

CRISTINA CORSI & FRANK VERMEULEN (eds.)

AMMAIA I: THE SURVEY

A Romano-Lusitanian Townscape Revealed



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I.3 THE TOWN OF AMMAIA IN ANCIENT SOURCES

V. G. Mantas

Introduction

As with most Roman towns located within the territory of present day Portugal, there are only a few ancient literary sources available from which to derive knowledge about the history of the *municipium* of *Ammaia*. This unfortunate situation makes it necessary to resort, systematically, to archaeological and epigraphic testimony which, however, does not always prove to be sufficiently clear, even when the data provided are cross-referenced or compared with the evidence produced by archaeological excavations. The ruins of *Ammaia* were neglected until almost the end of the last century (Oliveira, Fernandes and Caeiro 1996: 15-22; Mantas 2000: 391-394), a fact which explains the loss of much valuable information, which was destroyed or dispersed without appropriate registration. A good example of this loss of important documentation is the epigraph of *duumvir* M. Iunius Gallus, which we came to know about through an English officer serving during the Peninsular War, but which was not followed up upon or referred to again and has remained missing ever since (Stylow 2009: 35-55).

Until 1935, the very identification of the *Ammaia* ruins was hindered by the lack of sources, a problem that was only solved when Leite de Vasconcelos recorded the honorific inscription with which the inhabitants of *Civitas Ammaiensis* engraved the annual vote in honour of the Emperor Claudius. This inscription was found in S. Salvador de Aramenha (Vasconcelos 1935: 5-9), thus confirming an alternative location for *Ammaia* to the one previously proposed by Hübner, that of present day Portalegre (Hübner 1869: 20-21). Indeed, as described in chapter I.2, the scholarly tradition had always identified the ruins of S. Salvador de Aramenha as being those of *Medobriga*.

Other inscriptions recorded and published in the nineteenth century, namely by the *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, also went missing but have been recovered in recent years, partly due to the restoration works carried out on the Quinta de Deão manor house for its later use as the small monographic museum of the *Ammaia* archaeological site. In some cases, it was possible to correct former readings, despite the fact that several epigraphs had been damaged through the reuse of their base, as happened with the marble plaque of the provincial Flamen G. Iulius Vegetus (*CIL* II 160 = IRCP 617). Although heavily worn on the right side of the area of

inscription (Fig. 6), it still allows the name of his wife, Propinia Severa, to be clearly identified (Mantas 2004: 100-104). In spite of the prolonged dilapidation of the ruins – which caused artefacts such as the epigraph in honour of Lucius Verus to be spread significant distances from their places of origin, including pieces of considerable size, as happened with the famous Arch of Aramenha (see *supra* chapter I.2 and Mantas 2010b: 321-336) – new epigraphical remains are expected to emerge that are sure to contribute to our knowledge of the town. Even if most of the registered epigraphs are of more interest to the field of social rather than administrative history, some of them, although irritatingly ambiguous, are of great benefit to this latter field too, as we shall see.



Fig. 6 Marble plaque dedicated to the *flamen* G. Iulius Vegetus (*Ammaia* Museum).

This preliminary introduction is justified for the reasons initially stated: our knowledge of *Ammaia*'s past is largely based on archaeological and epigraphical data due to the scarcity of other written sources, which amount to nothing more than clues from which little can be derived¹. Some questions posed by the interpretation of these written sources can be answered or clarified by contrasting them with the archaeological evidence. In the same way, some literary references that do not allude directly to *Ammaia* should be taken into account, since they focus on aspects that are related to the town's history from a non-isolationist perspective.

Latin historiography on *Ammaia*

Let us start by reviewing some of these references in Latin historiography. The first refers to the relationship between *Herminius Mons*, usually identified as roughly corresponding to the Serra da Estrela, and the campaign against the Lusitanians conducted in 48 BC by Q. Cassius Longinus, which led to the destruction of *Medobriga*, a town that humanist historians have placed at S. Salvador de Aramenha through an obscure line of toponymic reasoning that associates Aramenha with *Herminius* through the intermediate name *Herminia*. The reference in *De Bello Alexandrino*, possibly written by Aulus Hirtius, is laconic: "Thus, by assembling the whole army at one place and by promising one hundred sesterces to the soldiers, he shortly after took the fortified town of *Medobriga* and *Herminius Mons*, where he was acclaimed Emperor" (Hirtius, *Bell. Alex.*, 48, 2). From this, we can take the Serra de S. Mamede to be *Herminius Minor*, which immediately contradicts the absence of this orographic toponym in Pliny the Elder, who merely referred to the hilly region of *Ammaia* as *Ammaeensibus iugis* (Pliny, *N.H.*, XXXVI, 24).

This fanciful connotation of Aramenha with *Herminius Mons*, without any support in classical sources, was widely accepted by researchers (Guerra 1996: 7-33) and can still occasionally be found in less informed publications. The influence of scholarly authority is also reflected in local legends, even of relatively recent creation, as in that of the Castelo de Marvão (Marques 1997: 159-168). Here, in line with the usual pattern of these narratives, a villain by the name of Cassius Longinus confronts a maiden appropriately named Amaia. The source of the toponym Monte Hermínio, designating a property in the vicinity of the ruins of *Ammaia*

and close to the confluence of two rivers, the Ribeira de Porto de Espada and the Sever, is probably the same, although the property appeared in the 1512 Manueline Charter of Marvão as Monte Arminho (Coelho 1988: 55-56, 99). In any case, there is nowadays no evidence that could possibly justify, or even allow for, the identification of the ruins of S. Salvador de Aramenha as being the *Medobriga* of ancient sources. Without wishing to interfere in ongoing language disputes, we do not exclude a relationship between Aramenha and Aramanha (*Ara Magna*), a toponym which can sometimes be found in areas where there was a heavy Roman presence, as for example on the outskirts of Santarém. The same could apply to S. Salvador de Aramenha, located at the northern corner of the urban ruins and eventually related to some large funerary monument of a type that we know to have existed in *Ammaia* (Mantas 2000: 408; Corsi and Vermeulen 2008: 167, 189-192). This hypothesis is reinforced by the fact that a necropolis was identified in the area in question.

Pliny the Elder's reference is laconic and indirect as it does not allude to the town but to the rock crystal existing in the elevated parts of the region and generally referred to as *Ammaeensibus iugis*.² Despite the difficulties in situating the mines that supplied this important economic resource, which in Antiquity was regarded as a kind of perennial ice and very much appreciated for the making of jewellery, their location was confirmed, centuries later, through an Islamic source, incidentally no less imprecise than the description by Pliny: "*Cornelius Bocchus et in Lusitania perquam mirandi ponderis in Ammaeensibus iugis, depressis ad libramentum aquae puteis*" (Pliny, *N.H.*, XXXVII, 127).

As a matter of fact, al-Himyari indicates the source of rock crystal as being some 40 miles north of Badajoz (Torres Balbás 1982: 770), which, although somewhat vague, still points to the region concerned, since the geodesic distance between Badajoz and S. Salvador de Aramenha is about 65km, not counting the Islamic villages of some importance that al-Himyari could have indicated as reference points in the intervening area (Sidarus 1991: 14-16). Given that al-Himyari also indicates a distance of 40 miles between Mértola and Beja, we can situate the rock crystal exploration in the Serra de S. Mamede area, without forgetting that the metrology of Islamic geographers does not always use the exact same measure for a mile. In any case, these are certainly the same deposits indicated by Pliny, an author we would like to return to, this time with regard to an unusual gemstone and, once again, related to a text by Cornelius Bocchus, a writer and eminent figure among the Lusitanian notables of the Julio-Claudian era: "*Bocchus auctor est et in Hispania repertas quo in*

1 We soon intend to publish the *corpus* of Roman inscriptions of the Municipality of Marvão, on which we have been working for some years by gathering all the presently known monuments, as well as completing and reviewing the data published by José d'Encarnação in his important work (IRCP 1984: 667-694, 777, 849).

2 For the identification of possible quarry areas, see chapter I.4 in this volume.

loco crystallum dixit ad libramentum puteis defossis erui, chrysolithon XII pondo a se visam” (Pliny, *N.H.*, XXXVII, 24).

The explicit statement that Bocchus actually saw the referred gemstone makes us question the origins of one of the more prominent figures of the early period of the urbanization of *Ammaia*, a certain Publius Cornelius Macer, who was granted Roman citizenship by Emperor Claudius and consequently registered with the Quirina tribe (IRCP 1984: 679-681; Encarnação 1986: 107; Mantas 2000: 410-411). This suggests strong patronage of Macer who we believe to have been a native elevated to the status of Roman citizen for reasons that naturally escape us, but which we can easily relate to a phase in the development of the town prior to it being granted Latin right – a subject we will return to later on (Fig. 7). We know today that several Cornelii Bocchi were active in the Julio-Claudian period, especially in *Salacia* (Alcácer do Sal) and Tróia, but also in other places where they left more or less obvious traces of their influence, such as *Olisipo* (Lisbon), *Scallabis* (Santarém), the Alentejo, near Arraiolos, and perhaps *Emerita* (Mérida) (Encarnação 2011: 189-201). Thus, it seems very likely that the promotion of Macer can be explained in light of the interests pursued by the Cornelii in the Alto Alentejo, which includes the writer referred to by Pliny. Given the fact that there are no known representatives of the *gens* Cornelia in the north-eastern Alentejo other than the one recorded in *Ammaia* (Encarnação 1987: 169), this hypothesis seems to be very plausible and worthy of further investigation.

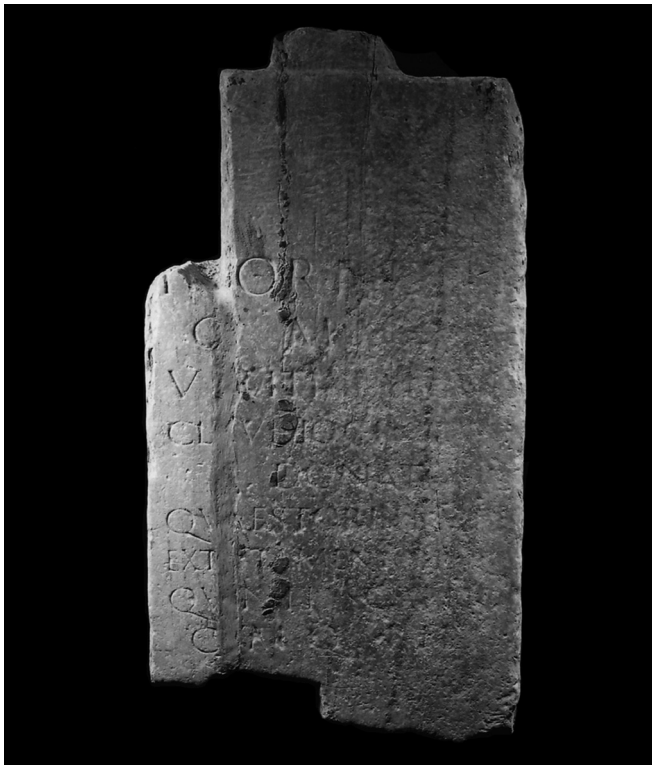


Fig. 7 Pedestal (?) of P. Cornelius Q. Macer (*Ammaia* Museum).

Another reference to the ancient city of *Ammaia* can be found in Claudius Ptolemy’s *Geographia*, a work completed in the mid-second century in Alexandria (Ptolemy, *Geog.*, II, 5, 8). This author enumerated a long list of settlements and geographical features, located by means of a system of coordinates that at present is difficult – but not impossible – to use, and whose coordinates may have been partly derived from ancient road and port maps. Thus, the coordinates help to calculate the distances between different cartographical locations, providing interesting elements of comparison with the indications given by the *Antonini Itinerarium*. We consider that every minute of a Ptolemaic degree is equivalent to 1.05 Roman miles, a relation that can be used with reasonable confidence in the operations of triangulation that are needed to transform the differences between coordinates into linear values. With regard to *Ammaia* (Ἀμμαία), Ptolemy defined the following coordinates: 7° longitude, 39° 20’ latitude. Now, these figures put *Ammaia* at a distance of 64 Roman miles from *Norba Caesarina* (Cáceres), equivalent to the 95km that separate them by road.

We believe that this coincidence proves the existence of a road going past Valência de Alcântara, which connected the two towns and continued in the direction of the River Tagus, despite the difficulties of its identification in the landscape. If we consider the distance to *Emerita Augusta* (Mérida), which in a straight line is about 102km, we encounter the equivalent of 96km, by default a negligible error, which is annulled if we consider the variant via Albuquerque. As for the town of *Olisipo*, the calculated distance seems to correspond to the length of the road which, via *Abelterium* (Alter do Chão), connected it with *Ammaia* (Fig. 8). Although much in the ancient sources needs to be treated with caution, we believe that *Geographia* can be used to situate *Ammaia*, even if the road maps that have come down to us through history do not corroborate the town’s road connections (Roldán Hervás 1975: 212; gravures 3, 12). Finally, Ptolemy places the town in the territory inhabited by the Lusitanians, which in fact covers the whole of present day Alto Alentejo, a fact that cannot be explained by mere population transfer, as has been defended based on Strabo, and much less as a consequence of forced relocations ordered by Caesar and Augustus (Cassius Dio, XXXVII, 52, Floro, II, 33, 52). The obvious and widespread Lusitanian onomastics of the region does not allow for such an interpretation.

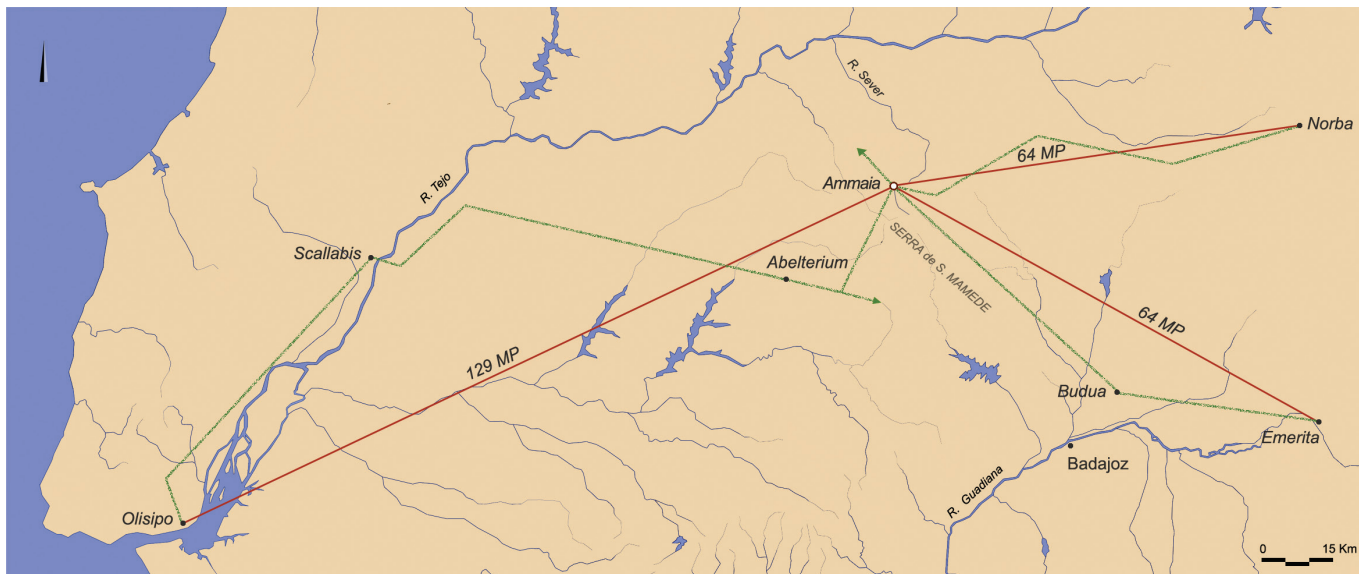


Fig. 8 Road network and Ptolemaic data. Approximate localizations of Ammaia, Emerita, Norba and Olisipo.

Epigraphic sources

Let us now focus on the epigraphic sources from either the region or the ruins of the ancient town. As is well known, these sources represent only a fraction, no more than 5% on average, of the total that may have existed in the past. We are therefore limited by quantity as much as we are subject to the arbitrariness of the findings, a fact that demands caution when attempting to write history based on these – undeniably irreplaceable – documents. Another question that arises, and which is not unique to Lusitania or this specific area, is the chronology of the inscriptions, which overwhelmingly fall into the period of the height of the Roman Empire. The epigraphic *corpus ammaiensis* comprises a reasonable number of inscriptions, preserved or lost, but in any case transcribed, a part of which is presently exhibited at the Ammaia Museum under very good conditions (Fig. 9). The respective bibliography is also rather extensive, though



Fig. 9 Detail of the epigraphy room at the Ammaia Museum.

only a small portion is the result of recent epigraphic studies. These sources are particularly important when analysing the process of the town's legal and administrative development, as well as the composition of its population and its connections to the outside world.

We will start with the testimonies of the town's evolution and, above all, with its still much discussed status. Though the date of its elevation to *municipium* remains somewhat unclear, if we consider a possible gap between the concession of Latin right and the granting of municipal status (Galsterer 1988: 68-70; Le Roux 1995: 83-87), the question of the tribe is definitively resolved, leaving no reasonable doubt regarding its registration with the Quirina tribe, which, for many researchers, should be sufficient to consider Ammaia a Flavian municipality (Pintado 2004: 343-364). Unfortunately, the problem is not that simple. Everything indicates that the town was founded by Augustus in the context of a plan to reorganize Lusitania through the creation of *civitates* (Alarcão 1990c: 386-390). This programme, however, expanded over time, as proven by the chronology of the various *terminus Augustalis* found throughout the province (Bárcena 2002-2003: 107-125). We certainly do not follow the hypothesis, solely based on the reading of an inscription found in Albuquerque (*CIL* II 724), that Ammaia could have been one of the prefectures of Emerita, even if Albuquerque had belonged to the territory of Ammaia instead of that of the capital of Lusitania, which, for now, cannot be proven.

With regard to the essential question, the creation of the town and its development until the granting of municipal status, we now have five inscriptions that allow us to outline a general picture, but which fail to inform us on the precise dates of the change in status, except for the last one. The

first of these inscriptions dates from the year 44/45, during the time of Claudius' principate, and alludes to *Ammaia* as a peregrine settlement governed by native magistrates, like so many others: *Tib. Claudio / Caesari. Aug. / Germanico. imp. III / pont. max. trib. pot. / IIII. cos. III. desig. IIII / Civitas Ammaiensis / ex voto. annuo / L. Calventio. Vetere. / Carmini. leg. / Tib. Claudii. Caesaris. Aug / Proculo. Pisiri. f / Omuncione. Cilai. f* (IRCP 615). Thus, we know that in 44 or 45 the town was still restricted to a peregrine status, though we are not able to say since when, and marginal in the hierarchy of Roman urban centres. We would like to recall that, a little earlier, a similar vote had been expressed by the inhabitants of *Aritium Vetus* (Alvega?). This vote was addressed to the Emperor Caligula in the year of 37, also on the initiative of two native magistrates (*CIL* II 172 = IRCP 647), something that does not occur in the inscription dated 16 BC from the town of the *Igaeditani* (Idanha-a-Velha), where four magistrates are named (Mantas 2006: 61-65).

Around 44 AD, however, something was going to change in *Ammaia*, as is strongly suggested by the second inscription of the above mentioned group of five (*CIL* II 159 = IRCP 618), which was also found in S. Salvador Aramenha: *P [C]ornelio / Q Macro / virtim a Divo Claudio civit[ate] / donato / quaestori II viro / ex testamento ip[sius] / Quintius. Ca[p]ito / cum Q f h [p]*. This epigraph, possibly belonging to a monumental base, has a rather troubled history, causing repeated discussions among experts. Lost and truncated after its first registration (IRCP: 679-681; Encarnação 1986: 107; Stylow, Abascal and Cebrián 2009: 25, 28-29), debate has dragged on about its meaning, and even about the presence of the letter Q at the beginning of the second line of the epigraph. Once the missing fragment was recovered, the presence of the letter Q was confirmed, to which we cannot give any other interpretation than *Q(uirina)*, which is corroborated by both the epigraphs of G. Sentius Capito and M. Iunius Gallus – also found at the Quinta do Deão (Mantas 2004: 92-97; Stylow 2009: 33-46) – and the inscriptions of Monforte (IRCP 578, 595a), where the tribe is always identified as being that of *Quirina*. Since no urban centres are known to have been promoted in the Iberian Peninsula by Nero, the status of *municipium* must have been granted in Claudian times – or, alternatively, the concession of Latin right, considering the positions held by Cornelius Macro. Either that or an earlier date must be assigned to the inscription in order to maintain the thesis of a Flavian municipality (Stylow 1997: 105-123; Pintado 2004: 343-364). The well known inscription of *Sabora* in *Baetica* (*CIL* II 1423) forces us to question this thesis, since it is hardly acceptable in many situations. In fact, we can only be certain that a change of status took place between 44/45 and 74 AD, which we believe to have been the concession of Latin right, whereas we consider the Julio-Claudian period the most plausible for this to have taken place. One wonders if the status of *municipium* had been granted at the same time.

A third inscription sheds some light on this issue, although rather diffuse, probably reflecting the granting of Latin right to *Ammaia*: *Genio Oppid[i] Constitut[i] / sacrum // C. Annus / Valens / a l d* (IRCP 604). Again we have a kind of birth certificate of the town, devoid of chronology other than the one inferred by study of the monument (Fig. 10). Contrary to other opinions, we believe that this is not the physical birth of the town, but its constitution as an urban centre integrated into the Roman judicial order through the concession of Latin right, most probably under the Principate of Claudius. With regard to the monument, the difficulties associated with its dating match the prudence shown by Encarnação, who preferred to focus on the meaning of the expression *Oppidi Constituti*, to which he attributed a legal sense, though again with caution. This is also our opinion, shared by Amílcar Guerra, who directly relates the votive stone to the concession of Latin right to *Ammaia* by the Emperor Claudius (Guerra 1996: 28-29). The opposite opinion, supported by arguments that do not differ significantly from those already presented, is maintained by Stylow, who suggests that the mentioned expression does not mean 'legally constituted', but rather 'built', though he accepts the dating of the monument to the Julio-Claudian period (Stylow 2009: 47-48).



Fig. 10 Altar dedicated to the Genius of the constituted *oppidum* (National Archaeological Museum).

The fourth monument worth considering with regard to the judicial history of the town, mentioned by Armin Stylow with reference to a document written by a British officer during the Peninsular War, does not help to solve this problem either. Here is the text: *M. Iunio / Quir. Gallo / II. vir. Turrania / Cilea. Genero* (Stylow 2009: 35-46). We thus have another Ammaian *duumvir*, whose *gentilicium* is included in the name of the Eboran Senator Q. Iulius Cordus Iunius Mauricus (IRCP 414) and whose *cognomen* Gallus is of reasonable representation in *Lusitania*, one of them being the Olisiponian *duumvir* Q. Antonius Gallus, who lived at the time of Trajan (Mantas 2005: 30-31). As

usual in these municipalities, we are looking at notables belonging to or associated with native families, as is apparent from the *cognomen* of Turrania Cilea, whose *gentilicium* belongs to one of the most important families of *Conimbriga*, a town where, under Vespasian, the provincial *flamen* L. Iunius Latro resided (Etienne *et al.* 1976: 49-51, 91-93). This large monument, of which a drawing is preserved, is likely to have existed in the late first century or early second century, where it probably served as the base for one of the missing statues of the *Ammaia* forum.

Undisputed is the inscription detected on the pedestal of a statue or bust, where, for the first and only time, *Ammaia*'s status of *municipium* is referred to (CIL II 158 = IRCP 616). This monument dates from 166 AD and has been used in the past as grounds for the identification of the town as Portalegre: *Imp. Caes. L. Aurelio Vero Aug / divi. Antonini. f / pont. max. tri. pot / cos. II. p. p. Municip. Ammai.* (CIL II 158 = IRCP 616). Unfortunately, as has been stressed many times, the monument – from which, unusually, the magistrates in office are absent, strengthening the collective message of homage to Lucius Verus (Fig. 11) – only confirms that *Ammaia* was a Latin *municipium* in the early second half of the second century. In fact, and despite this important set of inscriptions, we are still in doubt about the date when *Ammaia* ceased to be a peregrine town and rose to Latin right status, consecrated or not with the title of *municipium*. Pliny's reference to the settlements (*oppida*) awarded with the *Latium Vetus*, before the *Latium minus* was globally assigned to *Hispania* by Vespasian, may be



Fig. 11 Base of the monument dedicated to Lucius Verus by the *Municipes Ammaienses* (*Ammaia* Museum).

better understood if we consider this possibility, placing the status change to *municipium* at the end of the first century, at a time when significant architectural interventions took place, as suggested by excavations in *Ammaia*, and particularly in the area of the so called south gate (Pereira 2009: 60-77, 174-175). Is it possible that the few pre-existing Latin towns opted for the title of *municipium* in order to distinguish themselves from newly promoted centres? In fact, we can only count on documentary evidence related to the *Civitas Ammaiensis* (in 44-45) and to the *Municipes Ammaienses* (166) that lacks associated dynastic references.

Epigraphy is also an essential source of information about Ammaian society and culture. The native anthroponymy, registered in a territory that is still vaguely defined, but covered, as we believe, much of the current District of Portalegre, does not give room for much doubt about the Lusitanian provenance of the majority of its population, clearly related to those of the Beira Interior and the region of Cáceres, and integrated into a wide, culturally well characterized area (Encarnação 1987: 167-170; Mantas 2000: 401). This circumstance is easily confirmed through the examination of surviving religious testimonies, since we have found evidence of local cults, such as the ones of *Ocrimira*, probably connected to the River Sever (IRCP 610), *Toga* (IRCP 611) and *Quanceius Tangus* (IRCP 641, FE 23 103, 106). Since indigenous cults are under-represented south of the River Tagus, this fact seems very significant to us.

Although, for now, only the urban temple of the forum is known as possibly being consecrated to Jupiter (Mantas 2010a: 170-181) given that S. Salvador de Aramenha has three epigraphs devoted to IOM (IRCP 605, 606, 608), this cult was widely practised by the more or less romanized native people of this region, as well as by former slaves (Mantas 2000: 405-406; Carneiro 2010 : 84-85). The epigraphy also testifies to the cult of Mars, in epigraphs from Monforte (IRCP 568) and the Tapada da Colegiada³, the cult of the Nymphs in Monforte (IRCP 569), or of Genius related to the Ammaian *oppidum* (IRCP: 668, 693; Mantas 2004: 89-92).⁴ The religious landscape corresponds perfectly to that of a widely romanized region, but where pre-Roman traditions coexist in harmony with the classic cults, with or without *interpretatio*.

3 According to the different interpretation proposed by Patrício Curado, to be published in *Açafa* online n° 4.

4 The altar, consecrated to Genio Amaici, was found in Alvarrões, on the outskirts of the town.

An analysis of the Latin inscriptions also helps to detect changes in orthography, reproducing in certain circumstances the local pronunciation or a still imperfectly formed knowledge of the language, even when the supporting base is entirely classical. A survey of recorded *gentilicia* in the area that can roughly be considered dependent on *Ammaia* also offers some promising working hypotheses. Here is the current list: Aelia, Aquilia, Annia, Annonia, Carminia, Cateia, Coelia, Cornelia, Domitia, Iulia, Preccia, Propinia, Quintia, Sentia and Voconia. While some of these *gentilicia* only occur in rural settings, this does not necessarily point to a rural background, since there are several major landowners of the region among them.

The registered anthroponomical variety may indicate the relocation of families to the new urban centre, which, at the time, was built *ex-nihilo*. Some of these families belonged to a small group of notables, representing the elite that was needed to advance the programme of urbanization and to develop the political and economic dynamics that could ensure the success of the new town. These people were native peregrines, as is the case with the magistrates of the 44/45 AD epigraph, or with Publius Cornelius Macer. Some of them merely have urban representation, reflected in a limited number of inscriptions, since only Aelia, Annia and Iulia are, directly or indirectly, referred to in more than one epigraphic testimony. Without wishing to engage in a comprehensive analysis of the greater or lesser importance of these families, we must highlight Carminia, related, as has been maintained, to L. Calventius Carminius Vetus, legate of Claudius (Groag and Stein 1936: 103-104; IRCP: 677). Is this another coincidence?

The Iulia family appears in two inscriptions, suggesting a lower patronage at the beginning of the Empire when compared to other nearby urban centres, such as Évora, a fact we attribute in this area of *Lusitania* to the colonization strategy applied to the bordering stretches of the River

Tagus, although it may also reflect a later engagement in the region's urbanization. One of these epigraphs, probably dating from the second half or the end of the first century, and recovered from the Quinta do Deão, recalls the provincial Flamen G. *Iulius Vegetus* (CIL II 160 = IRCP 617), suggesting relations with Évora or Mérida and most likely with Lisbon, where we know about a female *flamen* called Iulia Vegeta (Silva 1944: 194-195; Mantas 2004: 100-104). The second inscription, devoted to the local deity Ocrimira, records a Iulia Saturisca of clearly indigenous origins (IRCP 610). The anthroponym Iulia still occurs in two other inscriptions: in the funerary inscription for the slave child of someone named Iulia (IRCP 622), and at a small altar devoted by a peregrine Iulia to a deity whose theonym has resisted all attempts at identification. Naturally, the first two testimonies are the most representatives in terms of *gentilicia*.

In addition to the naive citizens or peregrines, epigraphy also allows us to learn something about the freedmen and slaves (Mantas 2002: 49-68), which, at this location, seem to be of completely indigenous origin. Although the freedmen always had a rather numerous epigraphic representation, and *Ammaia* presents five inscriptions that refer to them, there is a lack of Greek or Grecized anthroponyms, so common in other areas. Is it possible that the Clunians, somehow over-represented in this area south of the River Tagus (Mantas 2000: 412, 415-416), replaced the technical staff employed at the agro-pastoral and mining explorations? As for the slaves, humble as they were even in death, they are only known through two inscriptions (IRCP 622, 639). We hope that further survey work, study and much required publication will allow us to extend our knowledge about this and other historical aspects of the town of *Ammaia*, and to definitively place it among the great Luso-Roman urban centres, notwithstanding the laconic style of the literary sources.

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