



DAILY LIFE

Despite the fact that at the moment there is not a lot of knowledge about the inhabitants of the city of El Forau de la Tuta, we can try to get an idea of what their daily life would be like from the few remains located in the site, from the known vestiges in similar settlements and from the news of the written sources.

According to these data, we think that the city of El Forau de la Tuta would be founded around the Change of Era, in the reign of Augustus, as a pilgrim community (of non-privileged status) belonging to the *Conventus Caesaraugustanus* within the province of Hispania Citerior, although it is possible that some of its inhabitants enjoyed Roman citizenship very soon. Although this right of full citizenship would be extended from the end of the first century thanks to the fact that in the times of the Flavian emperors this community would become a Latin municipality, most of the population would have had a pilgrim statute during the first decades of life of the city and the Latin citizenship after the municipal concession.

Initially, the most of the population would be free people, mostly pilgrims whose names were still indigenous, arising from the Basque-Aquitanic language of the area, such as Agirnes, Ausagesius, Andere or Hyahenis. Such a society would, from its origin, be remarkably stratified, with a local landed aristocracy formed by a handful of families at the top of the social pyramid, related one each other through family unions and controlling both wealth and institutions through of the monopoly of the magistracies, the civic priesthoods and the local senate or *ordo decurionum*. These citizens received relatively quickly the Roman citizenship. The Valerios family was one of the most important. The rest of the population was divided into small owners and tenants, artisans, merchants and shopkeepers who gradually changed their local names to Latin names such as Firma or Fronto. At the base would be the slaves, normally dedicated to the hardest work in the field, in domestic work or in manufacturing workshops.

Theoretically, women were on the margins of public life and economic activities: they could not access magistracies, assemblies and most of the priesthoods; they were also outside, in theory, of business. However, we know quite a few cases of women who, overcoming these legal and customary impediments, played prominent roles in the economy and social life of their cities, probably also here.

As it was normal in Roman urban communities, many of the city's inhabitants lived in small rural settlements in their territory, some of which became large palatial villas from the 4th century onwards, such as Rienda (Artieda). However, community activities of a civic-political, religious, economic or recreational nature would take place in the urban center of El Forau de la Tuta. In the forum, the public heart of the city, still not precisely located, temporary markets would be established and civic and religious ceremonies would take place, such as elections to magistracies and priesthoods, debates and political speeches, sessions of the *ordo decurionum*, administrative acts, sales, shows of all kinds, religious sacrifices or banquets and other community celebrations. It would, however, be bathing in the public baths, whose remains have recently been discovered in the accidental sector of the Forau de la Tuta, one of the most popular and daily



activities among the inhabitants of the city as in the rest of the cities of the Roman Empire.

ECONOMY

We can assume that the main economic activities of the inhabitants of the community of El Forau de la Tuta would be related to agriculture and livestock, taking advantage of the fertility of the red soils of the terraces on both banks of the Aragón River for the production of cereals and other rainfed crops, as well as livestock exploitation of the surrounding unplowed areas and mountain meadows. The economic exploitation of the forest and the minerals of the Pyrenees must not be discarded. It is also reasonable to think that the city developed manufacturing activities related to the transformation of raw materials into products, such as wine, meat, skins, bone or wool. In relation to these activities, it is remarkable the conservation of local technical traditions such as the grinding of the cereal in domestic rotary hand mills, several of which have come down to us, when in other Hispanic cities this activity was carried out in larger establishments and productive capacity.

However, as in any Roman city, the exchange of products would be another of the main economic activities. In this regard, we have to assume that the urban settlement of El Forau de la Tuta would work as the venue for the local and regional market, where agricultural products produced in the surroundings of the city and processed goods were exchanged, but also those imported from regions both near and far. In this sense, the archaeological findings show that throughout the 1st and 4th centuries, products from abroad arrived in abundance in the city, for daily use such as terra sigillata tableware or kitchen ceramics from the Ebro valley, from Gaul and even North Africa, as well as from far distant lands. A very interesting case of long-distance importation of these luxury products is the monumental sculpture in fine-grained white marble from Luni (Carrara, northern Italy), one of the fragments of which we preserve in this Exhibition, the high cost and difficulty of transport reveals the great efficiency of the goods distribution networks through both the sea and roads such as the one that ran through the Canal de Berdún on the left bank of the Aragón passing through the outskirts of the city (current Camino from Santiago).