

The crisis of antique society in Spain in the third century

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J. Arce recently alleged that the third century in Spain has never been extensively studied¹. For all its categorical exaggeration this allegation contains a grain of truth though — the problem of the crisis of antique society in the third century in general and on the territory of the Spanish provinces in particular is so far from being exhausted to date. The important aspect of the problem which has not yet received its due scholastic attention is the interdependence and interconnection of the crisis with the degree of Romanization in various regions of the country. In our opinion, such approach to the subject could further our comprehension of both the crisis proper and, above all, its aftermath.

From the view-point of her Romanization Spain by the end of the second century fell into three zones. The first zone comprising South and East Spain, i.e. Baetica and the Mediterranean parts of Tarraconensis, may be said to be completely Romanized. We must emphasize the fact that here there were a great many towns of Roman or Latin law. They were similar to a polis and governed in the Republican fashion. H. Galsterer believes that Spain had at the time 184 cities of this type; 90 cities were situated in Baetica and 35 in Tarraconensis. In other words, this zone could boast no less than 125 cities or about 70% of their total amount in Spain². The towns were populated by the Italic immigrants, veterans and indigenes; their descendants eventually merged and the towns' residents were divided not according to ethnic but social criteria. Some settlers possessed no citizenship of those towns but

¹ J. Arce, «El Edictum de pretiis y la Diocesis Hispaniarum». *Hispania*, t. 39, 1979, p. 6, nota 1.

² H. Galsterer, *Untersuchungen zum römischen Städtewesen auf der Iberischen Halbinsel*. Berlin, 1971, *passim*.

gradually they began to obtain more and more city rights which made them to a certain extent equal to local citizens³.

The social basis of this type of a city was petty and middle property. Its broad spread in the sphere of crafts is aptly attested by the concentration of numerous workshops producing the same items such as, for instance, amphorae to keep oil, wine or garum in; in the field of commerce it is evidenced by a considerable number of maritime traders (*navicularii*) who took Spanish products to Italy and the Western provinces; in agriculture the so-called formula of Bonansa (CIL II, 5042) confirms the existence of a small estate which was not even part of a *pagus* but of its subdivision — *ager*. Besides, the digs in the Mediterranean part of Spain and the vestiges of centuration in Baetica also bear witness only to the existence of small and middle estates of 30-50 hectares, or 120-200 *iugera*⁴.

Needless to say, rich people also lived in the first zone and they are more than once mentioned in inscriptions and amphorae marks⁵. Those rich owners whose wealth was based on land property must have had several estates⁶. The fact that in amphorae stamps each estate was marked separately testifies to their retaining at least some economic autonomy. Such estates could have been scattered in different places⁷ and even in different provinces. To corroborate the supposition we have at our disposal the references to people who were citizens of several towns at a time and who sometimes even occupied there high offices (for example, CIL II, 1200, 2026, 4267). All this presupposes their having some kind of property in those cities:

Along with the property of the citizens of *municipia* and colonies this zone had other types of property, too: First of all, this was the senators' property which was beyond the jurisdiction of cities but not beyond that of the province's authorities. During the period of the Early Empire all Spanish senators, as a rule, came from South and East Spain⁸. Exempt from the control of not only cities, but also their governors was the emperor's property. Judging by the fact that imperial procurators have been recorded in Baetica (see, for instance; CIL II, 1970), in this province of the senators there existed the emperor's property which mainly consisted of the pits but even

³ R. Rodríguez Neila, «La terminología aplicada a los sectores de población en la vida municipal de la Hispania romana». *Memorias de historia antigua*, 1-1977, p. 109.

⁴ E. Thouvenot, *Essai sur province romain de Bétique*. Paris, 1940, p. 248; M. Tarradell, «Población y propiedad rural en el este peninsular. *Acta del II congreso español de estudios clásicos*. T. 2. Madrid, 1968, p. 165-167; J. Estrado y L. Villaronga, «La "Lauro" monetar y el hallazgo de Cánoves». *Ampurias*. T. 29, 1967, p. 149-163; M. Carneras, «De re agrícola hispano-romana tarraconense». *Boletín arqueológico*. An. LII, 1952, p. 26-28; J. M. Blázquez, «¿Gran latifundia o pequeña propiedad en la Bética (Hispania), en época imperial?». *Miscellanea in onore di Eugenio Manni*. Roma, 1979, p. 245-255.

⁵ L. A. Curchin, «Personal Wealth in Roman Spain». *Historia*, 1983, Bd. 32, p. 277-284.

⁶ Comp.: CIL II, 4322; M. H. Callender, *Roman amphorae*. London, 1965, N.º 160, 581, 1454, 1506 a.o.

⁷ *Ibid.*, N.º 1792; CIL II, 1200, 2026, 4267.

⁸ R. Etienne, «Les sénateurs espagnols sous Trajan et Hadrien». *Les empereurs romains d'Espagne*. Paris, 1965, p. 55-85.

those were, in all likelihood, granted on lease by small strips (CIL II, 5181; Fontes... N.º 112-113)⁹.

And yet, for all non-urban social structures, the basic cell of society in South and East Spain was the city of the antique type. The native structures practically vanished in the South by the end of the Republic and in the East — in the first-second centuries.

Economically this zone was fairly well developed and closely connected with the economy of the Empire, especially its western part. From here streamed to Rome, Italy and Western provinces silver, lead, copper, mercury, sometimes also gold and, besides, agricultural products, namely, wine, wheat, and especially olive oil and garum; these products were mostly cultivated and produced in the petty and middle estates we have just considered.

In the course of the Early Empire this zone witnessed a virtually complete disappearance of all vernacular and local religion, and the last vestiges of Iberian culture got inhibited. Latin became a language of both official and everyday communication and the Roman religion struck root. Towns acquired a common Romano-provincial look — what with fora, theatres, porticoes, temples, etc.¹⁰.

In a way, south and eastern regions of the Iberian Peninsula may be regarded as an overseas extension of Italy.

The second zone was the most spacious, it embraced the central, western and north-western parts of Tarraconensis (including the Balearic islands) and the whole of Lusitania. This zone is remarkable for the coexistence of two worlds — Roman and native. The former was represented by the Roman legions and their camps, by the towns of Roman or Latin citizens (who were by far less numerous here than in the first zone) and by the Roman citizens' communities within native towns, by rural estates of the municipal landowners, Roman and Romanized traders, financiers, leaseholders, Roman administrators and priests, all-Empire cults and the emperor's property, pits included. The indigenous world was made up of the native people who still preserved their way of life. Here still persisted tribal communities, local religious practices and, perhaps, even native tongues continued to be spoken. This world no doubt, interacted with the Roman one. Roman influence accelerated and encouraged all socio-economic processes in the native society which in accordance with the degree of its development on the eve of Romanization had been evolving as class society. Tribal communities were growing into territorial ones (*vici* and *castella*)¹¹. From ancient society «broke away» on the one hand representatives of the nobility who belonged

⁹ This state of affairs has been evidenced by the Vipasca pit in Lusitania, but it probably holds good of the emperor's mines as well.

¹⁰ J. M. Blázquez, «La economía de la Hispania Romana». *Historia de España*. T. II, vol. I. Madrid, 1982, p. 365-496; J. M. Blázquez, J. Mangas, *La religión*. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 261-369; A. Blanco Freijeiro, *Arquitectura*. *Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 579-630.

¹¹ This is the subject-matter of another article by the author: Tsirkin Ju. B. Rural communities in Roman Spain. The problems of social-politic organization and ideology of Antique society. Leningrad, 1984, p. 154-173 (in Russian).

to the province's élite and on the other, some individuals from the lower strata who became craftsmen in towns, miners in pits and sometimes even slaves¹². The process of transformation of the indigenous society, however, had not been completed in this zone by the close of the second century. A town of the antique type, a salient feature of the Roman world had never become a basic cell of its social life by that time.

The role these regions played in the imperial economy was by far less significant than that of southern and eastern areas. For instance, the vessels made in this zone sold rather well at home but they could hardly command a ready market anywhere outside Spain, except Mauretania Tingitana and the Rhine valley¹³. In greater demand were horses from Asturia, as we are told by Silius Italicus (XVI, 348-353), Pliny (VIII, 166) and Martial (XIV, 199). The key item of the Spanish export from these parts were metals, above all gold from north-west.

Finally, we must also single out the third zone, i.e. the mountainous regions of North Spain. The process of Romanization must never have even started here. The Astures of the highlands, Cantabri and especially Vascones had still enjoyed life in tribal society. Moreover, the tribal society of the Vascones displayed at that time no signs of disintegration yet. The Roman world was foreign to this district. We have no confidence that these parts of Spain had ever been under Rome's political control¹⁴.

Leaving the non-Romanized zone alone let us now examine the effect the crisis and its consequences had on the Romanized and less-Romanized zones; what stands were taken by each of the two in the events associated with the crisis?

The earliest symptoms of the impending crisis were first registered in the second half of the second century. They were as follows: *a*) the reduction in oil and metal exports from the South and East of the Peninsula and in objects-of-art imports from Italy; *b*) the appearance of magnificent country villas in the vicinity of towns and virtually entire discontinuation of new constructions in towns; *c*) the curtailment of private charity offered by wealthy urban dwellers and the implementation of all required measures (the erecting of dedicatory statues to emperors among them) by the communities. Politically the crisis was heralded by the onslaught of the Mauri on Baetica (SHA, Marc. 21, I; CIL II, 1120, 2025) and of Maternus' bands on North Tarraconensis (Herod. I, 10, 2), by some unrest in Lusitania of which nothing is known apart from a sheer statement of the fact (SHA, Marc. 22, II)¹⁵.

¹² This process in the North-West and North of Tarraconensis is described by the author in his article: Spanish Celts and their Romanization. *Celts and Celtic Tongues*. Moscow, 1974, p. 22-30 (in rus.).

¹³ J. M. Blázquez, *La economía...*, p. 409, 454.

¹⁴ A. Barbero, M. Vigil, *Sobre los orígenes de la Reconquista*. Barcelona, 1974, p. 13-14, 145-185; J. M. Iglesias Gil, «Estructura social, poblamiento y etnogenia de Cantabria. *Memorias de historia antigua*, I-1977, p. 179-189.

¹⁵ J. Arce, «Inestabilidad política en Hispania durante el siglo II d.C. *AEArq*, t. 54, 1981, p. 110-113.

The first signs of the on-coming crisis set in primarily in the Romanized zone. The dissimilarities between the two zones of Spain brought forth also a different operation in them of the crisis ushered in by the events of the nineties of the second century.

In the civil war raging at the time the Tarraconensis legate L. Novius Rufus who must have been delegated there by Commodus or Pertinax¹⁶ took the side of Clodius Albinus and therefore he was later executed (SHA, Sev. 13, 7). The only large military unit of Spain — the VII legion Gemina, — though, did not support the legate and adopted the pro-Severian position, for which act the legion was afterwards rewarded with the honorary cognomen «Pia»¹⁷. In the inscription mention is made of a certain Qu. Mamilius Capitalinus, a legate (evidently, a juridical one¹⁸) of Asturia and Gallaecia who at the same time was general (dux) of the VII legion (CIL II, 2634). G. Alföldy holds that Capitalinus was compelled to undertake the command of the legion which was exempt from his authority by extraordinary circumstances when the lawful general had chosen to back Albinus and had been removed from office by the army¹⁹. Why did the soldiers of the VII legion favour Septimius Severus so firmly and resolutely as to dare to risk to violate military discipline? The answer, we believe, lies in the recently established fact that the legion by then had been primarily recruited among the middle strata of the populace, the natives of the central and north western conventa of Tarraconensis, and not necessarily among the residents of privileged communities at that²⁰. Soldiers and civilians were bound by manifold bonds and the popular sentiments conditioned and shaped those of legionaries. These conventa belonged to the zone not yet wholly Romanized. Obviously in the civil war of A.D. 195-197 this zone sided with Septimius Severus.

The situation in the Romanized zone was the very opposite. Here Albinus was supported not only by the Tarraconensis legate but also by senators who were natives of these regions, and so later they were also put to death by Severus (SHA, Sev. 13, I-3). True enough, some senators of Baetica opted to take the side of Severus, as, for examples. P. Cornelius Arnullinus of Iliberris who managed to make under this emperor a spectacular career (CIL II, 5506). And yet on the whole the province stood in opposition to Severus which is evidenced by the downfall of many respectable families of Baetica — out of the twenty families of senators recorded in the province in the second century (some of them had played a prominent role well back during the Republic) only six survived in the first half of the third century. The historical scene was deserted by the Acilii, Aelii, Aemilii, Baebii, Dasumii, Helvii,

¹⁶ G. Alföldy, «Septimius Severus und Senat». *Bonner Jahrbücher*, Bd. 168, 1968, s. 120.

¹⁷ J. M. Roldán Hervás. *Hispania y el Ejército Romano*. Salamanca, 1974, p. 204.

¹⁸ Alföldy G. *Op. cit.*, S. 125.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, S. 125 und Bem. 73.

²⁰ J. M. Roldán Hervás, *Op. cit.*, p. 249-250, 257-258. Comp., P. Le Roux «Provincialisation et recrutement militaire dans le N.O. hispanique au Haut-Empire romain». *Gerion*, 3, 1985, p. 285-307.

Manilii, Portii, Valerii and others²¹. The senators of South and East Spain in their majority stood in favour of Albinus.

And what was the position of those towns that played in this zone a major part? The answer to the question may be sought in the dedicatory inscription in honour of Ti. Claudius Candidus commissioned by Severus to Hispania Citerior (i.e. Tarraconensis) in the capacity of a legate and general who, as runs the inscription, had combated the Spanish insurgents, the foes of the Roman people by land and sea (CIL II, 4114)²².

But who in Spain could withstand Severus after Albinus' death, the more so as the only legion had from the very outset sided with the latter? Who were the alleged «Spanish insurgents»? We well know that besides the VII legion in the Peninsula there were also auxiliary troops, namely, four cohorts and an ala — the II Flavia ala of the Spaniards-Roman citizens. An inscription has come down to us to the effect that in A.D. 197 the ala had erected at its own cost a new statue to a deity of the invincible August Septimius Severus (A.é., 1967, 237). A. García y Bellido who has studied this inscription maintains that the ala at first had taken the side of Albinus and destroyed Severus' statue but then in order to expiate the guilt of their disloyalty the soldiers had at their own expense erected a new statue trying as it were to dissociate themselves from those of the usurper's adherents who demolished the old monument²³. This interpretation of the historical facts looks quite logical. The very title of the ala is worth considering. It emphasizes that in contrast to other auxiliary regiments the ala had been recruited exclusively from Roman citizens; but they were rather meagre in the North-West of the country where the ala was stationed, that is why it seems not at all improbable that the ala soldiers were predominantly the natives of the more Romanized areas, which could not but tell on its stand in the Civil War.

However it still be wrong to assert that the ala fought against Candidus because the inscription bears an exact and definite date — A.D. 197 whereas the new legate and general is known to have come to the Peninsula in the year 198. This enables us to suppose that the II Flavia ala of the Spaniards-Roman citizens had confined its operations to a passive act of destroying the statue without actively participating in the war, the more so as it was stationed together with a subdivision of the VII legion. When word about Severus' victory reached them, though, the soldiers anxious to atone for their «sinful deeds» promptly expressed their profound reverence to the victor.

And yet, there were in Spain some «foes of the Roman people» at the time. Those were indubitably advocates of Albinus who was declared enemy

²¹ C. Castillo, «Observaciones sobre la continuidad prosopográfica de la Bética en el Bajo Imperio». *Actas del III congreso español de estudios clásicos*. Madrid, 1968, t. II, p. 122; *eadem*. Städte und Personen der Baetica. *ANRW*, T. II, Bd. 3, S. 649.

²² On the date of Candidus' legateship see: J. Fitz, «Réflexions sur la carrière de Tib. Claudius Candidus». *Latomus*, t. XXV, 1966, p. 845-846.

²³ A. García y Bellido, «Nuevos documentos militares de Hispania Romana». *AEArq*, vol. 39, 1966, p. 30-31.

and outlaw (SHA, Sev. 10, 2), but as we have just shown they were not soldiers of the regular regiments. Apart from regular troops the provinces are known to have owned irregular cohorts too, recruited in cases of emergency; they were actually provincial or town militia. The existence of similar armed forces has been registered in Spain as well. Some of those regiments were specifically meant to guard the Mediterranean shore. J. M. Roldán Hervás in his research proves them to be precisely local militia forces²⁴. Under the circumstances reigning in the country after the battle of Lugdunum they seem the only armed force likely to have staged resistance to the new emperor and his legate. Since the cohorts whose sole mission was to safeguard the littoral had beyond doubt had some vessels at their disposal we deem it only too natural that Candidus was compelled to wage war not only on land but also on sea.

This militia raised by voluntary enlistment of the citizens and settlers of municipia and coloniae expressed the stand of the South and East Spanish town. We could cite another evidence for these cities' hostility and animosity against Severus — namely, confiscations the latter brought down upon their inhabitants. The subject will be dwelt upon in greater detail later; now we shall only stress that no matter how consistent Severus' policies may seem to have been, no matter how logical and consecutive his measures may appear, any and every single step of his had always been provoked by concrete conditions. Had the municipal landowners not «wronged» him the emperor would never have confiscated their property. Apparently all reprisals and sanctions of Severus were caused by the cities' position or even more likely by their active operations.

Two important conclusions may be inferred from the close consideration of these events. First, we clearly see that the two zones of Spain opposed each other both socially and politically. In Baetica and East Tarraconensis like in other parts of the Empire the towns must have stood by their provinces' senators since as far as we can judge from the events and the attendant repressions of Severus the senators and municipal aristocrats of Italy and the Western provinces accepted in the main the anti-Severian position²⁵. The greater part of the Peninsula, though, where local structures still held their own and played a prominent role adhered to the claimant upon the throne who had risen in opposition to the senate aristocracy of the Romano-Italian and Romanized provincial slave-owners.

Secondly, it is obvious that in the described events the cities of the Romanized zone came out as a powerful and rather independent force and, consequently, the city despite all symptoms of its crisis continued to remain a strong and important element of Spain's socio-political structure.

²⁴ J. M. Roldán Hervás, *Op. cit.*, p. 154-155, 227-229.

²⁵ On the composition of the pro-Albinus party see: G. Alföldy, *Op. cit.*, S. 119-122. In Gallia Albinus was supported mostly in these regions where the municipal system and senators' ownership of land gained ground: W. Seyfarth, *Römische Geschichte*. Berlin, 1975, Bd. I, S. 240.

In the strife that broke out at the end of the second century the Roman and Romanized towns of Spain sustained a heavy defeat which may be said to have triggered off the gear of a crisis.

The triumph of Severus brought in its wake confiscations and repressions. According to Herodianus (II, 8, 7) the emperor — due to his insatiable avidity — murdered ruthlessly and cold-bloodedly eminent provincials distinguished for their ancestry and wealth. It directly concerns Spain too because the emperor (we are told by his biographer) put to death a great number of notable Spaniards and Galli and when most of the gold of Gallia, Spain and Italy had passed into his possession (SHA, Sev. 12, 1-3) he left to his children a greater heritage than any other ruler before him. A substantial portion of confiscated belongings went not into state treasury but into private ownership of the princeps and his family. Small wonder that was when a special department was set up to take care of the emperor's private property (SHA, Sev. 12, 4).

The stamps on Baetica oil amphorae and their inscriptions indicate some radical changes in the structure of the province's property at the time, which cannot be but connected with the activities of Severus²⁶. In these inscriptions first disappeared the names of private *navicularii* and instead came the references to two, and then to three and finally again to one august, i.e. to Severus and Caracalla, then to Severus, Caracalla and Geta and later only to Caracalla²⁷. This implies the emergence of the imperial monopoly in the trade in so vital a commodity as olive oil of Baetica and the term «imperial» designates in this context not the *fisc* but the emperor proper. The amphorae stamps suggest that into the hands of princeps passed both a number of estates and amphorae workshops affiliated to them as well²⁸. As is proven by these stamps, the property of some municipal aristocrats was simply usurped, as was the case with the estate of L. Servius Pollio who held high posts in the neighbouring towns of Carmo and Munigua²⁹.

The emperors accumulated huge riches but they also enriched their henchmen too. Some estates of Baetica changed hands at that time but those were not the emperor's hands³⁰. Evidently part of the property stolen from the Albinians was distributed among those advocates of Severus who had served him hand and foot during the civil War, perhaps, among the local senators (for instance, Anullinus and Libo) as well³¹.

All these measures resulted in the development in the most advanced zone

²⁶ M. H. Callender, *Op. cit.*, p. 22; J. Remesal Rodríguez, «Reflejos económicos y sociales en la producción de ánforas olearias béticas». *Producción y comercio de aceite en la antigüedad*. Madrid, 1980, p. 151.

²⁷ E. Rodríguez Almeida, «Novedades de epigrafía anforaria del Monte Testaccio». *Recherches sur les amphores romaines*. Roma, 1972, p. 197-203; J. Remesal Rodríguez, «La economía oleícola bética». *AEArq*, v. 50-51, 1977-1978, p. 93.

²⁸ J. Remesal Rodríguez, *Reflejos...*, p. 143-152.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 143-144.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

³¹ Comp.: A. Balil, «De Marco Aurelio a Constantino». *Hispania*, v. 27, 1967, p. 267, n. 47.

of Spain of a large-scale property in land, first and foremost of the emperor's ownership of land, to the utter detriment of municipal landownership. This state of affairs persisted even when upon Caracalla's death all possessions of the Severi in Baetica passed into the state treasury: the amphorae of these years bore the formula: «rationis fisci»³². It is essential to note that when under Alexander Severus' permission private trade in oil was authorized anew³³ only a handful of merchants could afford to calitalize on it — evidently the blow once delivered by Severus turned out to be so crashing that the urban landowners and merchants were never able to recover.

Unfortunately no evidence of the similar kind has come down to us from Tarraconensis but we may suppose that in its eastern part the development followed very much the same course. Obviously the express mission of Qu. Gadius Rufus dubbed in the inscription «censitor H (ispaniae) C(terioris)» (CIL II, 4121) was to settle in this province all matters concerning the confiscated estates³⁴.

Septimius Severus and Caracalla initiated also a number of purely economic reforms which involved Spain too, such as the raising of customs duties and indirect taxes and the inflation of the coin³⁵. The latter must have resulted in higher cost of living and lower living standards of the broad masses, first of all of urban population traditionally more dependent upon the market than the rural one. All these are but the manifest signs of the economic crisis in Spain too.

In the Romanized zone of Spain the economic crisis was raging supreme. In the South-West and South-East of the Peninsula the production in the pits drastically dropped and sometimes ceased altogether. Also declined the volume of oil export from Baetica. It was by no means caused by the difficulties of exporting the wares to Italy on account of the Civil War. The reasons are to be sought elsewhere, as is eloquently shown by the excavation in Ostia: as before many oil amphorae of the period have been uncovered there but Spanish vessels seem to have been increasingly superseded by the African ones until by the fifties of the third century the Spanish import had been finally and entirely ousted by that from Africa³⁶. Likewise decreased and, perhaps, even came to an end the garum export from South Spain; anyway amidst the shipwreck debris not a single garum amphora has yet been found (and no metal ingots either for that matter)³⁷.

³² J. M. Blázquez, «La exportación del aceite hispano en el Imperio romano». *Producción...*, p. 145.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ A. Montenegro Duque, «Hispania durante el Imperio». *Historia de España*. Madrid, 1982, t. II, v. I, p. 236.

³⁵ R. Etienne, «Quadragesima» ou «quinguesima Hispaniarum»? *REA*, t. LIII, 1951, p. 62-70; Balil, *Op. cit.*, p. 269; A. Aymar et J. Autouyer, *Rome et son empire*. Paris, 1967, p. 468.

³⁶ C. Panella, «Annotazioni in margine alle stratigrafie delle Terme del Nuotatore. *Recherches...*, p. 93-103.

³⁷ R. Pascual Guasch, «La evolución de las exportaciones béticas durante el Imperio». *Producción...*, p. 241.

Both oil and garum were produced, in the main, by municipal land-owners, so that the decline and even cessation of their export must be interpreted as the symptom of a social crisis, the crisis of the South Spanish city. Some towns were affected by the crisis more acutely than others. For example, Munigua was implacably sinking into poverty, its territory was shrinking and its coinage was diminishing until in the midcentury it expired altogether³⁸. The majority of the towns, though, displayed no such apparent scars of decay. City life went on much as usual; new structures were built in many towns. True, those were chiefly emperors' statues, specifically those of Septimius Severus, and in the political climate of the period they should be regarded as first and foremost attempts to redeem the «misconduct» during the Civil War, as did the II Flavia ala in its time. It must be particularly stressed that these monuments were mounted almost exclusively by municipal communities (in contrast to the private patrons of the city élite as before). Dedications were very rarely made by wealthy individuals at the time and in the time of Gallienus they completely disappeared³⁹. On the other hand, increased the number of luxurious country-side villas in the vicinity of the cities⁴⁰. All this speaks volumes of the eclipse of the cities' wealth, of the shift of economic and political hub to the rural areas, of the indifference of rich residents to the destiny of the cities. Virtually the sole thing cities were still in power to do was to erect obligatory statues of emperors.

The debility of the municipia and coloniae was also manifest in the institution of curators appointed by emperors to take care on behalf of the government of the cities' welfare. The first curators began to appear as early as the time of Marcus Aurelius (CIL II, 1180) but the practice became especially widespread since the reign of Septimius Severus⁴¹.

The paucity of sources pertaining to the crisis of slave-owning relations is truly lamentable. Inscriptions yield but relative information on the reduction of the number of slaves and libertines: out of the two hundred extant inscriptions with references to slaves only five belong to the third century or the end of the second century; of 309 dated inscriptions of libertines only 15 belong to this epoch⁴². Since the latter half of the second century amphorae stamps began to bear, alongside the names of the owners of workshops and estates, also slaves' names, sometimes accompanied with the letter F (fecit)⁴³. Could this possibly mean that within the framework of one estate some workshops and even, perhaps, portions of the estate proper were leased as a

³⁸ J. M. Blázquez, *La economía...*, p. 511.

³⁹ J. Mangas, «Un capítulo de los gastos en el municipio romano de Hispania». *Hispania antiqua*, I-1971, p. 111-128; L. A. Curchin, *Op. cit.*, *passim*.

⁴⁰ A. Balil, *Op. cit.*, p. 267; idem. «Las escuelas musivarias del convento Tarraconensio». *La mosaïque gréco-romain*. Paris, 1965, p. 33-34; J. Fernández Ubiña, «Formas de propiedad agraria en la Bética del siglo III». *Memorias de historia antigua*, III-1979, p. 182-184.

⁴¹ A. Balil, *De Marco Aurelio...*, p. 266.

⁴² J. Mangas, *Esclavos y libertos de la España Romana*. Salamanca, 1971, p. 59, 285.

⁴³ E.g., J. Remesal Rodríguez, *Reflejos...*, p. 138-139.

peculium and the slaves consequently could operate and function independently? Data on the colonatus of the period is alas missing.

Presumably from the turn of the third century on south and East Spain witnessed on the one hand the fall of cities and on the other the growth of non-urban large-scale property (including emperors' property) which, however, had been gathering strength and could not yet compensate through its own economy the economic depression brought about by the crisis of urban antique property.

The vast regions in the centre, west and north-west of the Iberian Peninsula were not ravaged by the crisis until the second quarter of the third century when curators appeared in Clunia, and in the vicinage of some towns in Lusitania mushroomed countryside villas very much like those in the South and East only by far more splendid⁴⁴.

Throughout this period the gold-mines of the North-West continued to be actively exploited. Almost all milliaris bearing the names of emperors of the Severus dynasty have been unearthed in the West and North-West of the Iberian Peninsula⁴⁵. North-West Spain with her abundant gold deposits was of so vital a moment for the Empire that under Caracalla with the likely purpose of bringing the management directly to the pits, this region was ceded as an autonomous province Antoniana whose first and, apparently, only legate was C. Iulius Cerealis (CIL II, 2661). True enough, upon Caracalla's death the territory was again annexed to Tarraconensis⁴⁶ but the experiment was significant and repeated under Diocletianus.

In the first half and especially by the middle of the third century discontinued the manufacture of Spanish sigillate made to Italic and Gallic patterns but in its place came a kind of pottery which imitated or reproduced the shapes and ornaments of pre-Roman Celtic vessels⁴⁷. If not exactly the concrete centres, at least the regions of the two kinds of pottery's production coincide.

The return to pre-Roman ceramics spells one of the manifestations of the so-called «Celtic Renaissance». Another essential display of it is not only the preservation but also the reviving of the pre-Roman forms of social life, i.e. gentilicia and centuriae. It will be remembered that one of the centres of their spread coincides with the region where pottery of local forms prevailed, i.e. with Celtiberia⁴⁸. This is also the region where is localized the inscription with a mention of the freedmen and a slave of a gens (CIL II, 5812). Even the residents of Roman cities kept in the III d. century their habit of indicating their tribe⁴⁹. The Caracalla edict granted the Roman citizenship to almost all

⁴⁴ J. M. Blázquez, *La economía...*, p. 513.

⁴⁵ J. M. Blázquez, «La economía...», p. 480.

⁴⁶ J. M. Roldán Hervás, «La organización político-administrativa y jurídica de la Hispania Romana». *Historia de España*, t. II, vol. 2, p. 100.

⁴⁷ A. Montenegro Duque, *Op. cit.*, p. 250.

⁴⁸ M. L. Albertos Firmat, «Organizaciones suprafamiliares en la Hispania antigua». *BSAA*, t. XL-XLI, 1975, p. 9-20, 61.

⁴⁹ H. Glasterer, «Bemerkungen zur Integration vorrömischen Bevölkerung auf der Iberischen

free inhabitants of the Empire, which was of enormous consequence for the vast zone of Spain under our study; here have been registered over one hundred of Aurelii, some of them still had their indigenous cognomina, too, such as Reburinus (CIL II, 4007) or Tannepeser (CIL II, 4840), to name but a few.

The depression in South and East Spain made the center of the economic activities in the Peninsula gradually shift to the central, west and north-west regions. Their growing role is well attested by the fact that under the Severi some natives of these parts are known to have become senators⁵⁰.

Thus, the crisis of the antique forms of life did not lead in the less Romanized zone of Spain to a general crisis, as distinct from the situation in the Romanized zone, because in the former the Roman structures were getting replaced by the native ones which had not yet died off and were still viable. That is the reason why this zone of Spain was coming at the time to the fore.

All the above-mentioned processes got aggravated and accelerated by the events of the sixties-seventies of the third century when the barbarian hordes invaded Spain (Aur. Vict., de Caes. XXXIII, 3; Eutr. VIII, 8, 2; Oros. VII, 22, 8) and the incursion must have triggered off a powerful popular disturbance. Archaeological evidence has revealed everywhere the destruction of villas and partially of towns dated to the end of the fifties-sixties and mid seventies⁵¹. Contrary to some scholars, we deem it unwise to ascribe the eruption of the crisis to these events. The events never caused the crisis but they intensified and deepened it. Moreover, we believe that both the invasions and the popular unrest could take place only under the conditions of crisis of political power. Be it said in passing that by that time the crisis had been fanned into a general conflagration covering the Central, West and North-West regions where towns and villas are known to have been ravaged, too.

All these developments rendered the Spanish economy the mightiest blow. Evidently intending to help Spanish landowners heal the wounds Probus gave them permission to plant vineyards and make wine (SHA, Prob. XVIII, 8)⁵². But the measures did not yield the expected results, though, and nothing is known to us of the Spanish wine either of the third century or of later periods. A severe slump characterized the Spanish economy in the eighties when the Empire in general and Spain in particular began to draw out of the crisis.

The edict on prices issued by Diocletianus in A.D. 301⁵³, of all Spanish merchandise mentions only the ham of Ceretania (4, 8), the wool of Asturia (25, 7) and, perhaps, garum (3, 6; 7); there is no evidence for the wool of

Halbinsel». *Actas del II coloquio sobre lenguas y culturas prerromanas de la Península Ibérica*. Salamanca, 1979, S. 459.

⁵⁰ A. Balil, *De Marco Aurelio...*, p. 251, 267.

⁵¹ J. M. Blázquez, *La economía...*, p. 497-505.

⁵² *Ibid.*; A. Balil, «Hispania en los años 260 a 300 d.J.C.». *Emerita*, t. 27, 1959, p. 286.

⁵³ A. Aymar, J. Auboyer, *Op. cit.*, p. 533.

Baetica, once so highly praised by Strabo (III, 2, 6) and Martial (XII, 63; 98), for the oil of Baetica, the wine of Tarraconensis; even the wool of Asturia sold very cheap — a mere 100 denarii a pound whereas the wool of Mutina cost 300 and purple wool drew the price of 400 denarii (25, I, 3). In listing the tariffs of the sea shipping on different routes the edict mentions only the routes to Spain from the diocese of Oriens, from Africa or Rome (35, 15-17; 28; 35; 67-69) but not a single trading route from Spain⁵⁴. One can get the impression that Spain at that period was only the consumer but not the exporter and all the Spanish commodities that did somehow get mentioned in the edict, were sold through the agency of some middlemen. This impression finds veracious proof in the «Sea Itinerary» dated by the first years of Diocletianus's reign⁵⁵, which lists the trading routes from Spain (Baelo, Carthago Nova and Ebusus) only to Mauretania Tingitana and Caesariensis (495, 4-496, 2; 510, 2-513, 3). The wreckage of a Roman ship of the second half of the third century that sank near Syracusae has yielded a Spanish amphora amongst African ones⁵⁶. Not a single mosaic was executed in Spain proper in A.D. 260-280⁵⁷. In normal times the chief consumers of these goods were rich latifundia's owners but in those uneasy and troublous years they must have preferred to bide their time and refrain from restoring and adorning their estates.

It was a slow and painful recovery that Spain, as well as other Western provinces, passed through after the crisis. What were the consequences of the crisis in these two zones of Spain?

In the Romanized zone of the south and East rapidly grew villas that were centres of extensive latifundia. As well as in the first half of the century, many villas were situated in the cities' vicinity⁵⁸ but recent philological and toponymical studies suggest that their majority, however, appeared in the outlying districts. The examination of the villas' names, genetically the names of their initial owners, has supplied us with some very curious results. To our days have come down quite a few names derived from an anthroponym without the help of a suffix, as was customary in the most educated layers of the Roman society. The overwhelming majority of the villa-names, though have a suffix, more often than not the suffix — en which was typical, we are told by R. Menéndez Pidal, of the language of uncultured population groups, rural slaves included. R. Menéndez Pidal and J. M. Pabon have compiled a list of place-names of present-day Andalucía corresponding approximately to ancient Baetica. In the list there are 118 place-names derived from proper names with the suffix — en and 32 toponyms without the suffix⁵⁹. On the

⁵⁴ The citations of the edict concerning Spain are compiled in: J. Arce, *El Edictum...*, p. 9-10.

⁵⁵ W. Kubitschek, «Itinerarien». *RE*, 1916, Hbbd. 18, Sp. 2308-2363.

⁵⁶ G. Kapitän, «Le amfore del relitto romano di Capo Ognina (Siracusa)». *Recherches...*, p. 245-252.

⁵⁷ J. M. Blázquez, *La economía...*, p. 503.

⁵⁸ J. Fernandez Ubiño, *Formas de propiedad...*, p. 182-185.

⁵⁹ R. Menéndez Pidal, *Toponimia prerromana hispana*. Madrid, 1952, p. 122-147; J. M.

strength of this evidence it appears a safe supposition that the owners of the estates came from anything but the most cultured circles of the provincial population.

Among the names of the first owners of latifundia that have survived in present-day toponyms, very few have been recorded in the inscriptions and other documents of the Republic or Early Empire. Here we have to deal with new people, in no way related to the ancient municipal nobility. Some such parvenus had Celtic names — Burilius, Carantius or Taius. According to J. M. Pabon, most Celtic names are traceable in the toponyms with the suffix — en and only one unsuffixed place-name in Andalucia of today may be traced back to the Celtic name Caurius⁶⁰. But generally speaking, Celtic names are very scarce here owing to a considerable degree of Romanization of this province.

The country-dwellers must have influenced the townsfolk. The proof of the cultural rustication of towns is the change — inofficial so far but already widely accepted — of the name of Carthago Nova: it is exactly since the third century, according to R. Menéndez Pidal, that this city had been called Cartagena⁶¹.

What should be particularly emphasized, though, is that a city as such did not disappear altogether in the East and South of the Iberian Peninsula, for all the shrinking of the cities' area and the deteriorating of their economy. In Tarraco part of the former residential area was turned into a necropolis. The Emporites moved to live in a small island off the shore where some time before their first settlement (Palaeopolis) had come into being, the mainland part of the town becoming a city cemetery. In Malaca after the destructions of the sixties of the third century they did not even start to restore the theatre which in part lay buried under the city dump. On the restoration and reconstruction the most opulent and splendid buildings in towns were not temples or public edifices but private houses of rich residents, as is admitted to be the case with Italica⁶².

And yet, despite it all, a city went on existing. It preserved its municipal structure; for instance, the dedication to Maximianus was rendered on behalf of «ordo Segarrensensis» (Vives 1213). Cities were governed by curias and magistrates. The city's jurisdiction, as of old, embraced also its vicinage, although the latter reduced considerably owing to an encroachment of latifundia and imperial estates. The city still possessed the right and even the duty to have its armed forces. It was thanks to their armed forces that the cities could repulse the Germanics not only in the fifth but also in the sixth

Pabón, «Sobre los nombres de la "villa" romana de Andalucía». *Estudios dedicados a Menéndez Pidal*, t. IV. Madrid, 1953, p. 95-159.

⁶⁰ J. M. Pabón, *Op. cit.*, *passim*.

⁶¹ R. Menéndez Pidal, *Op. cit.*, p. 206.

⁶² M. Tarradell, «Les villes romaines dans l'Hispania de l'Est». *Thèmes de recherches sur les villes antiques d'Occident*. Paris, 1977, p. 119, 99; R. Teja, «Malaca». *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Classical cities*. Princeton, 1976, p. 547; J. M. Blázquez, «La economía...», p. 594-595.

century, and the Visigothic kings in the same century instructed their vicegerents to use in the police actions the city's armed force⁶³. The economic significance of the cities dropped. Some kinds of crafts, above all those that had previously catered for the city élite, never had a chance to revive, as, for instance, the sculpting of portraits. Others, on the contrary, before very long came in again, as for instance the manufacturing of pottery, the so called «sigillata clara», an undeniable descendant of the ancient forms but of rather low quality, and the manufacturing of garum⁶⁴. Some towns still retained their position of trading centres and went on diffusing imported products and exporting Spanish ones beyond the borders of the Iberian Peninsula⁶⁵.

Socially the towns of this romanized zone were still based on the petty and middle property of the antique type. Craftsmen must have united to form collegiae, as, for instance, «fabri Subidiani» at Corduba (Vives 5822). On the arable territories of the towns there existed small strips of land belonging to the «rural plebs», i.e. peasants subordinated to the town as part and parcel of the municipal community, and also middle estate of curials⁶⁶. The rural community a pagus — persisted on the municipal land, too (CIL II, 1082). In those estates there were no congenial conditions for the development of natural production and therefore municipal landowners had of necessity to trade. The greatest amount of the items of common import (not objects of art) have been found here in the South and East of the Iberian Peninsula⁶⁷.

To sum up, in the Romanized zone in the South and East of the Peninsula the new socio-political structure of the feudal type — latifundia — existed for quite some time alongside the ancient structure of the antique type — towns. It is hardly possible to specify the share of each structure in the economic life of the zone but it is necessary to underline that the city did not vanish, it did not yet become feudalized and the process of feudalization would set in much later, mostly already within the framework of Early Medieval History.

One more important factor must be stressed: in the Roman Empire and its economy the role of this zone became anything but conspicuous. The hub of both economic and political progress moved to the less romanized zone. An eloquent indicator of this shift is the fact that Traianus and Hadrianus came from Baetica and Theodosius — from the province of Gallaecia created by Diocletianus (Hydat. 2).

Another sign of it is the data of the «Itinerary of Antoninus» compiled as well as the «Sea Itinerary» in the eighties of the third century⁶⁸. According to it there were 36 roads in Spain — nine in the South and East of the Peninsula (396, I-416, 3), 22 — in the remaining regions (416, 4-556, 5), and five roads

⁶³ A. R. Korsunsky, «Goroda Ispanii v period stanovleniya feodalizma». *Sotsialno-ekonomicheskiye problemi Ispanii*. Moscva, 1965, s. 7-8, 13-22 (in Russian).

⁶⁴ J. M. Blázquez, *La economía...*, p. 540-549.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 573-580.

⁶⁶ A. R. Korsunsky, «O melkoy zemelnoy sobstvennosti v zapadnih provinciyah pozdney Rimskoy imperii». *VDI*, 1970, N2, p. 168-169.

⁶⁷ J. M. Blázquez, *La economía...*, p. 573-576.

⁶⁸ W. Kubitschek, *Op. cit.*, Sp. 2338.

connected the two zones (387, 7-395, 4; 415, 2-416, 3; 448, 2-452, 5). W. Kubitschek has listed six principal roads in Spain: one in East Spain, four roads in West and North Spain and one joining these areas⁶⁹.

The less Romanized zone had never previously been rich in towns; in those years they all suffered almost utter stagnation and decay. Ausonius (*Ordo urbium nobilium* 81-85) in his list of the Empire's celebrated cities singled out four Spanish ones; three of them are situated in the South and East of the country (Hispalis, Corduba, Tarraco) and only one — Bracara — in the less Romanized zone. The reason for distinguishing Bracara is self evident: the city was the centre of Gallaecia, the richest in gold among imperial provinces and the key provider of Rome with this metal. Hence the epithet given to Bracara by the Gallic poet — wealthy. In all probability Emerita was also a thriving town for, as some historians believe, it was the centre of the Spain diocese⁷⁰. But these were only exceptions in the otherwise grave situation. During the Late Empire the towns of this zone of Spain played but a modest part. In his account of the barbarians' invasion Hydatius says that the Spaniards hid themselves in their towns and castella (49) but when relating the concrete events in Gallaecia he makes mention only of castella (91).

In the economy of this zone latifundia played first fiddle. They majored in horse-breeding, rearing sheep and swine, cultivating wheat, that is, they supplied those products which in the fourth century were exported to Italy and provinces⁷¹. The pits that constituted the emperors' property provided gold. So it becomes clear that in this zone a large-scale non-urban property gained priority.

During the Late Empire it was latifundia owners who joined the ruling élite. Senators began to come primarily from the less Romanized zone⁷². All these were in the main «new people». Thus we can trace the origin of Theodosius back only to his grandfather Honorius who had risen to eminence under Constantinus⁷³. As regards the majority of Spanish aristocrats of the Late Empire their pedigree becomes obscure and gets lost already in the second generation. Some of these «homines novi» could have worked their way up during the crisis or the Civil War, as, for instance, Acilius Severus, a descendant from the equestrians who having taken the side of Constantinus managed to rise up to the highest échelons of power⁷⁴.

As for these people's ethnic roots it must be noted that out of the two hundred Spaniards known from literary sources and publicly active in the

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Sp. 2325.

⁷⁰ J.-N. Bonneville, R. Etienne, P. Rouillard, P. Sillieres, A. Tranoy, «Les villes romaines de la Péninsule Ibérique». *Les villes dans le monde Ibérique*. Paris, 1982, p. 21.

⁷¹ J. M. Blázquez, *La economía...*, p. 577-580.

⁷² K. F. Stroheker, «Spanische Senatoren der spätrömischen und westgotischen Zeit». *MM*, 1963, Bd. 4, S. 109-125; A. Balil, «Aspectos sociales del Bajo Imperio». *Latomus*, 1965, t. 24, 888-890.

⁷³ K. F. Stroheker, *Op. cit.*, S. 110-111.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, S. 110.

fourth-fifth centuries, 40 per cent had Latin names, 30 per cent — Greek names and the rest — indigenous ones, such as Hosius, Orosius, Hydatius, Lagodius, Asturius and others⁷⁵. Taking into account the fact that Greek names found their way to Spain only in the wake of Christianity (as undoubtedly was the case with the name Theodosius) and that Latin culture still held its own we can deduce that a huge number of native names is indicative of indigenous rather than Romano-Italic origin of a considerable portion (if not all) of ruling nobility during the Late Empire in Spain. The gentile name of Theodosius was Flavius. Some other representatives of Hispano-Roman aristocracy also bore this name at that time. Evidently they were descendants of native noblemen who had received the citizenship in the time of the Flavii⁷⁶, most likely of Vespasianus.

How latifundia came into existence in this zone of Spain is hard to say. Archaeological digs have proven that in the East of the Peninsula by the close of the third century several small estates, formerly independent possessions of different landowners, amalgamated into one large estate⁷⁷. Since the existence of petty and middle property in Central and West Spain has not been verified by the historical science we are in no position to claim that large estates of this region stemmed from the merging of their small and middle counterparts (with the exception of perhaps large towns' vicinage). A different way of forming latifundia seems more relevant. Research into the region's toponymics has shown that many modern toponyms originally the names of ancient villas have been derived not from anthroponyms of Latin origin (as is the case with the South and East) but from pre-Latin common nouns or from the names of towns or tribes⁷⁸. That is why it seems correct to surmise that at least part of the latifundia in question must have emerged from tribal or rural settlements, perhaps as a result of the usurpation of tribal property by the aristocrats.

As is already stated, tribal unities of this area were far from being extinct by the turn of the third century. One part of them could have turned into latifundia, another — into rural communities (*vici* and *castella*). It is not without reason that the names of some localities in the third-fifth centuries had the form of Latin or Celtic Genitive Plural (for example, *Itin. Ant.* 424, I; *Hydat.* 128; *Vives* 851).

We deem it a tenable supposition that the crisis of the third century rendered a severe blow to the elements of the Roman antique world in this zone and thereby promoted the development of the indigenous world. The advance of the native world manifested itself first and foremost in the

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, S. 129, Bem. 117-118; A. Balil, *Aspectos sociales...*, p. 890-891; A. Montenegro Duque, *Op. cit.*, p. 272.

⁷⁶ A. Chasatagnol, «Les espagnols dans l'aristocratie gouvernementale à l'époque de Théodose». *Les empereurs romains d'Espagne*. Paris, 1965, p. 272-290; J. M. Blázquez, *La economía...*, p. 592.

⁷⁷ M. Tarradell, «Población y propiedad rural en el este peninsular durante el Bajo Imperio». *Actas del III congreso español de estudios clásicos*. Madrid, 1968, t. II, p. 166-168.

⁷⁸ R. Menéndez Pidal, *Op. cit.*, p. 148.

transformation of the native social structures, tribal communities turning into territorial ones or into latifundia. All this brought about the «Celtic Renaissance» in culture, particularly in religion.

It could be remembered, though, that all these areas remained within the framework of the Roman Empire, they continued to obey the Roman authorities, they suffered the presence of the Roman troops stationed there which, although already partially barbarized, were still an essential element of the Roman society and state; the Roman law was still in force; economic bonds with other parts of the Empire diminished but were never severed entirely; the country's population still spoke Latin, though it was perhaps not so pure as literary Latin. The native world which before that epoch had co-existed with the ruling Roman world, now formed as it were an integral part of the latter's structure and acquired many of its elements. Therefore it seems more reasonable to assume not so much the triumph of the indigenous world over the Roman one as the merging of the weakened Roman world with the vigorous native one into one single entity with specific new features, distinct from both — the tribal Celtic (or Celtiberian) and ancient Roman ancestors. Apparently, on the vast expanses of the less Romanized zone of Spain there evolved — as result of the crisis and under its influence — a new society of Romane-Celtic synthesis, a forerunner to that Romano-Germanic synthesis that gave birth to feudalism.

Thus, the crisis of the third century in Spain has led to the decline of the city as the basic cell of antique society, to the appearance of the system of latifundia, to the formation of a new ruling class which even personally was dissociated from the preceding one (with only a few exceptions). However, similar results of the crisis bore dissimilar fruit in different regions of the country.

In the Romanized zone the urban society co-existed with that of latifundia; in the less romanized zone the system of latifundia prevailed. In the South and East of Spain the ruling élite comprised some descendants of Italo-Roman colonists and thoroughly Romanized Spaniards, in the other areas — some representatives of the less Romanized native world. On the Mediterranean shore and, probably, in Baetica, too, latifundia came about as result of confiscations and the incorporating of small and middle estates under the authority of one land-owner; in Central and North-West Spain at least part of latifundia originated from tribal communities. The two zones differed also ideologically — in some areas the crisis of antique religion encouraged a wider spread of Christianity whereas in others — a renewal of the Celtic cults.

Translated from the Russian by L. Chistonogova.

Castulo et la conquête

AGNES PELLETIER

RESUME

Les textes anciens relatifs à la conquête de l'*Hispania* montrent l'intérêt immédiat des Romains pour *Castulo*: ils en ont fait le pivot géographique et stratégique de leur progression dans la péninsule et une enclave de l'*Hispania* —c'est-à-dire de l'Espagne romaine— dans des zones non encore soumises ni pacifiées. Plus que dans l'importance politique de la cité, que les textes auraient alors négligée, il faut en voir la raison dans la position géographique clé de *Castulo* et de sa voisine *Iliturgi*, et dans l'image mentale que les Romains s'étaient faite de la péninsule.

En 214 avant J.-C., alors que l'armée carthaginoise et ses trois généraux installent leur camp face à Publius et Cnaeus Scipion établis près du *Mons Victoriae*, *Castulo, urbs Hispaniae valida ac nobilis et adeo coniuncta societate Poenis ut uxor inde Hannibali esset, ad Romanos defecit*¹; c'est en ces termes que Tite-Live parle pour la première fois de ce qui était peut-être la capitale des Orétans²: description élogieuse, qui affirme la puissance et la notoriété de la cité, et en même temps ambiguë en ce qu'elle la fait appartenir à trois entités différentes: à l'*Hispania* de toutes façons —et rares sont les villes que Tite-Live lui attribue explicitement³— et successivement aux Puniques puis aux Romains. Sa défection en faveur de ces derniers prend d'autant plus de valeur que ses liens avec les Barcides étaient forts, et le mariage d'Hannibal se

¹ *Castulo*, ville d'*Hispania* puissante et connue, et qu'une alliance unissait à tel point aux Carthaginois qu'elle avait donné à Hannibal son épouse, fit défection au profit des Romains: Tite-Live, 24, 41, 7.

² Strabon en parle comme une des deux villes importantes de l'Orétanie, 3, 3, 2. Cf. Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie*, Stuttgart, 1899, col. 1778.

³ La plupart du temps, en effet, Tite-Live présente une ville comme appartenant à un peuple: 21, 5, 4; 21, 39, 5; 21, 61, 6; 28, 3, 2; 39, 42, 1...