

# *Muros, turres, portas haciendas coeravit.* Remarks on the chronology of the foundation of *Barcino*

MUROS, TURRES, PORTAS FACIENDAS COERAVIT. NOTAS SOBRE  
LA CRONOLOGÍA DE LA FUNDACIÓN DE *BARCINO*

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**Abstract** Recent research has significantly improved our knowledge about the foundation of the Roman city of *Barcino* (Barcelona, Spain). However, while these studies have collected some encouraging evidence for a late-Republican chronology, the Augustan chronology traditionally granted to this foundation (around B.C. 10) has not been questioned at all. This article aims to analyse old and new literary, epigraphic, topographic, architectural, and archaeological data, to recover the Caesarean chronology (around B.C. 45-44), which was previously defended from the middle of the 19th century through to the end of the 1970s, and to draw from this study some more general historical conclusions on the process of the romanization of Catalonia.

**Key words** Augustus, Barcelona, Caesarean foundation, Hispania, Roman colony.

**Resumen** Las investigaciones recientes han acrecentado de forma significativa nuestro conocimiento sobre la fundación de la ciudad romana de *Barcino* (Barcelona, España). Sin embargo, mientras que los últimos estudios ofrecen una serie de evidencias lo suficientemente claras como para situar la fundación de la ciudad en época tardorepublicana, la historiografía continúa atribuyendo una cronología augustea a la fundación de la colonia (que se fija en torno al 10 a.C.). En este trabajo se analiza una serie de viejas y nuevas fuentes literarias, epigráficas, topográficas, arquitectónicas y arqueológicas, para recuperar la hipótesis de la cronología cesariana de la fundación de la ciudad (en torno al 45-44 a.e.) que fue mayoritariamente aceptada desde mediados del siglo XIX hasta finales de la década de los 70. Con ello se pretende extraer una serie de conclusiones históricas generales sobre el proceso de romanización de Cataluña.

**Palabras clave** Augusto, Barcelona, Colonia romana, Hispania, Fundación cesariana.

## 1. THE HISTORIOGRAPHICAL DEBATE CONCERNING THE CHRONOLOGY AND LOCATION OF THE FIRST *BARCINO*

The problem of the chronology of the foundation of the city of Barcelona (Roman *Barcino*) has attracted the attention of historians from at least the mid-19th century. If at first scholars linked the origin of *Barcino* to the Punics, and to the Barca family in particular (Pi y Arimón, 1854, pp. 13-17; de Bofarull, 1855, pp. XV-XVII; Fita, 1876, pp. 4-5; Sanpere y Miquel, 1890), doubts about this hypothesis were later raised by Almagro *et al.*, (1945, p. 64) and Mayer (1975). Though traces of the old etymological and literary theories continued to appear sporadically through to the end of the 20th century (see, for example, Guiunta, 1988, *passim*), the historiographical debate preferred to focus on elucidating the exact moment in the Roman epoch at which the founding of the colony took place.

Literary sources are unable to resolve the matter, since *Barcino* is only mentioned for the first time in our surviving texts in Pomponius Mela's *De Choreographia* (A.D. 43-44), where it is qualified as *parvum oppidum* (Mela 2. 90: «*Inde ad Tarraconem parva sunt oppida, Blande, Iluro, Baetulo, Barcino, Subur, Tolobi*») and its legal status is not made explicit before the work of Pliny the Elder (A.D. 77), who reports that the town held the rank of colony under the *cognomen* of *Faventia* (Plin. Nat. 3. 22: «*In ora autem colonia Barcino, cognomine Faventia*»).

The debate about the origin of *Barcino* was revived in the early 20th century by the discovery of an inscription dedicated by *Caius Coelius*, a local magistrate who held the position of quinquennial duumvir, in which he commemorated the construction of the city walls, with towers and gates (fig. 1):

*C(aius) Coelius Atisi f(ilius) / Ilvir quin(quennalis) mur(os), / turres, portas / fac(iendas) coer(avit).*

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**Figure 1.** Sandstone plaque commemorating the construction of the walls, towers, and gates of the city of *Barcino* by *Caius Coelius*, son of *Atisius*. Ca. B.C. 45-44. Dimensions: 55 x 120 x 29 cm. Barcelona, Archaeology Museum of Catalonia, inv. n° 7570 (© MAC). Bibl.: *CIL* I 2673 = *CIL* I<sup>2</sup>, 2, 2673 = *ILLRP* 581 = *IRB* 51 = *AE* 1978, 441 = *IRC* IV 57 = *IRC* V, p. 113 = *HEpOL* 8152 = *AE* 2016, 765.



Fidel Fita, the first editor of this inscription, pointed out in 1903 that the text was dated to the Caesarean epoch (Fita, 1903a, p. 459; Fita 1903b). In his opinion, the dictator may have granted the title of colony to the city, as he did with other settlements on the Iberian peninsula, such as *Felicitas Iulia* (Lisbon), *Liberitas Iulia* (Évora), *Pax Iulia* (Beja), *colonia Iulia Romula* (Seville) and *colonia Iulia Urbs Triumphalis Tarraco* (Tarragona). However, since the inscription had supposedly been found on the Montjuïc (the 173 m tall hill that towers over the city of Barcelona from the south), Fita thought that the walls referred to in the text had to be located in a primitive settlement near a hypothetical harbour at the mouth of the river Llobregat, and not in the high-Imperial *Barcino* built on the *Mons Taber*, where Barcelona's Barrio Gótico is currently located:

Por ventura la ciudad que amuralló Cayo Coelio no es la actual cuyo centro está en la plaza de San Jaime sobre la cima del monte denominado Taber por los documentos de la Edad Media, sino que es el Castro del Puerto, hacia el desagüe del Llobregat en la falda del Monjuí, donde radica el cementerio de Sudeste (Fita, 1903a, pp. 460-61).

The hypothesis of the existence of two different urban centres seemed to be reinforced by the testimony of Avienus (4th c. A.D.), who, in his *Ora Maritima*, referred to the city in the plural as the rich «Barcelonas» (Avien. *Ora Marit.* 513-14: «*Inde Tarraco oppidum / et Barcilonum amoena sedes ditium*»). However, the theory that Barcelona had its origins in a sort of two-headed city was ruled out by the majority of later investigators, although some scholars continued to support it through to the end of the 1970s. In that sense, Sebastián Mariner (1975, pp. 185-86) has argued that this toponymic duality represents a phenomenon similar to that found in cities such as *Arse-Saguntum* or *Tarraco-Cese*, where there is only one population settlement but two denominations. In relation to the text of Avienus, the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* solved the problem by interpreting it as referring to «the rich Barcelonians» rather than to «the rich Barcelonas» (*TLL* II: 1750, s.v. *Barcilo*). As for the numismatic issues of the 2nd c. B.C. with the legend *Laieśken*, which were used as an argument to defend the hypothesis of an earlier pre-Roman urban nucleus, several authors argued that these do not refer to a primitive city (*Laie*), which has not been located by either sources nor archaeology, but to the ethnic group living in the region of Layetania (Gimeno, 1950, p. 74; Balil, 1964, pp. 38-41; Untermann, 1975, A.13; Bonneville, 1978, p. 52; Villaronga, 1982, p. 169; Granados, 1984a, pp. 268-69).

In the same year that Fita first advanced his claims, Manuel Rodríguez de Berlanga also dated the inscription to the end of the Republican epoch. This dating was grounded not only on the palaeography and the presence of archaic features such as *coeravit*, but also on the absence of a *cognomen* in the name of the donor. This, he argued, meant the epigraph was dated prior to the *Lex Iulia municipalis* of B.C. 45, which endorsed the inclusion of the *tria nomina* in the onomastic system, as well as the inclusion of the patronymic and the tribe (Berlanga, 1903-1904).

Half a century later, Alberto Balil re-examined *Caius Coelius'* plaque and recognized that the text had undoubtable Republican palaeographic features. Nevertheless, Balil still argued that the date of the inscription should be delayed to the Augustan epoch since, in his opinion, the foundation of the colony just *had* to have taken place during the Principate (Balil, 1955-1956).

In the 1960s, Sebastián Mariner, following the discovery of the famous monumental inscription in St. Iu square (Barcelona, History Museum, inv. n° 3274: *IRC* IV 23 = *IRC* V, p. 111 = *IRB* 23 = *HEp* 1999, 240), financed by the colony in honour of Emperor Caracalla

(in which the complete title of the city appeared, that is to say *colonia Iulia Faventia Paterna Barcino*), argued that Barcelona had to be a Caesarean foundation:

*Imp(eratori) Caes(ari) M(arco) / Aurellio An[to]/nino Pio Fel(ici) A[ug(usto)] / Parthico ma[x(i-mo)] / Brit[t]an(n)ico m[ax(imo?)] / [Germ]anico m[ax(imo)] / trib(unicia) potest(ate) XVIII, / imp(eratori) III, co(n)s(uli) I[II], / p(atri) p(atriciae) pro co(n)s(ule) / col(onia) Iul(ia) Fav(entia) / Pat(erna) Barc(ino).*

The hypothesis of Mariner emphasized the onomastic concomitances between *Barcino* and the cities of *Arelate* and *Narbo*, both colonies founded by Caesar after the battle of *Munda* (B.C. 45), as well as the reading of the epithet *Faventia*, which can be derived from the term *faveo* («favour»), hinting at the help given by the Layetans to Caesar against his Pompeian enemies. However, Mariner also defended the claim that it was Augustus who granted the city the title of colony and the different *cognomina* it held (Mariner, 1964). The hypothesis was accepted by Balil (1964, p. 43, n. 46), who refers to a *Barcino vetus* (pp. 87-88).

A few years later, Frederic-Pau Verrié suggested that there must have been a colony at the foot of Montjuïc not only earlier than Augustus but perhaps even before Caesar. This town must have been baptized, initially, with the *cognomen* of *Faventia*, to which those of *Iulia* and *Paterna* were later added on account of the town's fidelity to Caesar. Subsequently, during the Principate, when the city must have been moved to its new location on the *Mons Taber*, the epithet of *Augusta* must have been added as well (Verrié, 1973).

Along much the same lines, Francisca Pallarés (1975, pp. 5-10) suggested a Caesarean chronology for *Caius Coelius'* inscription and assumed that the first city with walls, towers, and gates referred to in the epigraph must have been not the former pre-Roman nucleus of *Barcino*, as Fita and Rodríguez de Berlanga believed, but another small settlement erected close to it. This, she argued, would be the only way of justifying the epithet *Faventia*, which has parallels in other foundations between the 3rd c. B.C. and the time of Caesar.

Isabel Rodà (1976) also endorsed the hypothesis of the existence of an earlier urban settlement, located on the Montjuïc, basing her support on the presence of the *cognomina Iulia* and *Faventia* in the official title of the colony. This settlement, she suggested, could have been granted the status of colony by Caesar and later, in Augustus' time, being transferred to the *Mons Taber* and given the *cognomen* of *Augusta*.

Two years later, Jean-Nöel Bonneville (1978, pp. 52-61) forcefully ruled out the existence of a city on the Montjuïc prior to *Barcino*, as well as that of a harbour to the south. On the one hand, he pointed out that the findings from the Montjuïc area were few in number, sparse, and lacking in significance, while, on the other, he argued that it was inconceivable that the Iberians (who only showed a very limited interest in maritime activities) had built a harbour in the area. According to Bonneville, the city must have been founded in Augustan times, after the Cantabrian wars, and the walls referred to in the inscription of *Caius Coelius* were thus the original walls of the high-Imperial city.

Bonneville's hypothesis was developed further in the 1980s in a series of works by José Oriol Granados. Granados denied the existence of an Iberian or Roman settlement on the Montjuïc precisely on the grounds that, despite the several earthworks produced in the area, only a small series of scattered and low-profile archaeological finds had come to light, and these were insufficient to justify the hypothesis of a large nucleus. He did not exclude the possibility that a series of earlier small-scale rural settlements had existed in its place, and that it was the presence of these settlements



that was preserved by the small quantity of scattered structures and ceramic remains. In his opinion, *Barcino* was founded *ex novo* some time around B.C. 15-13. The erection of *miliaria* marking the new coastal route of the *via Augusta* (which would not have taken place prior to B.C. 8-7) and the ramification of this route in the inland area would have coincided with the foundation of the city (Granados, 1984a, pp. 274-75; Granados, 1989-90; Granados *et al.*, 1986. On the milestone from Barcelona dated to the Augustan epoch, see *CIL* XVII 1, 1, 9).

In the years since Granados' work, the inscription commemorating the construction of the walls has been associated with the first defensive perimeter of *Barcino* on the *Mons Taber*. Most of the historiography has assumed that the foundation of the city occurred after B.C. 19, as a result of a *deductio* ordered by Augustus at the end of the Cantabrian wars, and that the inscription of *Caius Coelius* should be dated within that chronological span, despite the clearly Republican elements in its palaeography and spelling (Bonville, 1982, p. 367; Rodà, 1989, p. 350; Pons, 1994, pp. 110-11; IRC IV 57; Rodà, 2001, pp. 33; Puig and Rodà, 2007, p. 597; Beltrán, 2010, pp. 39-41; Garrido, 2011, p. 14). The presence of archaisms such as *coeravit* were justified by the supposition of delays in development that were thought to be typical of the «*arte provincial*» (Granados, 1984a, p. 291).

The long-standing problem of *Barcino's* primitive location has only recently (2017) been likely resolved as a result of Alessandro Ravotto's research for his doctoral thesis (under the supervision of Isabel Rodà). Ravotto's study of Barcelona's ancient walls has revealed important new information related to *Caius Coelius'* inscription (Ravotto, 2017, pp. 287-94; Ravotto, 2018, pp. 65-69). The report of the inscription's discovery in 1903 was transmitted by Pelegrí Casades i Gramatxes, who sent a letter to Fita and Rodríguez de Berlanga informing them that the piece had been discovered that year in the southwest area of the Montjuïc. Berlanga's answer to Casades was published in the journal of which the latter was editor (Berlanga, 1903-04), and scholars have, since then, accepted the Catalan historian's account of the origin of the epigraph.

However, the inventory of the Municipal Artistic Museums for December 1902 includes, under the registration number 22, the following entry:

Donativo. D. José Laribal. Lápida romana descubierta en un solar de la calle Aviñó de esta ciudad, con la inscripción siguiente: Caius Coelius Atisi Filius Duunvir Quinquenalis Muros Turres Portas Faciendos Coeravit.

The place of discovery mentioned in this entry (carrer d'Avinyó) is not located in the southwest area of the Montjuïc at all, but next to the city walls, just a few tens of meters from the southwest Roman gate of the town. The donor of the piece, Josep Laribal i Lastrortas, was, it seems, a significant figure among Barcelona's bourgeoisie, and also one of the main real estate magnates of the city in the second half of the 19th century. Among his portfolio of properties, Lastrortas owned a farm on the Montjuïc that was later expropriated by the City Council after his death. It is very likely that, as Ravotto suggests, the inscription of *Caius Coelius* was initially found at one of Lastrortas' properties in Barcelona, and was later moved to his estate on the Montjuïc. The discovery in 1903, on the southern part of the mountain, of a homogeneous group of ruins belonging to a Roman exedra-shaped building led Casades to connect the inscription to these new findings (see the first report in Granados, 1984a, p. 270) while it had, in fact, actually been recovered from the Lastrortas estate on the northern part of the Montjuïc (Ravotto, 2017, pp. 292-294; Ravotto, 2018, pp. 65-69).

Thanks to Ravotto's investigation, it now seems clear that *Caius Coelius'* inscription, and its testimony relating to the construction of the city walls, refers to the colony of *Mons Taber* and not to a hypothetical pre-Roman town located on the Montjuïc. It also seems likely that *Caius Coelius'* epigraphical activity corresponded with the foundational act of *Barcino*. Nevertheless, while this is an important advance, the detailed chronology of the city's foundation and the construction of its walls remains open. Indeed, Ravotto himself goes on to accept the criteria set forth in *IRC IV 57* by Georges Fabre, Marc Mayer Olivé, and Isabel Rodà, who argue that «*malgré l'archaïsme apparent, la datation doit être augustéenne et non républicaine*» (*IRC IV 57*; Ravotto, 2017, p. 287). This forces us to return once more to the palaeographic analysis of the inscription and to insert it back into its historical, archaeological, and topographic contexts, with the aim of shedding new light on this issue.

## 2. THE INSCRIPTION OF CAIUS COELIUS

Borja Díaz Ariño (2008a) did not include *Caius Coelius'* inscription in his catalogue of the Republican Latin epigraphy of Hispania as he dated it back to Augustus (p. 61). Nonetheless, the features of the epigraph adhere perfectly to the series of technical, palaeographic, onomastic, and orthographic elements that, as the author points out in the introduction to his work, usually characterize this kind of inscription:

La paleografía suele ser poco cuidada. La O suele ser totalmente redonda. La P tiene la panza totalmente abierta. La M presenta los trazos exteriores convergentes y tanto la F como la E tienen los trazos horizontales de la misma longitud. Las interpunciones más características son las circulares, cuadradas y con forma de aspa, aunque también hay varios ejemplos de interpunciones triangulares (Díaz Ariño, 2008a, p. 48).

Also worth noting is that the letters in the inscription are engraved very deeply; that their height is very irregular; that the <C> is very open and with almost horizontal extremities; that the <Q> and the <R> have a rectilinear tail (and the tail of the <Q> is almost horizontal); that the <S> is very angular; that the strokes of the <M> form three equal triangles; that the numeral II is given a form identical to a Greek pi. In addition, the plate is made from the local sandstone of Montjuïc, and not marble.

Díaz Ariño (2008a, pp. 48-49) points out that Republican inscriptions often include certain linguistic archaisms, such as the use of the diphthong <EI> instead of <I> or the confusion of <C> and <Q> in formulas such as *curavit / quravit*. In *Caius Coelius'* inscription, one such archaism can be identified clearly in the use of the *coeravit* form for the verb *curavit*. The abbreviated formula *fac. coer.* (in spite of the abundance of available space in the right half of the line) does not clarify whether the text carried a *faciendas*, or the (also archaic) *faciundas*.

The archaism *coeravit* is present in Spanish epigraphy of the late Republic and the early Principate. For example, we find it in an inscription from *Tarraco* from the beginning of the 1st c. B.C.: *Cn(aeo) Lucretio / L(uci) f(ilio) Scap(tia) / Seleucus l(ibertus) de suo / faciendum coer(avit)* (*CIL I 2276* (p 1108) = *CIL II 4371* = *CIL II 6073* = *RIT 12*), but also in the Ampuritan plate of the early-Augustan epoch commemorating the construction of a *campus*: *[L(ucius) C]aecilius L(uci) f(ilius) Gal(eria) / [Ma]cer aedil(is), Ilvir / [ca]mpum de sua pecu(nia) / [facie]ndum coeravit / [idemq]ue probavit* (*AE 1981, 563* = *HEpOL 15782*), or in the Saguntine plate, probably of the late 1st c. B.C., which commemorates the repair of the *turris et murus* of the city: *[-] Ful[vius - f(ilius)] Titinian(us), / L(ucius)*

*Lucilius L(uci) f(ilius) / Ilvir(i) ex d(ecreto) d(ecurionum) / turris et mur[o]s / refic(iendos) co[er(averunt)]*) (CIL II<sup>2</sup>, 14, 361). In these last two inscriptions, the form of the *duo* is a Greek pi, as in the case of *Barcino*.

As for the form referring to *muri*, *turres*, and *portae*, the inclusion of these three elements in the same epigraphic text is a phenomenon that is especially documented in late-Republican Italy: CIL X 6238 = ILLRP 602 (Fondi, 1st c. B.C.): *M(arcus) Nellius M(arci) f(ilius), / A(ulus) Octavius C(ai) f(ilius), / L(ucius) Ursius A(uli) f(ilius) / aid(iles) / murum, portam, turris / faciunda ex s(enatus) c(onsulto) coe[r(averunt)] / eid(em)que probav(erunt)*; CIL X 6239 = ILLRP 603 (Fondi, B.C. 130-71): *L(ucius) Numistrionius L(uci) f(ilius) Decian(us), / C(aius) Lucius M(arci) f(ilius), M(arcus) Runtius L(uci) f(ilius) Mess(ianus) / aed(iles), portas, turreis, murum / ex s(enatus) c(onsulto) faciund(a) coera(ve)runt / eisdemq(ue) proba(ve)runt*; CIL IX 1140 = ILLRP 523 (Aeclanum, B.C. 78-51): *C(aius) Quinctius C(ai) f(ilius) Valg(us) patron(us) munic(ipii), / M(arcus) Magi(us) Min(ati) f(ilius) Surus, A(ulus) Patlaci(us) Q(uinti) f(ilius) / IIIvir(i) d(e) s(enatus) s(ententia) portas, turreis, moiros / turreisque aequas qum (!) moiro / faciundum coiraverunt*; CIL V 3434 = AE 1987, 450 (Verona, B.C. 59-49): *P(ublius) Valerius C(ai) f(ilius) [---], / Q(uintus) Caecilius Q(uinti) [f(ilius) ---], / Q(uintus) Servilius Q(uinti) [f(ilius) ---], / P(ublius) Cornelius P(ubli) f(ilius) [---] / IIIvir(i) murum, porta[m, turreis], / cloacas d(e) d(ecurionum) s(ententia) faciu[ndum coer(averunt)]. / P(ublius) Valerius C(ai) [f(ilius) ---], / Q(uintus) Caecilius Q(uinti) f(ilius) [--- probav(erunt)]* (cf. Gregori and Nonnis 2013). Nonetheless there is also an inscription from *Saepinum* dated to the Augustan epoch, during the last quarter of the 1st c. B.C.: CIL IX 2443 = AE 1976, 194: *Ti(berius) Claudius Ti(beri) f(ilius) Nero pont(ifex), co(n)s(ul) [II, imp(erator) II], trib(unicia) potest(ate) V, / Nero Claudius Ti(beri) f(ilius) Drusus Germ[anicus] augur, c[o(n)s(ul)], imp(erator) [II], / murum, portas, turris [d(e) s(ua) p(ecunia)] f(acienda) c(uraverunt)*.

Of course, there are other texts dated to the 4th c. A.D. in which the repair of walls, towers, and gates is recorded (e.g. AE 1935, 86; CIL VI 1188-1190 = AE 1997, 107), but these are not relevant to our interests here.

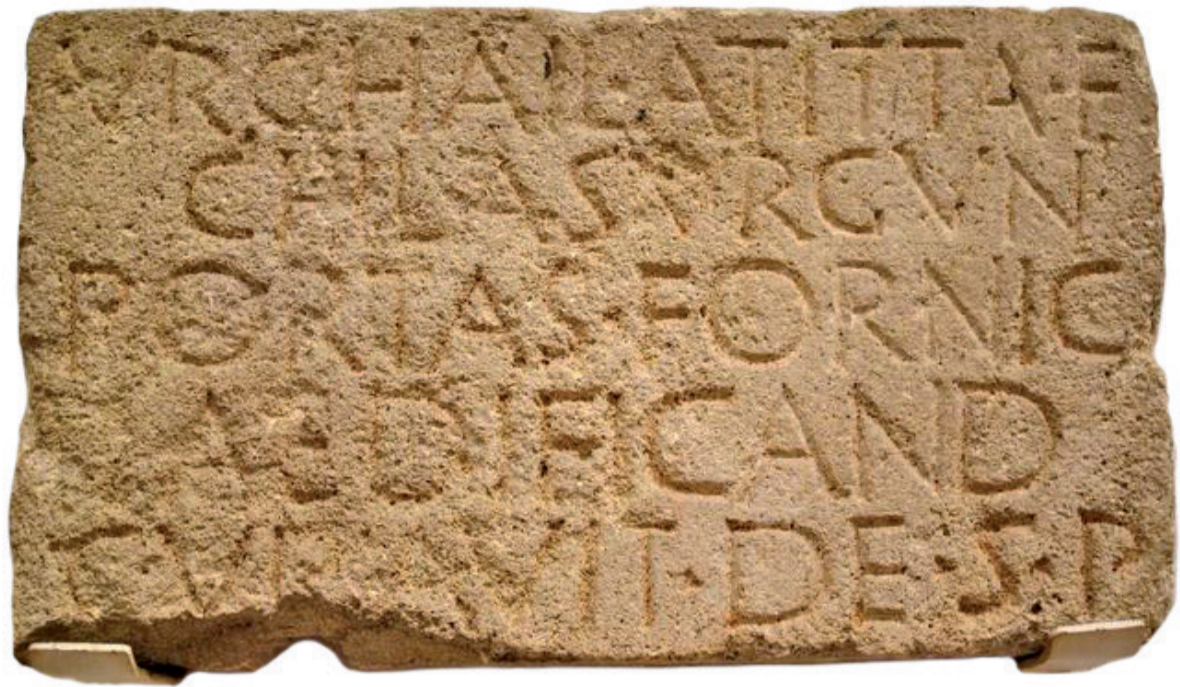
In *Hispania*, an inscription from *Pax Iulia* (Beja, Lusitania) dated to the year B.C. 2 may have included the same three elements, like AE 1989, 368 = HEp 1990, 744: *[Imp(erator) Caesar Divi f(ilius) Au]gustus pater pa[triae, / pont(ifex) max(imus), trib(unicia) p]otes(tate) XXI coloni[ae Pac(is)] Iul(iae) / [muros], turres e[t p]ortas [---]*. For inscriptions in which only two of these three elements are referred to, see Bonneville (1978, pp. 57-58). As he points out, most of these are dated to the half-century preceding the establishment of the Principate. Unfortunately, the monument from *Pax Iulia*, of which only a part is preserved, was found in 1879 and then lost. The interpretation proposed by José D'Encarnação is, thus, entirely hypothetical (D'Encarnação, 1988, n° 131).

Finally, the absence of a *cognomen* (which, as Rodríguez de Berlanga already argued, would likely place the inscription at a time before the *Lex Iulia municipalis* of B.C. 45) did not become systematic until the first half of the 1st c. A.D. and, therefore, cannot be used as a leading argument for the inscription of *Caius Coelius*. Much more significant is the mention of the paternal name *Atisius* (likely a *peregrinus*) in the filiation formula, which strongly suggests that the donor belonged to the first generation of settlers.

One of the clearest Hispanic parallels to the inscription of *Caius Coelius* was found in Alcalá del Río (Seville), the old city of *Ilipa*. In this epigraph, an individual named *Urchail*, son of *Attita*, financed the construction of certain gates and their vaults in the decade of B.C. 40 (fig. 2):

*Urchail Atitta f(ilius) / Chilasurgun / portas, fornic(es) / aedificand(a) / curavit de s(ua) p(ecunia).*





**Figure 2.** Plaque by *Urchail*, son of *Attita*, commemorating the construction of some gates and their vaults in *Ilipa* (Alcalá del Río). B.C. 50-40. Dimensions: 26,5 x 46 x 8 cm. Seville, Archaeological Museum (© Seville, Archaeological Museum). Bibl.: *CIL* II 1087 = *CILA* I 300. Cf. Díaz Ariño (2008a, p. 212).

Palaeographic similarities can also be found between the inscription of *Coelius* and some of the epigraphs concerning the walls of *Carthago Nova* (Cartagena). The city boasts a set of ten inscriptions related to the construction of the defensive enclosure, its towers, and its gates. The dating of the pieces has given rise to a long-standing debate. Juan Manuel Abascal Palazón and Sebastián F. Ramallo Asensio (1997, pp. 82-86), in their study of the epigraphy of *Carthago Nova*, linked most of these epigraphs to a single moment of building activity that they placed in the last quarter of the 1st c. B.C. But some of the protagonists of this activity certainly lived prior to that date, as, for example, did *Marcus Calpurnius Bibulus*, who should be identified with the individual who shared the consulate with Caesar in B.C. 59 and died at the beginning of B.C. 48. At present, the most widely accepted hypothesis is that they would have been dedicated between the middle of the 1st c. B.C. and the first years of the 1st c. A.D. (Díaz Ariño, 2008b). Along such lines, Díaz Ariño dates:

- A. The epigraph with the names of the magistrates in charge of the construction of the walls [---] *C(aius) Pr[---] Ilviri (?)*, / *L(ucius) Fabius [---, - Ver]gilius C(ai) f(i)lius [aediles] / [tur]ris XI, portam, mur(um) [a fundame]nteis d(e) [s(ua) p(ecunia) f(a)cienda] c(uraverunt) i(dem)q(ue) p(robaverunt)]* (fig. 3a) and the inscription *M(arcus) Cal[purnius ---] / Bibulu[s mur(um) long(um) p(edes) ---] / faciun[dum] coeravit i(dem)q(ue) p(robavit)]* (*CIL* II 3422. Cf. Díaz Ariño, 2008a, p. 117, n° C25) to B.C. 54, possibly in relation to the concession by Pompey of a privileged juridical status.
- B. The inscription of the *aedile Caius Maecius Vetus* (fig. 3b) to B.C. 45, after the passage of Caesar through Spain: [-] *Maecius C(ai) f(i)lius Vetus / aug(ur), aed(ilis) murum / p(edes) LX f(aciendum) c(uravit) i(dem)q(ue) p(robavit)*.
- C. The inscription of the *duumvir Marcus Cornelius Marcellus* (fig. 3c) to the mid-30s: *M(arcus) Cornelius M(arci) f(i)lius / Gal(eria) Marcellus aug(ur), / quinq(uennalis) murum a porta / Popilia ad turrim / proximam ped(es) CXLVI et / ultra turr(im) p(edes) XI d(ecreto) d(ecurionum) f(aciendum) c(uravit) i(dem)q(ue) p(robavit)*. Abascal (2002, pp. 30-31) has proposed that this individual may have been *duumvir* in B.C. 34.



D. The inscription of *Cnaeus Cornelius Cinna* (fig. 3d) to the last quarter of the 1st c. B.C.: *Cn(aeus) Cornelius / L(uci) f(ilius) Gal(eria) Cinna / Ilvir / murum long(um) p(edes) CII / ex d(ecreto) d(ecurionum) f(aciendum) c(uravit) i(dem)q(ue) p(ro)batit*.



**Figure 3a.** Fragment of the inscription attesting the names of the magistrates responsible for the construction of the walls of *Carthago Nova*. B.C. 54. Dimensions: 22 x 165 x 65 cm. Cartagena, Archaeological Museum (© Cartagena, Archaeological Museum) Bibl.: *CIL* II 3427. Cf. Díaz Ariño, 2008b, p. 227.



**Figure 3b.** Inscription of the aedile *Caius Maecius Vetus*. B.C. 45. Dimensions: 120 x 61 x 31 cm. Cartagena, Archaeological Museum (© Cartagena, Archaeological Museum). Bibl.: *AE* 1975, 525. Cf. Díaz Ariño, 2008a, p. 118, n° C27; Díaz Ariño, 2008b, p. 230.



**Figure 3c.** Inscription of the quinquennial augur (?) *Marcus Cornellius Marcellus*. B.C. 40-30. Dimensions: 60 x 131 x 38 cm. Cartagena, Archaeological Museum (© Cartagena, Archaeological Museum). Bibl.: *CIL* II 3426. Cf. Díaz Ariño, 2008a, p. 118, n° C28; Díaz Ariño, 2008b, pp. 230-31).





**Figure 3d.** Inscription of the duumvir *Cneus Cornelius Cinna*. Last quarter of the 1st c. B.C. Dimensions: 141 x 78 x 34 cm. Madrid, National Archaeological Museum, inv. n° 16.485 (© MAN). Bibl.: *CIL* II 3425 = *ILS* 5332 = *AE* 2008, 726 = *AE* 2016, 710.

If we look at other Western Mediterranean contexts, such as North Africa, we also find a very close parallel to *Coelius'* epigraph, not only with regard to its stylistic and palaeographic characteristics, but also the presence of the archaic use of *coeravit*. The epigraph in question is a dedication paid by the *quaestor pro praetore Decimus Laelius Balbus* in *Carpis* (El Mraissa, Tunisia), dated B.C. 44-42 (fig. 4): *D(ecimus) Laelius D(ecimi) f(ilius) / Balbus q(uaestor) pro / pr(aetore) assa, d(e)strictar(ium) / solariumque / faci-undu(m) coerav(it)*.

On the other hand, the inscriptions from *Barcino* that can confidently be dated to the Augustan era also have distinctive features of their own, which are not shared by *Coelius'* text. The inscription *IRC IV 72*, a lintel made of the local sandstone of Montjuïc, is a paradigmatic example (fig. 5): *Q(uinto) Salvio L(uci) [f(ilio)] Galeria aedili, / duo{i}vir[o] et duo{i}viro quinq/ uennal[i] [he]redes ex / testamento*. Here, the <O> and the <Q> are not completely round, but rather ovoid, while the tail of the <Q> (especially that of the *nomen* of *Quintus*) originates at the lower extremity of the body of the letter (and not at the bottom of its right belly) and is not horizontal and rectilinear, but slightly sinuous. The convergent outer strokes of the letters <A>, <V>, and <M> are also much more closed. What is more, the inscription is dedicated to an individual (*Quintus Salvius*) who was already enrolled in a tribe and held the positions of aedile, duumvir, and quinquennial duumvir, which places the inscription at a time later than *Coelius'* generation, probably at the beginning of the Augustan epoch.

Considering all that has been said so far, it is true that *Coelius'* inscription does not, by itself, constitute an indisputable document for dating the foundation of *Barcino* to either the Caesarean or the Augustan epoch. The epigraph contains elements that could either be dated to the time of the dictatorship of Caesar or to the very beginning of the Principate. However, there is a whole series of further data that, taken as a whole, allows us to better situate the inscription in its historical context and thus shed more light on the problem.



**Figure 4.** Plate commemorating the construction by *Decimus Laelius Balbus* of two thermal spaces in *Carpis* (El Mraissa, Tunisia). B.C. 44-42. Tunis, Bardo National Museum (© Tunis, Bardo National Museum). Bibl.: *AE* 1908, 21; *CIL* VIII 24106; *ILS* 9367; *ILLRP* 1275; *ILP-Bardo* 520; *ILTun* 852. Cf. Jouffroy (1986, pp. XXX) and Saastamoinen (2010, p. 406, n° 3).



**Figure 5.** Monument dedicated to the aedile, duumvir and quinquennial duumvir *Quintus Salvius*. Augustan epoch. Barcelona, Archaeology Museum of Catalonia, inv. n° 19079 (© MAC). Bibl.: *CIL* II 4530 = *IRC* IV 72; *IRB* 65.

### 3. THE TITLE OF BARCINO AND ITS TRIBE

First of all, additional information can be extracted from the official title of *Barcino*, that is *colonia Iulia Augusta Faventia Paterna Barcinonensium*, whose complete nomenclature appears in the 2nd c. A.D. inscription *IRC* IV 76 (fig. 6): *Col(oniae) Iul(iae) Aug(ustae) Fav(entiae) Pat(ernae) / Barcin(onensium) / IIIIIviri Augustal(es)*.

Isabel Rodà herself recognized 45 years ago that the *cognomina* of the city of *Barcino* (*Faventia* and *Paterna*) correspond to those granted to other peninsular Caesarean foundations, such as *Ulia Fidentia*, *Vesci Faventia*, *Osset Iulia Constantia*, *Ituci Virtus Iulia*, *Ucubi Claritas Iulia*, *Seria Fama Iulia*, *Nertobriga Concordia Iulia*, *Lacimurga Constantia Iulia*, or *Olissipo Felicitas Iulia*, all cities with Caesarean *cognomina* that share an abstract term followed by the gentilice *Iulius* (Rodà, 1976, pp. 231-32). In our case, *Faventia* might refer to the wish for a good omen (Canto, 1990, p. 291, n. 18).

The *cognomen Paterna* is a detail of crucial importance: the city of *Barcino* shares this epithet with two Caesarean colonies – *Arelate* (*colonia Iulia Paterna Arelate*) and *Narbo* (*colonia Iulia Paterna Narbo Martius*) – that were founded in *Gallia Narbonensis* by Tiberius Nero in B.C. 46 under the orders of Caesar (Vittinghoff, 1952, p. 66). It is symptomatic





**Figure 6.** Plaque dedicated by the college of Augustan seviro to the colony of *Barcino*, in which the complete official title of the city appears. A.D. 110-130. Dimensions 328 x 163 cm. Barcelona, History Museum, inv. n° 9085 (© MUHBA). Bibl.: IRC IV 76 = IRC V, p. 113 = IRB p. 216 = AE 1972, 294.

that the city of *Narbo*, in particular, seems to have held a close relationship with *Barcino*. Fabre, Mayer, and Rodà all emphasize that the gentilices of the first settlers of *Barcino* (*Ratumedius*, *Herennuleius*, or *Lucceius*) may have come either from central Italy or, more likely, from the city of *Narbo*. The gentilice *Coelius* itself is also widely documented in the onomastics of the *Narbonensis* (IRC IV 57, p. 131).

As for the explanation of the meaning of the *cognomen Paterna*, several hypotheses have been proposed. Sebastián Mariner has argued that this appellation was related to the founding action of Augustus, who granted this nomenclature because the city helped his father during the war against Pompey, which would mean that there was a pre-Caesarean settlement (Mariner, 1964, p. 238). Other authors, especially for the cases of *Arelate* and *Narbo*, have argued that Augustus would have given them the epithet of *Paterna* to distinguish those colonies that were founded by his father, Caesar, from those he had founded himself (Vittinghoff, 1952, p. 66, n. 2). José Carlos Saquete (1997, p. 29), who also suggests that *Barcino* may have been founded prior to B.C. 27, links the *cognomen* of *Paterna* to Caesar's paternity in relation to Augustus and to the inhabitants of these cities, who would be Caesarean veterans. Alicia Canto has advanced another hypothesis, based on a text by Siculus Flaccus in which the author writes about the mixed land assignments (*miscellum*) that affected veterans who had been deducted at the time of Caesar, but who were once again recruited under Augustus (Sic. Fl. *Agrim* 44). These are called by Adolf August Rudorff «*veterani paterni*» and, according to Canto, this phenomenon could explain the *cognomen* assigned to the city (Canto, 2007). In this connection we can note Dio Cassius' statement that, at the end of the Cantabrian wars, Agrippa had to resort to soldiers «already old and exhausted by the continuous wars» (Dio Cass. 54. 11.3). According to Canto (2007), these might have been the veterans who had already fought under Caesar.

Most of the foundations of the Triumvirate, Caesar, and Octavian prior to B.C. 27 received the *cognomen Iulia* in their official denomination after obtaining a privileged juridical status. In *Hispania* we have some paradigmatic examples: *Pax Iulia* (Beja), *colonia Iulia Nova Carthago* (Cartagena), *Ebora Liberalitas Iulia* (Évora), *colonia Iulia Urbs Triumphalis Tarraco* (Tarragona), or even the controversial *colonia Iulia Gemella Acci* (Guadix), a Caesarean foundation in the opinion of some while other hold that it dates to the Octavian period (before B.C. 27) (Pastor, 2001, pp. 426-27; González Román, 2011, pp. 307-18).

One final element can be added to what has been said thus far about the city's official title. In *Hispania* there were only three cities which had, at one and the same time, the two official *cognomina* of *Iulia* and *Augusta*: *Ilici*, *Gades*, and *Barcino* (Alföldy, 2003, pp. 42-43). The first two obtained, respectively, the legal status of *colonia* and *municipium* in Caesar's time and, a few years later, underwent a second foundation which incorporated the *cognomen* of *Augusta* (as for the case of *Ilici* see Abascal, 2004, p. 80; Amela, 2013; a triumviral foundation of *Ilici* has been also proposed by Ventura *et al.*, 2018, pp. 39-40; as for *Gades* see Alföldy, 2003, p. 42). The succession of nomenclatures of these cities is endorsed by the text of Cassius Dio, which indicates how Augustus, during his third trip to *Hispania*, «colonized numerous cities in Gaul and in Spain (...) besides allowing them, by a decree, to call their city Augusta (...). [M]y purpose is to show that the senate even assigned names to cities as a mark of honour and that the inhabitants did not, as is usually done now, make out for themselves in each instance lists of names according to their own pleasure» (Dio Cass. 54.23.7-8).

The case of Mérida is somewhat different. For Mérida, the official title of *Augusta* appears by itself in the city's official documents (i.e., in its coinage), while in other, unofficial, records (pipes, private dedications, ceramics, etc.) the *cognomen* of *Iulia* is also used alongside. Canto makes the quite compelling argument that *Emerita* might be a Caesarean foundation, although this hypothesis has been widely rejected with strong counterarguments (Saquete, 1997, pp. 29-36). In *Barcino*, the opposite is the case: the official title of the city always includes the *cognomen Iulia*, but sometimes omits *Augusta*, as in the public inscription dedicated to Caracalla that has been discussed above (see *supra* IRC IV 23). It is unlikely that the absence of the epithet *Augustus* can be explained by reference to the unfinished status of the inscription, as suggested in IRC IV 27 (see *supra* fig. 2). In conclusion, on the basis of its nomenclature we should expect that *Barcino* would have been a Caesarean foundation, as was the case with *Ilici* and *Gades*, and, above all, *Arelate* and *Narbo*.

Before ending this section, it is necessary to say something about the tribes in which the inhabitants of the city were enrolled. It should be noted that the factors that led a magistrate to enrol the inhabitants of a colony in one or another tribe are neither clear nor follow an established pattern, especially outside Italy (Castillo, 1988; Stylow, 1995; Saquete, 1997, pp. 30-31). That said, Carmen Castillo (1988, p. 236) has stressed that Caesar seems to have ascribed his *coloniae* to the tribe *Sergia* and his *municipia* to the tribe *Galeria*. Augustus, on the other hand, seems to have tended to grant diverse tribes to his *coloniae* and the *Galeria* to his *municipia*. However, according to Castillo (1988, p. 235) there was a group of colonies that were most likely founded by Octavian prior to B.C. 27, such as *Tarraco*, *Virtus Iulia*, *Claritas Iulia*, and our own place of interest, *Barcino*, which was registered under the tribe *Galeria*. In *Barcino*, citizens were for the most part registered in this tribe (Mayer, 2005, p. 280), although as many as six other tribes have also been documented in the city (Wiegels, 1985, pp. 168-178; Fasolini, 2012, pp. 168-178). The one with the second largest number of representatives is the *Aniensis*, which represents a majority only in *Caesaraugusta*. According to Rainer Wiegels (1985, p. 97), this might be an indication that the two cities maintained close relationships which resulted in a degree of migratory mobility. More recently, Donato Fasolini has pointed out that members of the *Aniensis* tribe also form a majority in *Forum Iulii (Gallia Narbonensis)*, and that the families of individuals documented in *Barcino* could have been from any of these cities (Fasolini, 2012, pp. 169-170).



Although, again, not conclusive, the tribe argument does at least suggest, once again, that the foundation of *Barcino* should be framed before the Principate, as pointed out by Castillo and Wiegels. Wiegels in particular (1985, p. 98, n. 14) has highlighted the high likelihood («*durchaus möglich*») that the community of *Barcino* had obtained, before B.C. 27, a privileged legal status, although not as a colony of Roman citizens.

#### 4. THE CITY WALLS

The archaeological analysis of the city walls could help to solve the problem of the foundation of *Barcino* and, therefore, of the chronology of *Coelius'* inscription.

The analyses that took place along the walls of *Barcino* in the mid-20th century identified the existence of two historically sequential layers of defensive structures (Durán and Sanpere, 1945; Durán and Sanpere, 1959; Serra, 1959). That there were two different phases involved in the construction of the wall is a fact that has been known since the 19th century (see the passage of the *Diario de Barcelona* of 22 August 1871, transcribed by Granados, 1991, p. 171). The most recent investigations confirmed that the outer walls that are currently visible were erected at the end of the 3rd c. A.D. (Ravotto, 2017, pp. 418-44; Ravotto and Rodà, 2017, pp. 51-52, with bibliography). However, the study of the inner wall is considerably more difficult.

Josep Calassanç Serra i Ràfols classified the ancient wall as «*de técnica ibérica*» and «*fechable hacia el tiempo de Augusto, poco más o menos hacia el cambio de era*» (Serra, 1959, pp. 136-37, n. 9). However, the evidence to support these claims was very limited. Granados subsequently studied the composition of the walls of Barcelona and determined that the exterior façade of the late-Imperial epoch made use of the technique of filling *opus quadratum* with *caementicium*. The ancient wall, by contrast, presented a parament of *opus vittatum* or a slightly irregular *opus certum* formed by small sandstone blocks of Montjuïc stone arranged in rows, internally filled by *opus caementicium*, and without any reused material throughout (Granados, 1984a, pp. 284-85; Granados, 1996-97, 1619, cf. also Ravotto, 2017, p. 213). Unfortunately, Granados was not able to identify any stratigraphic data that allowed him to date the foundation of the first walls. The only possible source of dating is offered by a study of the paraments. The constructive technique of the *opus certum* was «*propio de las ciudades fundadas o reconstruidas en época augustea en Italia y Galia Narbonense, completándose en estructuras principales con el opus quadratum*» (Granados, 1984a, p. 286). The initial transition from *opus incertum* to *opus certum* can be traced in the area of Provence around the 20s B.C., in the fortification of *Navale Augusti* (Granados, 1984a, pp. 286-87). Its use only seems to have become widespread at the beginning of the Empire: «*así lo hallamos en Arezzo, Arcoli, Termas de Fiesole, Teatros de Sepino, Assisi, Gubbio o en las construcciones de Bevagna, Trieste y Verona*» (Granados, 1984a, p. 287). According to Granados, the construction of the walls of *Barcino* occurred at a time when the *opus incertum* was being replaced by the *certum*, which should be dated around the change of era.

Until very recently, Granados' hypothesis has remained unquestioned, with the scholarship on the topic assuming that the foundation of the walls took place in the Augustan epoch (Puig and Rodà, 2007, pp. 604-10; Ravotto, 2009-11; Ravotto and Rodà, 2017, pp. 50-51). However, Ravotto's 2017 PhD dissertation, discussed above, offers a new and compelling analysis of the construction techniques of the defensive wall. Ravotto argues that the parament rather makes use of the technique of *opus vittatum*, combined,

in some sectors, with *opus quadratum* (Ravotto, 2017, pp. 211 and 450), and that some of the gates, such as those at the north-west and south-east, might be contemporaneous with the building of the defensive enclosure (Ravotto, 2017, pp. 158 and 309). He finds the best parallels in the late-Republican and Augustan walls and gates of *Brixia*, *Fanum Fortunae* (especially its «Gate of Augustus»), *Hispellum* (especially the «Venerere» and «Consolare» Gates), *Novum Comum*, *Pola*, and the «Pretoria» and «Decumana» Doors of *Augusta Praetoria*. The walls of *Barcino* should thus be framed in the stylistic current that matured in the late-Republican epoch and lasted through to the beginning of the early-Imperial period (see the specific bibliography collected in Ravotto, 2017, pp. 209-10).

As the stylistic argument for stressing an Augustan chronology has not been validated by clear stratigraphic information, Ravotto tries to confirm his hypothesis by basing it instead on the presence of certain marks on the walls, in a sector of the north-western gate (fig. 7). These four vertical lines, which the author identifies with the numeral *IIII*, were accompanied by «un signe indesxifrabable» which, «ni tan sol a nivell d'hipòtesis», could belong to a specific kind of *vexillum* (Ravotto, 2017, pp. 131 and 314). According to Ravotto (2017, pp. 310-14), these signs are typical of the *legio IIII Macedonica* (cf. Gómez-Pantoja, 2000; Morillo Cerdán, 2000). If this were to be shown to be correct, then we could suppose that this legion participated in the construction of the city walls after the end of the Cantabrian wars, and the chronology of the foundation would, thus, necessarily be Augustan. But the argument for the identification of these marks with the *legio IIII* is very weak (cf. Navarro Caballero *et al.*, 2014), to the extent that Ravotto himself is forced to recognize that «a dia d'avui, els elements de datació directa proporcionats per les excavacions arqueològiques no són suficients per assegurar una cronologia en funció del material mòbil recuperat en la estratigrafia» (Ravotto, 2017, p. 308). This being the case, we must instead direct our investigation in another direction.



Figure 7. Marks at the north-western gate of *Barcino* interpreted by A. Ravotto and I. Rodà as the numeral *IIII* of the *Legio IV Macedonica* (© Federico Bencini).

## 5. THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT: THE TEMPLE AND THE FORUM

Our knowledge of the layout of the city of *Barcino* has been improved by several authors who have dedicated their efforts to the investigation of its urban planning. Thanks to their work, the location of the forum is now roughly known, although its orientation is still speculative (Orengo and Cortés 2009-11, pp. 189-92; Beltrán, 2015b; Beltrán, 2015a). In addition, a part of the elevation of the temple that presided over the public square, the so-called «Temple of Augustus» of carrer Paradís, is well preserved. Unfortunately,



nothing is known of its phases beyond the fact that the building, due to its architectural characteristics, might have been erected at the time of the foundation of the city (Orengo and Cortés, 2009-11, p. 187).

In María Ángeles Gutiérrez Behemerid's study of the architectural decoration of the temple, the author highlights the large number of late-Republican elements that characterized the temple: the type of peripteral plan that appears in Rome at the beginning of the 1st c. B.C.; the use in the mouldings of the podium of the *kyma reversa*; the absence of the plinth in the bases; the imoscopus of the column and the base carved in the same block; the Attic bases with the two tori of almost identical height and diameter, and a narrow and deep intermediate scotia (fig. 8); the capitals belonging to the so-called «*style of the second triumvirate*», with stems topped by rosettes, which developed between B.C. 45 and 29 (fig. 9a-b); the cornice profile, very simple, with a bracket and without denticles; etc. (Gutiérrez Behemerid, 1991, pp. 97-99). Despite this, Gutiérrez Behemerid (1991, p. 102), aware that «*esta cronología pudiera, en alguna manera, entrar en contradicción con las fechas que se barajan sobre la fundación de Barcino*», concludes that the construction of the temple had to have been carried out during the last quarter of the 1st c. B.C., with the presence of all these archaisms being due to a provincial delay or a provincial style.



**Figure 8.** Carrer Paradís, Barcelona. Imoscopus and base of one of the columns of the “Temple of Augustus” (© Valentino Gasparini).





**Figure 9.** Carrer Paradís, Barcelona. Columns of the “Temple of Augustus”: a) The capital of the corner column seen from south-east; b) Detail of the capital incorporated into the adjacent building structures (© Roberto Silvestrini García).

Ana Garrido Elena, in her recent PhD dissertation supervised by Ricardo Mar and Isabel Rodà, also provides a valuable architectural and stylistic analysis of the temple, typologically and stylistically framing the construction of the building within the third quarter of the 1st c. B.C. Despite this, she concludes (in the same way as Gutiérrez Behemerid does) that «*la fecha de la fundación de la colonia, en torno al 10 a.C., nos lleva necesariamente a situar la construcción del templo en el último decenio de este siglo*» (Garrido, 2011, pp. 340-41; on the existence of archaising workshops in the area of Catalonia, see Domingo *et al.*, 2011).

In addition to taking into account all the architectural elements that suggest a dating in the third quarter of the 1st c. B.C., it is important to draw attention to another feature that seems to have gone unnoticed by even the most acute scholars. The vestiges of the forum of *Barcino* are so poor that, in reality, the structure of the square has been reconstructed from the position of the temple, the network of the streets and the parallelism with other forums. This has led to the forum being reconstructed



as a rectangular square, slightly shifted to the north with respect to the urban fabric, and presided over by the temple on its eastern side (Mar *et al.*, 2012, pp. 85-94). On the opposite side of the square, an area of *tabernae* and, supposedly, a *curia* were discovered in 2003. The basilica should, therefore, be located on one of the lateral sides of the square. A decade later, in 2013, a number of structures, identified with what could be a small part of the forum curb in its northern area, behind the temple, were discovered along carrer de la Freneria (Beltrán, 2015b, pp. 129-31). The vestiges found so far make it possible to establish, in a hypothetical manner at least, the limits of the forum. However, a careful examination of the published plans of *Barcino* shows that the temple is slightly rotated with respect to the limits of the portico (fig. 10). In our opinion, this anomaly is due to the fact that there were at least two building phases in the process of the organization of the urban fabric of the city. We suggest, with the caution that is necessary due to the poverty of the remains so far brought to light, that both the walls and the temple that has widely (and erroneously) been called «of Augustus» were built in a first phase, which can be dated to the third quarter of the 1st c. B.C. This was then followed by a second phase in which the urban plot of the city was defined and monumentalized. This process, we suggest, corresponds to the re-foundation of the colony by Augustus.

## 6. CONCLUSIONS

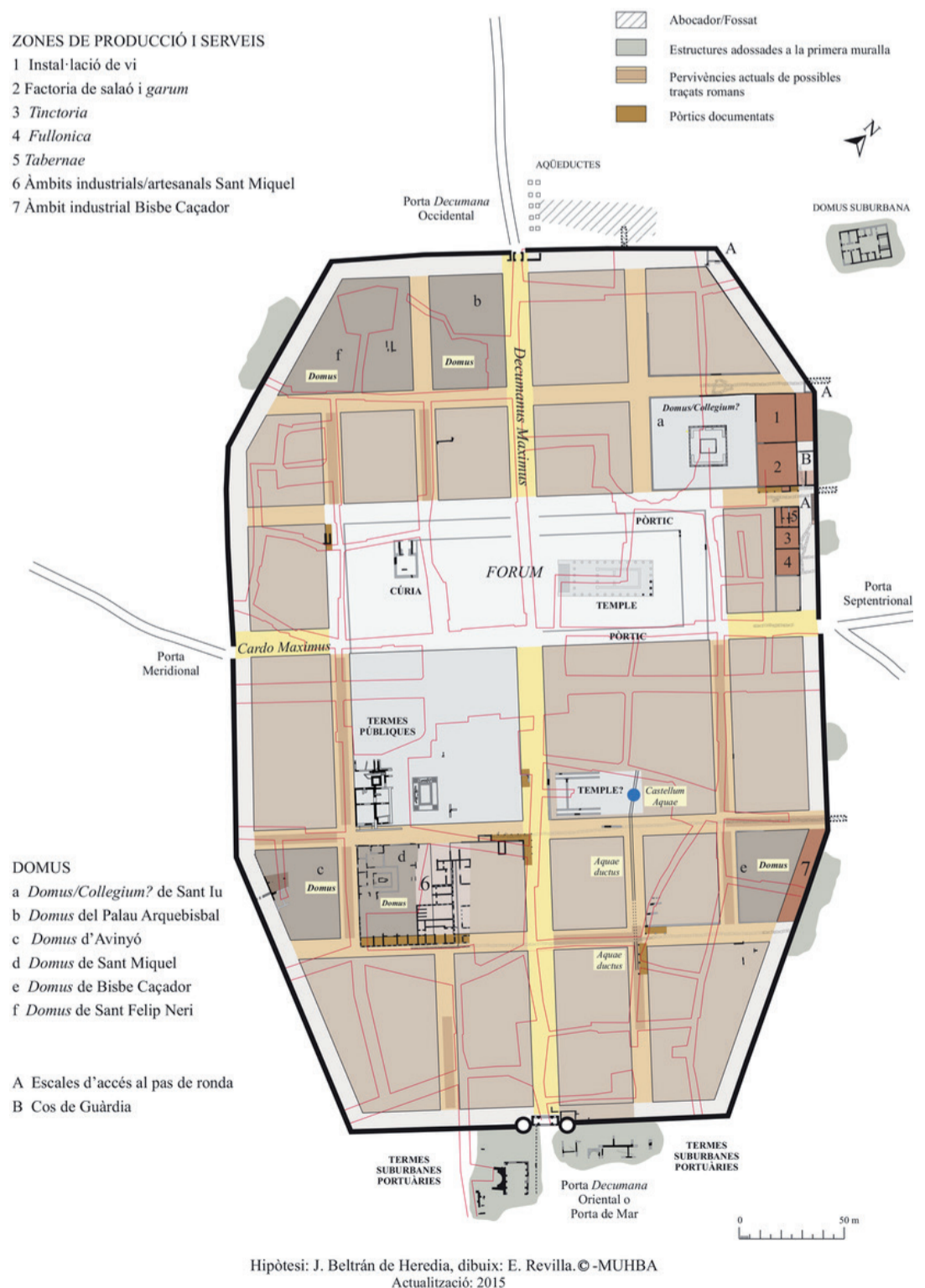
In general, the historiography of the last decades has dated the foundation of *Barcino* around B.C. 10, setting the event within the framework of the reorganization of the northern peninsula after the Cantabrian wars. As a result of this process, the construction of the coastal variant of the *via Augusta* would have taken place, which begins to be documented in the *miliaria* from B.C. 8, as would the construction of the Pont de Martorell and the arch of Castellbisbal. These works would have involved soldiers of the legions IIII, VI, and X (Gurt and Rodà, 2005) who, rewarded with a *deductio*, would have received plots of land on the coastal plain located between the rivers Besòs and Llobregat, and would have contributed to the first building phases of the city (Rodà, 2001, pp. 22 and 33). This same period would have also seen the erection of the walls by *Caius Coelius*, as well as the activity of one of the first quinquennial duumvirs of *Barcino* (*Quintus Salvius*) (see *supra* CIL II 4530 = IRC IV 72) and the construction of the exedra on the Montjuïc in which the names of three or four other magistrates appear (AE 1959, 113 = IRC IV 62 = IRC V, p. 113 = IRB 71: L(*ucius*) Licinius // A // C(*aius*) Iulius A // S(*extus*) Sedillus).

It is true that there seems to be no documented trace of ceramics in the current city of Barcelona that can be dated prior to B.C. 10 (Berni and Carreras, 2001). This factor may support its Augustan chronology. The same can be said for the absence of *miliaria* before B.C. 8. However, these are only arguments *ex silentio*. Throughout this work, several clues have been identified which, taken together, cohere strongly enough to provide good grounds for rescuing an old hypothesis: the claim that the foundation of *Barcino* took place during the Caesarean epoch (plausibly B.C. 45-44), and not under Augustus. The markedly Republican palaeographic and stylistic characteristics of the inscription of *Caius Coelius*, the official title of the city, the building techniques of its walls, the architectural features of the so-called «Temple of Augustus», and the orientation of the temple with respect to the urban fabric all support this thesis.

How would this hypothesis fit into the historical evolution of the north-eastern peninsular region? From at least B.C. 118-117, the Layetan territory began to be organized thanks to the establishment of a network of communication routes that not only connected Gaul with *Tarraco* and *Valentia* through the *via Heraclea* in its passage through the Catalan pre-coastal depression, but also articulated the different late-Republican *oppida* of the territory of the Maresme (Mayer and Rodà, 1986; Olesti, 2008, pp. 237-58; Revilla and Santacana, 2015, p. 85).

A little later, at the beginning of the 1st c. B.C., two new cities were founded on the coast north of the river Besòs, *Iluro* (Mataró) and *Baetulo* (Badalona), as well as two other settlements in the inland area, *Auso* (Vic) and *Gerunda* (Girona), which began to restructure the territory from an economic and administrative perspective (as for *Iluro* see Revilla and Cela, 2006, p. 89; for *Baetulo* see Guitart and Padrós, 1990, p. 165; see also Palet, 1997, p. 165; Guitart, 2006; Revilla and Santacana, 2015, p. 86; Revilla 2020). A series of road axes were thus established linking the aforementioned coastal cities with the Roman foundations of the interior, among which the nuclei of *Aqua Calidae*

**Figura 10.** Map of *Barcino* with the so-called “Temple of Augustus” of carrer Paradís in the center of the forum, slightly rotated with respect to the limits of the portico (after Beltrán, 2015a, p. 208, fig. 1).





(Caldes de Montbui) and *Auso* (Vic) stand out (Flórez and Rodà, 2014; Revilla and Santacana, 2015, p. 86).

For its part, the area of the Baix Llobregat and the Pla de Barcelona was involved in a process of change from the beginning of the 1st c. B.C. (more pronounced in the north than in the south), that led to significant changes in the local production model, which was oriented from this time towards the production and marketing of wine (see Mar *et al.*, 2012, pp. 71-72; Solias, 1989, pp. 88-91 and 101-02; cf. Berni and Carreras, 2001, p. 104). The business would have been managed by individuals of Italian origin or by local aristocrats, as is evidenced by the epigraphic marks documented by the amphorae of the area of the Maresme (Miró, 1988, pp. 226-32; Pena, 1999; Revilla, 2004, pp. 178-90; Mar *et al.*, 2012, p. 72). If there was a pre-Roman settlement on the Montjuïc, from which the Iberian coinage of the end of the 3rd c. B.C. was perhaps issued with the toponym of *Baikenno* (Balil, 1964, pp. 37-41; Untermann, 1975, A.13; Mayer, 1991, pp. 298-99) and of which the most significant element that has been located so far is a field of silos in the neighborhood of Magòria (Granados, 1984b; Mayer and Rodà, 1991, pp. 346-47), then this might have formed the basis for the establishment of a military *deductio* in the area. When did this occur? In our opinion, it is possible that this took place over not one but two successive foundations (or, at least, urban phases): the first in the time of Caesar and the second in the time of Augustus.

As Ricardo Mar, Ana Garrido, and José A. Beltrán-Caballero have recently pointed out in a study of the historical development of *Barcino* and its territory, the Augustan foundation of the city took place at a time when the *Tarraconensis* had already been administratively reorganized. It would, therefore, be a creation that was motivated exclusively by economic concerns related to the control of the production of Layetan wine and its export to the markets of Rome (Mar *et al.*, 2012, p. 73; Miró Canals, 2020). However, if we disassociate the creation of *Barcino* from Augustus' territorial reorganization policy and frame it instead within the historical process that occurred after the battles of *Ilerda* (B.C. 49) and *Munda* (B.C. 45), the resulting conclusions are even stronger. As a result of his victory, and in order both to consolidate his power in the Iberian Peninsula and deal with the need to settle veterans, Caesar established a colony annexed to the Greek city of *Emporiae*, most likely founded the *municipium* of *Dertosa* (Pena, 1993, p. 590; *contra* Faria, 1992, p. 35; Abascal, 2006, p. 76; Amela, 2017, pp. 82-83), granted the legal status of colony to *Tarraco*, and, as we have suggested, created a new urban settlement in the area of the Pla de Barcelona that allowed the effective control of the entire Layetan area located to the south of the river Besòs. However, whether the project was carried out before the death of the dictator, or alternatively in the years between his death and the establishment of the Principate (as happened at *Tarraco*), is something that we cannot determine.

A few years later, after Augustus' third visit to *Hispania*, the colony would have received a second *deductio*, as happened in the other two privileged Hispanic cities that held the official epithet of *Iulia* and *Augusta* (*Ilici* and *Gades*). This *deductio* would have concluded the distribution of land in the area of the Pla de Barcelona among licensed veterans, leading to the *centuriatio* identified by some scholars (Palet, 1997, pp. 109-13; Palet *et al.*, 2010, pp. 120-25). As a result, the city launched itself on a new phase of urban development that resulted in the conclusion of the works in the forum (establishing a different orientation to that started by the first settlers), and in the erection of the rest of the public and private buildings that would ultimately give shape to the urban plot of the early Imperial *Barcino*.

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### Authors' contributions

Both authors have conceived and designed the research, collected the data, performed the analysis and wrote the paper.