

*Contributa Iulia, Ugultunia and Curiga*¹

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SUMMARY.—This article deals with the history of two towns in Baeturia. It is an investigation into their location, legal statuses, and interrelationship with one another.

The Northern area of Baetica has frequently been neglected in previous studies of the province despite the fact that it offers several points of interest. One of these is a list of towns of the Celtic area of Baeturia given by Pliny. These towns are distinguished from others the same names in Lusitania by titles, *quae cognominibus in Baetica distinguntur*². The style of the list is to place the title of a given town in the nominative case and the town, or, in two cases, the group, to which it is attributed in the dative case, governed by the verb *adicere*. However the following entry is also found; *Contributa Iulia Ugultuniae, cum qua et Curiga nunc est*. The text of Pliny is corrupt at this point and various manuscripts read (*M*) *Ugultuniacum quae Curiga nunc est*.

This passage raises several points of interest, the first being the exact name and location of the town given the title *Contributa Iulia* and the second the relationship between this town and the Curiga and the connection, if any, between this relationship and the title *Contributa*.

Perhaps, however, an initial problem which needs to be dealt with is the status of *Contributa*. It has been suggested that the towns Pliny lists with titles, a group which extends beyond the list of Celtic towns, owe their titles to the possession of a privileged status; normally that of a Latin colony is proposed³. Nevertheless there is very little evidence that this was so, proponents mainly having to reply on the «colonial» sound of the titles and consequently being at a loss to explain a title such as Onuba Aestuaria, which appears to be purely geographic in reference. Moreover it appears from epigraphic evidence that the stipendiary town of Saepo

1. I should like to thank the Leverhulme trust for their kind award of a study abroad studentship which made the writing of this article possible.

2. Pliny, *N. H.*, III 1. 13-4.

3. See M.I. Henderson, «Julius Caesar and Latium in Spain», *JRS*, 32, 1942, p. 1 y ss.

possessed the title *Victrix*⁴. Consequently these titles do not seem to mark a specific privileged status. Moreover, in the case of the «Celtic» list Pliny himself suggests another clear reason for the titles, namely that they are to distinguish the towns from others with the same name in Lusitania. There seems to be no reason to doubt Pliny here and so it appears that we can deduce nothing about the status of *Contributa*, or other titled towns, simply from the fact they possessed a title.

Our first problem specifically related to *Contributa* itself is to decide, if possible, which of the two readings of Pliny is correct and whether the native name of the town was *Ugultunia* or *Ugultuniacum*. Although the town is mentioned in several other sources, e.g. the Antonine Itinerary⁵, the Ravenna Cosmography⁶, and the geography of Ptolemy⁷, it is always mentioned by its title, *Contributa*, and never its native name. The reading *Ugultuniacum* has several supporters, beginning with the Spanish antiquarian Rodrigo Caro⁸. The termination *-acum* is a common Celtic suffix found in Gaul, e.g. *Mogontiacum*, the modern Mainz. It has also been suggested that the «*Ugultuniacum*» is a genitive plural of the type found among the *gentilitates* of northern Spain⁹. Both these facts fit well with Pliny's assertion that the town was in three Celtic part of *Baeturia*, nevertheless there are serious problems in accepting this reading of the text.

Grammatically speaking it is difficult to understand the sense of Pliny's sentence if the reading «*Ugultuniacum*» is correct. We should expect, by analogy with the rest of the entries of the list, the dative «*Ugultuniaco*», rather than the nominative form, «*Ugultuniacum*», in order to make the name of the town agree with the overall governing verb of the sentence, «*adiceri*». However this is not attested in any of our manuscripts. If, on the other hand, «*Ugultuniacum*» is a genitive plural of a *gentilitas*, it must form part of the title to the town, rather than being the name of the people to whom the title was given, as, again, if it were the name of a people we should expect a dative, «*Ugultuniacibus*», in the same way as later in the list we find the entries «*Steresibus Fortunales*» and «*Callensibus Aeneanici*». If we accept that the title of the town was «*Contributa Iulia Ugultuniacum*» our problems do not end. Then there appears to be no town listed to which this title applies. The only solution is to believe that the town involved is that listed in the following phrase, «*quae Curiga nunc est*», but in this case we should again expect a dative, «*Curigae*», rather than the nominative, «*Curiga*», to conform to the overall structure of the sentence. However the gender of the relative pronoun rules out this assumption as, if this were the case, it ought to be neuter, «*quod*», in order to agree with «*cognomen*», as the titles were previously described. It could be replied that «*quae*» here is a neuter plural as more than one *cognomen* is involved, but as the relevant verb of the phrase, «*est*», is singular this possibility is not available.

4. See *CIL*, II, 133q-1341 and Pliny, *N. H.* III 3, 14-15

5. *IA*, 432, 6.

6. *Rav. Cos.* 4.44/314.14

7. Ptolemy, II 4, 10.

8. Caro: *Antigüedades y Principado de la ilustrísima ciudad de Sevilla*, Libro III, Corografía del convento de Sevilla p. 196. For modern supporters see A. Tovar, *Iberische Landeskunde*, Band I, Baetica p. 178.

9. R. Rodríguez Bordallo and A. M. Ríos Graña, *Contributa Iulia Ugultuniacum*, in V. Congreso de Estudios Extremeños, p. 147 y ss., p. 150, p. 159.

These problems lead to the third, and most severe, objection to the reading of «Ugultuniacum», namely that in the resulting complete phrase «Contributa Iulia Ugultuniacum quae Curiga nunc est», the relative pronoun, «quae», must refer to Contributa so implying that Contributa and Curiga are the same town. However the Antonine Itinerary¹⁰ lists the two towns separately and places Contributa some 24 miles to the North of Curiga. The two towns are also listed separately in the Ravenna Cosmography and the Geography of Ptolemy¹¹. In addition, as will be seen, there is epigraphic evidence for the separate existence of these two entities.

It appears reasonable therefore to discard the possibility that our town was called Ugultuniacum and so assume that its native name was Ugultunia. Even this reading is not without its difficulties as the phrase «cum qua» produced by it, if not grammatically unsound, certainly is poor Latin. We shall discuss this problem again below.

The site of Contributa Iulia Ugultunia is problematic, but the town which it appears to have had some relationship, Curiga, can be located in, or near, the town of Monesterio with a reasonable degree of certainty. An inscription built into the Ermita de la Candelaria in the cemetery of Monesterio records a decree of the *decurio(n)es Res. P. Curigensium* erecting an honorific statue to an emperor. The top of the stone had been lost before it was recorded, and therefore the emperor involved is unknown, however Hübner believed from the style of the epigraphy that Septimius Severus was the emperor concerned, and dated the stone to 196 A. D. Unfortunately the stone has been lost so Hübner's judgment, which has been generally accepted, cannot be verified. This late second century date is however of great importance, as will become clear below¹². Although the original provenance of this stone is unknown, it should have been found at Monesterio, or at least nearby, as it refers to a decree of the local council, rather than just a citizen of Curiga who could have died away from his home town, and so Curiga can be placed in, or near, Monesterio¹³.

Given the location of Curiga we can attempt to find the site of Contributa. The Antonine Itinerary places this town a further 24 miles to the North of Curiga, on the main road from Hispalis to Emerita. If we assume that the Roman miles measures approximately 1,620 yards and that the Itinerary's figures are correct, this would make the modern town of Medina de los Torres a possible location for Contributa. Such speculation is supported by the fact that a substantial number of inscriptions have been found here, including one found in the Parochial church recording a *Q. Manlius Avitus Gal Contributensis Hvir bis*¹⁴. A further inscription records a *L. Iunius Hebenus IIIIvir Augustalis*¹⁵. Care needs to be exercised, as there is no reason why Manlius could not have been buried in a town other than his own, and indeed

10. See n. 5.

11. Ptol., II 4, 10 & 11 & *Rav. Cos.* 314.14, 314.16

12. *CIL*, 1040 and commentary.

13. J. de Viu in his *Antigüedades de Extremadura*, p. 221 speaks of «señales» of an ancient site to the South of Monesterio unfortunately without being more specific. These could well be the remains of ancient Curiga. R. Corzo and A. Jiménez, «La organización de la "Baetica"», *A.e.A.*, 53 (1980) p. 21 y ss., plausibly propose the site of Venta del Culebrin, close to Monesterio.

14. *CIL*, II, 1029.

15. *ILER*, 3764.

the tomb of an Emeritensis¹⁶ and a dedication by a Romulensis¹⁷ have also been found here. Nevertheless the combination of the distance involved and attestation of a *Ivir* of Contributa here is highly suggestive. The monuments of the Emeritensis and the Romulensis also hint that this site was on a main thoroughfare as we know Contributa was. The dedication by Threptus, the Romulensis, may possibly provide a further piece of supporting evidence. The dedication begins with the abbreviation *M.C.i.* This has been interpreted as a dedication to M(ithari) C(autopati) I(nvicto). Such an interpretation however seems unlikely and another possible reading could be M(unicipio) C(ontributensi) I(ulio). However further readings, e.g. implying that we are dealing with a dedication to Cybele, are equally possible.

In addition to this epigraphic evidence, there are the remains of a major ancient site 1.5 kms. to the East of the present-day town at «Los Cercos» in the Dehesa de Castillejos¹⁸. Given this combination of facts, it appears that we can locate Contributa in the Dehesa de Castillejo. From our epigraphic evidence, we have a hint that the town was a *municipium*, and that it certainly possessed the normal municipal system of administration headed by *Iviri* and a *collegium Augustales*.

If we have located these two towns correctly, it remains to determine what, if any, relationship existed between them. The two pieces of information of relevance here are the text of Pliny and the title «Contributa». The sense of Pliny's phrase «cum qua et Curiga nunc est» shows that if one these towns was subordinated to the other the subordinate town would have been Curiga rather than Contributa. The force of the «nunc» also implies that some change in the relationship between the two towns had taken place either in Pliny's day, or, at least, since the date of the compilation of Agrippa's map, from which it is normally agreed that the greater part of Pliny's information was taken.

Ugultunia's title is also of interest. «Contributa» suggests that either the town itself was formed from a synoecism of smaller settlements or had absorbed a group of smaller settlements into itself. Could Curiga have suffered this fate and have same merged into Contributa Iulia Ugultunia? A possible parallel for the fate of the town is provided by the town of Carbula near Corduba which minted coins in the first century B.C. and is listed as an *oppidum* by Pliny, but later appears as the *pagus Carbulensis*, and so seems to have been absorbed by the provincial capital, Corduba¹⁹.

At this point a further inscription from Monesterio, found built into the parochial church, becomes important. Unfortunately it is incomplete and reads «Iu li .../mutatione oppidi muni/cipes et incolae pagi/lucani et pagi/suburbani». Hübner in his commentary on the inscription dated it by its lettering firmly to the Vespasianic period²⁰.

16. *C.I.L.* II, 1026.

17. *C.I.L.* II, 1025.

18. Rodríguez Bordallo and Ríos Graña, *op. cit.*, n. 9 pp. 155-156. For a list of finds in this area see J. R. Melida, *Catálogo monumental de la provincia de Badajoz*, núms. 1882-1886.

19. Pliny *N. H.*, III 3, 10 and *C.I.L.* II 2322. However it must be born in mind that the *pagus Carbulensis* is so called because it is a *pagus* of Corduba bordering on the *territorium* of Carbula rather because it is an aboerbed town. The continuing existence of the town is made more likely by the attestation of a presbyter of Carbula and the Council of Elvira. in c. 300 A. D.

20. *C.I.L.* II 1041 and commentary.

This inscription has been combined with Ugultunia's title of *Contributa* to suggest that what is being recorded is the change of city, namely from Curiga to Contributa, by two *pagi* previously associated with Curiga, and that this change was brought about by the absorption of Curiga by Ugultunia. Further, given the dating of this inscription, it is suggested that this took place in the Vespasianic period and it was at this period that Ugultunia took the title of Contributa, previously having merely been titled *Iulia*²¹.

At first sight this seems to be an excellent synthesis of our literary and archaeological evidence. Nevertheless there are some severe problems in accepting this interpretation. The first is the problem of the title of Ugultunia. The titles given by Pliny fall into two patterns; the assigning of a simple title in adjectival form to a people, also in adjectival form, e.g. «Callensibus Aeneanici», and the assigning of a title which inevitably takes the form an abstract noun in the nominative case followed by the adjective «Iulia» to a town whose form is given as a noun in the dative case, e.g. «Nertobrigae Concordia Iulia». The title *Contributa Iulia* falls into this latter category (*Contributa Iulia Ugultuniae*) and, given its similarity to the titles of the rest of the list, should have been granted in its entirety at the same time as the rest of the titles concerned. The adjective «Iulia» suggests a Caesarian or, at the latest, an Augustan date for the grant which appears to rule out a link between the title and the absorption of Curiga by Ugultunia in the Flavian period.

A further linguistic argument against a link between the title *Contributa* and the possible absorption of Curiga by Ugultunia, is Pliny's use of «nunc», which implies that the arrangement, if it existed, between *Contributa* and Curiga postdated the grant of the title, otherwise it is difficult to see why this phrase should be describing a situation which existed «nunc», with its implicit contrast with the rest of the titles.

A much larger problem for what can be called the «Contribution theory» is the apparent survival of the town of Curiga as a separate entity. If the town was subordinated to Ugultunia, it ought to have lost its identity almost entirely, being demoted to the status of a *pagus* of Ugultunia and retaining as such at the most a *magister*, or *magistri*, as minor local magistrates²². However from our evidence this does not appear to have been the case. The presence of the town in the Antonine Itinerary and Ravenna Cosmography may not be too problematic as concerns this question, as these list many settlements which are not of municipal status and, consequently, it could be argued that all that is being recorded at Curiga in these documents is a *mansio* which was called Curiga because it lay in a *pagus* of that name, and was, in turn, was attributed to *Contributa*. However the appearance of a Κουρίγα in Ptolemy's geography is much more difficult to explain in this manner as the settlements listed here are listed as *πολεις* which should mean administratively independent units suggesting that Curiga was an independent town at this date. Our epigraphic evidence also suggests that Curiga continued as a separate entity. If Hübner was correct in attributing the imperial

21. This was the view of A. Albertini, *Les divisions administratives de L'Espagne*, p. 113 and Rodríguez Bordallo and Ríos Graña, *op. cit.* n. 9, pp. 149, 159.

22. See Festus, ed. Lindsay, p. 502.

dedication found at Monesterio to Severus²³, Curiga certainly seems to have been an independent entity at this date, as we find a *respublica* complete with *decuriones* making decrees in their own right. As has been noted, a *pagus* would only have possessed a *magister*, or a pair of *magistri*, as local minor magistrates and would certainly not have possessed *decuriones*²⁴.

The tribal affiliations of the two towns suggest that they remained separate entities. Ugultunia was affiliated to the Galerian tribe as is attested by the tombstone of the *Ilvir Avitus*²⁵ and that of (T?) *Iunius T.f. Gal. Crassidianus* and (T?) *Iunius T.f. Gal. Fundinus* found on a funerary inscription from Fuente de los Cantos²⁶. On the other hand Curiga appears to have been affiliated to the Quirine tribe as can be seen from the tomb of Denea Sperata found in Monesterio, on which the name *C.A.(n)tistius C(f) Quir. Cra(ssus?)* occurs²⁷. Had Curiga been absorbed into Contributa we should expect that the same tribe, that of Contributa, the Galerian, to appear at both sites. Separate tribal affiliation on the other hand implies that the two sites were separate municipal entities.

Curiga's probable enrollment in the Quirine tribe poses further problems for the contribution theory. It strongly suggests that the town became a *municipium* in the general grant of the *ius Latii* to Spain by Vespasian²⁸, this being the tribe to which the newly created *municipia* of this period were affiliated. If this is the case, the reference to a «*mutatio oppidi*» on the stone found in Monesterio cannot refer to Curiga being attributed to Ugultunia, as if Hübner was right in dating the inscription to the Vespasianic period, it dates precisely from the period when Curiga should have become a *municipium* in its own right. The phrase «*mutatio oppidi*» can be much more plausibly be interpreted as referring not to a physical change of administrative centre for the two *pagi*, but to an internal change at Curiga itself, namely the change in status from that of a mere stipendiary *oppidum* to that of a *municipium* with the *ius Latii*. This change may have provoked the use of the phrase «*municipies et incolae*» used on the inscription to underline the town's newly acquired status²⁹.

The two *pagi* involved in the dedication are normally assumed, in the contribution theory, to have belonged to Contributa. This is because of the fragmentary broken line above the main body of the text, which Hübner believed

23. See n. 12.

24. The letter of the Praetorian Prefect Ablabius and the Emperor Constantine to the town of Orcistus (I.L.S. 6091) specifically mentions the possession of decurions (here curiales) as a defining attribute of an independent town (col. 1, 11. 19-20).

25. See n. 14.

26. *CIL*, II 1030.

27. *CIL*, II 1042.

28. Pliny, *N. H.*, III, 3, 30.

29. Rodríguez Neila, «Notas sobre la "contributio" en la administración municipal de la Bética romana», *Archivo Hispalense*, 185 p. 55 ss., believes that the use of «*municipes*» here should indicate that Contributa was a *municipium? iuris Latii?* prior to the Vespasianic period. However this assumes that the inscription predates Vespasian's grant of the *ius Latii* to Spain; something that is by no means clear, especially if the grant was made at the beginning of Vespasian's reign (see A. B. Bosworth, «Vespasian and the provinces—some problems», *Athenaeum* 51 (1973) and that the *pagi* referred to are part of Contributa, which again is disputable. Nevertheless the tribal affiliation of Contributa does appear to indicate early privileged status.

ought to be restored as *Iul(ienses ?Contributensis?)*. Nevertheless given the fragmentary nature of the text this restoration cannot command total confidence. Another possibility is that the line is the fragment of a proper name, perhaps that of one of the *magistri* of the *pagus* under whose direction the votive act was performed. The name of the *pagus suburbanus* is also problematic for the contribution theory. «Suburbanus» implies that this *pagus* lay near the administrative centre, the «urbs», of its municipal unit. The «urbs» concerned, if the contribution theory is correct, would have been Ugultunia. It is difficult to see why such a *pagus* would have wished to make a dedication along with a further *pagus* in a third *pagus* was merely of equal status and was located at least twenty miles away from the administrative centre of their *municipium* where its impact would have been much greater.

The easiest solution to these problems is to interpret the two *pagi* as *pagi* not of Contributa, but of an administratively independent Curiga. This immediately solves the problem of the title of the *pagus suburbanus* which would have been located near to Curiga, its «urbs». The problem of why two *pagi* should wish to make a dedication in a third *pagus* is also solved, as Curiga would, in this case, have been the urban centre, rather than a *pagus*, and so the obvious place to make such a dedication.

A final problem for the contribution theory is the possible existence of a third town, Lacimurga Constantia Iulia, between Curiga and Contributa. This is hinted at in the Ravenna Cosmography where the *mansio* «Lacurris», or «Lacunis», is listed between the two³⁰. Although two stones listing a Lacimurga have been found much further to the North in the despoblado of Villavieja near Alocer³¹, we must bear in mind that Lacimurga is one of the towns which, according to Pliny, had a homonymous twin in Lusitania³². This is supported by Ptolemy's geography which lists a Λακονιμουργι, probably a corrupt form of Lacimurga, in Lusitania³³. Given the location of these inscriptions, found just North of the river Guadiana, the boundary between the two provinces, they ought to be from the Lusitanian Lacimurga and so not affect the localization of its Baetican homonym. Several arabic writers refer to the town of Laqant, which appears to be a corrupted version of Lacimurga, and modern arabist commentators are almost unanimous in placing Laqant around, or at, the modern town of Fuente de los Cantos³⁴, which does indeed lie between Monesterio and Medina de los Torres.

Fuente de los Cantos has been identified with Ugultunia by several authors³⁵ on the strength of the inscription of Crassidianus listed above³⁶, where Crassidianus is described as «patria Contributense». There is no reason however to link this title to the find spot of the inscription and the use of «patria» here as well as a municipal

30. *Rav. Cos.* 4.44 (314-315).

31. *CIL* II 5068-5550, *AE*, 1984, p. 328.

32. Pliny, *N.H.* II, 3, 13 and IV 35, 118, «stipendiorum... praeter iam dictos in Baetica Cognominibus».

33. Ptolemy, II 5,7. The variant «Lacinimurae» is found in some manuscripts of Pliny.

34. See the extensive discussion by F. Hernández Giménez, «El itinerario de Musa de Algeciras a Mérida», *Al Andalus*, 26 (1961) p. 43 y ss., and Bosworth et al., *The Encyclopaedia of Islam* (1986), vol. 5, s.v. Laqant.

35. For example Rodrigo Caro, *op. cit.* in n. 8, p. 196, and Albertini, *op. cit.*, in n. 21, p. 91.

36. See n. 26.

adjective may suggest, by its additional force, that Contributa lay elsewhere. Moreover the Itinerary's given mileage for the distance between Ugultunia and Curiga, something which is fitted by Medina de los Torres. Nonetheless there appears to have been a major Roman site at Fuente de los Cantos. Rodrigo Caro mentions a despoblado, San Bartolomé del Villar, situated a mile from the modern town, with: «muchos vestigios de antigüedad Romana y comiença una calçada que va a Mérida derecha». Hübner too speaks of «vestigia oppidi antiqui» being visible here.³⁷ Caro's remarks about the presence of a road are important as they appear to indicate that the settlement concerned was on the main Roman route North from Seville as the Ravenna Cosmography implies that Lacunnis/Lacimurga was.

Fuente de los Cantos therefore seems to have been the approximate site of the Roman town of Lacimurga. If this is the case, its *territorium* would have lain in between those of Contributa and Curiga, making a permanent fusion between these latter two sites almost impossible. It could be suggested that Curiga became a «praefectura» of Contributa, but such arrangements seem to have been exclusively for *coloniae*³⁸. In addition the attestation of *decuriones* and a *respublica Curigensis* appears to rule out this possibility³⁹.

There are therefore good reasons to think that Ugultunia and Curiga were independent of each other. Nevertheless there remains the statement of Pliny, our only concrete evidence to this effect, that there was a link between the two towns. What, therefore, are we to make of Pliny's assertion? One possibility, suggested by Thouvenot, but now largely forgotten⁴⁰, is that Pliny's statement refers to the political situation prior to, rather than after, Vespasian's grant of *Latinitas* to Spain. In this case the dedicatory inscription of Monesterio discussed above would refer by its phrase «mutatio oppidi» the creation of a new independent municipal entity centred on Curiga in this period. But this still leaves the problem of why Pliny states that Curiga «nunc» is associated with Contributa. The force of the «nunc» appears, at first sight, to place the date of this arrangement in Pliny's own day. Nevertheless a further possibility exists. Curiga was an independent entity in the Flavian period, ruling out the possibility that «nunc» refers to this period. Instead it should refer to an administration change which took place in the Julio-Claudian period which was then superseded on the Flavian grant of *Latinitas* to the peninsula. Pliny's information about the legal status of Spanish towns was already out of date at the time of its publication as can be seen from the fact that he mentions Vespasian's grant, by far the most important political event for the province, in a cursory sentence tacked onto the end of his account of the Spanish provinces. Here, therefore, Pliny could be incorporating a correction of his original source, probably Agrippa's map compiled by around 8 B. C., which still predated the actual situation of his own time.

37. See. *CIL*, II, p. 131. «Ugultuniacum».

38. Agennius Urbicus, *De Controv. Agr.* in *Corpus Agrimensorum Romanorum*, ed. Thulin, p. 40, «Coloniae quoque loca ... quae... solemus praefecturae appellare.»

39. See Festus, ed. Lindsay, p. 262, «Praefecturae "neque tamen magistratus suos habebant, in qua his legibus praefecti mittenbantur quotannis qui ius dicerent"».

40. R. Thouvenot, *L'essai sur la province romaine de Bétique*, pp. 198, 201-201.

If this is the case, we can reconstruct the history of Ugultunia and Curiga in the following manner. Initially the two sites were independent of each other, Ugultunia's title does not appear to bear any reference to a relationship with Curiga. Later in the Julio-Claudian period, Curiga was absorbed by Contributa, but this relationship did not last. The failure of this arrangement could have been because of the size of Curiga and its distance from Ugultunia and that, as the *territorium* of the town of Lacimurga probably lay between the two, it was highly impractical to administer Curiga from Ugultunia. Curiga consequently appears to have regained its administrative independence and the status of a *municipium* in the general grant of *Latinitas* to Spain by Vespasian, being enrolled in the normal tribe allotted to such towns at this period, the Quirine. That submerged units aspired, and, on occasions, succeeded, in regaining lost administrative independence can be seen from the petition of Orcistus to the emperor Constantine to regain their independence from the town of Nacolea⁴¹.

A further set solutions involves an examination of the depth of possible corruption of Pliny's text at this point. The poor grammatical expression «cum qua» instead of «quacum» which we would expect, warns us that something may be amiss here. Perhaps the phrase is a corruption of an abstract title of the town of Curiga beginning with «C» and that «Curiga nunc est» could again be a corruption of a phrase such as «Curigensibus». However this second form of corruption seems less likely as the list of titles in Pliny uses either nominal or adjectival forms, but never combines the two.

Another possible form of corruption would be that Pliny is attempting to say that Curiga and Ugultunia were allotted the same title. This did occur on occasions, both the town of Lacimurga and that of Osset (the modern San Juan de Aznalfarache), for example, were given the title «Constantia Iulia». If this was the case here the original phrase in Pliny would have read something like, *Contributa* (for *cum Curiga [e]*) nunc (addicta) est. The use of «nunc» and «et» showing that Curiga obtained its title after the rest of the towns mentioned and Pliny wished to draw attention to this fact. If Curiga became a *municipium* in the Vespasianic period it is possible that several smaller surrounding units were attached to it for administrative convenience and hence it obtained the title of *Contributa* like the neighbouring town of Ugultunia.

It is easy to see how such a statement could have been later misunderstood and «corrected» by copyists to produce the text we now have. These solutions are more difficult to accept however as there is no parallel to this degree of corruption in the rest of the text and if the titles were to be used for the clear identification of towns, as seems to be the case, it would seem odd to allot the same title to two towns so close to one another.

If the contribution theory must be discarded we still need to account for the title of Ugultunia. This differs from the other titles given in nominal form in Pliny's list as these almost all refer to abstract virtues whereas «Contributa» appears to refer to a political act⁴². As has been seen above the linking of the

41. *ILS*, 6091; Riccobono, *FIRA*, 1-95.

42. Viu's suggestion, *Antigüedades de Extremadura*, p. 216, that the town was named *Contributa* because it had «contributed» to the Caesarian war effort in the civil wars is without value. The only parallel to «Contributa» is Segida's title «Restituta».

adjective «Iulia» to titles of these towns suggests that they were granted in the Augustan period at the latest. Several possibilities exist: the most obvious is that Caesar, or Augustus, created an administrative unit centred on Ugultunia, placing several smaller nearby sites under it, hence forming a unit created by the process of contribution. A possible parallel to this process is found at the town of Ipsca, the present-day Cortijo de Iscar, near Castro del Río, which also possessed the title *Contributa* and became a *municipium* in the Vespasianic period as can be seen from its allotment to the Quirine tribe⁴³. Ipsca was located in an area where a large number of native «recintos» persisted well into the Roman period and it is likely that some of these were attached to the new *municipium* for administrative purposes, giving rise to the title «Contributa». Such small native settlements also survived in the area of Ugultunia and their incorporation into the political structure of the town may explain the title of *Contributa*⁴⁴.

A second is that the title reflects not a Roman, but the native political order as found by the Romans. It has been assumed on occasions that the title «Iulia» ought to give a date for the foundation of the town⁴⁵. There is no reason why this should be the case, indeed if Pliny is right that titles were granted to these towns solely to distinguish them from homonymous towns in Lusitania they must have existed prior to the granting of their titles, as otherwise the problem would not have arisen in the first place. Nertobriga, for example, which received the title *Concordia Iulia*, was a native settlement which clearly predated the Caesarian period⁴⁶. We know from the Turris Lascutana inscription that some native communities possessed subordinate groups beneath them and it may be this characteristic of Ugultunia that its title is describing⁴⁷.

Either of these solutions would seem more likely than that «Contributa» reflects an arrangement which the town possessed with the nearby town of Curiga. Of the two the former seems the most likely to be correct.

Like several other towns in this area Ugultunia, by virtue of being enrolled in the Galerian tribe, appears to have obtained some form of Roman municipal status prior to the Vespasianic period. At first sight it is difficult to see why this should have been the case. Romanization in this area appears to have been much slower than in the Guadalquivir valley so the privileges granted (Pliny's *Latium antiquum* [i.e. prior to the grant of Vespasian]?) cannot have followed as a consequence of the evolution of a highly Romanized lifestyle in the towns concerned, two more likely possibilities are that they were a reward for supporting the Caesarian cause in the civil war⁴⁸, or that they were to create loyal centres at key points in Baeturia thus ensuring communication between Bae-

43. *CIL*, II 5466, *CIL*, II 1957.

44. See M. I. Ongil Valentín, «Aportaciones al estudio de la prehistoria extremeña» in A. Ruiz y M. Molinos, *Iberos*, Actas de jornadas sobre el mundo Ibérico, Jaén, 1985.

45. See Rodríguez Bordallo and Ríos Graña, *op. cit.*, n. 9, p. 150.

46. For a possible literary reference to Nertobriga in the second century B.C. see Polybius XXXV 4, but with the reservations of J. S. Richardson, *Hispaniae* (1986), p. 196.

47. *CIL*, II 5041 & J. Mangas, «Servidumbre comunitaria en la Bética prerromana», *Memorias de la Historia Antigua*, I (1977), p. 151 y ss.

48. For the possibility that this region of Spain supported Caesar in the Civil War see J. B. Tsirkin, «The South of Spain in the civil war of 40-45 (sic) B. C.», *A.e.A.*, 45 (1981) p. 54 y ss.

tica and Lusitania. However this topic deserves separate and detailed coverage in itself⁴⁹.

In conclusion we can see that Ugultunia and Curiga were for the greater part of their existence independent units. Ugultunia was probably made a town of political importance by having several surrounding smaller units incorporated into it either by Caesar or Augustus, and it was this act which is reflected in its title. At a later date, but at some time in the Julian-Claudian period, it seems that the neighbouring town of Curiga, too, was incorporated into Ugultunia's political jurisdiction. Nevertheless this town succeeded on regaining its independent identity, at least by the time of the reign of Vespasian.

49. The present author knows of no article discussing this problem.

La dependencia económica de los libertos en el Alto Imperio Romano¹

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SUMMARY.—Three are the main goals of the present article: to propose a new and more useful meaning for the expression «independent freedmen»; to study which were the links between social mobility and dependance in the Roman city of Ostia and, finally, to state briefly my case for an inner solidarity among freedmen in certain cities that can be taken as explanation of their success as a group.

I

En una fecha indeterminada, en torno al año 108, se presentó en casa de Plinio el Joven un liberto de su amigo Sabiniano para rogarle que intercediera ante su patrono y poder así recobrar el favor perdido. Según el testimonio de Plinio, el liberto se arrojó a sus pies llorando, arrepentido por su conducta, y prometió no reincidir nunca más. Ignoramos cuál había sido la causa del enojo de Sabiniano, pero podemos intuir cuál fue el castigo: Sabiniano, probablemente, expulsó al liberto de su casa, donde habría vivido hasta entonces desde los tiempos en que aún era esclavo, le retiró su amistad y su apoyo, condenándolo así a la inseguridad, la pobreza y el hambre². Sabiniano no es un ejemplo

1. En el presente artículo, he querido reflexionar sobre uno de los aspectos a los que dediqué mi tesis doctoral con el fin de hacer públicas las conclusiones a las que, a este respecto, pude llegar entonces. Quiero dar las gracias por su apoyo y estímulo, pero también por sus correcciones y sugerencias, a mi director de tesis, el Dr. Domingo Plácido, y a los miembros del tribunal que la examinó, los Dres. Julio Mangas, Gerardo Pereira, José Miguel Serrano, Manuel Abellán y Javier Arce.

2. Plin., *Ep.*, 9, 21 y 9, 24. La expulsión de casa de Sabiniano se deduce del hecho de que éste, cuando, a ruegos de Plinio, perdona a su liberto, le recibe de nuevo en su casa («*Bene fecisti quod libertum... in domum in animum recepisti*»). Aunque el destinatario de estas dos cartas nos es desconocido y no hay ningún dato en ellas que nos permita precisar la fecha, la mayor parte del libro IX parece haberse escrito entre el 108 y el 109 d. C. Vid. A. N. Sherwin-White, *The Letters of Pliny. A Historical and Social Commentary*, Oxford, 1985, tercera edición, revisada (1.ª ed. 1966), y R. Syme, «The Dating of Pliny's Latest Letters» *CQ*, 35, 1985, pp. 176-185.