

Introduction

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THIS PRESENT VOLUME RESULTS from a symposium entitled 'The Origins of Urbanization in Iberia' organized under the auspices of the British Academy and held at the premises of the Academy in London on the 24th and 25th February 1994. The idea for the symposium arose in the Academy's Section 10, which is responsible for archaeology, and reflects an awareness of the remarkably rich archaeological record of the Peninsula and the high quality of archaeological and historical endeavour focused on the area, most notably during the last two decades.

The Academy has made a significant contribution to the study of ancient Iberia in recent years. Since 1988 the Academy has made 81 Personal Research Grants for work in Spain, of which 22 have been in the field of ancient history and archaeology. It has also made an important contribution to Anglo-Spanish fieldwork projects. These have ranged from the second millennium BC regional survey at Gatas in Almería, the Son Ferrandell Oleza Project in Mallorca, the Guadajoz and the Celti (Peñaflor) Projects in Andalucía, the Frías de Albarracin and Majaladares Projects in Aragón and the Ager Tarraconensis Survey in Catalunya.

A significant percentage of the Academy's research budget has thus been devoted to Iberia. This is a measure not only of the Peninsula's huge archaeological potential but also of the harmonious and creative nature of the collaborative projects which it has been possible to set up with our Spanish and Portuguese colleagues. The welcome we have experienced has always been warm and the memories of new friendships abiding. But pleasures apart, the Academy's rigorous review procedures would not have allowed projects to be supported had it not been for the assurance that results of outstanding archaeological importance would emerge. The last few years have shown how thoroughly justified its decisions have proved. The British contribution to the archaeology of Iberia is now settling down to form a new strand in the rich history of research into one of the more culturally complex regions of Europe. Indeed it is starting to

bear comparison with that in Italy and Greece where British Schools have been long established.

For many years it has been possible to discuss the origin and development of towns in early Europe without any reference being made to Iberia, even though it occupies a key position between temperate Europe and North Africa and dominates the western edge of the Mediterranean. In choosing 'The Origins of Urbanization in Iberia' as a theme, we have focused upon a subject area in which major advances have been, or are being, made. They inform us about the complex process of urbanization at a general level of significance well beyond the bounds of the Peninsula itself. Paradoxically, however, awareness of this has been confined to only a limited British academic audience. In this one piece of very varied landscape, sitting astride several major corridors of communication, it is possible to examine in fine detail the development of indigenous communities and to gauge the settlement and influences of Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians and Romans. The socio-political patterns which emerge are kaleidoscopic in their variety: it was the aim of the symposium to identify some of the broader underlying patterns.

The tradition of study in the subject goes back many years and it would be impossible to even try and enumerate the more important works. Excavations at well known sites like Los Millares, Soto de Medinilla, Cortes de Navarra, Empúries, Ullastret, Numantia, Azaila, Briteiros, Tarragona, Italica, Mérida and Conimbriga were of key importance in tracing the cruder outlines of urban development in Iberia up until the 1970's. Over the last two decades, however, there has been a veritable data explosion in which publication and synthesis has been barely able to keep pace with the speed of discovery. Excavations at proto-historic sites like Tejada La Vieja (Fernández Jurado 1987), La Joya (Llanos 1983) and Fuente Alamo (Arteaga and Schubart 1981) have begun to change our understanding of pre-Roman communities in the Peninsula. Important archaeological work at the Roman towns of Saguntum (Aranegui 1992), Carthago Nova (Ramallo 1994), Corduba (León 1990) and Celsa (Beltrán *et al.* 1984), together with major new epigraphic discoveries, are shedding important new light upon the genesis of early Roman towns in the west. This has been largely due to delegation of the management of the archaeological resource to the 17 autonomous communes of Spain since the early 1980's, the growing popularity of archaeology in Spanish and Portuguese Universities and an increasing awareness of archaeology amongst the general public. This is reflected in the pages of regional archaeological summaries and journals, foreign journals like *Madridrer Mitteilungen* and *Mélanges de la Casa de Velázquez* and in the pages of the "national" journals like *Trabajos de Prehistoria*, *Archivo Español de Arqueología* and

O Arqueologo Portugues. As a result the complexities and subtleties of urban development throughout Iberia are starting to become apparent. Some archaeologists have begun to tease out some of the socio-cultural patterns which are emerging (Chapman 1989; Arteaga (ed.) 1986; Almagro Gorbea and Ruiz Zapatero (eds) 1993, AAVV 1987 and Bendala (ed.) 1993; AAVV 1990; Trillmich and Zanker (eds) 1990). These are sure to lead to the revision of many long-cherished ideas about the origin and development of different kinds of town in Europe.

Given such richness and the constraints of a two-day symposium, selection has not been easy. What we have tried to do is to cover the full span up to the second century AD in a series of broad contributions and to balance this with a series of case studies of specific sites where current work is leading to major reassessments. In those relatively rare cases where a site has already been published in English or American Journals we opted for a lesser known alternative. The reason for this was to try and maximize the coverage of less familiar, but equally important, sites. We have also attempted to reflect work in all parts of the Peninsula except for the Balearic Islands. It was felt that the very special nature of the archaeological record there merits its consideration apart. All of this means that in the constraints of a single volume much work of the highest quality has, of necessity, been omitted. However this is inevitable in an area receiving such vigorous scholarly attention.

The papers presented in this volume are, for the most part, written versions of those given at the symposium. One additional contribution, by Virgílio Hipólito Correia, has been solicited to reflect recent developments in southern Portugal.

Many people have contributed to the overall success of this project. We would particularly like to thank Rosemary Lambeth of the British Academy for organizing the meeting with such quiet efficiency that it appeared effortless, Alison Wilkins of the Institute of Archaeology, Oxford for preparing the majority of the line illustrations in this volume from originals supplied by the authors and Lynda Smithson, also of the Institute of Archaeology, Oxford, for the immense amount of skilled work which she has put into the editorial preparation of this volume. Without her steadfast efforts it is doubtful if this volume would ever have appeared.

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