

Roman Social influences on Spain

Historical Study A

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الملخص باللغة العربية
التأثيرات الاجتماعية الرومانية
على اسبانيا: دراسة تاريخية

تناقش هذه الورقة التأثيرات الاجتماعية للوجود الروماني في إسبانيا، وكيفية إصلاح الرومان كل من التاريخ والجغرافيا فيه. وكان لجهود الرومان التي بدأت منذ وقت الجمهوري في السيطرة على اسبانيا انعكاساتها على المواطنين والرومان كذلك، و في هذه الورقة سأحاول معرفة انعكاسات إيجابية وسلبية على كلا الجانبين، وذلك لحكم الرومان، وكيف أنهم كانوا قادرين على الإشراف على مثل هذه المقاطعة الغنية. وبالتالي فإن الورقة التالية تنتهج النهج التاريخي بدءاً من الجمهورية الرومانية مروراً بالامبراطورية الرومانية حتى وقت "فلافيانس".

Abstract
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This paper discusses the social influences of the Roman presence in Spain, and how the Romans reformed both the history and the geography of it . The efforts of the Romans which began since the republican time in controlling Spain had its reflections on the natives and the Romans as well . In this paper I will try to figure out the positive and negative reflections on both sides, in order to judge the Romans, and how they were able to supervise such a wealthy provinc . So the paper is following the historical approach starting with the Roman republic passing by the early Roman empire till Flavians' time.

Introduction

This paper discusses the social influences of the Roman presence in Spain, and how the Romans reformed both the history and the geography of it . The efforts of the Romans which began since the republican time in controlling Spain had its reflections on the natives and the Romans as well . In this paper I will try to figure out the positive and negative reflections on both sides, in order to judge the Romans, and how they were able to supervise such a wealthy province. So the paper is following the historical approach starting with the Roman republic passing by the early Roman empire till Flavians' time .

The Roman senate first assigned Spain as a provincia in 218 BC. According to Livy , the meeting held probably in March , ordered that Hispania should be one of the two areas named for Cornelius , the consul of the year , the other being " Africa with Sicily " for Sempronius ¹. After 197 BC. Spain appeared on the annual list of provinciae in the form of two areas under the supervision of Marcus Claudius Marcellus ² , Hispania citerior and

¹ Livius ,21.17.1.

" nominatae iam antea consulibus provinciae erant; tum sortiri iussi. Cornelio Hispania, Sempronio Africa cum Sicilia evenit. "

² Livius , 43.15.3.

Hispania ulterior , nearer and further Spain³ . Some scholars think that Spain remained under the Roman control until the Vandal invasions in the fifth century AD.⁴

We know from Strabo⁵, earliest writer, who deals with the geography and demography of Spain, that it is difficult to write about the people of the Iberian peninsula owing to the smallness of the units into which they are divided⁶. It is clear that the first interest that Rome displayed in the Iberian peninsula was not the result of any concern with the country itself , nor even with its natural resources or its inhabitants . The Romans were engaged in Spain because of the presence of Carthaginians , and in particular the Barcid family . Here I would like to refer to the significant effect of both the Romans and the allied Italian troops on the local populace ,particularly in the places where they were based

" urbana C. Sulpicio, peregrina C. Decimio obtigerat; Hispaniam M. Claudius Marcellus, Siciliam Ser. Cornelius Lentulus, Sardiniam P. Fonteius Capito, classem C. Marcius Figulus erat sortitus. consulum Cn. Servilio Italia, Q. Marcio Macedonia obvenit; Latinisque actis Marcius extemplo est profectus."

³ Plinius , NH , 3.4. ; about the natural resources :3.4.118-119.

⁴ J.S. Richardson , *Hispaniae : Spain and the Development of Roman Imperialism 218- 82 BC*, Cambridge ,2004,p.1.

⁵ Strabo , geographer , one of the earliest writers from the eastern Mediterranean , he wrote about Spain under Augustus and Tiberius at the end of the first century BC and the beginning of the first century AD.

⁶ Strabo, *Geography* , 3.4.19

regularly over so long a period such as Emporion , Tarraco , and New Carthage .

Spain and the late republic

Absence of the trading settlements ,such as the Greek , Phoenician and Carthaginian colonists which had been established in the peninsula between the eighth and the third centuries BC , indicates that the Romans and Italians who came in increasing numbers in the wake of the Roman armies , were able to benefit from their military presence and they did not separate urban facilities to carry on their business . All these efforts led to a great development that affected the civilian population of the peninsula with whom they used their diplomatic ways since they had approached Saguntum and had been presented with a number of Iberian hostages ,previously held by the Carthaginians ,whom they had returned to their own families , thus gaining more of the goodwill that was essential for their control of the region⁷.

In 210 B.C P. Scipio was sent as a commander in Spain . Here I would like to refer to the contacts between the commanders and the local populace , resulting from the continuation of the provincial from a year to another ,

⁷ Polybius , 3.97.6-99.9; Livius , 22.22; Zonaras ,9.1.

formed the basis of the structures which were to determine the life of the province . Taxation and tribute , relations with local communities and the placing of new settlements were all part of the activity of a Roman commander in Spain in the second century B.C, and these , along with the legal decisions that accompanied them made up a large part of what it was to be a governor in a province of the empire. In Spain as elsewhere in the Mediterranean World , the appearance of the Romans and Italians to exploit the agricultural and mineral resources and the response of the local peoples to their arrival became observable in the latter part of the century.

In 205 B.C and after P. Scipio had been elected consul, according to Livy , he brought into the senate an embassy from the people of Saguntum to thank the Romans for the benefits brought to them by the work of the two Scipio brothers and specially by him. These had relieved them from the menace of the Carthaginians and put them in a strong position with respect to their neighbours . They asked permission to make a thank- offering to Jupiter , best and the greatest , and requested that those benefits that had been gained by the Roman generals should be maintained through the authority of the senate ⁸

⁸ Livius , 28.39.1-16.

In the second half of the second century, we can see that the effects of the Roman presence on Spain became increasingly evident in other ways, which demonstrates the Roman presence impact on the region of the presence of the Romans. Those Italians who are said to have flocked to the mining area around New Carthage were actually living in a region in which there had previously been only distant contact with Italy ⁹ . Later on after the outbreak of the civil wars both against Sertorius and that between Caesar and the Pompeians, it caused immense physical damage in the areas on which they took place. Pompeius wrote to the senate in 74 describing how that part of Hispania citerior had been ravaged either by himself or by Sertorius ¹⁰

The Roman presence in Spain caused as well a serious problem about determining the nature of its increase which is the difficulty of distinguishing Roman residents in Spain from those who use Roman names but were born in Spain . Velleius Paterculus , the historian wrote under the emperor Tiberius , describes Cornelius Balbus , who was born in Gades and acquired citizenship from Pompeius during the war against Sertorius , as non

⁹ Diodorus Siculus , 5.36.

Diodorus describes a large numbers of Italians coming to Spain in order to make a fortune in the silver mines

¹⁰ Sallustius , Hist.,2.98.9.

Hispaniensis natus ,sed Hispanus, that is , not born a Roman citizen resident in Spain but a native Spaniard ¹¹ .

The Legio Vernacula was one of two legions of the Pompeian army in 49 and it included those who were born in Spain, while the others in the second legion , were described as " became provincial " as a result of their prolonged residence in Spain ¹² .

Spain in the time of the early Roman empire

In 27 when the senate insisted that August should remain in charge at least of the military provinces¹³ , he proceeded to leave Rome on a new military campaign , he went first to Gaul , and was expected to begin an invasion of Britain , but as he faced a census in Gaul , he crossed the Pyrenees into Spain¹⁴ .

The emperor himself wrote about these campaigns in his autobiography , giving the war in Spain a special interest to ancient writers , such as Dio Cassius who concentrates on the activities of August himself and how he fell ill in the process, which encouraged some scholars to think that the seven Roman legions had not succeeded in controlling the area in the two campaigns of 26 and

¹¹ Velleius Paterculus ,2.51

¹² Bell.Alex.58.3.

¹³ Dio Cassius , 53.3-21.7.

¹⁴ Dio Cassius , 53.22.5.

25¹⁵, and these campaigns were the consequence of the agreement between August and the senate in 27 .

According to Dio Cassius, the agreement of 27 BC., divided the area into three parts , with Baetica being a province of people and the senate , while the areas of Tarraco (Hispania citerior) and Lusitania were of the emperor¹⁶ . This process gave the emperor the right of choosing who was to go to " his" province , while in principle it was the senate who allotted the rest , the Roman in their empire did not only use division of Spain to guarantee their control over it , but they also used founding new coloniae such as Emerita Augusta (modern Merida) , located on the river Anas (Gaudiana) , from Dio Cassius we know about the campaigns of both 26 and 25 . As he described the end of those wars, he asserted that August discharged the older of his soldiers and founded for them a city called Augusta Emerita¹⁷ , here it may be convenient to mention that the very first settlement made by the Romans in Spain was Italica

¹⁵ J. Syme , " The Conquest of North – West Spain " , pp.104-6 ; P. Le Roux , *L'armee romaine* , pp.59-65.

¹⁶ Dio Cassius , LIII.12.4-5.

¹⁷ Dio Cassius , 53.26.1. The name Emerita echoes the Latin word Emeritus used for (a time – served veteran soldier)

*which was founded by Scipio in 206 , to provide a home for the wounded veterans*¹⁸ .

*So although Spain had been seized by the Romans since the time of the republic , it could invade Rome itself by donating the Romans one of its emperors and many Senators of the Roman senate in Rome itself, particularly in the time of Galba , who remained important under Trajan and Hadrian*¹⁹ . *The phenomenon of a substantial and increased number of senators from Spain in the first decades of the second century continued through the reigns of the Antonine emperors and it appeared in the case of Narbonese Gaul as well*²⁰ .

¹⁸ *Scipio established colonia in the foothills of the Sierra Morena , at Italica (modern Santiponce 8km north of Seville) . This settlement was native land of the Ulpia , Trajan and Hadrian's family . see : Appian , Ib., 38.153; SHA, De Vitae Hadriani , 1.1. " Origo imperatoris Hadriani vetustiora Picentibus, posterior ab Hispaniensibus manat; si quidem Hadria ortos maiores suos apud Italicam Scipionum temporibus resedisse in libris vitae suae Hadrianus ipse" , David Magie , Ainsworth O'Brien – Moore ,and Susan Helen Ballou (eds.) , SHA = (Scriptores Historiae Augustae) vol. 1,1982 , Blackwell , London ; Elizabeth Speller , Following Hadrian . A Second - Century Journey Through the Roman Empire , Oxford University Press , 2003 , p.77; Stewart Perowne , Classical lives : Hadrian , Croom Helm , Australia , 1986 , p.22.*

¹⁹ *Ronald Syme , ' Partisans of Galba ' , Historia 31, 1982, pp.460-83; Idem , ' Spanish Pomponii. A study in nomenclature' , Gerion 1, 1983, pp.249-66.*

²⁰ *Idem , ' Spaniards at Tivoli ' , Ancient Society 13/ 14 , 1982- 3 , pp.241-63.*

Examples of Some Roman Social influences on Spain

In order to form a full picture of life in one of the provincial capitals of Spain during the early Roman empire , we have here to mention a fragment which had been edited by P. Annius Florus , a poet who exchanged verses with Hadrian about the desirability of being a Caesar or a poet , the fragment is entitled “ Virgilius poeta an orator”’. We have been told by Macropius that it discussed a very popular theme in the works that belong to the early Roman empire which was whether Virgil should be considered as a rhetorician rather than a poet²¹ , Florus describes how he left Rome after a disappointment result in a literary competition in the reign of Domitian , and after wandering around the eastern Mediterranean and then through Gaul , had come across the Pyrenees to settle in the city of Tarraco “ Colonia Iulia Urbs Triumphalis”’

Florus in the mentioned fragment described to one of his friends how the inhabitants of the city were decent , quite , frugal and discerningly hospitable . He mentioned also its ancient temple of Jupiter not only as it had been established by the Roman military standards , but also as a home of the aristocracy , and from his answer about his

²¹ Macrobius , Sat., 5.1.1.

job in the city , we know that he has been working as a literature teacher to the children in this city for five years.

The Upper town of Tarraco during the Flavian reign had been in the late third century BC a military base used by the Scipio brothers to wage the wars against the Carthaginians , it was given a new forum used for the provincial assembly of Hispania citerior , was 300 meters broad and 120 meters deep. The hillside , had at its foot a circus , for the horse- and Chariot – racing , measured 340 meters by 116 meters. There was also a temple placed in the center of the northern side on the highest point of the hill. This temple was the focus for the provincial imperial cult as it was erected in the reign of Tiberius who dedicated it to Augustus ²². All the marble decorations of these buildings appeared to have been modeled as the Forum of Augustus at Rome ²³.

Although in the time of August and Tiberius, Italica was a mere small quite town , but it had a theater built in the early Julio – Claudian period , and a set of bathes close by , which probably belong to the reign of Trajan , while in the reign of Hadrian the size of the small town was enlarged with laid out streets , fine drainage , and

²² Tacitus , *Annales*, 1.78.

²³ Sean Keay , *Roman Spain* , London , 1988, pp.120-3.

large public buildings , such as a new forum ²⁴, a magnificent set of bathes and a big amphitheater . It is worthy to refer also to the results of the excavations of 1991 such as the fine houses and the bathes complex with a water tower, with a large gymnasium building ²⁵ .

According to Richardson “the sudden expansion of Italica was the result of imperial favour, as Hadrian was using Italica as a monument to his defied predecessor, and a large set of buildings within the town has been identified as a sanctuary of the divine Trajan” ²⁶. Such benefactions encouraged the town to seek the right of being a colonia and not a mere municipium. Aulus Gallus ²⁷ mentioned that the community of Italica managed - after a long time of suffering from the ignorance of the early Roman emperors for their request – to persuade them to give Italica the title of “ Colonia Aelia Augusta Italica”

²⁴ A.Garcia y Bellido , *Colonia Aelia Augusta Italica* , Madrid , 1960, pp.74-120ff; R. Syme , “ Hadrian and Italica ” , *JRS* 54 , 1964 , pp. 142-149.

²⁵ M.Kulikowski , *Late Roman Spain and the cities* , Johns Hopkins university press, 2004 , pp.10-13 .

²⁶ J.S. Richardson, *The Romans in Spain* , Blackwell , 1998, p.223

²⁷ Aulus Gellius , *NA*, 16.13.4-5 ; R. Syme , “ Hadrian and Italica” , *JRS* 54 , 1964, pp.142-9.

Conclusion

In my point of view the Roman presence in Spain was clear and strong , and all the previous evidences can prove that . The Romans transferred their style of life to the Coloniae in Spain which helped the natives to adopt such style²⁸ , to such an extent that some of the Spaniard families ,who descended form Roman roots, were able to raise some of their children in a way by which they became convenient rulers and senators contributing in the administration of the whole Romans as it is mentioned before²⁹ .

Giving the mentioned coloniae buildings such as a forum where the assembly of the colonia was meeting , a circus , an amphitheater , and a gymnasium , prove that all of them were not only for the benefit of the Romans who settled in the coloniae , but also the natives must have been affected , and I think it was a new Roman style in dealing with the natives of Spain . Maybe they found

²⁸ Many experts asserted that so many words in Spanish dictionaries had been derived from the Latin Language , such as “ Don ‘’ = Dominus , “ DONA’’ = Domina .see John J. Browne Ayes , Juan Ponce de Leon His New and Revised Genealogy , 2009, p.93

²⁹ Italica and Emerita were made for the Roman veterans who will not see their mother land again , the Veterans had married women of the country , that is of native Iberians and Phoenicians or even Greeks . Here it is worthy to mention that the Hadrians for example were proud of being among the “ First Families’’ of Spain , descended from the original Roman settlers . see : Stewart Perowne , op. cit., p.22.

themselves obliged to melt the social differences between themselves as Romans and the natives around them . Such social policy , which were quite different from the ordinary military policy , helped the Roman presence to survive in Spain for such long time³⁰ .

The Roman social policy in Spain led to some kind of peace , that spread in most of its areas , that peace gave the provincia as a whole a convenient chance to be productive and to become more wealthy³¹ . That wealth was well employed by the Romans themselves³² , and that can be known from the procuratores who were appointed by Augustus to supervise the production of silver and the gold mines. They were from the equestrian and known as imperial procuratores Augusti ³³ in Spain . Beside the

³⁰ John A. Crow , *Spain : The root and the Flower . An Interpretation of Spain and the Spanish* , University of California press , 2005, p.30 , where he mentioned that forcing the natives in Spain by the Romans to work in heavy duties and in mines in particular led to paying the attention of the Spanish inhabitants to the value of silver and gold .

³¹ H.E. Jacob , *Six Thousand years of Bread : Its Holy and Unholy History* , Skyhorse publishing , USA, 2007, pp. 82-84

³² *The wine , olive oil , and fish sauce were products to be shipped out of Spain (Saguntum and Baetica) definitely from 161-168, J.C. Edmondson , Two industries in Roman Lusitania : Mining and Garum Production , BAR NO.362, Oxford , 1987, pp.189-90; A.J. Parker , Ancient Shipwrecks of the Mediterranean and the Roman Provinces , BAR NO 580, 1992, pp.16-7; Andrew Bibby , Backbone of England . Life and Landscape on the Pennine Watershed , London , 2011 , p.17.*

³³ e.g. Quintus Petronius Modestus (ILS , 1379) , under Nerva and Trajan , and some suggested that L.Arruntius Maximus can be considered as a procurator Aug. under Vespasian who was appointed to Asturia and Callaecia .cf. O. Hirschfeld , *Die Kaiserlichen Verwaltungsbeamten bis auf Diocletian* ,

former type, appeared another type known as procuratores metallorum ,who had direct control of particular mines or mining areas . These men unlike the Augusti , were not from the equestrian but were imperial freedmen³⁴ .

From some inscription dated from the reign of Hadrian and belonging to the ancient silver and copper – mining area of Vipasca(modern Aljustrel , in southern Portugal) , we can know much about the organization of the supervised social life by the community of miners , many activities are covered , from auctions which take place in the community to the management of the communal baths and the provision services , like shoe – making , barbering and cleansing of the new and used cloths which is let in each case to the concessionaire , who becomes the only one who can run such services. Concerning the baths , the concessionaire has to provide hot water and proper equipment through the day , which is to be used by women in the first part of the day and men in the latter part . It was allowed to use the baths for free to the staff of the imperial procurator of the mines (

2nd ed., Berlin , 1905 , p.377.; H. G. Pflaum , Les procurateurs equestres , Paris , 1950 , pp.46-7.

³⁴ The earliest known of these officials , the imperial freedman called Pudens , whose name appeared on an inscription from the mines at Rio Tinto ,dated to the reign of Nerva . ILS 276

his slaves , freedmen , soldiers ,and children , but for all the others they have to be charged admission , men being charged half the rate for the women , also we know that the schoolteachers in this community were exempted from the taxes that were imposed by the procurator of the mines³⁵ .

It is worth remembering that conditions of the slaves of the mines in Spain were bad not only for the slaves but also for all the miners , but this did not prevent free men from earning their living , since the Romans depended on a large numbers of slaves in Spain since the late republic , the salve miners were suffering because of the Roman greediness , as they were working many hours under pressure ³⁶as the Roman emperors used to lease out the right to exploit the mines to individual contractors Publicani or associations as at the Vipasca in southern

³⁵ C. Domergue , *La mine antique d'Aljustrel (Potrugal) et les tables de bronze de Vipasca* , Paris , 1983. pp.1-32, the Romans used a very strict slavery system in Spain with most of its inhabitants except those who had enjoyed the Latin citizenship and this can be seen in the mining areas .see : William Linn Westermann , *The slave systems in the Greek and Roman antiquity* , The American Philosophical Society , Philadelphia , 1955, p.94.and about the Roman water-wheels that were used in these areas by the slaves to drain the different levels of galleries , one above the other in the mines of Roman Spain . see :Peter Salway , *History of Roman Britain* , Oxford university press, 2001, p.458.

³⁶ Diodorus Siculus , 5, 36.3.,38.1. see also Xenophon on the mines of Attica 87; Ps.Demosthenes 42.20. where we can find an inscription from Spain the *Lex Metalli Vespascensis* = ILS 6891. Which illustrates the bad conditions of such miners

Portugal³⁷ , the labour shortage was made by condemning to the mines, and many Christians were working in the mines , not because they were criminals , but because they were slaves³⁸ .

The mining industry was of great importance not only for Spain but for the entire Roman world ³⁹, it continued to produce good returns to those who were devoted for it ; which may explain the evidence from inscriptions of the movement of the people from other parts of Spain into the mining regions of the north west and the Sierra Morena ⁴⁰. Finally knowing the importance of Spain , the area which provided Galba with his support , and produced the quantities of metals which emerged from the mines of the north west and Sierra Morena , the peace which was achieved within the empire by Trajan , Hadrian and Antoninus Pius , were of great utility for Rome and Spain, while the prosperity of Spain and the Stability of

³⁷ *Fontes Iuris Ante Iustiniani I 104, 105 cf. G. W. Bowersock ,Peter Brown , and Oleg Grabar (eds.) , A Guide to the Postclassical World , 2nd ed., 2000, USA, p.579*

³⁸ *E. J. Thomas Wiedemann , The Greek and Roman slavery , Croom Helm , 1981, p.177*

³⁹ *About the industrial development that was made by the Romans in Spain .see: Mihail Ivancovic Rostovcev, The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire , vol.2 , 1929, p.199; about the skills of the Roman engineering and their role in magnifying the Roman interests .see: Richard Shelton Kirby , Sidney Withington , Arthur Burr Darling and Fredrick Gridley Kilgour , Engineering in the history with 181 Illustrates ,USA ,1990, p.90.*

⁴⁰ *E. W. Haley , Migration and Economy in Roman Imperial Spain , Barcelona ,1991, pp.89-99.*

Rome both had been upset by the circumstances of the late second and third centuries .

Note:

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