

# COMPLUTUM

When Alcalá de Henares was a Roman city

# COMPLUTUM

- Complutum is located in the east of the Community of Madrid and west from the city of Alcalá de Henares, one of the most interesting zones of the old Hispania. In the municipal boundary of Alcalá de Henares have been found remains from the Bronze and Iron ages. The most important ones, before the Roman age, are Celtiberians (these peninsula's inhabitants lived between the 13th century and the 1st century b.C. ).
- The old Celtiberian city, whose name could have been Ikesancom Kombouto, was located in the Cerro de San Juan del Viso (or El Gurugú). After Roman conquest, it became COMPLUTUM. During its first period it remained in the Cerro de San Juan del Viso. Later, in the 1st century a.C., it was moved next to the Henares river, where the archeological remains are.

# COMPLUTUM



Reconstrucción hipotética de la ciudad de Complutum hacia el año 300 d.C. Alcalá de Henares.

# Una ciudad romana

- When we visit the archeological remains of Complutum, we can notice what could have been a big city of the 1st century a.C., perfectly settled, with monumental buildings in the Forum (center of the city) like civil basilica, supplies market or the baths, with porched streets (like the calle Mayor of Alcalá de Henares), workshops, shops or big houses. A modern and prosper city built under emperors Augustus and Claudius government, in the mid of the 1st century a.C.. In the 3rd century a.C. the Curia was built, where there were baths before. A new market and new baths were also built.
- Complutum inhabitants were called Complutenses.

# Una ciudad romana

What are we going to see?:

- Monumental front: front of the criptoportico which imitated theatre's decorations.
- Paredón del Milagro: Curia and basilica's northern front, where the tradition locates the martyrdom of the Saint-children Justo y Pastor in 305 a.C.
- Termas norte-Curia: Public baths built in the 1st century a.C and transformed in Curia in the 3rd century a.C.
- Basílica: Building made in the 1st century a.C and rebuilt in the 3rd century a.C.
- Termas sur: Baths built in the 3rd century a.C, when the north baths were eliminated with the fórum's reform.
- Pórtico sur: comercial Street which closes the fórum's square by the south. Built in the 1st century a.C.
- Market: building with a central courtyard, done in the 1st century a.C, which was wrecked in the 3rd century a.C.
- Roman houses like Marte's one.
- Sewers and streets.
- La Casa de los Grifos. Characteristical domus where many mural pictures have been recovered.

# Una ciudad romana

The city of Complutum had a straight base, with streets which crossed themselves in a right angle rounding the big streets, cardo máximo (north-south) and decumano máximo (east-west), and it was surrounded by a Wall with four gates and big towers. It had many types of buildings. The city was divided in neighbourhoods or Regio. Where the cardo and the decumano crossed, there was the forum.

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# Una ciudad romana

- **FORO:** It was the center of politic, economic and religious life in the city. There can be found the most important buildings, like temples, the basilica, the curia, the macellum (market), the auguraculum, termas and the most important houses.
- **AUGURACULUM:** Auguraculum is a building made for the predictions of the augurs and other priests, and was fundamental for the life of the citizens and the public life. There were found two offering pools and small deposits for animal sacrifices.

# Una ciudad romana

- **TERMAS:** Public baths, where everyone went not only to wash but to make relationships and businesses. Complutum had two termas.
- **BASÍLICA CIVIL:** Public building where there were done financial transactions, like a bank. There were also courts, or civil meetings. Its base was composed by three or five corridors separated by pillars. Here, Justo and Pastor were judged. They were the saint-children of Alcalá de Henares. The best conserved Wall is called Paredón del Milagro.



- **Shops:** Complutum's streets were full of shops. The most common was the taberna. There were also bakeries (pristinum) and laundries (fullonica). *There were also thermoplolium (tabernas for hot drinks) and caupona ( a little restaurant to have lunch).*
- **NECROPOLIS** (graveyards). It's located in the accesing routes of the cities.

- **CRIPTOPORTICO.** Underground gallery enlightened with high Windows, made to avoid the differences in the ground. Over it, another buildings were built.
- **CURIA:** Building where the local senate met.



# La casa romana



atrio  
tablinum  
peristilos  
cubiculum

# La casa romana

Mars' house.

- It's an example of a domus in Complutum, which belonged to the "atrium houses", built for a family. Its main element is the atrium, a courtyard without pillars with an impluvium in its center to take water from rain, surrounded by rooms (cubiculum), kitchen (culina), dining room (triclinium) and a room to represent the lord of the house (tablinum).

# La casa romana

- Roman house's structure:
  - Before you know Mars' house, you have to know some things about Roman houses. There were three types of houses:
    - -Domus: Isolated and biggest houses made for richest families. We can compare it to our mansions.
    - -Little houses: regrouped in Insulae (neighbourhoods), they were houses for people with Little resources. They were only known in Roma and Ostia
    - Villa: It was a countryside house for richest families, with open spaces for agricultura.

# La casa romana

- Now we'll do a tour of a domus. We'll enter through a corridor (fauces) to a square courtyard: atrium. Atrium has a deposit to take water from rain, (impluvium). The roof is made to carry the rain water to the impluvium.
- Beside the atrium there are the rooms. Kitchen (culina) and chambers (cubiculae). In the atrium it was the lararium (altar to pray). In the other side is the tablinum, which was an open room made for the cult of the ascendant. From the tablinum we can access to the peristilum, which is a porched courtyard with a garden in its center. Peristilum is also surrounded by rooms, and sometimes it has an upper floor. Biggest houses usually had a little farm (hortus).

# La decoración de los suelos: los mosaicos

- Mosaic comes from the term opus musivum (inspired by muses). Mosaic is a decorative work consisted on covering the pavement with a picture made of small shards of Stone. Each shard is called tessera.
- Mosaics can be:
  1. **opus tessellatum**: the Mosaic which covers all its surface with tesseras.
  2. **opus signinum**: only the geometrical design is made of White tesseras, while the rest is a pink mortar base.
  3. **opus sectile**: Mosaic made of big marble shards, put as a puzzle.

# Los mosaicos

Materials . A Mosaic required many tesseras. Tesseras can be obtained from shards of marble. There were also crystal tesseras, used to form the sea and blue objects. Apart of tesseras, it was needed a component, which was the mortar, made of water, lime, sand and brick dust. The lime was the main component.



# La Casa de Hippolytus

- Opened in 1999, is the first archeological place in the Community of Madrid which is prepared to be visited. Located in the suburbs of Complutum, it was a school. It was also a place to entertain with games and religious, made for young people of the richest families.
- Although it was built in the 1st century a.C, remains belong to a reform done in the 4th century. In the next century it was used as a catholic church and a graveyard.

# La Casa de Hippolytus

- Hippolytus' house presents a structure characteristic of the mediterranean house, with a central courtyard, which is used as a hall, paved with two mosaics: one with geometrical decoration and the other with a fishing scene. This one is signed by Hippolytus, a Mosaic master from the north of Africa, slave of the rich family of the Annios, school patrons.



# La Casa de Hippolytus

- Rooms:
- Daily activities: the building has baths with two pools (frigidarium or cold-water pool), rooms with heating with hypocaust (underground vault for the circulation of the air) caldarium or hot-water pool and tepidarium, with warm water.
- Religious activities: there is a trapezoid room which has been interpreted as a chapel made for Diana the Huntress. During the excavation a part of a statue of that goddess had been recovered.
- Formation activities: the building has a place for meetings, composed by eight rooms (exedras) with benches located outside for school activities.

# La Casa de Hippolytus

- The garden was very beautiful and much bigger than the remains. It had elms and oaks. There have been found remains of jasmines and cedars. It also could have had a little zoo with exotic animals, like pelicans.



# La Casa de Hippolytus

- Latrines (toilets) and a kitchen where many plates were made. Latrines were very common in schools. In the perimeter of the stance were conduits. As we can see in hyppolitus' house, latrines were shared by the inhabitants of the building.

