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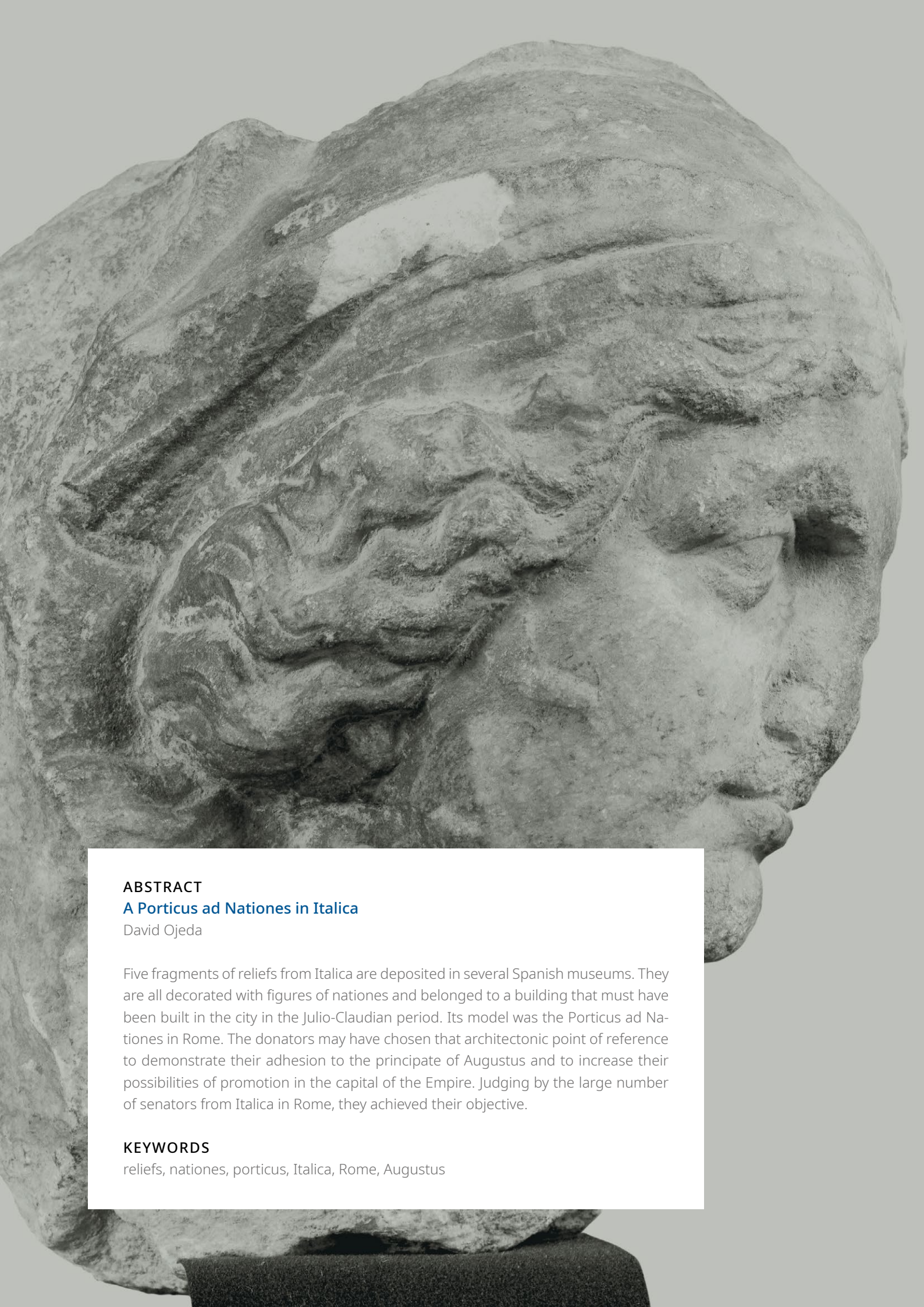
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## **ABSTRACT**

### **A Porticus ad Nationes in Italica**

David Ojeda

Five fragments of reliefs from Italica are deposited in several Spanish museums. They are all decorated with figures of nationes and belonged to a building that must have been built in the city in the Julio-Claudian period. Its model was the Porticus ad Nationes in Rome. The donators may have chosen that architectonic point of reference to demonstrate their adhesion to the principate of Augustus and to increase their possibilities of promotion in the capital of the Empire. Judging by the large number of senators from Italica in Rome, they achieved their objective.

## **KEYWORDS**

reliefs, nationes, porticus, Italica, Rome, Augustus

# A Porticus ad Nationes in Italica

*In remembrance of Antonio Peña*

## Introduction

<sup>1</sup> Italica was a Roman city in the Province of Baetica (Andalusia, Spain)<sup>1</sup>. The development of the city was divided into two main stages: an initial monumental phase in the first century A.D.<sup>2</sup> and then a large expansion towards the north in the time of Hadrian<sup>3</sup>. From the architectonic point of view little is known about the Julio-Claudian Italica. Our knowledge is limited almost exclusively to information about the theatre<sup>4</sup>, the location of the forum<sup>5</sup> and the existence of a temple devoted to Apollo<sup>6</sup>. The present study aims to improve this deficiency by the reconstruction of a Julio-Claudian building whose portico was decorated by a series of reliefs with representations of *nationes*<sup>7</sup>. The key questions are to determine what has been preserved of that building, where it was situated, what it looked like and whether it was modelled on any architectonic complex in the capital of the Empire.

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<sup>1</sup> Only four studies have approached the city of Italica monographically: García y Bellido 1960; Caballos et al. 1999; Caballos 2010; León 2021.

<sup>2</sup> For the urbanism of Italica in the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D., see Keay 1997. Most recently, León 2021, 128–144.

<sup>3</sup> For the enlargement of Italica in the time of Hadrian, see León 1992. Most recently, León 2021, 158–243.

<sup>4</sup> For the theatre in Italica, see the summary in Ventura 2008, 192–202. Most recently, León 2021, 131–143. For the possible existence of two edifices built in the Augustan period behind the cavea of the theatre, see Jiménez 2021a, 351–397; Jiménez 2021b, 195; León 2021, 140.

<sup>5</sup> For the forum in Italica, see Hidalgo 2003, 96–99. For the location of the forum, see also Peña 2007, 335. Most recently, León 2021, 143–149.

<sup>6</sup> Its existence is known thanks to an inscription: Caballos 1987/1988; Caballos 1994, 67. For the connection between the temple of Apollo and the forum in Italica: Hidalgo 2003, 98; Hidalgo – Márquez 2010, 58. Most recently, León 2021, 144.

<sup>7</sup> For the use of the terms *natio/nationes* in this paper, see *infra* § 3.

## The Reliefs

2 Five reliefs from Italica are presented below in catalogue format. For each one, the following information is given: the present place of custody, provenance, material, size, comments and references to the literature in which it has been mentioned. Four of the reliefs are decorated with a female figure and one with a male. The five figures display iconographic details that allow them to be identified as representations of *nationes*.

3 Before starting the analysis, some brief methodological remarks are needed to justify the use of the term *natio* in this study. On the few occasions when the inscriptions accompanying the representations of geographic personifications have been preserved, these can be of different kinds: cities as shown by the pedestal of Pozzuoli<sup>8</sup>; Roman provinces like Egypt and Judea in the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias<sup>9</sup>; people that never formed part of the Empire, like India in the Domus of Terpsichore<sup>10</sup>; tribes that belonged to different provinces in the Empire, like the Andizeti in the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias<sup>11</sup>; and kingdoms such as the Bosporan also in the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias<sup>12</sup>. In cases when there is no inscription it is impossible to establish the nature of the geographic personification being represented<sup>13</sup>. The difficulties increase if it is considered that different geographic entities might appear in the same complex. The shrine of Dea Caelestis in Dougga clearly illustrates this problem<sup>14</sup> because cities, provinces and regions like Hispania, formed by three provinces, are mixed in its portico<sup>15</sup>. For these reasons and owing to the absence of inscriptions, each of the figures represented on the reliefs from Italica has been named generically as a *natio*. The term appears in written sources in antiquity referring to cities, tribes, provinces and regions<sup>16</sup>. It therefore encompasses appropriately all the options that should be taken into account when interpreting which types of geographic personification might be represented on these plaques. Without the inscriptions of the five reliefs from Italica, it is impossible to specify more precisely the type of *natio* depicted or to propose names for each one of them.

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8 Weisser 2008.

9 Smith 2013, 103 f. B-base 10 fig. 38; 109 B-base 25 fig. 44.

10 de Hoz 2007, 132 no. 3 fig. 3.

11 Smith 2013, 102 B-base 7 fig. 37.

12 Smith 2013, 104 f. B-base 12 fig. 39.

13 This difficulty has been expressed clearly in the case of the series of *nationes* on the ›Parthian monument‹ in Ephesus: Oberleitner 2009, 249 f.; Fittschen 2009, 166.

14 For the shrine of Dea Caelestis in Dougga, see Saint-Amans 2004, 275–281; Eingartner 2005, 213–215.

15 For the inscriptions with names of *nationes* in the shrine of Dea Caelestis in Dougga, see Saint-Amans 2004, 280 f.; Eingartner 2005, 214.

16 For the term *natio*, see Thesaurus linguae latinae IX 1, 132–138 s. v. *natio*. For the different meanings of the term *natio* and its application in the Roman era to provinces, regions, tribes and cities, see the following examples: a) For the term *natio* referring to provinces in the Roman Empire: CIL IX 1424 (Thracia); Tac. hist. 1, 11 and Plin. paneg. 31 (Egypt). – b) For the term *natio* referring to regions in the Roman Empire: HispEpigr VI 525 (Greece). – c) For the term *natio* referring to tribes in the Roman era: Tac. hist. 4, 61 (tribe of the Bructeri). – d) For the term *natio* referring to cities in the Roman Empire: Tac. ann. 4, 45 (Tiermes); CIL V 3465 (Alexandria).



1



2

### Cat. 1 – Relief with the body of a female natio

Fig. 1

Location: Arch. Mus. of Seville inv. CE106

Provenance: Italica, without further details about the exact place where it was found. The relief can be seen in a drawing of the objects found in the 18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> centuries in Italica<sup>17</sup>. It was deposited in the Archaeological Museum of Seville on 12<sup>th</sup> March 1880<sup>18</sup>.

Material: white marble

Size: max. height 90 cm; max. width 33 cm; max. depth 9 cm (in the profile of the lower moulding); min. depth 3.5 cm (from the background of the figure to the rear part of the plaque); height of the lower moulding 5 cm

This relief represents a female figure whose head has not been preserved. She is wearing a peplos and a mantle, which falls behind her like a large cape. Its ends at the front are gathered by the women's left arm, as if it were a kind of scarf. She is wearing smooth, pointed shoes

Fig. 1: Relief with a natio from a porched building in Italica. Arch. Mus. of Seville inv. CE106

Fig. 2: Relief with a natio from the Hadrianeum in Rome. Rome, Farnese Palace

17 León 1995, 23 f. fig. 5.

18 A mould was taken of the relief by L. Bartolozzi between the 6<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of February 1911 with the aim of exhibiting it in the Mostra Internazionale di Archeologia in Rome in that same year: Tortosa 2017, 1142 fig. 8 a.

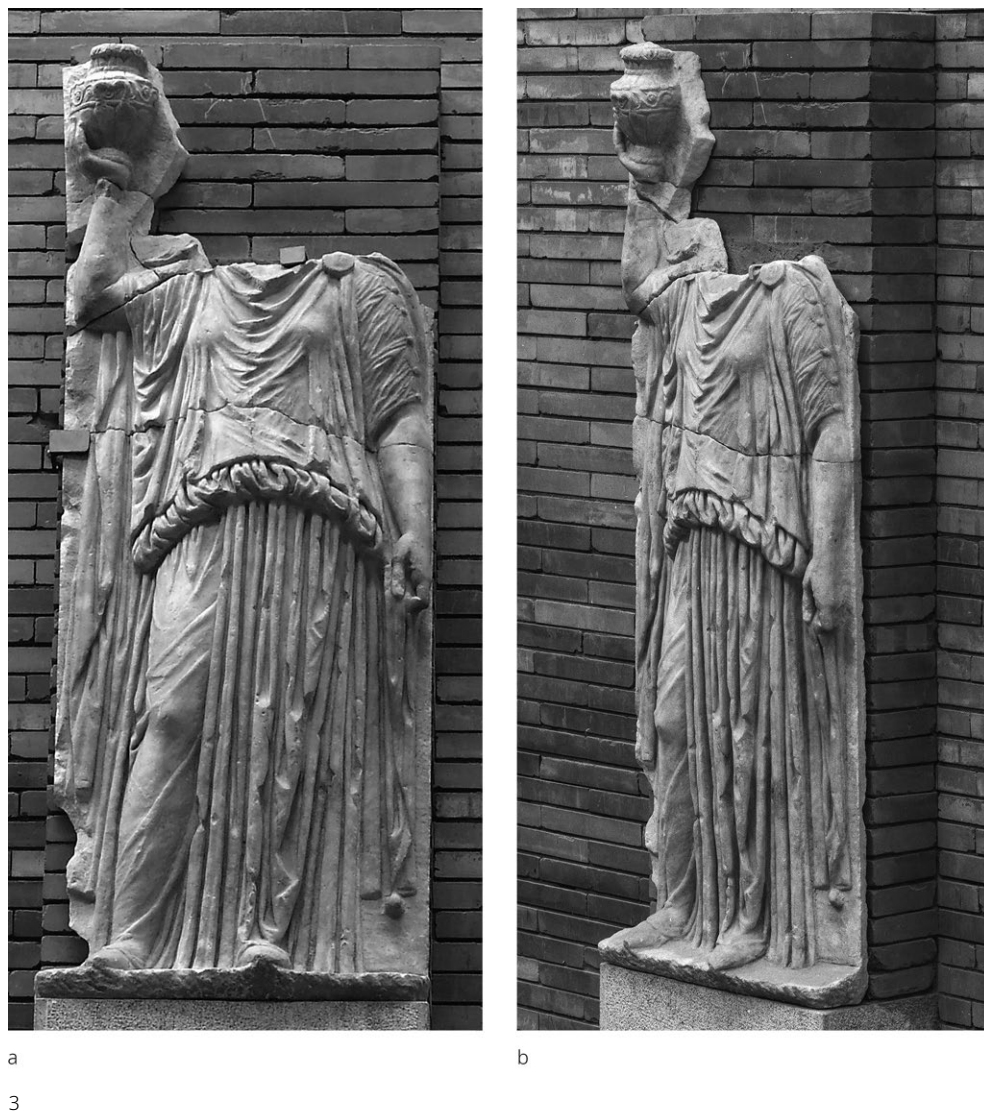


Fig. 3: Relief with a caryatid from the ›Forum Adiectum‹ in Mérida. Mérida, Nat. Mus. of Roman Art inv. 33003

without laces. It is undoubtedly a *natio*<sup>19</sup> because there is a copy of the figure in one of the reliefs in the Hadrianeum in Rome (Fig. 2)<sup>20</sup>.

Some scholars have dated the Italica relief in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. because of its stylistic similarity with the caryatids in the ›Forum Adiectum‹ in Mérida (Fig. 3 a. b)<sup>21</sup>; and

19 Trillmich 1996, 184 f.; Trillmich 1997, 139; Trillmich 1998, 171; Jiménez 1998, 23 and Casari 2004, 30 identified the figure on cat. 1 as a caryatid and linked it with a fragment of a *clipeus* found in the theatre. According to this proposal, both objects formed part of a building that imitated the architecture in the Forum of Augustus. The hypothesis is unsustainable owing to the differences in the sizes of the relief and the *clipeus*. Additionally, the figure is not a caryatid but a *natio*. For more details of these arguments, see Ahrens 2005, 63; Peña 2005, 162; Peña 2007, 335, esp. n. 51; Beltrán 2009a, 36; Goldbeck 2015b, 86.

20 For the relief from the Hadrianeum: Sapelli 1999, 40–43 no. 6 with illustrations. Although the relationship between the reliefs from Italica and Rome has recently been noted by Goldbeck 2015b, 86, the parallel was established over 100 years before: Gómez-Moreno – Pijoán 1912, 23 (which refers to Lucas 1900, 7 f. fig. 5) and Arndt – Amelung 1913, 4 no. 1819 (which refers to Bieńkowski 1900, 68 fig. 62). The similarity between the two representations has also been pointed out by Trillmich 1996, 184 f.; Beltrán 2009a, 35 f.; Beltrán 2009b, 285. Previously, the relief had been mistakenly identified as a funerary stele: Gómez-Moreno – Pijoán 1912, 23; Fernández Chicarro 1957, 71 no. 4; Fernández Chicarro 1969, 67 no. 4; Fernández Chicarro – Fernández 1984, 58 no. 3. García y Bellido 1949, 419 and García y Bellido 1960, 156 f. suggested that it belonged to the decoration of a public building in Italica but did not specify anything about the identity of the figure.

21 Goldbeck 2015b, 86. For the caryatids in Mérida, the most complete catalogue is de la Barrera 2000, 105–110 nos. 371–396 figs. 126–134; see most recently Goldbeck 2015b, 72 f. figs. 89–92. The building in Mérida where the caryatids were located has been given different names: ›Forum Adiectum‹, ›Porched Forum‹, ›Marble Forum‹, ›Augusteum‹, and ›Eastern Platform‹. For the different names: Ayerbe et al. 2009b, 745. In the present study, I shall use the term ›Forum Adiectum‹ for the building (Gros 1987, 357).

others in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D. because they believe it to be part of a Hadrianic building<sup>22</sup>. Since the chronology of the ›Forum Adiectum‹ in Mérida is not absolute<sup>23</sup> and the plaque from Italica is not associated with any archaeological context, both proposed dates are unprovable. There are two better ways to determine its chronology. In the first place, the *natio* displays many points of similarity with a colossal Hüftmantel statue at Italica, whose typology ensures its date in the Julio-Claudian period<sup>24</sup>. The thick horizontal fold over the waist and the vertical end of the mantle on its support share the flat, schematic and rigid carving of the clothes of the *natio*. In second place, these same details also appear in some figures in the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias. The folds in the scarf of the *natio* are very similar to those that can be seen in the Turkish plaques of Oceanus<sup>25</sup>, a member of the Julio-Claudian imperial household<sup>26</sup>, and the two young princes facing each other<sup>27</sup>. Bearing in mind the date in the Julio-Claudian period for the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias<sup>28</sup>, a similar date is the likeliest option for cat. 1.

Literature: Gómez-Moreno – Pijoán 1912, 23 fig. 4; Arndt – Amelung 1913, 4 no. 1819; Taracena 1947, 88 fig. 72; García y Bellido 1949, 419 fig. 300; Fernández Chicharro 1957, 71 no. 4 fig. 38; García y Bellido 1960, 156 f. no. 26 fig. 46 b; Fernández Chicharro 1969, 67 no. 4 fig. 31; Fernández Chicharro – Fernández 1984, 58 no. 3; León 1995, 23 fig. 5; Trillmich 1996, 184 f. fig. 7; Trillmich 1997, 139; Jiménez 1998, 23; Trillmich 1998, 171; Casari 2004, 30; Ahrens 2005, 63; Peña 2005, 162; Nogales 2007, 489; Peña 2007, 335; Beltrán 2009a, 35 f.; Beltrán 2009b, 285 fig. 385; Goldbeck 2015b, 86 fig. 119; Loza – Beltrán 2021, 399. 428 fig. 1

## Cat. 2 – Relief with the head of a female *natio*

Fig. 4 a. b

Location: Madrid, Nat. Arch. Mus. inv. 2771

Provenance: although it has been said that it came from the Roman villa of El Ruedo (Almedinilla, Cordoba)<sup>29</sup> or was an Athenian object from the Asensi Collection<sup>30</sup>, this relief undoubtedly came from Italica. The discovery of the plaque is recorded in the reports on the excavations in Italica by I. de la Cortina<sup>31</sup>, who also included a drawing of it<sup>32</sup>.

Material: white marble

Size: max. height 20 cm; height from the chin to the crown 13 cm; max. depth 5 cm (from the background of the figure to the rear part of the plaque)

- 
- 22 Beltrán 2009b, 285. For this Hadrianic building situated in the upper part of the theatre, behind its cavea, see Izquierdo 2012; most recently, León 2021, 222–225. For the possible existence of two edifices from the Augustan age located under the Hadrianic building, see supra n. 4.
- 23 For the issues in dating the ›Forum Adiectum‹ in Mérida and the present state of our knowledge about this complex, see Peña 2017. The main problem with the current proposals for the date of the reliefs from Italica is that they are all based on stylistic arguments (for issues with stylistic dates, see for example Pittschen 1999, 18; Ojeda 2013, 374; Pittschen 2021, 55) but none of them has used objects with absolute chronologies as parallels. Dating by comparison with undated items is methodologically unsound. For this matter, see Goette 1993, 305; Ojeda 2019, 843–852; Ojeda 2020a, 115 f. To avoid making the same mistake, I have based my proposed date for the reliefs at Italica on comparisons with objects with an absolute chronology.
- 24 For the date in the Julio-Claudian period attributed to the Hüftmantel portrait statues, see infra n. 108. For the colossal Hüftmantel statue at Italica, see infra § 11. For the methodological pertinence of attempting in the first place to establish dates with the geographically closest parallels: Schneider 1999, 26–37.
- 25 Smith 2013, 80–82 no. A3 fig. 23 (folds that hang from the right arm).
- 26 Smith 2013, 156–158 no. C18 fig. 72 (folds that hang from the left arm in the central figure). For this plaque, see most recently Pollini 2021, 247–249 fig. 21 (Claudius?).
- 27 Smith 2013, 158–160 no. C19 fig. 74 (folds in the mantles of both figures). For this plaque, see most recently Pollini 2021, 251–253 fig. 24 (Britannicus and Nero?).
- 28 For the date of the Sebasteion: Smith 2013, 309 f. Most recently, Pollini 2021, 279 f.
- 29 García y Bellido 1949, 173; Vaquerizo – Noguera 1997, 200–204.
- 30 Trunk 2018, 129, who takes up the old idea of Arndt – Amelung 1912, 44, that the relief formed part of the Asensi Collection and therefore must have come from Athens.
- 31 For de la Cortina's excavations in Italica, the most detailed information can be found in: Beltrán 2012, 123–126; Beltrán – Rodríguez 2012a; Beltrán – Rodríguez 2012b, 32–49. For the mention of the relief in the reports, see infra § 8.
- 32 The drawing has been reproduced on numerous occasions. See for example León 1995, 19 f. fig. 3; Peña 2005, 147 fig. 5. The curl over the right cheek and the small protuberance just above the crown of the head are details that prove that this drawing reproduces cat. 2. See infra Fig. 15 in the present paper.
-





a



b

Fig. 4: Relief with a natio from a porched building in Italica. Madrid, Nat. Arch. Mus. inv. 2771



a



b



c

Fig. 5: Relief with a natio from the ivory frieze at Ephesus. Selçuk, Ephesus Arch. Mus.

The relief represents a woman with her head turned towards the left. She is wearing a kind of turban that covers all the top of her head. Below this, some wavy locks of hair are combed back. They spread from a central parting hidden under her headwear, but their start is still visible over her forehead. The most exhaustive publication of the relief proposed that it was part of

a sarcophagus decorated with a mythological figure<sup>33</sup>. Three arguments are able to refute that interpretation and identify the female figure as the representation of a *natio*. First, the plaque was not found in a mortuary context but in a public building in Italica<sup>34</sup>. Second, the expression of suffering on her face is usual in the representations of *nationes*. A similar grimace is seen on some of the *nationes* in the Hadrianeum in Rome<sup>35</sup>. Third, the turban is an iconographic detail that appears in the depictions of some *nationes*. Similar turbans can be recognised on one of the *nationes* in the marble frieze at Ephesus<sup>36</sup> (Fig. 5 a–c) and on two in the Hadrianeum in Rome<sup>37</sup>.

Most scholars who have attempted to date the relief have situated it in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D. using the stylistic method but without resorting to parallelisms with an absolute chronology<sup>38</sup>. An age in the Julio-Claudian period is the most likely option. The face of the *natio* is very similar to that of some ladies in Augustus's family. The closest physiognomic similarities can be found in the portraits of Livia<sup>39</sup>. I also find the similarity with a portrait of Antonia Minor in Erbach Castle especially significant<sup>40</sup>.

Literature: de la Rada y Delgado 1883, 187 f. no. 2771; Arndt – Amelung 1912, 44 no. 1731; García y Bellido 1949, 173 no. 189 fig. 142; Rodríguez Oliva 1993, 41; Vaquerizo – Noguera 1997, 200–204 no. 28 with illustrations; Rodríguez Oliva 2009, 138 fig. 160; Trunk 2018, 129 fig. 4

### Cat. 3 – Relief with the head of a female *natio*

Fig. 6 a. b

Location: Seville, House of the Countess of Lebrija inv. 21

Provenance: Italica, without any further details about the exact place where it was discovered. Most of the objects in the Countess of Lebrija's home are from Italica and in this particular case it is expressly recorded in that way. A small sign is still attached to it stating that it was from Italica<sup>41</sup>.

Material: white marble

Size: max. height 23 cm; height from the chin to the crown 13 cm; max. depth 5 cm (in the profile of the upper moulding); min. depth 3 cm (from the background of the figure to the rear part of the plaque). The sizes of the upper and lower fillets vary: in some places they are both 2 cm in height, in others the lower one is 1 cm high.

The relief represents a head in profile. It is wearing a *petasos* adorned with a flat ribbon in the upper part and fixed to the head by strings tied under the chin<sup>42</sup>. Some long locks of hair appear from under the *petasos*. They are divided in the forehead by a fork. In the nape they reach the shoulders. Although the relief has been mentioned in several publications, a hypothesis of identification has only been proposed once. A. García y Bellido suggested that it was an image of Hermes<sup>43</sup>. This is problematic. There are hardly any Roman representations of Hermes with

33 Vaquerizo – Noguera 1997, 200–204 no. 28. The possibility of a sarcophagus was also accepted by Trunk 2018, 129. Other authors have proposed that it is an Attic funerary stele dated in the 4<sup>th</sup> century B.C. (Arndt – Amelung 1912, 44 no. 1731) or a Roman relief with the representation of a deity (García y Bellido 1949, 173 no. 189; Rodríguez Oliva 2009, 138).

34 See infra § 8.

35 See for example Sapelli 1999, 44 no. 7 with illustration.

36 Caryatid 2 in the marble frieze at Ephesus is undoubtedly a *natio* because it has a dromedary in its lap: Dawid 2003, 32 f. fig. 16. For other examples of animals as iconographic attributes of reliefs with *nationes*: Smith 2013, 91–93 B2 fig. 28 (bull); 109 B25 fig. 44 (feline); LIMC I (1981) 253 no. 40 fig. 40 (lion) s. v. Africa (M. Le Glay); Weisser 2008, 134 f. fig. 56 (undetermined animal); 136 fig. 66 b (dolphin).

37 Sapelli 1999, 57 f. no. 12 with illustration; 72 no. 23 with illustration (for another image of this *natio*, see 99 fig. g).

38 See for example Vaquerizo – Noguera 1997, 204; Rodríguez Oliva 2009, 138. For the problem of dates based on comparisons with objects without absolute chronology, see supra n. 23.

39 See for example Winkes 1995, 82 f. no. 4 with illustration; 92 f. no. 16 with illustration; 141 no. 65 with illustration.

40 Fittschen 1977, 58–61 no. 18 fig. 20. The comparison with the representation of Tellus in the Ara Pacis is also useful: Rossini 2007, 38 with illustration. With this figure it shares not only a certain physiognomic likeness but also a hairstyle that is very similar in its structure and sculpting technique.

41 The sign and its text are easily legible in García y Bellido 1960, 151 no. 16 fig. 48.

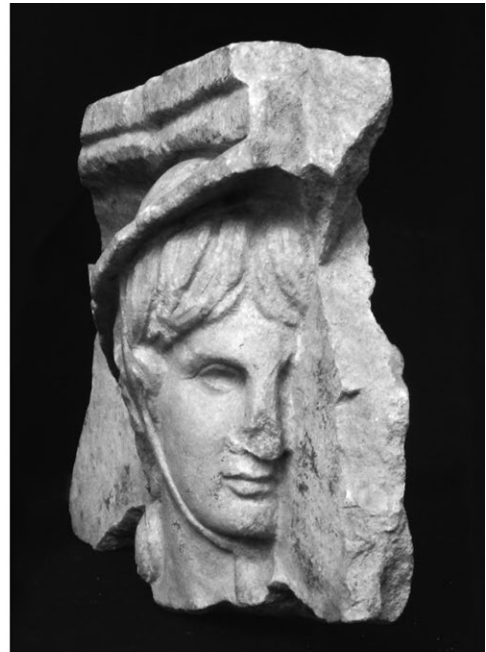
42 For the strings of the *petasos* and their positions: Janssen 2007, 39 f. n. 104.

43 García y Bellido 1960, 151 no. 16 fig. 48. The other publications that mention the object either say nothing about the identity of the figure (Amador 1912, 287; León 2021, 267) or simply note that the *petasos* is a typical iconographic attribute of the god Hermes (Caballos et al. 1999, 19; Corzo 2002, 85).



a  
6

Fig. 6: Relief with a *natio* from a porched building in Italica. Seville, House of the Countess of Lebrija inv. 21



b

such long hair<sup>44</sup> and it is not even possible to assure if the head depicted on the relief is male<sup>45</sup>. Better parallels for this figure can be found among Roman female *nationes*. On some occasions, they do not only display similar hairstyles with a short fringe and long loose hair at the back<sup>46</sup>, but they also sometimes wear similar caps. One of the figures in the small frieze on the *Ara Pacis*<sup>47</sup> (Fig. 7) and the *natio* F14 in the ›*Parthian monument*‹ in Ephesus<sup>48</sup> are two examples of *nationes* with similar headwear.

Fig. 7: Relief with a *natio* from the small frieze of the *Ara Pacis*. Rome, Mus. Naz. Rom., Palazzo Massimo alle Terme

I only know of one proposal for the relief's chronology. P. León dated it in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D.<sup>49</sup>. This was based on the comparison with some Athenian reliefs<sup>50</sup>, which unfortunately



7

44 To see the small number of representations of Hermes/Mercury with long hair, it suffices to compare LIMC V (1990) 285–387 s. v. Hermes (G. Siebert); LIMC VI (1992) 500–554 s. v. Mercurius (E. Simon – G. Bauchhenß). Among all the representations of Hermes/Mercury in the LIMC, only two have long hair: LIMC V (1990) 371 f. no. 985 fig. 985 s. v. Hermes (G. Siebert); LIMC VI (1992) 505 no. 10 fig. 10 s. v. Mercurius (E. Simon – G. Bauchhenß).

45 Although without repercussion, Amador 1912, 287 identified the figure as female.

46 See for example Sapelli 1999, 30 with illustration; 38 with illustration; 50 with illustration.

47 Kähler 1954, 98 no. 2 fig. 20; Koepfel 1987, 148 no. 13/2 fig. 44. The relief forms part of a group of no more than 66 figures of *nationes* (Kähler 1954, 97). Although some authors have questioned this possibility (see for example Torelli 1982, 35 f.; La Rocca 1983, 52), the presence of this cycle of *nationes* on the small frieze of the *Ara Pacis* is certain. The iconographic details demonstrating it are clearly summarised in Smith 1988, 73 n. 58.

48 Oberleitner 2009, 90–93; 227–234 FR14 figs. 149–151. It is not possible to be sure if the cap on Figure FR14 in the ›*Parthian monument*‹ in Ephesus was prepared to receive an applique. If it was, the proposal of inserting in its cap the Elefantenexuvien (Landskron 2006, 103 f.) is unlikely. As a general rule, the surfaces prepared to receive attachments, whose form is so well-defined as in the case of the Figure FR14, determine the shape of the applique. See for example Ojeda 2020b, 405–407 figs. 1–5. If it carried an attachment, this must simply have covered in metal the cap of Figure FR14 and maintained the same shape.

49 León 2021, 267.

50 For the link between cat. 3 and Attic reliefs, see also Corzo 2002, 85.



a



b



c

8



9



10

Fig. 8: Relief with a *natio* from a porched building in Italica. Arch. Mus. of Seville inv. CE392

Fig. 9: Relief with a *natio* from the small frieze of the Ara Pacis. Rome, Mus. Naz. Rom., Palazzo Massimo alle Terme

Fig. 10: Relief with a *natio* from the Arcus Claudii/Arcus Novus. Rome, Villa Medici

have not an absolute date. For this reason, they cannot be used as a point of reference to determine the chronology of this plaque from Italica<sup>51</sup>. I think it is more likely that it was sculpted in the Julio-Claudian period. The head follows the usual Augustan models. This iconographic tendency can easily be detected if the *natio* is compared with some of Augustus's portraits<sup>52</sup>. Similar forms are also found in some Julio-Claudian ideal female heads. A figure of Rome in the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias is a good example to verify the similarity<sup>53</sup>. It shares not only the physiognomic model but also the way of carving the eye in the form of a deep crack<sup>54</sup>.

Literature: Amador 1912, 287; García y Bellido 1960, 151 no. 16 fig. 48; Caballos et al. 1999, 19; Corzo 2002, 85 fig. 42; León 2021, 267 fig. 267

#### Cat. 4 – Relief with the head of a female *natio*

Fig. 8 a–c

Location: Arch. Mus. of Seville inv. CE392

Provenance: Italica, without any further details about the exact place of its discovery. Two pieces of information about this plaque are given in the registration books at the Archaeological Museum of Seville: first, that it is from Italica, and second, that it was purchased in 1882.

Material: white marble

51 The date of the Athenian relief that León 2021, 267 n. 527 uses as a parallel is based on stylistic criteria: Stephanidou-Tiveriou 1979, 183 f.

52 Boschung 1993a, 166 f. no. 140 fig. 109; 189 no. 197 fig. 117.

53 Smith 2013, 154–156 no. C17 fig. 71 (lower left picture). Although they are male figures, see also the plaques in the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias in supra n. 26. 27.

54 For the Julio-Claudian date of the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias, see supra n. 28.



Fig. 11: Relief with a natio from a porched building in Italica. Arch. Mus. of Seville inv. CE2020/063-0001

Size: max. height 18.5 cm; height from the chin to the crown 11.5 cm; depth 3.5 cm (from the background of the figure to the rear part of the plaque)

The relief represents a woman who turns her head towards the right. Her hair is parted in the middle and gathered in a simple bun. Remains of her clothes are seen on the left of her neck. Her only iconographic attribute is a wide double ribbon which allows her to be identified as a *natio*. This type of adornment has not been documented in portraits in classic antiquity<sup>55</sup> and is not usual on Roman ideal female statues<sup>56</sup>. In contrast, some examples of *nationes* with double ribbons or a very wide one are known, as seen on a head in the small frieze on the Ara Pacis<sup>57</sup> (Fig. 9) and one of the figures in the Della Valle-Medici reliefs<sup>58</sup> (Fig. 10).

Cat. 4 must have been made in the Julio-Claudian period. A female portrait in the Ara Pacis is a clear point of reference supporting this hypothesis<sup>59</sup>. Whoever is the lady being represented, the coincidence in the rounded shape of the face, the large chin, small mouth and general physiognomy of the face suggest chronological proximity between the two sculptures. Other evidence supports the proposal of the Julio-Claudian date for cat. 4. The fringe in the *natio* is combed backwards and makes a quite large wave divided by the central parting. Similar ways of combing their hair can be seen in Julio-Claudian female portraits that are now associated with Vipsania Agrippina<sup>60</sup>.

Literature: unpublished

55 Some Roman female portraits display a ribbon, but it is never double like on the relief from Italica. Fittschen 2004, 121 f. See also Fittschen 2009, 171.

56 In the case of the ideal female statues, the ribbon is usually either single (see for example Goette 1986, 718–722 no. 6 fig. 7; Knoll et al. 2011, 250–255 no. 33 with illustrations; 288–292 no. 43 with illustrations) or double/triple but not superimposed (see for example Goette 1986, 711 f. no. 1 fig. 1; Knoll et al. 2011, 393 f. no. 70 with illustrations). I only know of one ideal female figure with a double ribbon superimposed: Reinhardt 2019, 144 no. PY1-2 figs. 29, 86. 87.

57 For the head with a double ribbon on the Ara Pacis: Kähler 1954, 98 no. 1 fig. 19; De Angelis Bertolotti 1985, 229 fig. 95, 1; Koeppl 1987, 148 no. 13/1 fig. 43; Rossini 2007, 97 f. (with illustration on 98, top photograph). The relief forms part of a group of no more than 66 figures of *nationes*, see supra n. 47.

58 Laubscher 1976, 91 f. fig. 8.

59 Rossini 2007, 69 with illustration. For the date of the Ara Pacis, see infra n. 125.

60 See for example Boschung 2002, 9 no. 1.9 fig. 7, 3. For the iconography of Vipsania Agrippina: Boschung 1993b, 58 f. From the point of view of the general structure of the face, very similar forms can be found in a) the head of Dea Roma in the temple of Augustus and Dea Roma at Leptis Magna (Boschung 2002, 8 no. 1.2 fig. 2, 2); b) one of the reliefs in the small frieze of *nationes* in the Ara Pacis (see supra n. 57 and Fig. 9 in the present paper).

## Cat. 5 – Relief with the head of a male natio

Fig. 11 a. b

Location: Arch. Mus. of Seville inv. CE2020/063-0001<sup>61</sup>

Provenance: Italica, without any further details known about the exact place of its discovery. It is not recorded in the registration books in Seville Archaeological Museum but is stored in the room with the finds from Italica, in a box registered as »several sculptures Italica«.

Material: white marble

Size: max. height 20 cm; height from the chin to the crown 11.5 cm; max. depth 7 cm (in the profile of the upper moulding); min. depth 3 cm (from the background of the figure to the rear part of the plaque); height of the upper fillet 1.2 cm; height of the lower fillet 1.8 cm

The relief represents a male head turned towards the right. Three arguments support the hypothesis that it formed part of the cycle of reliefs of *nationes* at Italica: the upper moulding is identical to the one on cat. 3; its size coincides with those of the other four reliefs and figures; and the head is so similar to that of the figure on cat. 4 that they might have been made by the same sculptor. Although this head is of a male and the other of a female, the physiognomic features are practically the same: a round face with small almond-shaped eyes and a wide but short chin. Even the way of fitting the hair on the head, the space it occupies on the forehead and the three-quarters position of the figure on the background of the relief are practically equal in the two plaques. If all these similarities are not regarded as simple coincidences, the most likely hypothesis is that cat. 5 belongs to the same decorative programme as the other four plaques from Italica. This is supported by the fact that the figure sculpted on the relief may be a *natio*. The parting in the forehead fringe is in the shape of an inverted epsilon<sup>62</sup>. This quirk is common in the iconography of *nationes*, as shown some of them from the Hadrianeum in Rome<sup>63</sup>. Male representations of tribes, provinces or regions are not known, but male figures representing cities have been documented. Examples are the images of the cities of Tmolos<sup>64</sup> and Temnos<sup>65</sup> on the base at Pozzuoli, and those of Tarquinia and Vetulonia on the base at Caere<sup>66</sup>. It is therefore likely that cat. 5 from Italica also represents a city.

The similarity between cat. 5 and some young princes in the Julio-Claudian dynasty is the best argument to determine the chronology of the relief. It suffices to compare it with some of the portraits of Lucius Caesar, Germanicus or the Young Nero to appreciate the physiognomic likenesses and to affirm its production in the Julio-Claudian period<sup>67</sup>.

Literature: unpublished

## Reconstruction of the General Design of the Reliefs

4 The five reliefs from Italica have been conserved in a bad state of fragmentation. Fortunately, the parts that are missing on some of them are present on others. This allows a quite exact reconstruction of their general design (Fig. 12). Their total height

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61 Neither the Archaeological Museum of Seville nor I have been able to find the original inventory number of this relief. For this reason, in September 2021, the museum assigned it the inventory number CE2020/063-0001. The box containing the relief indicated the following inventory numbers: 310; 3741F; 10 REP 4766F; 327; 2368; REP 2368F; 363. I do not know which of these numbers corresponded to the relief and the museum records do not provide further information. The relief was discovered by A. Peña in 2004 during a course of cataloguing and drawing of unpublished objects from Italica in the stores of the Archaeological Museum of Seville.

62 The inverted epsilon is a motif drawn from Polykleitos's works. Three sculptures attributed to the Argive master show clearly the inverted epsilon in their forehead fringes: the Hermes (D. Kreikenbom in: Beck et al. 1990, 531 f. no. 34; 533 f. no. 37), the Doryphoros (D. Kreikenbom in: Beck et al. 1990, 546 f. nos. 52, 53; 549 no. 56), and the Heracles (D. Kreikenbom in: Beck et al. 1990, 552 no. 61; 553 f. no. 63).

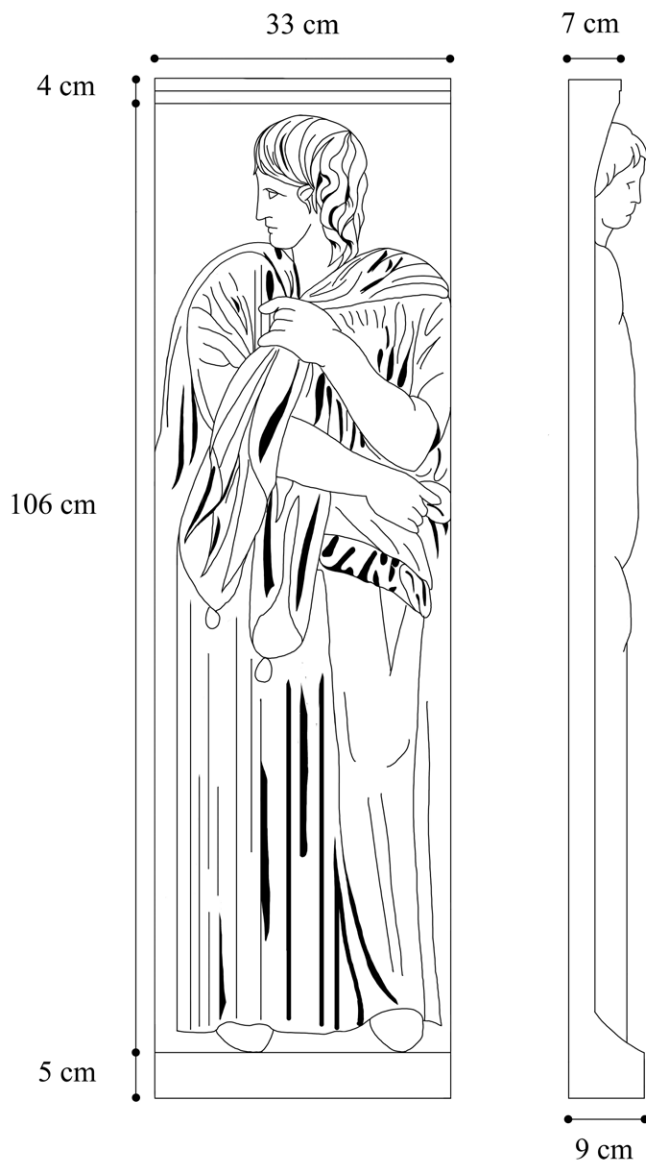
63 See for example Sapelli 1999, 30 with illustration; 54 with illustration; 69 with illustration.

64 Weisser 2008, 126 f. fig. 51.

65 Weisser 2008, 128–130 fig. 55.

66 For the representations of Tarquinia and Vetulonia on the base at Caere, see Fuchs et al. 1989, 53–57 fig. 24.

67 See for example Boschung 2002, 64 f. no. 17.3 fig. 50, 2 (Lucius Caesar); 43 no. 5.3 fig. 27, 3 (Germanicus); 26 no. 2.10 fig. 19, 1 (Nero).



12

Fig. 12: Reconstruction of the general design of the reliefs with nationes from Italica

must have been about 115 cm<sup>68</sup> and the figures sculpted on them would have been about a metre high<sup>69</sup>. The plaques finished at the top with a moulding about 4 cm high with two convex fillets<sup>70</sup>, and at the bottom with a completely plain moulding 5 cm high<sup>71</sup>. Combining mouldings of different kinds in the same relief was normal in the Roman period. For example, the *Cancelleria Reliefs* combine a plain moulding at the top and a moulding with plain/convex fillets at the bottom<sup>72</sup>, and the ›Parthian monument‹ at Ephesus possesses a moulding with fillets at the top and a plain moulding at the bottom<sup>73</sup>. Cat. 1 has been preserved complete in its width and shows that the plaques from Italica did not have side mouldings and were about 33 cm wide<sup>74</sup>.

5 The plaques are a minimum of 3 cm deep<sup>75</sup> and at most 9 cm deep<sup>76</sup>. The thickness of the upper and lower mouldings is not the same. Whereas the lower moulding on cat. 1 is 9 cm deep, the upper mouldings preserved on nos. 3 and 5 are no more than 7 cm deep. These differences in the upper and lower mouldings are not only seen on the reliefs of *nationes* from Italica. To cite only two similar examples, in the *Cancelleria Reliefs* the depth of the upper and lower mouldings differs by more than 2 cm<sup>77</sup>, and in the plaques of the ›Parthian monument‹ at Ephesus the difference reaches 30 cm<sup>78</sup>.

68 This is suggested by adding the sizes of cat. 1 and 3. The former is preserved from the neck to the lower moulding and the second from the neck to the upper moulding.

69 The body of the figure on cat. 1 is 85 cm tall as far as the neck. Comparison with the heads on the other four plaques shows that at most 15 cm would be missing. The slight differences in the sizes of the heads of the reliefs cannot be used to refute their belonging to the architectonic decoration of the same building.

Two arguments clearly prove this: although the chin-crown

measurements of cat. 3 and 5 differ in 1.5 cm, the coincidence of their upper mouldings shows that they are part of the decoration of the same edifice. Differences in the height of the figures are common in other reliefs in the Roman age. The *nationes* on the reliefs in the Sebasteion are a good example. Some of them occupy the whole height of the plaque (Smith 2013, 96 f. B4 fig. 32) or even go slightly above it (Smith 2013, 97–99 B5 fig. 34), whereas others do not reach the upper edge (Smith 2013, 93–95 B3 fig. 30).

70 For the height and appearance of the upper mouldings, see cat. 3 and 5.

71 For the height and appearance of the lower moulding, see cat. 1. The variation in the height of the upper and lower mouldings is usual in Roman reliefs. For example, on the Reliefs of the *Cancelleria*, the upper moulding is 5 cm high and the lower about twice as high (Fless et al. 2018, 22 fig. 5 a); on the plaques of the ›Parthian monument‹ at Ephesus, the upper moulding is more than twice as high as the lower one (Oberleitner 2009, 39 fig. 64; 54 fig. 106).

72 Fless et al. 2018, 31–42 figs. 8 a–f.

73 See for example Oberleitner 2009, 36 fig. 55; 40 fig. 65; 52 fig. 100; 59 fig. 116; 93 fig. 191.

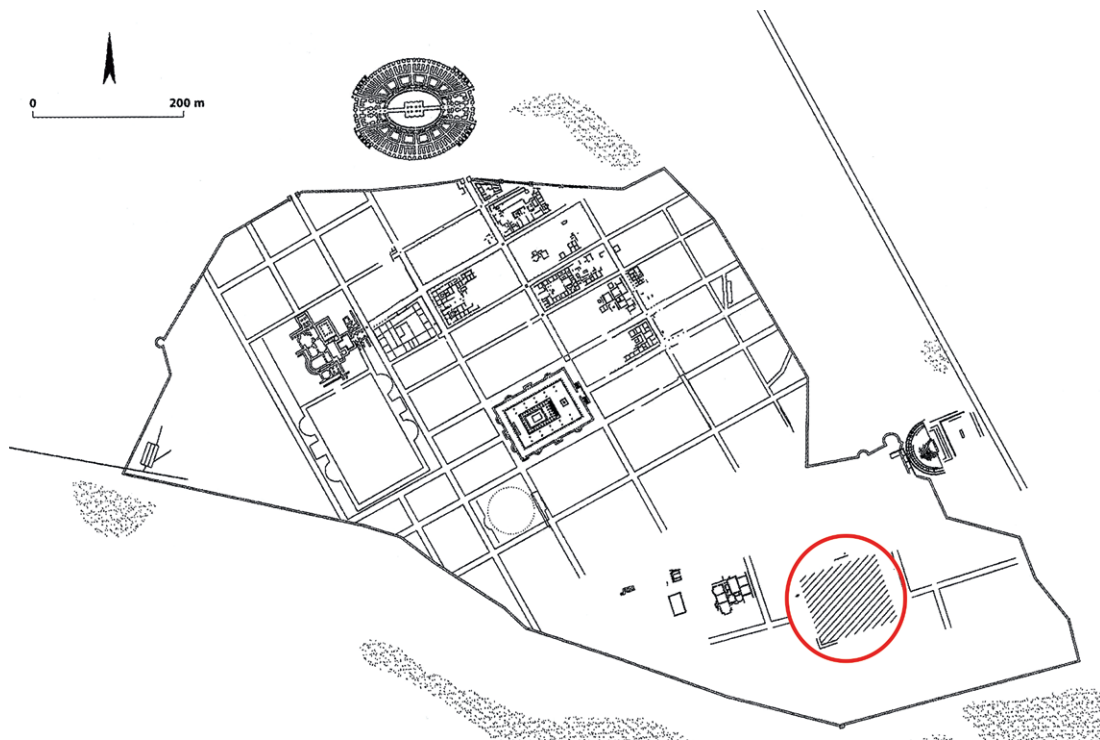
74 A similar solution can be seen on the lateral edges of the reliefs with caryatids from the ›Forum Adiectum‹ in Mérida: de la Barrera 2000, 105–107 nos. 371. 376. 377. 378 figs. 127. 130. 132. 133.

75 Cat. 1, 2 and 3 have a minimum depth of 3 cm, cat. 4 and 5 of 3.5 cm.

76 See the maximum depth of cat. 1.

77 Fless et al. 2018, 22 f. figs. 5 a, b; 34 fig. 8 b.

78 See for example Oberleitner 2009, 39 fig. 64; 67 fig. 134. The slight differences in the depth of the reliefs cannot be used to question their belonging to the decorative programme of the same edifice. Similar cases exist, such as the plaques with *nationes* in the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias. Their depth varies between 46 cm (Smith 2013, 91–93 B2 figs. 28. 29) and 36 cm (Smith 2013, 93–95 B3 figs. 30. 31). If only the depth of the back (from the background of the figures to the rear part of the plaques) of all the reliefs in the Sebasteion is taken as the point of reference, it varies between 12 and 20 cm (Smith 2013, 38).



13

## The Building

6 It is possible to establish the original location of the reliefs at Itálica because the archaeological context of one of them is known. Cat. 2 was discovered in the first official excavations at Itálica<sup>79</sup> directed by de la Cortina in 1839 and 1840<sup>80</sup>. It was found in the structures of a building that was partly excavated by de la Cortina in an area of Itálica known in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the ›Forum Square‹<sup>81</sup>. Thanks to information in de la Cortina's reports and some archaeological finds in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>82</sup>, it has been possible to place this building inside the boundaries of the city prior to the Hadrianic enlargement<sup>83</sup>, about 200 m to the southwest of the theatre<sup>84</sup> (Fig. 13).

7 The structures of the building can no longer be seen. They are hidden beneath the houses in the modern town of Santiponce, but they are known thanks to a drawing by de la Cortina<sup>85</sup> (Fig. 14). A series of structures that are difficult to interpret can be recognised<sup>86</sup>, but the L-shaped foundations of a large building stand out among them<sup>87</sup>. The excavation reports published by de la Cortina in the ›Madrid Gazette‹ on 16<sup>th</sup> April

Fig. 13: Location of the porched building in Itálica decorated with a series of reliefs with figures of nations. The circle marks the findspot of the building.

79 For a summary of the historiography and the excavations at Itálica: León 1993.

80 For de la Cortina and his work at Itálica, the most detailed information can be found in Canto 2001; Beltrán – Rodríguez 2012b.

81 The excavations in this sector began in March 1839: Beltrán – Rodríguez 2012b, 38.

82 The finds are described in detail in Hidalgo 2003, 98. See also Peña 2007, 335 n. 49.

83 Therefore, the building decorated with *nationes* was in the part of the city now known as the ›Vetus Urbs‹. This neologism is used to differentiate the city boundaries before the enlargement in the time of Hadrian, which the specialists now call the ›Nova Urbs‹. For the plan of the two areas and their boundaries: Rodríguez 1997, 112 fig. 31. The terms ›Vetus Urbs‹ and ›Nova Urbs‹ were coined by García y Bellido 1960, 73 f.

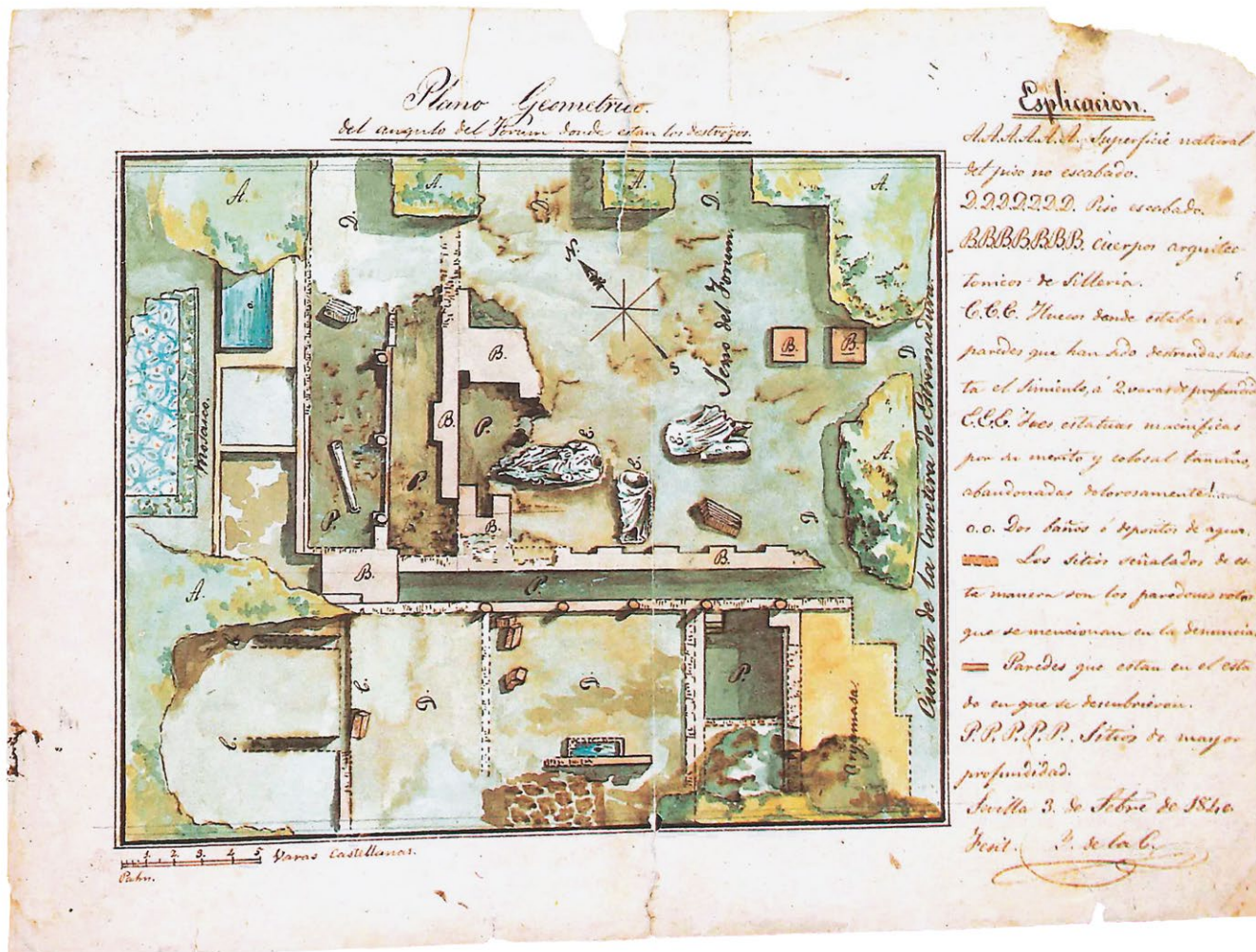
84 For the location of the structures excavated by de la Cortina, see Hidalgo 2003, 98 and the plan on page 100 fig. 4; Peña 2007, 335 f. fig. 12; Hidalgo – Márquez 2010, 58 fig. 5, 1.

85 The drawing is kept in the Archaeological Museum of Seville. See León 1995, 19 n. 41 fig. 2. It was later copied by D. de los Ríos in February 1857: Beltrán 2012, 123 fig. 1.

86 For a detailed description of these structures and the possibility that it is an accumulative floor plan formed by superimposed buildings from different times: Peña 2007, 334 f.

87 Peña 2007, 334 f.





14

Fig. 14: L-shaped foundations of the porched building in Italica decorated with a series of reliefs with figures of nations

1839 indicate that cat. 2 was found among the remains of that building<sup>88</sup>. As I imagine that it cannot be easy to obtain these reports outside Spain, a transcription of them is given below:

»Relacion de los objetos extraidos el mes de Marzo en las excavaciones que bajo mi direccion se efectúan en Itálica.

Sitio.

En el sitio designado por Matute y Puyades, coma plaza del foro, se ve la línea del argamason que corre de E. á O., cuyo frente está al Norte; y siguiendo el piso de la antigua plaza que se ha descubierto á cuatro varas de profundidad, se observan de trecho en trecho los pedestales de las estatuas que la decoraban y los trozos de columnas que formaron la galería, cuya columnata decoraba este lado que se presenta á la vista en la extensión de 40 varas de E. á O., y 32 de N. á S. En este sitio se han hallado los objetos siguientes:

Estatuas.

Una de mármol de Génova, de once pies de longitud, que representa con traje de toga consular á Trajano, cuya cabeza conserva aun intacta la áurea corona de encina; dibujo resplandeciente, buril fluido, pleguería inimitable y bajo del lienzo se ve trasparecer la musculatura con la mayor verdad. Le faltan las manos y pies.

88 De la Cortina's excavation reports were also published in the local newspapers. See »Diario de Sevilla« on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1839, 3.



Fig. 15: Drawings of the sculptures found by I. de la Cortina. No. 4 reproduces the relief with the head of a female natio in Madrid, Nat. Arch. Mus. inv. 2771 (Fig. 4).

15

Media de idem: segun sus dimensiones, la parte desde el vientre hasta los pies que posan sobre el plinto, son ocho pies, dos pulgadas: por lo grueso en sus formas y desproporcion de sus pies, como por la toga, puede creerse, aunque sea aventurado, pudiese ser Junio Bruto: su dibujo es inferior á la de Trajano, por cuya razon no la creo de la época resplandeciente. Pleguería regular, el buril fácil, pero poco acabada.

Una cabeza completa de Minerva, de un pie, dos pulgadas y cuatro líneas, cuyo dibujo excede á todo lo mas bello que se ha recolectado en todos tiempos en estas ruinas, y lo mismo en lo acabado de su ejecucion: quizá con dificultad pueda encontrarse en Roma pieza que le exceda; de la misma estatua se ha encontrado una mano, un pie, el pecho, hombro y mitad del brazo.

Idem fragmento de un bajo relieve de mármol muy quemado que representa una cabeza de una afligida matrona; buen dibujo, expresion excelente, ejecucion suave y acabada.

Un relieve de bronce que representa una matrona con una cornucopia al lado; buen dibujo en la parte de la cabeza, pecho y brazo derecho; mala ejecución en el resto: la supongo del bajo imperio.<sup>89</sup>

8 The burnt relief with the head of a sorrowful matron is cat. 2. It coincides not only in the sad expression described by de la Cortina in his report but also in the signs of being exposed to fire<sup>90</sup>. Although it has been cleaned in modern times, the photos taken in the 1990s clearly show how the left half of the face was covered by a large black soot stain<sup>91</sup>. If these two pieces of evidence are not enough, it should once again be noted that cat. 2 is also among the drawings of the sculptures found by de la Cortina (Fig. 15)<sup>92</sup>. The relief definitely came from the building excavated by de la Cortina in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and therefore the other four plaques may have decorated that complex too.

9 Since all we know are its foundations, only two aspects about this building can be claimed<sup>93</sup>. The first is that it must have played some kind of public function. In addition to the case of Italica, only five other buildings are known with series of reliefs of geographic personifications<sup>94</sup>: Sebasteion at Aphrodisias<sup>95</sup>, Forum Transitorium<sup>96</sup>, Hadrianeum<sup>97</sup>, Cordoba Theatre<sup>98</sup> and Foro Vechio<sup>99</sup> in Leptis Magna. They were all public edifices. The second is that it should be a porched building. Bearing in mind their similarity with the plaques of caryatids in Mérida (Fig. 3 a. b)<sup>100</sup>, it is likely that the function of the reliefs in Italica was also to decorate the attic of a portico. Whether they were isolated on the attic or accompanied by other iconographic elements, as for example in the case of the Hadrianeum<sup>101</sup>, is a question for which there are no archaeological data.

10 The size of the porched building at Italica is not known. De la Cortina did not excavate it completely and later excavations have not added further information in this regard. I can only think of one way to determine its size approximately: by comparing the measurements of the reliefs of *nationes* in Italica with those of the reliefs with caryatids in the ›Forum Adiectum‹ in Mérida (Fig. 3 a. b). This building is the closest

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89 »Madrid Gazette« on 16<sup>th</sup> April 1839, 3.

90 See the description of cat. 2 in Arndt – Amelung 1912, 44 no. 1731.

91 See the two figures in Vaquerizo – Noguera 1997, 200.

92 See supra n. 32.

93 It has been proposed that the large L-shaped foundations excavated by de la Cortina may have been the south-east corner of the forum in Italica (Hidalgo 2003, 98; Márquez 2008, 121; Beltrán 2009a, 37; Hidalgo – Márquez 2010, 58–60; Beltrán 2012, 125) or a building adjacent to the forum (Peña 2007, 335). Both options are conceivable, but with the little information that is available, it is not possible to prove any of them.

94 The forum in Tarragona is not included among these five buildings because I do not believe it is possible to determine if the reliefs that decorated it represented figures of barbarians (from an honorific arch: Koppel 1990, 327–332; from a chalcidicum: Mar et al. 2015, 273–278) or of *nationes* (Liverani 1995, 222 f.; Nogales 2007, 489). The presence of the base under the feet of one of the images (Koppel 1990, 328 fig. 31 c) is not a definitive argument to identify them one way or another because the barbarians on the arch at Carpentras (Gros 2002, 68 fig. 62) and the *nationes* at Aphrodisias (Smith 2013, 91–93 B2 fig. 28) are also located on a similar base. Similarly, the presence of a male figure (Koppel 1990, 329 fig. 31 e) does not prove definitively that they are barbarians because it could be a male representation of a city (for male representations of cities, see supra n. 64–66). The same doubt regarding either barbarians or *nationes* affects two reliefs found in the so-called lower Agora at Ephesus (Schneider 1986, 125–128 figs. 35, 2–4; Landskron 2005, figs. 1. 2; Strocka 2010, 47. 50 figs. 110. 111) and two reliefs found in the Basilica at Utica (Russell 2019, 216 f. figs. 8. 18).

95 The most complete study of the reliefs of *nationes* in the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias is Smith 2013.

96 The most complete studies of the reliefs of *nationes* in the *Forum Transitorium* are Del Moro 2007; Lalle 2010.

97 The most complete study of the reliefs of *nationes* in the Hadrianeum in Rome is Sapelli 1999.

98 The most complete study of the reliefs of *nationes* in the theatre in Cordoba is Márquez 2002. Together with this study, references to this cycle have been published in Ventura – Márquez 2005 (with illustrations); Nogales 2007, 489; Schattner et al. 2008, 721 n. 19; Beltrán 2009a, 36; Beltrán 2009b, 285 figs. 379. 382–384.

99 No study of this cycle of *nationes* has been published. The most detailed approach is Liverani 1995, 243, although it does not include photos of the reliefs. Photographs of them can be found in LIMC I (1981) 253 no. 40 fig. 40 s. v. Africa (M. Le Glay); LIMC VI (1992) 254 no. 7 fig. 7 s. v. Leptis Magna (R. Vollkommer). See also Floriani Squarciapino 1967, 82 f. fig. 6.

100 For the reliefs with caryatids in Mérida, see supra n. 21.

101 See for example Sapelli 1999, 32 no. 2; 36 no. 4. It has also been supposed that some decorative element was present between the plaques of the *nationes* in the *Forum Transitorium*: Lalle 2010, 26.



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typological parallel from the geographical point of view and its dimensions have been well established by different archaeological excavations:  $73.50 \times 100$  m<sup>102</sup>. The difference between the size of the plaques at Itálica ( $115 \times 33$  cm)<sup>103</sup> and those in Mérida ( $160 \times 60$  cm)<sup>104</sup> indicate that the building at Itálica must have been a little smaller. If the relative proportions of the height of the reliefs are taken as the point of reference, the building would have been about a third smaller in size ( $49 \times 67$  m).

11 The sculptural decoration of de la Cortina's building is the safest way to date it. Three colossal statues were discovered inside it<sup>105</sup>, of which two are still in the Archaeological Museum of Seville<sup>106</sup>. The first is the bottom half of a Hüftmantel statue<sup>107</sup> (Fig. 16). It can definitely be dated in the Julio-Claudian era because that typology ceased

Fig. 16: Hüftmantel statue found by I. de la Cortina inside the porched building in Itálica. Arch. Mus. of Seville inv. CE137

Fig. 17: Headless statue wearing a toga found by I. de la Cortina inside the porched building in Itálica. Arch. Mus. of Seville inv. CE93

102 For the size of the ›Forum Adiectum‹ in Mérida, see most recently Ayerbe et al. 2009b, 753.

103 For the estimation of the approximate size of the reliefs with *nationes* at Itálica, see supra § 4.

104 For the measurements of the reliefs with caryatids at Mérida, see most recently Peña 2009, 606.

105 For the definition of colossal: Ruck 2007, 50; Balty 2008, 38 n. 7; Fittschen 2010. The three colossal statues were depicted by de la Cortina in the drawing of the ›Forum Square‹ (Fig. 14) and are mentioned in his excavation report. These three statues and the cat. 2 are not the only sculptures found in de la Cortina's excavations. Another three statues from the same place have been preserved. Unfortunately, none of them is dated absolutely and therefore cannot be used to determine the chronology of the building. – a) Head of a female deity (identified by de la Cortina in his report as head of Minerva). For the sculpture: León 1995, 150 f. no. 49 with illustrations. – b) Colossal male head (identified by de la Cortina in his report as head of Trajan). For the sculpture: León 1995, 78 f. no. 21 with illustrations. – c) Fragment of a *mulleus* (mentioned by de la Cortina in his book ›Antiquities of Itálica‹, see Peña 2005, 158). For the sculpture, see infra n. 117.

106 The whereabouts of the third statue drawn by de la Cortina are unknown. It has been identified in two ways: either as a second Hüftmantel statue (see for example Beltrán – Rodríguez 2012b, 40 figs. 9, 2; 11 [central statue]); or as part of a statue of Romulus (Peña 2007, 331–333). It will only be possible to determine its identification should it appear in a collection or museum in the future.

107 León 1995, 34 f. no. 1 with illustrations. See also Post 2004, 472 f. no. IX 7 figs. 50 a. b.

to be used in portrait statues from the Flavian period onwards<sup>108</sup>. The second is a headless figure wearing a toga<sup>109</sup> (Fig. 17). Its similarity in size and way of carving to the Hüftmantel statue and its inclusion in the Ba group of Claudian figures with toga<sup>110</sup> mean that its dating in the Julio-Claudian period is also the most likely option. The same chronology can be proposed for the five reliefs with *nationes*. This is shown first by the similarity of cat. 1 with some figures with absolute dates in the Julio-Claudian period<sup>111</sup>; and second by the likenesses between *nationes* 2–5 and portraits of some members of the Julio-Claudian dynasty<sup>112</sup>. Since nothing has been found inside it that can be dated after the Julio-Claudian age, the edifice might have been built during that period<sup>113</sup>.

## The Model that Inspired the Building in Italica

12 Since 2005, it has been internationally accepted, without any dissension, that the building excavated by de la Cortina echoes the Forum of Augustus<sup>114</sup>. The main argument to justify this proposal is the supposed provenance from this building of a statue of Romulus and some *clipei*, which replicate the decoration C of the ones in the Forum of Augustus<sup>115</sup>. This hypothesis should not have been accepted so unreservedly because it is based on an unprovable premise and on a false one<sup>116</sup>. First, the statue of Romulus has been reconstructed from the fragments of a hand with a trunk and one *mulleus*<sup>117</sup>. There are more options for the interpretation of the hand<sup>118</sup>, and a *mulleus* might be used in the iconography of other people<sup>119</sup>. It cannot even be assured that the two fragments come from that same statue. Second, the *clipei* were not found in the building excavated

108 I only know of one Hüftmantel statue that might have been made after the Julio-Claudian period (Post 2004, 404 f. no. III 5 fig. 10 a) and as stated by Fittschen 2012, 70–74, its portrait might also be dated in the time of Nero.

109 Goette 1990, 124 no. 235 fig. 10, 1; León 1995, 66 f. no. 15 with illustrations.

110 Goette 1990, 35–37.

111 See supra n. 24–27.

112 See supra n. 26. 27. 39. 40. 52. 59. 60. 67.

113 Unfortunately, the find of the two colossal statues in the building is not a guarantee of its chronology. Although their size and weight make it unlikely, they are mobile objects and might have been taken there after it was built. For a similar argument: Fittschen 2012, 73 f. Even though a large percentage of the parallels used to date the five reliefs belong to the Augustan period, I think it would be imprudent to attribute the building to the reign of Augustus. It could equally have been built in a later period and the Augustan reminiscences of the reliefs may be a consequence of the faithful imitation of the iconographic programme in the *Porticus ad Nationes* at Rome.

114 See for example Dardenay 2012, 165; Goldbeck 2015b, 85; León 2020, 488 f.

115 This hypothesis was first proposed by Peña 2005; Peña 2007. For the three types of decoration of the *clipei* from the Forum of Augustus: Goldbeck 2015b, 28. For the *clipei* from Italica and their link with the ones from the Forum of Augustus: Peña 2005, 145–148; Peña 2007, 326 f.; Goldbeck 2015b, 85.

116 The search for imitations of the Forum of Augustus sometimes ought to be more cautious and objective. Identifying citations to the Forum of Augustus is very appealing and involves a high degree of scientific recognition but cannot always be proved empirically. Together with the hand and *mulleus* at Italica, the most extreme case of this tendency is a fragment of a breastplate decorated with a griffon from Mérida, which is currently identified as part of a statue of Romulus (see for example Nogales 2008, 305–312 fig. 5; Dardenay 2012, 165; Goldbeck 2015b, 72 fig. 86; León 2020, 491 fig. 10 a). The fragment from Mérida is so damaged that it is impossible to identify it. As I have argued on other occasions, with little success, it might also be part of a portrait statue (Ojeda 2015a, 186; Ojeda 2015b, 476).

117 Both fragments have been illustrated in different publications, but the most complete set of photographs of them is in Peña 2005, 148–158 figs. 6. 8. 9; Peña 2007, 328–333 figs. 5–10.

118 For example, it might be part of a statue of Mars: Ojeda 2020b, 409 f.

119 For example, in a colossal portrait statue: Eck – Mägele 2008, figs. 32, 1–3. For more candidates that might be wearing *mullei*: Goette 1988, 401–423.

by de la Cortina but in the area of the theatre<sup>120</sup>. It is more probable that they decorated one of the Augustan buildings behind the cavea<sup>121</sup>. No evidence is able to demonstrate that the edifice excavated by de la Cortina imitated the Forum of Augustus.

13 One of V. Goldbeck's observations is the most reliable starting point to solve the problem of the model that inspired the building in Italica: the typological resemblance of the *natio* on relief 1 (Fig. 1) and one of the *nationes* in the Hadrianeum (Fig. 2) suggests the existence of a common prototype for both figures<sup>122</sup>. This must have been placed in an important building in the capital of the Empire<sup>123</sup>. A fragment of the small frieze of the *nationes* on the Ara Pacis is the best option to identify this lost model. The relief is badly deteriorated but a third *natio* very similar to the other two can be recognised<sup>124</sup> (Fig. 18). Only the upper part of the torso, the start of the neck and the left shoulder are left of the original figure. It is wearing a mantle and a scarf that seems to cross in front of the chest. Its resemblance to the *nationes* in Italica (Fig. 1) and the Hadrianeum (Fig. 2) indicates that the three figures were inspired by the same prototype, which must have been part of the decoration of a building in Rome coetaneous with or previous to the Ara Pacis<sup>125</sup>. Only three buildings in the capital of the Empire with *nationes* in their decorative programmes satisfy this chronological premise: the Theatre of Pompey, the Forum of Augustus and the *Porticus ad Nationes*<sup>126</sup>.

14 The first building was decorated with a series of 14 *nationes*<sup>127</sup>. Despite this, there are no reasons to think that these were imitated in any way after Pompey's death. It was a proto-imperial monument, the precursor of the Augustan series<sup>128</sup>, which finally became more important. No member of a provincial elite in the imperial age



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Fig. 18: Relief with a *natio* from the small frieze of the Ara Pacis. Rome, Mus. Naz. Rom., Palazzo Massimo alle Terme

120 Like the fragments of the supposed statue of Romulus, the *clipei* have been illustrated in numerous publications, but the most complete set of photographs of them is in Peña 2005, 140–148 figs. 1–3; Peña 2007, 325–327 figs. 1–3. For the provenance of the *clipei*: Ahrens 2005, 62 f. Peña 2005, 158 f.; Peña 2007, 325 f. Accepting that the *clipei* were moved to the area of the theatre from another part of Italica (Peña 2005, 158–160; Peña 2007, 333 f.) is possible, but there is no archaeological information that justifies their link with de la Cortina's building.

121 For the two Augustan buildings behind the cavea, see supra n. 4.

122 Goldbeck 2015b, 86.

123 Many authors have suggested that the existence of copies of the *nationes* in different Roman buildings can only be explained if a common model existed for all of them in the capital of the Empire. For this possibility: Smith 1988, 70–75; Smith 1990, 92. 95; Wiegartz 1996, 178; Sapelli 1999, 92 f.; Smith 2013, 87. 91. 116. 118; Goldbeck 2015a, 209–215; Goldbeck 2015b, 86; Goldbeck 2017, 127–129; Goldbeck 2020, 37 f.; Goldbeck 2021, 384. – For cases in which representations of *nationes* are repeated on two different buildings, see supra n. 122 and the following list: a) Kähler 1954, 98 recognised the typological similarity between one of the *nationes* on the small frieze of the Ara Pacis and one in the Hadrianeum in Rome. – b) Wiegartz 1996 recognised the typological similarity between one of the *nationes* in the *Forum Transitorium* and the personification of the Pirousti in the Sebasteion in Aphrodisias. The relation between the two plaques has been picked up and discussed by numerous authors: see for example Smith 2013, 91; Goldbeck 2015a, 211 and n. 51. – c) Ventura – Márquez 2005, 112 recognised the typological similarity between one of the plaques decorated with *nationes* in the theatre in Cordoba and one in the Hadrianeum in Rome.

124 Kähler 1954, 99 no. 5 fig. 23; De Angelis Bertolotti 1985, 229 fig. 95, 2; Koeppl 1987, 148 no. 13/5 fig. 47. The relief forms part of a group of no more than 66 figures of *nationes*, see supra n. 47.

125 For the date of the *dedicatio* of the Ara Pacis: Settis 1988, 401. Although the oldest of the three figures is the one on the Ara Pacis, it cannot be the model for the *natio* in either Italica or the Hadrianeum. The Ara Pacis was not a monument in which the *nationes* played an important role but a secondary one subordinated to the main message of the altar: Smith 1988, 72; Goldbeck 2015a, 218. The images of geographic personifications in the procession during Augustus's funeral cannot be regarded as a possible model either (Cass. Dio 56, 34; Tac. ann. 1, 8). They were possibly based on or even might be the same as the ones that decorated the *Porticus ad Nationes*: Smith 1988, 75; Goldbeck 2015a, 214 n. 60.

126 For the representations of *nationes* in the pre-Roman period, see the summary in Smith 2013, 113 f.

127 For this building and the *nationes* that decorated it, see most recently Goldbeck 2015a, 204–209.

128 Smith 1988, 74; Smith 2013, 115; Goldbeck 2015a, 206.

would have imitated a monument symbolising the loser in the civil wars of the first triumvirate; moreover, no provincial council would have approved the construction of a similar complex. The second edifice displayed a series of *tituli gentium*, of which nothing has been preserved<sup>129</sup>. Its existence is only known through a passage of Velleius Paterculus<sup>130</sup>. It may have been a purely epigraphic monument with a list of names of *nationes*<sup>131</sup>, as in the case of the monument of *La Turbie*<sup>132</sup>. The model of the reliefs at Italica must therefore be sought in some other place. The third building is a quadriporch built by Augustus in the Campo Martio<sup>133</sup> and decorated with *simulacra omnium gentium*<sup>134</sup>. No material remains of it have been preserved and its existence is only known thanks to passages of Servius and Pliny<sup>135</sup>. They indicate that it was an independent architectonic structure on which the representations of *nationes* were the main decorative element. This differentiates it substantially from both Pompey's Theatre and the Forum of Augustus. For this reason, its *simulacra* are the most likely candidates to be the model for the *natio* of the Ara Pacis/Italica/Hadrianeum type and thus for the building in Italica as a whole.

15 We know nothing about the appearance of the *simulacra* on the *Porticus ad Nationes*<sup>136</sup>. None of them appear to have reached the present time. The only way to reconstruct their appearance is by considering their imitations in other Roman buildings<sup>137</sup>. To date, it is only supposed that the representation of the Pirousti in the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias and its copy in the *Forum Transitorium* were very close replicas of one of those Augustan *nationes*<sup>138</sup>. Another one can be now restored thanks to the copies Ara Pacis/Italica/Hadrianeum. It cannot be affirmed that the other *nationes* from Italica followed the Augustan models, although that would be the most likely scenario. The similarity of cat. 3 and 4 (Fig. 6. 8) and the figures with a hat and double ribbon on the Ara Pacis (Fig. 7. 9) suggests that they were all based on common prototypes. They may have been referencing another two of the missing *nationes* from the *Porticus ad Nationes* in Rome.

129 For the *tituli gentium* in the Forum of Augustus, see most recently La Rocca 2011, 1000; Smith 2013, 116 f.; Goldbeck 2015a, 201–204.

130 Vell. 2, 39. The citation has been related to an inscribed base in the Forum of Augustus, which was supposedly crowned by a representation of the province of Baetica (Alföldy 1989; Liverani 1995, 221; Liverani 1997, 95). However, this hypothesis should be rejected because the inscription does not specify anything about what was on the base. Therefore, a statue of Augustus is the most likely option (Smith 2013, 117). Other authors have posited that there was a tripod on the base (La Rocca 1995, 77; Gros 2006, 123). For the difficulty in linking the inscribed base of the province of Baetica to the *tituli gentium*, see also Spannagel 1999, 340. Monterroso 2009 has suggested a link between the *tituli gentium* at Velleius Paterculus, the *Porticus ad Nationes*, the Forum of Augustus and a fragment of the *Forma Urbis*. For the same reasons as those given by Goldbeck 2015a, I think that this hypothesis is unlikely. See also Ungaro 2011, 54 f. Schäfer 1998, 91 f. has combined the news of Velleius Paterculus with Ov. fast. 5, 561 to suggest the presence of representations of *nationes* and *tropaea* in the Forum of Augustus. Against this possibility, see infra n. 131.

131 This possibility is supported by the fact that no representations of *nationes* have ever been documented among the numerous remains of statues from the Forum of Augustus and its provincial imitations. For this argument, see Smith 2013, 117; Goldbeck 2015a, 203 f.

132 For the monument of La Turbie, see the summaries in Binninger 2006 and Castellvi 2015, 237–244.

133 Goldbeck 2015a, 216 f.

134 For this building, see most recently Goldbeck 2015a; Goldbeck 2017, 127–129.

135 Serv. Aen. 8, 721; Plin. nat. 36, 39. For the possibility that *Porticus ad Nationes* was not its official name and that it may have been *Porticus Vipsania*: Goldbeck 2015a, 216.

136 It is likely that the figures in the *Porticus ad Nationes* were statues. The *nationes* in Aphrodisias are the best argument to support this. They were on a pedestal, which is not necessary in the case of a relief. Therefore, their models might be sculptures on inscribed bases. The process of reducing a *ronde-bosse* model to a relief has been documented on other occasions in the Roman era. The clearest examples are the statues of caryatids in the Forum of Augustus, transformed into reliefs in the ›Forum Adiectum‹ in Mérida. For this reasoning, see Goldbeck 2015a, 213 f. There is no information about the year of the inauguration of the *Porticus ad Nationes*. If it is accepted that the Ara Pacis copied its *nationes*, it must have been inaugurated before the year 9 B.C. For the date of the dedication of the Ara Pacis, see supra n. 125.

137 Goldbeck 2020, 38.

138 For both plaques, see supra n. 123 no. b.

16 Bearing in mind the wide semantic range of the term *natio*<sup>139</sup>, it is not certain what types of people were represented on the Augustan building. Epigraphs preserved on the reliefs of *nationes* in the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias suggest that not only provinces were depicted, but these may have also alternated with tribes, kingdoms or islands<sup>140</sup>. Relief 5 (Fig. 11 a. b) from Italica also allows the possibility of cities to be added as part of the decoration of Augustus's *Porticus ad Nationes*<sup>141</sup>.

## Conclusion

17 A porched building in Italica was decorated with a series of reliefs with figures of *nationes*. The edifice was excavated in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century by de la Cortina and is now buried beneath the town of Santiponce. It was located about 200 m southwest of the theatre in Italica. Of its original appearance, we only possess a drawing of its foundations and five reliefs, which are distributed between three Spanish museums. Although the figures on the reliefs could be identified as *nationes* thanks to their iconographic details, the absence of inscriptions prevents us knowing which type of people they were and propose names for them. Only in the case of relief 5, it can be affirmed that the image of a city was sculpted on it. Bearing in mind that in both the Sebasteion at Aphrodisias and the shrine of Dea Caelestis in Dougga different types of people were mixed – tribes, cities, provinces, regions, etc. –, it is possible to extrapolate a similar alternation in Italica and suppose that different types of ethnic groups appeared among its *nationes*.

18 The architectonic complex at Italica must have been built in the Julio-Claudian period and its model was the *Porticus ad Nationes* in Rome<sup>142</sup>. Since no material remains of the latter building have been found, it is only possible to approach its appearance through the copies of its decorative programme. From this point of view, the identification of a new building with *nationes* in Italica has enabled further data to be added to our knowledge of the Augustan construction: the approximate appearance of three of its *nationes* and the presence of cities among them.

19 The significance of the *Porticus ad Nationes* has recently been studied by Goldbeck<sup>143</sup>. It was the physical embodiment not only of Augustus's military success but also of the liberation of the Empire by means of the *pax Augusta*<sup>144</sup>. The copy at Italica therefore demonstrated the commitment of the city to the Augustan concept of *consensus universorum*<sup>145</sup>. The emulation of buildings in Rome was not simply an altruistic initiative of the provincial oligarchs. It was a resort that they used to further their integration in the new imperial elites<sup>146</sup>. Italica was the city in Baetica that provided

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139 For the different kinds of people to which the term *natio* might refer, see supra n. 16.

140 For a list of the names of the *nationes* represented in the Sebasteion in Aphrodisias, see Smith 2013, 110.

141 For the presence of cities in cycles of *nationes*, together with provinces and regions, see supra n. 15.

142 The study of the reception of Augustan iconographic motifs in the provinces of the Empire has been restricted almost exclusively to the imitation of the Forum of Augustus (for this phenomenon, see most recently Goldbeck 2015b). However, other buildings and decorative programmes from the time of Augustus were emulated outside Rome (see for example Schäfer 1998; Trillmich 2010; Goldbeck 2020). As Lipps 2016 has demonstrated, the so-called Dreifuss-Denkmäler of Rome and Athens – the presence of copies of these monuments has been proposed in other parts of the Empire (Schäfer 1998, 69 n. 97) – should be eliminated from the list of Augustan imitations. For the imitation in the provinces of other buildings in Rome: Goldbeck 2015b, 160; Goldbeck 2017, 129; Goldbeck 2021. The *Porticus ad Nationes* was one of the Augustan buildings most imitated in the provinces. This has been suggested on several occasions by Goldbeck (Goldbeck 2015a, 213; Goldbeck 2015b, 86; Goldbeck 2017, 127–129; Goldbeck 2020, 37 f.; Goldbeck 2021, 384) and has now been confirmed by this new edifice in Italica.

143 Goldbeck 2015a, 218.

144 For the concept of *pax Augusta*: R. Gest. div. Aug. 12–13. See also Eck 2006, 89.

145 For the concept of *consensus universorum*: R. Gest. div. Aug. 34. See also Eck 2006, 36.

146 Goldbeck 2015b, 160 f.



that largest number of senators in the time of Vespasian<sup>147</sup>. This shows that the urban policy of the authorities in Italica during the Julio-Claudian period, in which references to Augustan architecture in Rome played a major role<sup>148</sup>, was not in vain and bore the desired fruit some years later<sup>149</sup>.

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<sup>147</sup> Caballos 1994, 82. For the senators from Baetica in the time of Vespasian: Caballos 1993. For the senators from Italica in the time of Vespasian: Caballos 1990, 44 f. no. 8; 305–313 no. 167; 314 f. no. 168. Italica is the city in Hispania from which the largest number of Roman senators came: Caballos 2009, 278.

<sup>148</sup> Italica imitated Augustan architectonic complexes and decorative elements in the capital of the Empire on at least two occasions. One was the emulation of the *Porticus ad Nationes* and the other was the copy of the *clipei* with decoration C from the Forum of Augustus. For this last aspect, see supra n. 115.

<sup>149</sup> A similar argument in Peña 2007, 341.

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