i Barraquer de Tarragona (antiga Sofrera Pallarès), *Butlletí Arqueològic* 34-35, 2012-2013 (2015), pp. 153-164; M. Díaz García, D. Gorostidi, C.A. Pociña, Nova inscripció procedent del suburbi del Francolí. Intervencions als solars núm. 30-38 de l'Avda. de Roma (Tarragona), *Butlletí Arqueològic* 34-35, 2012-2013 (2015), pp. 165-171; J. Ciurana, *Mors immatura*. Morir abans d'hora a Tarraco (segles I-III dC), *Empúries* 56, 2009-2011 (2016), pp. 207-226, esp. 221-223; D. Gorostidi, J.C. Ruiz Rodríguez, La inscripció monumental del circo de Tarraco: primera hipòtesis reconstructiva, [in:] J. López Vilar (ed.), Tarraco Biennial. Actes del 3r Congrès Internacional d'Arqueologia i Món Antic La glòria del circ. Curses de carros i competicions circenses. *In memoriam* Xavier Dupré i Raventós (Tarragona, 16-19 novembre 2016), Tarragona 2017, pp. 285-292. In a recent excavation carried out at Number 1 López Peláez Street in Tarragona three new inscriptions have been found and will be published shortly by the head of the archaeological project, Judit Ciurana, to whom we are grateful for her kind communication.

⁷ G. Alföldy, Desde el nacimiento hasta el apogeo de la cultura epigráfica de Tarraco, [in:] L. Hernández, L. Sagredo, J.M. Solana (eds.), *Actas del I Congreso Internacional de Historia*

it also has the earliest Latin inscription outside the Italian Peninsula. This is a votive inscription written in an archaic Latin and dedicated to Minerva by one *M(anios) Vibios*, presumably of Etruscan origin⁸. This graffito dates to the time of the Second Punic War, during which the Scipio brothers established a military camp on the highest part of the Tarraco hill.

From the available evidence, we know that the town's official epigraphy dates back to at least the first half of the first century BC⁹. The first document is the plaque dedicated to Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus dated to around 71 BC and clearly from the context of the civil wars. The plaque with the epigraph suffered a rather peculiar kind of *damnatio memoriae*; it was turned round and the other side was inscribed with a dedication to Publius Mucius Scaevola, probably one of Caesar's generals, thus demonstrating the town's clear support for the Caesarean cause¹⁰. It is plausible that after the war against Pompey, Tarraco finally obtained the rank of colony under Roman law – probably between autumn 45 and summer 44 BC, as confirmed by G. Alföldy¹¹ in a hypothesis that has achieved optimum consensus in the academic sphere¹².

Antigua. La Península Ibérica hace 2000 años. Valladolid 23-25 de noviembre 2000, Valladolid 2001 [2002], pp. 61-74, esp. 61. The update of the corpus Tarraconense can be found in three recently published fascicles of the CIL by G. Alföldy (CIL II²/14, 815-2384 = G. Alföldy, Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum, editio altera. Voluminis secundi, pars XIV. Fasc. 2-4, Colonia Iulia Urbs Triumphalis Tarraco, Berlin 2011-2012-2016).

⁸ CIL II²/14, 841 (= CIL I², 34491). See the detailed study of this epigraph in G. Alföldy, Die älteste römische Inschrift der Iberischen Halbinsel, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 43, 1981, pp. 1-12; F. Pina Polo, Minerva, *custos urbis* de Roma y de Tarraco, *Archivo Español de Arqueología* 73, 2003, pp. 111-119.

⁹ From the Late Republican era comes a hardly legible graffito (*Urnii?*), carved on the bottom of the foot of a specimen of Campanian B ware (CIL II²/14, 2070, with the preceding bibliography). Regarding the earliest graffiti from Hispania, cf. the evaluations of B. Díaz Ariño, *Epigrafía Latina Republicana de Hispania*, Barcelona 2008, p. 75 and 152 (C64).

¹⁰ See in this regard L. Amela, RIT 1 and 2. La ciudad de *Tarraco* entre pompeyanos y cesarianos, [in:] L. Hernández Guerra et al. (eds.), *Actas del Congreso Internacional de Historia Antigua*, Valladolid 2002, pp. 45-51. Cf. likewise idem, *Tarraco tardorepublicana*, *Hispania Antiqua* 39, 2015, pp. 47-70; Regarding Mucius Scaevola in Tarraco, cf. J. López Vilar, César contra Pompeyo. *Glandes inscriptae* de la batalla de Ilerda (49 aC), *Chiron. Mitteilungen der Kommission für Alte Geschichte und Epigraphik des DAI*, 43, 2013, pp. 431-457.

¹¹ G. Alföldy, Wann wurde Tarraco römische Kolonie? [in:] G. Paci (ed.), *ΕΠΙΓΡΑΦΑΙ. Miscellanea epigraphica in onore di Lidio Gasperini*, Tivoli 2000, pp. 3-22.

¹² J. Ruiz de Arbulo, La fundación de la colonia Tarraco y los estandartes de César, [in:] J. Jiménez, A. Ribera (eds.), *Valencia y las primeras ciudades de Hispania*, Valencia 2002, pp. 137-156; I. Arrayás, Tarraco, colonia romana, *Habis* 36, pp. 159-178. Cf. likewise J. Ruiz de Arbulo, La *legio Martia* i la fundació de la colonia Tarraco, [in:] F. Tarrats et al., *Tarraco pedra a pedra. exhibition catalogue*, Tarragona 2009, pp. 36-55 = *La legión de Marte y la fundación de la colonia Tarraco*, [in:] J. López Vilar (ed.), *Tarraco Biennial. Actes 1er Congrès Internacional*

These honorary monuments were placed in the town forum, which, judging by archaeological evidence, appears to date back to the end of the second century BC, at the same time as the initial town planning project¹³. The first architectural phase of the Capitoline hill has been associated with this period, with a major reform being carried out around the middle of the following century and linked to the obtaining of the colonial statute¹⁴. In this context, we can include the inscription dedicated to Gnaeus Domitius Calvinus as patron of the *colonia*, masterfully reconstructed by G. Alföldy¹⁵. Later, at an undetermined time in the Augustan period, the area of the forum was doubled in size with the addition of a second plaza presided over by a judicial basilica, as part of a significant process of monumentalization¹⁶. The theatre was built near the forum, although the interpretation of its chronology is problematic. This is due to the discordances between the stratigraphic record and the archaeological finds – elements of the architectural and sculptural decoration, epigraphy and numismatics. Nevertheless, its origins have been dated to the Augustan period, around the turn of the era, mainly due to an imperial statue cycle and the dating suggested by the architectural decoration¹⁷. Finally, it is generally accepted

d'Arqueologia i Món Antic. Govern i societat a la Hispània romana, novetats epigràfiques. Homenatge a Géza Alföldy (Tarragona, 29-30 de novembre i 1 de desembre de 2012), Tarragona 2013, pp. 263-277. In this respect, cf. F. Beltrán's observations in the introduction to his translation into Spanish of G. Alföldy, Wann wurde Tarraco römische Kolonie?... [in:] D. Gorostidi (ed.), Géza Alföldy. Estudios tarraconenses, Tarragona 2017, pp. 243-245.

¹³ J.M. Macias, L'urbanisme de Tàrraco a partir de les excavacions de l'entorn del fòrum de la ciutat, [in:] J. Ruiz de Arbulo (ed.), Tàrraco 99. Arqueologia d'una capital provincial romana (Tarragona, 15, 16 i 17 d'abril de 1999), Tarragona 2000, pp. 83-106; J.M. Macias, J.A. Remolà, Topografía y evolución urbana, [in:] X. Dupré (ed.), las capitales provinciales de Hispania 3. Tarragona, Colonia Iulia Urbs Triumphalis Tarraco, Rome 2004, pp. 30-35; J.I. Fiz, J.M. Macias, L'urbanisme, [in:] J.M. Macias et al. (ed.), Planimetria Arqueològica de Tàrraco, Tarragona 2007, pp. 25-40, esp. 25 and 33; R. Mar et al., Tarraco. Arquitectura y urbanismo de una capital provincial romana, I: de la Tarragona ibérica a la construcción del templo de Augusto, Tarragona 2012, pp. 116-157.

¹⁴ R. Mar, J. Ruiz of Arbulo, D. Vivó, El capitolio de Tarraco, [in:] I. Piso, R. Varga (eds.), Trajan und seine Städte. Colloquium Cluj-Napoca, 29. September – 2. Oktober 2013, Cluj-Napoca 2014, pp. 37-68 with prior bibliography.

¹⁵ CIL II²/14, 977.

¹⁶ R. Mar, J. Ruiz de Arbulo, D. Vivó, El foro de la colonia Tarraco entre la República y el Imperio, [in:] R. González Villaescusa, J. Ruiz de Arbulo (eds.), *Simulacra Romae* II. Roma, les capitales de province (*capita provinciarum*) et la création d'un espace commun européen. Une approche archéologique. Actes du colloque tenu à Reims les 19. 20. et 21. Novembre 2008, Reims 2010, pp. 52-62.

¹⁷ With regard to this discussion, see R. Mar et al., La *scaenae frons* del teatro de Tarraco. Una propuesta de restitución, [in:] S.F. Ramallo, N. Röring, La *scaenae frons* en la arquitectura teatral romana. Actas del Symposium Internacional celebrado en Cartagena los días 12 al 14 de marzo de

that, also during the principate of Augustus, Tarraco was confirmed as capital of the renewed Hispania citerior, a province that was placed under the direct control of the emperor himself¹⁸.

Tacitus tells us that at the beginning of the reign of Tiberius, an embassy of the *Hispani* requested the emperor's permission to build a temple dedicated to his predecessor in Tarraco, which was granted¹⁹. This mention, together with the existence of locally-minted coins dated to the Tiberian period – that depict on the obverse an enthroned figure with the legend DEO AVGVSTO and on the reverse the frontal of an octastyle temple accompanied by the legend AETERNITATIS AVGVSTAE C.V.T.T.²⁰ – and elements of architectural decoration dated to the Julio-Claudian period²¹, have been used as evidence for the hypothesis that a temple dedicated to the *Divus Augustus* was built on the town's acropolis, on the site now occupied by Tarragona Cathedral²². This is thought to have been the first initiative, in a town outside of Rome, for instituting an imperial cult ceremonial on a provincial level.

2009 en el Museo del Teatro Romano, Murcia 2010, pp. 173-201; R. Mar et al., Tarraco. Arquitectura y urbanismo I, pp. 286-327.

¹⁸ See, with bibliography, I. Arrayás, Tarraco, capital provincial, *Gerión* 22, 1, 2004, pp. 291-303; P. Ozcáriz, La administración de la provincia Hispania citerior durante el Alto Imperio romano: organización territorial, cargos administrativos y fiscalidad, Barcelona 2014.

¹⁹ Tac., *Ann.* I, 78.

²⁰ L. Villaronga, J. Benages, Ancient Coinage of the Iberian Peninsula = Les monedes de l'état antiga a la Península Ibèrica: Greek, Punic, Iberian, Roman, Barcelona 2011, 630 n. 3262, 631-632 n. 3267 with previous bibliography.

²¹ Pilaster capital dated to the beginning of the Julio-Claudian period: P. Pensabene, La decorazione architettonica dei monumenti provinciali di Tarraco, [in:] R. Mar (ed.), *Els monuments provincials de Tarraco. Noves aportacions al seu coneixement*, Tarragona 1993, 36-37 n. 4; J. Domingo, Capitells corintis a la província Tarraconense (s. I-III dC), Tarragona 2005, 178-179 n. 14. – Frieze with scrolls dated to the Julio-Claudian period: P. Pensabene, R. Mar, Dos frisos marmóreos en la Acrópolis de Tarraco, el Templo de Augusto y el complejo provincial de culto imperial, [in:] J. Ruiz de Arbulo (ed.), *Simulacra Romae*. Roma y las capitales provinciales del Occidente Europeo. Estudios arqueológicos. Reunión celebrada en Tarragona, los días 12, 13 y 14 de diciembre del 2002, Tarragona 2004, pp. 78-80 n. 1.

²² For archaeological investigations in the area of the Temple of Augustus on the Tarraco acropolis, see recently carried out research, with prior bibliography, in J.M. Macias et al., El templo de Augusto en Tarraco: últimas excavaciones y hallazgos, [in:] J.M. Álvarez, T. Nogales, I. Rodà (eds.), *Actas XVIII Congreso Internacional de Arqueología Clásica = Proceedings of the 18th International Congress of Classical Archaeology*, 2, Mérida 2014 (2015), pp. 1539-1543; R. Mar et al., Tarraco. Arquitectura y urbanismo I, pp. 348-374; R. Mar et al., Tarraco. Arquitectura y urbanismo de una capital provincial romana, II. La ciudad imperial, Tarragona 2015, pp. 83-129. Regarding a new inscription that documents the *templum Divi Augusti*, cf. A. Peña, D. Gorostidi, J.M. Macias, A. Muñoz, I. Rodà, I. Teixell, Más datos sobre el templo del *Divus Augustus* de Tarraco: a propósito de una nueva inscripción, [in:] López Vilar J. (ed.), Tarraco Biennial Actes 2on Congrés Internacional d'Arqueologia i Món Antic. August i les províncies occidentals. 2000 aniversari de la mort d'August (Tarragona, del 26 al 29 de novembre de 2014), Tarragona 2015, pp. 181-189.

It can be linked to Tacitus' reference to the construction of this temple in Tarraco: (...) *datumque in omnes provincias exemplum*²³. As far as the rest of the hill is concerned, archaeology appears to have detected an initial monumental project that could well be linked to this temple, although everything points to that project having remained unfinished²⁴. In any case, archaeological finds dated to chronologies prior to the end of the first century AD are extremely rare in the upper part of the town.

This paucity of archaeological evidence can be explained by the fact that, from the time of Vespasian, the whole of the upper part of the town was remodelled for the construction of a new monumental complex of gigantic dimensions. This involved the removal of the topsoil that, over most of the acropolis, meant lowering the terrain down to the level of the natural rock, razing any evidence of preceding periods²⁵. This was a construction process of such magnitude that it must have been related to the reform of the imperial cult under the reign of the first emperor of the Flavian dynasty²⁶. This undertaking definitively consolidated the cult of the emperor and his family members, which was extended in a regulated way to the goddess Roma, the deified emperors and also the reigning sovereigns. This was probably subsequently carried out not only on a local scale, but across the whole province.

²³ See the commentaries in this regard, with abundant bibliography, in G. Alföldy, *In omnes provincias exemplum: Hispanien und das Imperium Romanum*, [in:] G. Urso (ed.), *Hispania terris omnibus felicior*. Premesse ed esiti di a proceso di integrazione. Atti del convegno internazionale Cividale del Friuli, 27-29 settembre 2001, Pisa 2002, pp. 183-186.

²⁴ See with the prior bibliography J.M. Puche, Los procesos constructivos de la arquitectura clásica. De la proyección a la ejecución. El caso del *Concilium Provinciae Hispaniae Citerioris de Tarraco*, *Arqueología de la Arquitectura* 7, pp. 13-41.

²⁵ In this regard see, among others, R. Mar (ed.), *Els monuments provincials de Tàrraco*. Noves aportacions al seu coneixement, Tarragona 1993; X. Aquilué, *Arquitectura oficial*, [in:] X. Dupré (ed.), *Las capitales provinciales de Hispania 3*. Tarragona, *Colonia Iulia Urbs Triumphalis Tarraco*, Rome, pp. 41-53; J.M. Puche, J.M. Macias, I. Fiz, *Proyecciones urbanísticas*, [in:] J.M. Macias et al., *Planimetría Arqueológica de Tàrraco*, Tarragona 2007, pp. 40-46; J.M. Macias et al., *La acrópolis de Tarraco y la implantación urbana del culto imperial en la capital de la Hispania Citerior*, *Bollettino di Archeologia online I*, volume speciale A, A8, 4, 2010, pp. 52-61; Ò. Martín, J. Rovira, *Arquitectura i Urbanisme de la Part Alta de Tàrraco en època Republicana i Imperial*, Tarragona 2009, pp. 22-65; J.M. Puche, *Los procesos constructivos, passim*; M. Serena Vinci, *Las ventanas y los sistemas de acceso en el „Foro Provincial” de Tarraco: técnicas y procesos de construcción*, [in:] J.M. Álvarez, T. Nogales, I. Rodà (eds.), *Actas XVIII Congreso Internacional de Arqueología Clásica = Proceedings of the 18th International Congress of Classical Archaeology*, II, Mérida 2014 (2015), pp. 1569-1571; R. Mar et al., *Tarraco*. *Arquitectura y urbanismo* 2, pp. 67-211.

²⁶ Regarding the reform of the imperial cult undertaken in the time of Vespasian, cf. D. Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West*, III: *Provincial Cult*, 2: *The Provincial Priesthood*, Leiden 2002, 3-16 and 95-170.

Under Vespasian the functions of the provincial flamine were reformed. The main consequence of this was greater political visibility, which made it a post that was especially sought after by the Hispanic elites of the communities that had just received their new legal status²⁷. Thus, together with the reform of the imperial cult, the concession of the *ius Latii* was also a determining factor in the configuration of the image of Tarraco as the capital of the largest province in Hispania, located closest to Rome, and the seat of the administrative contingents linked to the imperial administration²⁸. Therefore, not only the person elected to the post of *flamen* of the province, but also – and especially – their town of origin, were called upon to exercise a very significant role in the configuration of the collective representation²⁹. In this context, the reform of the imperial cult, with its ceremonies and processions held as part of the annual provincial council assemblies, was accompanied by a scenario for the solemn manifestation of the political power of Rome in the capital of Hispania citerior. As a consequence of the urban reform, the monumental complex of the Tarraco acropolis was structured around three large terraces. The upper terrace was the site of the *temenos* of the Temple of Augustus, situated in the middle of the grand plaza, with an *aula* of worship on the northern side, aligned along the same axis as that of the temple³⁰; it appears to have been completed either in the

²⁷ G. Alföldy, *Hispania bajo los Flavios y Antoninos*, 19-20; E. Ortiz de Urbina, *la exaltación de la élite provincial*, pp. 60-61.

²⁸ According to Pliny's famous statement: *Universae Hispaniae Vespasianus Imperator Augustus iactatum procellis rei publicae Latium tribuit* (HN, 3, 30). For the current state of debate concerning the administrative reform of Hispania under the Flavians, cf. G. Alföldy, *Hispania bajo los Flavios y Antoninos* 16; J. Andreu, *Edictum, municipium y lex: Hispania en época Flavia (69-96 d. C.)*, Oxford 2004; idem, *En torno al ius Latii 'ústic en Hispania. A propósito de una nueva publicación sobre latinidad*, *Faventia*, 29, 2, 2007, pp. 37-46 (with prior bibliography). Regarding Tarraco as an administrative seat, cf. J. Ruiz de Arbuló, *Tárraco. Escenografía del poder, administración y 'usticia en una capital provincial romana (s. II aC – II dC)*, *Empúries*, 51, 1998, pp. 31-61; regarding the social promotion of the municipal elites in Hispania, cf. the works compiled in J.F. Rodríguez Neila, M. Navarro (eds.), *Elites y promoción social en la Hispania romana*, Pamplona 1999; idem, E. Melchor, *Poder central y autonomía municipal: la proyección de las élites romanas de Occidente*, Córdoba 2006.

²⁹ As recorded in the text of the *lex Narbonensis*. The subject of the concession of the *ius Latii* on an individual basis or to communities continues to be the backbone of the debate (cf. J. Andreu, *in torno al ius Latii flavio*, p. 40).

³⁰ Regarding this *temenos*, designated as an „area of worship” in the bibliography, in addition to the references cited in Note 25, see J.M. Macias et al., *La construcción del recinto imperial de Tarraco (provincia Hispania Citerior)*, [in:] J. López Vilar, Ò. Martín (eds.), *Tarraco: Construcció i arquitectura d'una capital provincial romana. Actes del Congrés Internacional en homenatge a Theodor Hauschild (Tarragona, 28-30 de gener de 2009) II* (*Butlletí Arqueològic*, V, 32), Tarragona 2009, pp. 423-479; J.M. Macias et al., *El templo de Augusto en Tarraco, 1539-1543*.

reign of Titus or that of Domitian. The intermediate terrace corresponded to a large forum square, in fact, the largest of its kind known in the whole Roman empire³¹. It is commonly called the „plaza of representation”, an expression coined by G. Alföldy, having documented that this was where the statues and pedestals of the provincial elites were exhibited³² (see below). On the lower terrace there was a circus, which was rather small in comparison to other circus buildings in Hispania³³. Finally, we should mention the amphitheatre that, although not strictly part of the same terraced complex, was closely linked to it, as appears to be attested by its alignment with the circus³⁴. The construction of the circus has been dated to the beginning of the second century and, at least in part, it was financed by a provincial *Flamen*, as recorded in the inscription of monumental dimensions found inside this building for performances³⁵.

³¹ In addition to the bibliography already referred to in Note 25, see recently about this plaza M. Díaz García, I. Teixell, La plaza de representación del *Concilium Provinciae Hispaniae Citerioris*: soluciones y dudas sobre su interpretación arquitectónica, [in:] J.M. Álvarez, T. Nogales, I. Rodà (eds.), *Actas XVIII Congreso Internacional de Arqueología Clásica = Proceedings of the 18th International Congress of Classical Archaeology*, I, Mérida, 2014 (2015), 837-841. Cf. likewise S. Vinci, J. M. Macías, M. Orellana, Metodología y análisis fotogramétrico del muro de cierre de la plaza de representación del „foro provincial” de *Tarraco (Hispania Tarraconensis)*, [in:] *ibidem*, pp. 91-94.

³² This was proposed for the first time in the context of the study on provincial high priests in Hispania Citerior: G. Alföldy, *Flamines provinciae Hispaniae citerioris*, Madrid 1973, pp. 4-10; see also *idem*, Bildprogramme in den römischen Städten des Conventus Tarraconensis – Das Zeugnis der Statuenpostamente, en Homenaje a García y Bellido IV, *Revista de la Universidad Complutense*, 18, 1979 [1981], pp. 213-219 and 231. Regarding the epigraphic and iconographic programme of the *flamines*, cf. E. Ortiz de Urbina, La exaltación de la elite provincial. Los homenajes estatuarios decretados o autorizados por la provincia Hispania Citerior, *Epigraphica*, LXVIII, 2006, pp. 45-84; D. Gorostidi Memoria, prestigio y monumento: los pedestales de los *virii flaminales* in Tarraco y su difusión in ámbito provincial, [in:] A. Ruiz, J.M. Iglesias (eds.), *Coloquio Internacional Monumenta et Memoria* (Santander, 22-23 de septiembre de 2016). *Estudios de Epigrafía Romana*, pp. 167-187.

³³ Regarding the circus of Tarraco, see the different contributions in J. López Vilar (ed.), *Tarraco Biennal. Actes del 3r Congrés Internacional d'Arqueologia i Món Antic La glòria del circ. Curses de carros i competicions circenses. In memoriam Xavier Dupré i Raventós* (Tarragona, 16-19 novembre 2016), Tarragona 2017.

³⁴ For this building, see among others J. Ciurana et al., *Amphitheatrum, Memoria Martyrum et Ecclesiae*. Les intervencions arqueològiques a l'Amfiteatre de Tarragona (2009-2011), Tarragona 2013; J.M. Macías et al., Reconstrucción digital del Anfiteatro romano de Tarraco (*Hispania Tarraconensis*) mediante escáner laser. Bases para el estudio analítico y estructural, [in:] J.M. Álvarez, T. Nogales, I. Rodà (eds.), *Actas XVIII Congreso Internacional de Arqueología Clásica = Proceedings of the 18th International Congress of Classical Archaeology*, I, Mérida 2014 (2015), 87-90; R. Mar et al., *Tarraco*. Arquitectura y urbanismo, 2, pp. 213-237.

³⁵ CIL II²/14, 1109 (cf. G. Alföldy, Die Bauinschriften des Aquäduktes von Segovia und des Amphitheatres von Tarraco. Mit einem Anhang von Peter Witte, *Madrider Forschungen*, 19, Berlin-New York 1997).

Among all these architectural structures, the middle terrace with its „plaza of representation” was one chosen to house the honorary monuments of the most outstanding members of the provincial elite, especially the high priests of the imperial cult, whose homages will be addressed below.

THE ARCHITECTURAL MEDIA AND STONE MATERIALS IN THE CONFIGURATION OF THE EPIGRAPHIC AMBIENCE OF THE PUBLIC SPACES

The distribution of Lunense marble in Tarraco

The construction of the monumental complex on Tarraco’s acropolis also brought with it a radical change in the choice of epigraphic media and stone materials associated with the transformation of the new public space, whereby everything was formed in relation to the actual architectural structures. The monumentalization programme, which was gradual and progressive, brought about an increase in the honorary epigraphy exhibited in both the area of the Temple of Augustus and the plaza of representation as well as the two „provincial” performance buildings.

There can be no doubt whatsoever that one of the phenomena that had the most impact on the layout of the renewed public space was the arrival of huge amounts of Lunense marble, imported rough to be worked by local stonemasons³⁶. This fact, together with the starring role of this imperially-owned white marble, has been highlighted in various studies on architectural decoration and structural building elements, mainly for the *temenos* of the Temple of the *Divus Augustus*. They include the famous studies by P. Pensabene³⁷, subsequently in collaboration with R. Mar³⁸, and those

³⁶ A synthesis with prior bibliography in J.C. Ruiz Rodríguez, La importación de *marmor Lunense* en la *Hispania* romana: el paradigma de Tarraco, *Butlletí Arqueològic*, V, 34-35, 2012-2013 (2015), pp. 87-114. Regarding the local workshops manufacturing objects in Lunense marble, cf. also the very recent S. Vinci, A. Ottati, Alcune considerazioni su a produzione di mortai a Tarragona in epoca romana imperiale, *Zephyrus*, 78, 2016, pp. 151-172.

³⁷ P. Pensabene, la decorazione architettonica, 33-105; idem, *Classi dirigente, programmi decorativi, culto imperiale: Il caso di Tarraco*, [in:] M.P. León (ed.), *Colonia Patricia Corduba: una reflexión arqueològica*. Coloquio internacional celebrado en Córdoba (mayo de 1993), Sevilla 1996, pp. 197-219.

³⁸ P. Pensabene, R. Mar, Il tempio di Augusto a Tarraco. Gigantismo e marmo lunense nei luoghi di culto imperiale in Hispania e Gallia, *Archaeologia Classica*, 61, 11, 2010, pp. 243-308.

generated as a result of the most recent archaeological excavations in Tarragona Cathedral³⁹.

This does not mean in any way that this type of marble had been absent in the town before the Flavian period. Although it was not limited solely to imported elements, it is these that predominate in the record of archaeological relics between the Augustan and Julio-Claudian periods. In terms of epigraphic finds, we may refer to a *mensa ponderaria* found in the 1920s during the building of the Tabacalera (tobacco factory)⁴⁰ and the iconic altar dedicated to the *numen* of Augustus from the theatre⁴¹. These artefacts share various characteristics: they are dated to the Augustan period, they are exceptional objects – in the sense that they are unusual – and they are movable. Moreover, their manufacture evinces very high quality of execution in the sculpted details and moulding in the case of the former, as well as the proportions, the carved priestly elements, the details and, in general, high stylistic quality in the latter. These features, taking into account the fact that the local workshops were only used to working with the native stone types (soft lutites and biocalcarenes, which were much easier to work than metamorphic rocks), all but confirm their imported nature, although they probably arrived plain to be inscribed in Tarraco with a text chosen by the person who commissioned them⁴². From the late Augustan or early Tiberian period, we have a plaque in grey-bluish, *bardiglio*-type marble corresponding to the statue pedestal of an equestrian-rank magistrate⁴³. To these three examples we can add the numerous imperial statues from the Julio-Claudian period – identified with members of the imperial family – from the colonial

³⁹ J.M. Macias et al., *Praesidium, Templum et Ecclesia*. Les intervencions arqueològiques a la Catedral de Tarragona (2010-2011), Tarragona 2012, pp. 25-29 n. 1.2.1.-1.2.9, 31-33 n. 1.2.12.-1.2.17.

⁴⁰ CIL II²/14, 1205. Identified as such (*mensa macelli*) for the first time by G. Alföldy in the updating of the CIL entry.

⁴¹ CIL II²/14, 851.

⁴² At least in the case of the *mensa macelli*, as demonstrated by the palaeography of the text that conserves part of the name of the local *aedilis*, very close to the contemporary Tarraconense types. Regarding local lithotypes, lutite („Alcover stone”) and soft calcarenites („Mèdol”-type) used en masse for the inscriptions of Tarraco until the end of the first century AD, cf. A. Gutiérrez García-M., Roman Quarries in the Northeast of Hispania (Modern Catalonia), Tarragona 2009; D. Gorostidi, J. López Vilar, *La officina lapidaria tarraconense en época augustea: actualización del corpus y primeras consideraciones*, [in:] J. López Vilar (ed.), Tarraco Biennial. Actes 2 on Congrès Internacional d'Arqueologia i Món Antic. August i les províncies occidentals. 2000 aniversari de la mort d'August, Tarragona 2015, pp. 257-262; D. Gorostidi et al., The Use of Alcover Stone in Roman Times, in press.

⁴³ CIL II²/14, 1021.

forum and its neighbouring theatre. Some of these appear to have been imported fully finished, while others may have been carved in local workshops⁴⁴.

In the Flavian period, the pre-eminence of Luni-Carrara marble was not limited to the building decorative programmes, but was also used along with other materials for the production of new epigraphic media put in place to honour the most privileged individuals and embellish the architectural structures themselves⁴⁵. These are plaques with honorary inscriptions, all fragmentary. Two of them were apparently dedicated to undetermined members of the Flavian dynasty and preserve remains of the name of Vespasian: one was found in the interior of the area occupied by the *temenos* of the Temple of Augustus⁴⁶; the other also originates from the historical quarter⁴⁷, making it fairly certain that they were part of the official programme of the acropolis. A third fragment of a monumental plaque, this time better preserved, was found during excavations in the area of Tarragona Cathedral. It was dedicated to an unknown individual who plausibly held the rank of [*curator te]mpli Di[vi Augusti]* and has recently been dated to the Flavian period⁴⁸. In this sense, the change with respect to the Julio-Claudian epigraphy is evident on comparing the materials used in that period for the same purpose, which were limited to the coloured *marmora* imported from more distant areas of the Western Mediterranean. These were *africano* from Teos⁴⁹, *giallo antico* from Chemtou⁵⁰ and the white streaked and brecciated varieties of *pavonazetto* from Afyon⁵¹, precisely the three most expensive types not including the porphyries⁵². This demonstrates, if not a phenomenon

⁴⁴ See the list, albeit incomplete, in E.M. Koppel, *Técnicas escultóricas romanas: Tarraco*, [in:] T. Nogales (ed.), *Materiales y técnicas escultóricas en Augusta Emerita y otras ciudades de Hispania*, Mérida 2002, p. 53. We have been able to identify Lunense marble as the raw material used for the following Julio-Claudian statues: idem, *Die römischen Skulpturen von Tarraco*, Berlin 1985, pp. 15-19 n. 4-7, 35-36 n. 48, 37-39 n. 56-57.

⁴⁵ J.C. Ruiz Rodríguez, *El uso del mármol lunense*, pp. 103-120.

⁴⁶ CIL II²/14, 895.

⁴⁷ CIL II²/14, 896.

⁴⁸ CIL II²/14, 1871a. See in detail A. Peña et al., *Más datos sobre el templo del Divus Augustus de Tarraco...*

⁴⁹ CIL II²/14, 882-884 (*tituli honorari imperatoris vel Caesaris*).

⁵⁰ CIL II²/14, 885 and 892 (*tituli honorari imperatoris vel domus imperatoriae vel Caesaris*).

⁵¹ CIL II²/14, 887 (*titulus honorarius imperatoris?*) and 957 (*titulus incerti generis*) respectively.

⁵² P. Barresi, *Province dell'Asia Minore. Costo dei marmi, architettura pubblica e committenza*, Rome 2003, pp. 151-200. Cf. B. Soler, *Planificación, producción y costo del programa mármoleo del teatro romano de Cartagena*, [in:] V. García-Entero (ed.), *El mármol en Hispania: explotación, uso y difusión en época romana*, Madrid 2012, tabla 1.

of substitution of the stone material, a competition in which Lunense marble arrived in Tarraco in huge amounts, displacing the rest of the privileged imported stone materials that had been preferentially used as prestige epigraphic media⁵³.

In fact, this can be confirmed if we look at the monumental civic epigraphs datable to the Flavian period. These are two large inscriptions consisting of several plaques: the fragment of a plaque with a part of the title of Titus or Domitian, accompanied by the presumed mention of an *[aed]es*⁵⁴, and a monumental inscription from the circus – preserved in numerous fragments – that probably referred to Domitian together with a magistrate who exercised the post of provincial *flamen*, among others⁵⁵. To this we can add the plaque which had also formed part of a large set from the amphitheatre in which the post of provincial *flamen* is mentioned *in extenso*⁵⁶. All these inscriptions required a huge amount of this stone, which was probably imported rough. We should recall that plaques were a type of medium that was easier to transport by sea and that all the plaques were only a part of the covering of the buildings on which they were placed. All this makes it fairly clear that both these civic inscriptions and the honorary monuments referred to above were carved in local workshops. This is also confirmed by the similarities between their palaeographic features and the characteristics of epigraphic media in local limestone⁵⁷ or Tarraco *marmor*, commonly known as „Santa Tecla stone”, which also includes also a widespread biomicritic variation known as „llisós”, used extensively as an epigraphic medium from the time of the Flavians⁵⁸.

***Tarraco marmor* and the configuration of the pedestal gallery**

Among all the epigraphic media of the notably abundant urban *corpus*, of particular note is the series of composite tripartite pedestals designed as

⁵³ J.C. Ruiz Rodríguez, *El uso del mármol lunense*, p. 112. The epigraphs on imported coloured marbles are too fragmentary to be able to establish conclusively that it was exclusively destined for the members of the imperial family, although the little evidence that is preserved suggests so.

⁵⁴ CIL II²/14, 899.

⁵⁵ CIL II²/14, 898a-b, 900 and 1913 to which we can add other fragments excavated in 2013: D. Gorostidi, J.C. Ruiz, *La inscripción monumental del circo*.

⁵⁶ CIL II²/14, 1109. Cf. supra note 35.

⁵⁷ Cf. A. Peña et al., *Más datos sobre el templo*, pp. 186-187.

⁵⁸ Cf. A. Álvarez, V. García-Entero, A. Gutiérrez García-Moreno, I. Rodà, *El marmor de Tarraco: explotació, utilització i comercialització de la pedra de Santa Tecla en época romana = Tarraco marmor: the quarrying, use and trade of Santa Tecla stone in Roman times*, Tarragona 2009.

stands for the honorary statues that gradually came to occupy the epigraphic landscape of the town from the reign of Vespasian. The origins of this phenomenon appear to have lain in the honorary monuments dedicated to the outgoing provincial *flamines*, the highest priesthood of the imperial cult⁵⁹, erected on the orders of the provincial council of Hispania citerior⁶⁰. In fact, as we can see in the text of the *lex de officiis et honoribus flaminis provinciae Narbonensis*, high priests would have been honoured with a statue placed in the imperial cult area (*intra fines eius templi statuae ponendae ius esto*), on a pedestal that explicitly recorded their names and those of their fathers (*nomenque suum patrisque*), their *origo* (*unde sit*) and the year in which they had held the position (*quo anno flamen fuerit*)⁶¹. The inscriptions from Tarraco include this information, with the exception of the consular dating, although they also systematically include the mention of the tribe, a detail that was not obligatory, according the conserved part of the *lex Narbonense*⁶².

⁵⁹ G. Alföldy, *Flamines provinciae, passim*; E. Ortiz de Urbina, La exaltación de la élite provincial, 68-69. Análisis de la composición de la élite provincial representada a través de los homenajes del *Concilium Provinciae*: idem, La *res publica* en las comunidades hispanas a partir de la fórmula epigráfica *omnibus honoribus functus*, [in:] J. González (ed.), Ciudades privilegiadas en el Occidente romano, Sevilla 1999, pp. 127-146; idem, La exaltación de la élite provincial, *passim*; S. Panzram, Stadtbild und Elite: Tarraco, Corduba und Augusta Emerita zwischen Republik und Spätantike, Stuttgart 2002, pp. 43-66.

⁶⁰ G. Alföldy, Die römischen Inschriften von Tarraco (= RIT), Berlin 1975, pp. 470-484; idem, Bildprogramme in den römischen Städten, *passim*; idem, Hispania bajo los Flavios y los Antoninos: consideraciones históricas sobre una época, [in:] M. Mayer, J.M. Nolla, J. Pardo (eds.), De les estructures indígenes a l'organització provincial romana de la Hispania citerior. Homenatge a Josep Estrada i Garriga (Itaca. Annexos, 1), Barcelona 1998, pp. 11-32; idem, Desde el nacimiento hasta el apogeo, pp. 61-74; idem, Tausend Jahre epigraphische Kultur im römischen Hispanien: Inschriften, Selbstdarstellung und Sozialordnung, *Lucentum*, 30, 2011, p. 120; idem, *Officina lapidaria Tarraconensis*, pp. 429-471; D. Gorostidi, J. López Vilar, La *officina lapidaria tarraconense* en época augustea: actualización del corpus y primeras consideraciones, [in:] J. López Vilar (ed.), *Tarraco Biennial. Actes 2 on Congrés Internacional*, 257-258. Géza Alföldy individualised this epigraphic type as specific to the production of the Tarraconense in his monograph dedicated to the *flamines Hispaniae citerioris* (G. Alföldy, *Flamines provinciae*, p. 11) as well as in his first corpus (RIT), and he dedicated his final works, published posthumously, to synthetic studies of society and epigraphic media (idem, Tausend Jahre epigraphische Kultur; idem, *Officina lapidaria Tarraconensis*). This line of inquiry is also sustained by the excellent work by G. Fabre, M. Mayer and I. Rodà (mainly, although not exclusively, in the IRC = G. Fabre, M. Mayer, I. Rodà, *Inscriptions Romaines de Catalogne, I-V*, Paris 1984-2002), who, together with G. Alföldy, pioneered the systematic study of epigraphic media in the Catalan area. Finally, see D. Gorostidi, Memoria, prestigio y monumento.

⁶¹ CIL XII, 6038: () *ius sta]tuae ponendae nomenquem suum patrisque et unde sit et quo anno fla]men fuerit inscribendi* (). cf. D. Fishwick, The Imperial Cult in the Latin West, III, pp. 3-16.

⁶² D. Fishwick's studies have shown how the *lex Narbonensis* was applied in the capital of Hispania Citerior through an analysis of epigraphic sources, whose contents show that they were

The *cursus honorum* of these high priests usually corresponds to members of the equestrian rank, in many cases limited to the municipal posts and synthesized from the time of Hadrian in the expression *omnibus honoribus in re publica sua functus*⁶³. There is, of course, no lack of mentions of the provincial flamine, whose designation varies, although the most habitual is the synthetic formula *flamen p(rovinciae) H(ispaniae) C(iterioris)*, corresponding to the official title of *flamen Romae, Divorum et Augustorum provinciae Hispaniae citerioris*⁶⁴. The text is ended by the dedicator, who is in many cases the provincial council itself, also cited in abbreviated form with the initials PHC. These letters are usually prominent due to their larger size⁶⁵. The reiterated disposition of these textual elements – also considering those found in the aforementioned *lex Narbonensis* – coincides with the desire to conserve the aspects of a more formal nature, such as the material, the measurements and the type of decoration. All this made those monuments match in visual terms and attuned them to a specific aesthetic canon in the interior of a unique ambience, which was simultaneously epigraphic and architectural.

Archaeological and epigraphic evidence allows us to reconstruct, without any doubt whatsoever, the plan of the civic complex destined to house the structures of provincial representation and power in Tarraco from the time of Vespasian. In addition to the architectural and urban framework, this necessarily included an iconographic design arranged around the figure of the provincial high priests of the reformed imperial cult, whose honorary statues were added annually to the gallery of honour in the capital of Hispania citerior. This epigraphic programme, which would have been set out by the provincial chancellery, is documented in the *lex de Narbo* through the more or less uniform systematization of pedestal texts. In Tarraco, moreover, the epigraphic support itself was standardized, probably based on the model chosen by the *officina lapidaria* that made the first pedestals in the

also obligatory for the high priests of the Tarraconense. Cf. D. Fishwick, A Municipal Decree at Tarraco, *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, 126, 1999, pp. 291-295; idem, The Imperial Cult in the Latin West, III, pp. 95-170.

⁶³ E. Ortiz de Urbina, La *res publica* en las comunidades hispanas Cf. G. Alföldy, Drei städtische Eliten im römischen Hispanien, [in:] *Die römische Gesellschaft. Ausgewählte Beiträge*, Stuttgart 1986, p. 248.

⁶⁴ D. Fishwick, *Flamen Augustorum*, *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, 74, 1970, pp. 299-312; G. Alföldy, *Flamines provinciae*, 43-46. Cf. idem in *CIL II²/14*, 1109 (= AE 1990, 653).

⁶⁵ Idem, *Flamines provinciae*, 13-14. They constitute variations of the *ex decreto concilii PHC* and *universi censuer(unt)* formulas, documented solely in two inscriptions (*CIL II²/14*, 1174 and 1194).

time of Vespasian and established the tripartite type of pedestal composed of separate pieces as the uniform support for the homages commissioned by the provincial administration itself and destined for the *virī flamines* and, by extension, to the rest of high magistrates and provincial dignitaries⁶⁶. The success of this medium as a prestige honorary pedestal, together with its mass production, no doubt favoured its spread among the rest of the population able to meet the cost of a such a monument for their private commissions⁶⁷.

The excellent local limestone was exclusively used for their manufacture. This had two characteristic facies: one biomicritic with a brownish-grey colouring, commonly known as „llisós”, and the other pseudo-microsparitic, the so-called „Santa Tecla stone”, with tonalities ranging from yellow to pink and which the town exported mainly for ornamental uses⁶⁸. The exploitation of this stone, which the Romans considered as *marmor*⁶⁹, dates back at least to the Augustan period⁷⁰. The introduction of this stone, particularly for a homage of such importance – being the earliest known monument of adherence to the imperial household – can be attributed to the search for materials that were highly appreciated and also to be found in the surrounding area and, therefore, easy to access.

The pedestal destined to support the statues of the outgoing provincial *flamines* was made up of three separate pieces: the *crepido*, the dado or central pillar and the *corona*, of which in most cases only the central parallelepiped is preserved. These blocks correspond to standardized sizes of 90 x 60 x 55 cm and present their frontal face, containing the epigraphic field, framed with a similar type of mould formed by a listel and a flat cyma⁷¹. The

⁶⁶ One of the earliest was that of *Raecius Gallus* (CIL II²/14, 992, 70-75 dC). Cf. D. Fishwick, *The Imperial Cult in the Latin West*, pp. 156-158.

⁶⁷ Without doubt, the monumental type was not only used for public homages to the members of the provincial elite, as is attested by the fact that some 150 examples are preserved in the town, to which we have to add those in the various surrounding towns, although not only (cf. D. Gorostidi, *Memoria, prestigio y monumento*).

⁶⁸ See note 58.

⁶⁹ Thus named explicitly in the inscriptions IRC IV, 107-108; CIL II²/14, 1279. See M. Mayer, *Basis lapidea aere clusa*, [in:] *Homenaje al profesor Luis Rubio*, *Estudios Románicos*, 5, 1987/89, pp. 927-932; A. Álvarez et al., *El marmor de Tarraco*, pp. 10-13.

⁷⁰ As attested by a plaque with an honorary inscription dedicated to Tiberius, dated to between 16 and 14 BC (CIL II²/14, 879).

⁷¹ We also have a preserved part of an inscription made up of various blocks of „Santa Tecla stone” in its pinkish variety that constitute a pseudo-monolithic pedestal composed of a plinth, a central dado and probably a crown (CIL II²/14, 1007). It can almost certainly be dated to a time prior to the reign of Vespasian, given that, as we will see below, its features are in contrast to the pedestals of the Flavian *officina lapidaria* and, moreover, the palaeography points to a dating well into the Julio-Claudian period. In our understanding, this epigraph appears as an element of

monument was part of a systematic statuary plan designed to endow the town with a homogeneous and coherent language of representation with the Flavian administrative reform⁷². This change with respect to the previous period reveals a new unitary perspective that endowed its recipients with exceptional visibility, above all if they were placed in the monumental worship area created for the representation of the *Concilium Provinciae*.

Thus, the provincial council had a specialised *officina lapidaria* to fulfil its annual commissions. To these we can add the few preserved pieces that were stipulated for other procurators of the provincial council, such as the head of the *legationes gratuitae*⁷³. The result was the creation, next to the imperial cult temple, of a prestigious gallery of representation made up of bronze statues of the provincial *flamines* – illustrious men and citizens of renown – with their respective pedestals recording their names and origins. This panorama undoubtedly offered a powerful image in eyes of the delegates from the communities who came to the annual meetings in the provincial capital. A similar gallery immediately evoked the most illustrious representational areas of the imperial capital itself from the time of creation of the Forum of Augustus in Rome, where the gallery of *summi viri* represented the constitution of the *dignitas*, the *auctoritas* and the *imperium* of Roman power. This image would undoubtedly have influenced the decision to export this privileged medium of imperial officialdom to the respective towns of origin of many of those civil servants and magistrates who were fortunate enough to receive homage in the provincial capital, also epigraphically transferring the iconic magnificence of imperial officialdom⁷⁴.

transition towards the new typology of media disseminated in Tarraco from the end of the first century, when the mass-produced solid pedestals arrived. The increase in demand led some stonemasons' workshops to specialize in this specific type of monument.

⁷² G. Alföldy, *Bildprogramme in den römischen Städten*, p. 177; idem, *Hispania bajo los Flavios y Antoninos*, 19; I. Rodà, *Foros y epigrafía: algunos ejemplos de Hispania Citerior*, *Historia Antiqua*, 5, 1999, pp. 127-129; G. Alföldy, *Desde el nacimiento hasta el apogeo*, pp. 69-71.

⁷³ Three persons who received a statue by decree of the council in recognition of commitments undertaken in their names are documented (cf. E. Ortiz de Urbina, *La exaltación de la élite provincial*, pp. 46-50).

⁷⁴ Indeed, the definition of a standardized medium served to offer a uniform image to the official homages and, therefore, an adaptation of the official propaganda, as demonstrated by the export of the monumental model to other towns in the immediate area of Tarraco and the *conventus Tarraconensis* (G. Alföldy, *Bildprogramme in den römischen Städten*). It also reached *Caesaraugustanus* (*Caesar Augusta*, *Labillosa*, *Ilerda*) and, very probably, *Carthaginiensis* (*Carthago Nova*, *Saetabis*, *Castulo*). Regarding this detail, see recently D. Gorostidi, *Memoria, prestigio y monumento*.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Beyond their function as a historical document, the inscriptions, and especially the official epigraphy, are revealed as essential in the configuration of the imperial iconography in Roman towns, in its content, typology and even the material used. From the time of the Flavians, Tarraco represented an excellent paradigm in this respect. Understanding the construction project of the town's acropolis continues to be a very complex task; however, epigraphy was a necessary part of the original design of this long monumentalization process, which took decades until it was finally completed in the time of Domitian. For these purposes, the architectural and epigraphic media on the one hand, and the stone employed on the other played a fundamental role. This is especially true if we consider the aim to create solemn spaces that produced a visual impact and the homogeneous appearance befitting the solemnity of an area of representation. Thanks to the information at our disposal, particularly the architectural elements – both structural and ornamental – and the inscribed monuments from the site, we know for certain that the ornamental theatricality of its buildings and sculptural programmes contributed effectively to the achievement of these goals and to the dissemination of the *imago Urbis* among the recently promoted communities throughout Hispania.

In conclusion, the epigraphic landscape implemented in Tarraco for the representational areas of the *concilium provinciae* made an important contribution to that homogeneity and solemnity and, definitively, its epigraphic workshops opportunely exploited the potentials of the available local stone, from the quarry to the exhibition of the monuments. All this manifested the power of Rome, not only in the inscriptions of the official texts, but also through the aesthetic conferred by the colour and the texture of the privileged media used for the monumental honorific epigraphy.

Summary

From the time of Vespasian, the upper part of Tarraco, which had previously been occupied by a military *praesidium*, was remodelled for the construction of a new monumental complex of gigantic proportions for the *Concilium Provinciae Hispaniae citerioris*. This initiative corresponded to a profound political transformation: the reform of the administration of the Hispanic provinces, with the generalised concession of the *ius Latii* and the re-institution of the *provincia*

Hispania citerior Tarraconensis. One of the results of this process was a greater political visibility of the priesthood of the provincial cult. It became a post that was especially sought after by the Hispanic elites from the communities that had just received their new legal status. The urban reform also brought with it a radical change in the choice of epigraphic media and stone materials used in the new public space, forming everything with respect to the architectural structures themselves. There was a massive arrival of Lunense marble, which was imported uncut to be worked by local stonemasons. Due to its association with the decorative programmes of public buildings, it was almost exclusively used for imperial epigraphy, replacing the imported coloured *marmora* used for that purpose in the Julio-Claudian period. The use of the white marble found in the excellent local limestones – the so-called Tarraco *marmor* with its pinkish-yellow varieties – provided a colourful contrast. This was manifested in the specialised use of the local stone as a new medium designed for public homages to the provincial magistrates in the provincial council's grand „plaza of representation”, and specifically those for the provincial *flamines* placed around the temple of Augustus. As for *flamines*, the *lex de officiis et honoribus flaminis provinciae Narbonensis* inform that their homages had to include a series of specifications to commemorate the person, their family and their community of origin. The Tarraco pedestals confirm that very similar precepts to those of Narbo were applied in the town. Not only were the texts standardized, but the pedestals also followed the same uniform, monolithic, moulded, tripartite pattern. The large number of preserved examples shows how this model imposed itself on the epigraphic landscape of Tarraco from Vespasian to Commodus. This, and its mass production, also made it popular for private commissions. The image of a gallery of numerous, uniform statues dedicated to the illustrious men of the province must have had a considerable impact on the many municipal representatives who came to the capital for the annual assemblies and who would have been able to see in the honorary monument a symbol of prestige, a transmitter of the political values of Rome's power that emanated from the magnificence and solemnity of the areas of provincial representation.

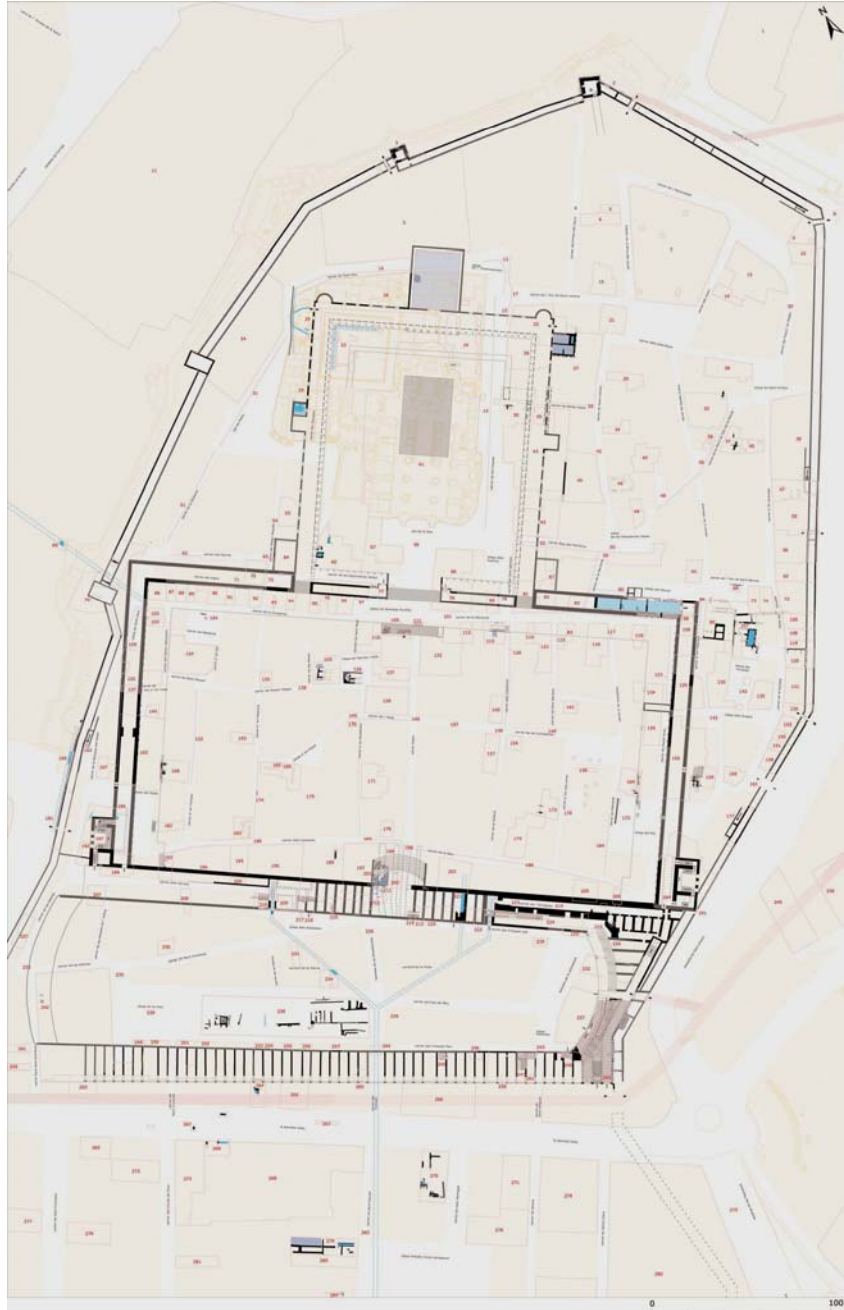


Fig. 1. Planimetry of Tarraco's acropolis (from J.M. Macias et al., *Planimetria Arqueologica de Tarraco*, Tarragona 2007, tab. A1)



Fig. 2. Fragmentary Luni inscription with a part of the Vespasian's name (CIL II²/14, 895.
Photo: BBAW-CIL)



Fig. 3. Monumental Luni plaque with mention of an *aedes* found around the Augustus' temple (CIL II²/14, 899. Foto: authors with permission of Diocesan Museum of Tarragona)



Fig. 4. Monumental Luni plaque with mention of a provincial *flamen* found in the amphitheatre (CIL II²/14, 1109. Photo: The National Archaeological Museum of Tarragona – MNAT)



Fig. 5. Distinctive Tarraconense honorific tripartite pedestal (CIL II²/14, 685). The National Archaeological Museum of Tarragona – MNAT)



Fig. 6. Pedestal with *omnibus honoribus in re publica sua functus* form (CIL II²/14, 1143.
Photo: The National Archaeological Museum of Tarragona – MNAT)



Fig. 7. Santa Tecla's marmor plaque of Tiberius (16-14 BC) (CIL II²/14, 879. Photo: The National Archaeological Museum of Tarragona – MNAT)

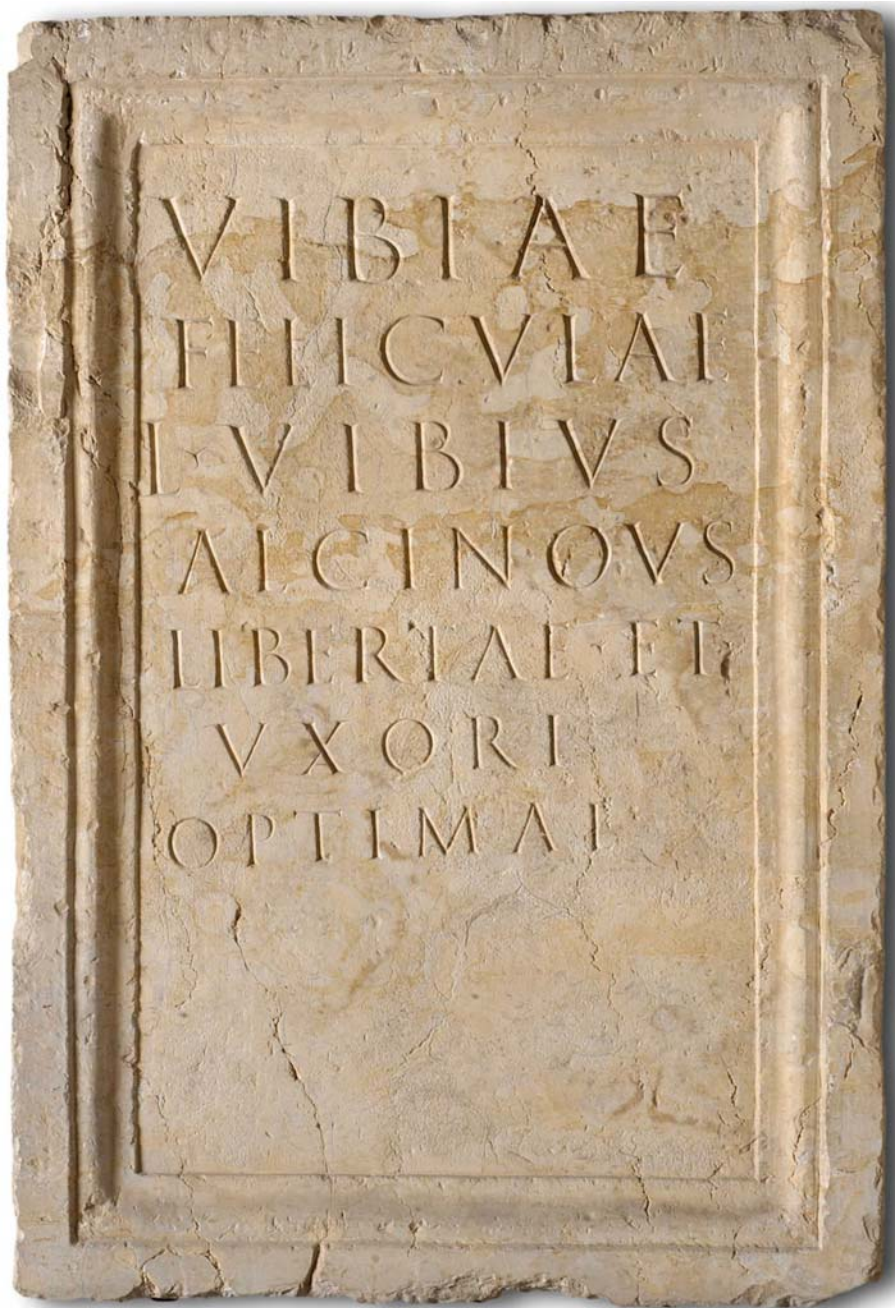


Fig. 8. Distinctive Tarraconense honorific tripartite pedestal for a private (CIL II²/14, 1349. Photo: The National Archaeological Museum of Tarragona – MNAT)

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