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The domestic architecture of Bracara Augusta and its evolution

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Abstract

The excavations carried out under the rescue “*Project of Bracara Augusta*” have generated significant amounts of data that enabled the reconstruction of Bracara Augusta urban evolution and the characterization of its buildings and blocks. This paper aims to enhance the existing data related with the domestic architecture of the roman town, which was mainly represented by the houses of *domus* type.

1 Introduction

Our knowledge regarding the roman *modus vivendi* is inherently rooted in the study of the cities particularly increased by the development of urban archaeology after 1970s. One of the major contributions of the urban excavations is precisely associated with the increased knowledge of the roman domestic architecture in the cities of the western provinces of the Empire, which generated new research perspectives in the study of the social and economic structures of the Romanised territories and their inherent urbanization processes. These new research perspectives include spatial analysis, such as the inclusion of houses within the urban setting, the enhancement of construction techniques and used materials and the overall improvement regarding the functionality of urban spaces contributing towards a better understanding of the complex urban world, where houses may be valued both as residential and social units.¹ Thus, the roman house may be understood as an experimental microcosm that intertwines italic stereotypes adapted to regional constraints of technical, social and cultural origin. The reason behind this logic is the fact that there aren't two houses alike, however they all present similar traits amongst themselves.² This paper aims to contribute to the knowledge of roman urban private architecture of Bracara Augusta through the presentation of a group of selected excavated examples of *domus*.

¹ Uribe Agudo, 2004: 191.

² Fernández Vega, 1999: 454.