

# RURAL SETTLEMENT IN THE *CONVENTUS ASTIGITANUS* (BAETICA) UNDER THE FLAVIANS

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RECENT SURVEY WORK in southern Spain has revealed a remarkable proliferation of villa settlements in south-eastern Baetica during the Flavian era. The purpose of this article is to illustrate, in a graphic way, this explosion in rural settlement ca A.D. 70–100 and to argue that the new villas and farmsteads are to be connected with Flavian policy affecting Spain. The geographical focus is on south-eastern Baetica and, more specifically, the *conventus Astigitanus* (see map) for two reasons: first, because the majority of Flavian *municipia* in Baetica are located in this region and second, because it is in this portion of modern Andalusia that survey archaeology has been practised most intensively since the early 1980s. The essential argument of this article is as follows: as a result of the Flavian municipalization of Spain financial demands on local élites increased, arising from an increased tribute and from the need to maintain one's census rating, to seek and hold local office, to meet increased taxes (in the case of those who had achieved Roman citizenship), to pay for building programs and to engage in socially competitive benefactions; and because landowning was the most common and secure means of wealth in the Roman world—one which met with the greatest approbation in the Roman scale of values<sup>1</sup>—local élites in the *conventus Astigitanus* during the Flavian epoch turned to the intensive exploitation of private property centered on the *villa rustica* not only to meet expenses but also to advertise their acceptance of and assimilation into the Roman order.

## I. PRE-FLAVIAN SETTLEMENT PATTERN

In order to appreciate fully the nature and scale of the intensification of rural settlement in the *conventus Astigitanus* under the Flavians, it is desirable first to summarize the settlement pattern of that district in the pre-Flavian period. In general, pre-Flavian villas predominate in the north-western and western lowland portions of the *conventus*, which include the *territoria* of the Caesarian colony

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<sup>1</sup>The *locus classicus* on the desirability of landowning and agriculture as a source of gain is Cic. *Off.* 1.151; cf. Finley 1973 *passim*. For the upper-class Roman interest in land as a steady and risk-free source of income, see Kehoe 1988: esp. 19.

Urso and the Augustan colony Astigi.<sup>2</sup> The eastern and southern portions of the district—mainly upland areas in excess of 400 m elevation—saw in the pre-Flavian period widely dispersed Iberian *oppida* and *turres* or hilltop fortifications.<sup>3</sup> The likely motivation for the construction of *turres* in the pre-Flavian period was rural banditry,<sup>4</sup> which a largely uninhabited countryside abetted.

Within the theoretical territory of the Iberian *oppidum* at Atalayuelas in the province of Jaén, occupying an area of 180 km<sup>2</sup>, intensive survey has revealed only five Iberian settlements apart from the aforementioned *oppidum*. Two of the sites, Cerro Sabalete and Cerro Calvete, are Iberian fortifications which were transformed into villas during the Flavian epoch. El Viento yields no constructive elements but a stone quern and is explicable as a spill-over of the population of Atalayuelas. A fourth site, Los Oriondos, was the Iberian necropolis associated with Atalayuelas. A fifth site, Majadahonda, defies categorization because of its deterioration. A sixth pre-Flavian site is the *turris* Los Prados located just outside the polygon.<sup>5</sup>

In an area of 434 km<sup>2</sup> which is on the north-western fringe of the *conventus Astigitanus*, namely the territory of modern Palma del Río, nine sites show occupation during the Republican era, of which five only were farmsteads.<sup>6</sup> From the reign of Augustus to the end of the Julio-Claudian period the same area records 14 settlements and only five new rural sites. The majority of the population seems to have lived in *oppida* such as those at San Sebastián, Remolino, and Peñafior (ancient Celti). Pre-Flavian farmsteads in the area of Palma del Río are situated generally on or in the immediate vicinity of low-lying fertile alluvial soils.<sup>7</sup>

In the SE of the modern province of Córdoba, archaeologists from the University of Córdoba in the late 1980s surveyed 648 km<sup>2</sup> of the upper reaches of the river Salado and its tributaries. 37 sites came to light.<sup>8</sup> During the Republican epoch nine sites were occupied, of which six are classifiable as Iberian *oppida*. Two of the nine sites (Los Collados and Los Zurriones) were identified as farmsteads, consisting of unfortified rural habitations with an extension of less than 0.5 hectares.<sup>9</sup> The history of these sites in the pre-Flavian period is to a large extent one of discontinuity. Cerro de la Cruz was abandoned at the end of the

<sup>2</sup> On the settlement situation in Astigi's environs, see Durán and Padilla 1990: 67–119. For late Republican villas in the vicinity of Gülena, 17.5 km east of Urso, see Romo *et al.* (1990: 311–313), who emphasize their emplacement in elevated situations favorable for watching over potentially belligerent Turdetanians.

<sup>3</sup> On the settlement pattern in this portion of the *conventus Astigitanus* see, in general, Fortea and Bernier 1970: 25–124 and Ruiz and Molinos 1993: 113–122 and 278–281, esp. fig. 99.

<sup>4</sup> So Lizcano *et al.* 1989: 58.

<sup>5</sup> Castro 1988: 316–318.

<sup>6</sup> Carrillo and Hidalgo 1991: 48.

<sup>7</sup> Carrillo and Hidalgo 1991: 45 and 52.

<sup>8</sup> Carrillo 1991 and Vaquerizo *et al.* 1991: 142–146.

<sup>9</sup> Carrillo 1991: 230–231.

second century B.C., and only reoccupied on a small scale in the form of a villa during the Flavian era. The Cerro del Puerto, similarly, shows no Julio-Claudian material, and was only reoccupied by a farmstead in the Flavian epoch. The Cerro del Canuto was abandoned at about the same time as the Cerro de la Cruz and not resettled until the fourth century A.D., when a farmstead developed on the site.<sup>10</sup> Ten sites of the region show signs of occupation during the Julio-Claudian period. Four of the *oppida* and rural settlements exhibit continuity of habitation from the Republican period: Cerro de las Cabezas, Cerro de la Almanzora (ancient Sosontigi?), Torre Alta, and Los Llanos de Zamoranos. Five sites begin their existence in this period, while three others occupied in the Republican period (Los Collados I, Los Zurrones, and Cerro del Puerto) display complete or nearly complete abandonment.<sup>11</sup>

Survey work around the *conventus* center Astigi (Ecija) reveals a remarkable contrast with the settlement patterns described above. In 1990 Durán and Padilla catalogued 152 Roman sites of all categories and epochs within the territory of modern Ecija, which exceeds the bounds of the *territorium* of Roman Astigi.<sup>12</sup> Astigi was an Ibero-Turdetanian *oppidum*, which Augustus elevated to colonial status in 14 B.C.; the colonial *deductio* involved veterans of *legio II Augusta*, *VI Victrix*, and *X Gemina*.<sup>13</sup> Only 9% of surveyed villas pre-date Augustus. Very few villas continue a pre-Roman, Iberian foundation, while there is a more discernible continuity into the Principate of nucleated rural settlements: i.e., villages.<sup>14</sup> Fully 45% of the villas catalogued seem to have their inception in the Augustan period, though some of this group may post-date the original *deductio*. Durán and Padilla explain the discrepancy between the lower number of identified sites and the higher number we would expect theoretically from a *deductio* of at least 1,200 time-served soldiers on the reasonable assumption that the colonists will have lived in Astigi itself and have constructed, at most, small, temporary shelters on their plots, which have escaped archaeological detection.<sup>15</sup> 20% of recorded villas begin during the Claudian period or in the first years of the Neronian.<sup>16</sup> In relative

<sup>10</sup> Carrillo 1991: 231, n. 13. For the Flavian *terminus post quem* of the habitation at the Cerro de la Cruz, see Vaquerizo *et al.* (1990: 177), who note the presence in the southern part of the former *oppidum* of a scatter of *terra sigillata hispanica* and *tegulae*. The site yields no Gallic red-slip ware (*terra sigillata gallica*).

<sup>11</sup> Carrillo 1991: 234–235 and figs. 2 and 3.

<sup>12</sup> Durán and Padilla 1990: 67–119.

<sup>13</sup> Durán and Padilla 1990: 123 and Ordóñez 1980: 46, 49.

<sup>14</sup> Pre-Augustan villas: Durán and Padilla 1990: cat. 1; 30; 38; 41; 62; 98; 109; 132; 144; 146; and 148. Villars with a pre-Roman, Iberian foundation: cat. 1; 38; 62 and 132. Rural agglomerations: cat. 13; 21; 26; 39; 56; 60; 64; 66; 72; 103; 105; 112; 125 and 152.

<sup>15</sup> Durán and Padilla 1990: 123.

<sup>16</sup> Durán and Padilla 1990: cat. 4; 37; 75–77; 122; 127; 135 and 147. The sites' *post quem* is ascertainable from the facts that the first coin-issues found at them are Claudian and the earliest fineware represented is South Gallic.

terms the Flavian impact on the region was modest. Only six sites are securely identified as beginning in the Flavian period—i.e., less than 5% of the survey total.<sup>17</sup> It may be relevant, when one considers this last, low figure, that Astigi, along with Tucci, Iptucci, Ucubi, and Urso in the *conventus Astigitanus*, enjoyed immunity from Roman taxation, and, therefore, would have been unaffected by Vespasian's increase of the provincial tribute.<sup>18</sup>

The policy of Caesar and Augustus seems to have favored the juridical promotion of lowland cities in the valley of the Baetis (Río Guadalquivir) and Singilis (Río Genil) such as Hispalis, Urso, Astigi, Corduba, Ucubi (modern Espejo), and Obulco (modern Porcuna) as a means of defining and maintaining Rome's political and military control over the core area of the province.<sup>19</sup> Juridical promotion and rural settlement proceeded *pari passu* in the case of Astigi, while the state ignored the stipendiary, peregrine towns of most of the *conventus* whose inhabitants, living for the most part in native *oppida*, worked the land to produce tribute and to provide for subsistence needs. Moreover, local élites in these stipendiary towns assume a low profile in our sources. Of 31 inscriptionally attested magistrates in former peregrine communities of the *conventus*, only one is on record in a pre-Flavian text.<sup>20</sup> Not one Baetican inscription of pre-Flavian date names an explicitly designated town councillor. Of 41 costed donations in Baetica (i.e., instances of élite euergetism in which the value of the benefaction is recorded), not one is datable before the Flavian epoch.<sup>21</sup> Finally, I know of only one dated and uncosted example of euergetism from the *conventus Astigitanus* of pre-Flavian date.<sup>22</sup> It is highly significant that the gift—a statue of the emperor Claudius—donated in A.D. 46 not by a local magistrate or town councillor but by Optatus, freedman of Reburus, was mediated by the local senate of Ipsca acting as “recipient and guardian” of the benefaction.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Durán and Padilla 1990: cat. 6 (Alamillo III); 7 (Alamillo IV); 9 (La Alberquilla); 14 (Los Algarbes); 102 (Los Motimentos); and 137 (Tarancón III).

<sup>18</sup> Immune colonies: Pliny *HN* 3.12.

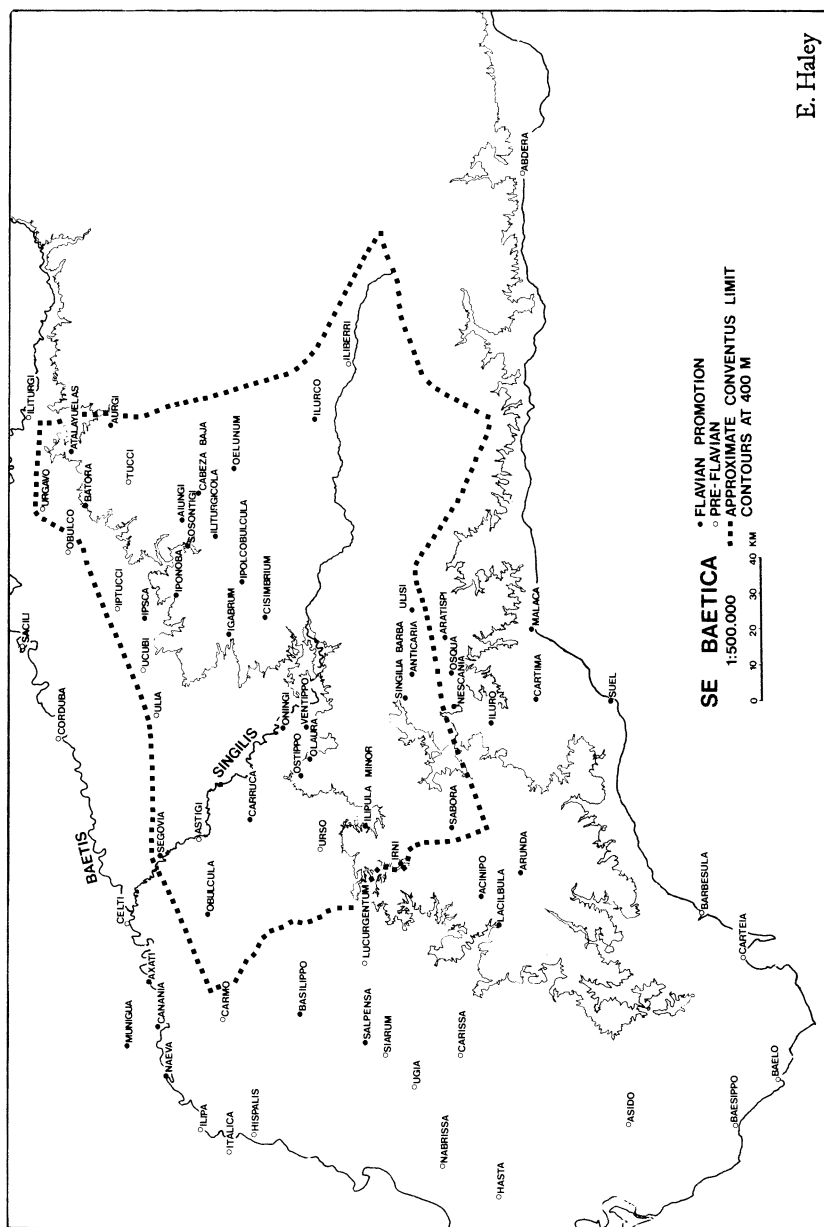
<sup>19</sup> So Cortijo 1990–91.

<sup>20</sup> Curchin 1990: 138, no. 8 (Anticaria); 139, nos. 21–22 (Aurgi); 144, nos. 73–76 (Cisimbrium); 148, no. 111 (Igabrum); 149, no. 117 (Ilipula Laus); 149, no. 118 (Iliturgicola); 149, nos. 119–122 (Ilurco); 150, no. 126–127 (Ipolcubulcula); 150, nos. 128–130 (Ipsca); 160, nos. 228–229 (Osqua); 160, no. 234 (Ostippo); 161, nos. 235–236 (Sabora); 162, nos. 249–251 (Singilia Barba) and 165, nos. 281–282 (Ulisi). Of these inscriptions, only Curchin 160, no. 234 = *CIL* II 5048 certainly dates to the pre-Flavian epoch; the dedicant, a *Xvir Maximus* of Ostippo, honored the younger Drusus in an inscription dating between ca A.D. 15–20. To Curchin's list of magistrates add now *AE* 1989, 420, attesting the *Ivir* at Singilia Barba M. Valerius M.f. M.n. G.pron. Quir(ina tribu) Proculinus in an honorary inscription dated A.D. 109; and *AE* 1990, 535, attesting the *Ivir* M. Hirrius M.f. Quir(ina tribu) Annianus honored by the *municipium Liberum Singiliense*.

<sup>21</sup> See Dardaine 1993: 68–72 (summary table listing all known Baetican costed donations).

<sup>22</sup> *CIL* II 1569, Ipsca (Cortijo del Iscar near Castro del Río).

<sup>23</sup> Mackie 1983: 184, noting the “self-conscious” declaration by the local senate of the gift and its disposition into the *bona publica*.



## II. THE FLAVIAN SETTLEMENT EXPLOSION

Vespasian promulgated the *ius Latii* throughout the Spanish provinces in 73–74, and from that period scores of communities in south-eastern Baetica (see map) became *municipia* in name and provisionally in function.<sup>24</sup> Scholarship is unanimous in positing as the essential component of the *ius Latii* the ability of local élites to become *cives romani* by the holding of a magistracy. The Flavian municipalization of Baetica and elsewhere in Hispania also enhanced the importance of local town councils from the ranks of which magistrates were elected.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, chapters 82–83 of the *Lex Irnitana* refer clearly to the rural installations and property of *privati* in the territory of that Flavian *municipium*.<sup>26</sup> I will argue below (section IV) that these *privati*, at Irni and elsewhere in the *conventus Astigitanus*, are mainly local élites. But it is essential, at this point, to illustrate the intensification of rural settlement which is a characteristic of the Flavian *conventus Astigitanus*.

The numbers alone of new Flavian rural settlements in the *conventus Astigitanus* are telling, and represent a substantial proportion of all sites identified in each survey area. Of a total of 50 sites catalogued by Castro in that area in the SW of the province of Jaén centered at the hill-top *oppidum* Atalayuelas, 41 begin in the mid-first to early second century.<sup>27</sup> Of the 74 sites datable to the second half of the first century A.D. and the second century A.D. in the zone of Palma del Río on the immediate periphery of the *conventus Astigitanus*, fully 60 represent

<sup>24</sup> Stylow 1986: 301–303, following Galsterer 1971: 44–50. The fact that it is not until Domitian's reign that individual town charters begin to appear is explicable in terms of the time-consuming need to draw up individual constitutions reflecting local conditions (Stylow 1986: 302). The dissociation of the *ius Latii* and municipal status, as by Gordon *et al.* 1993: 143, citing Zahrnt 1989, seems to me to be misguided, at least in a Baetican context. Zahrnt has decidedly not proven that Hadrian elevated Ilugo (Santisteban del Puerto, Jaén prov.) to the rank of *municipium*, on the basis of the fragmentary *CIL* II 3239, reading [*condi*]tor*i m[unicipii]* in lines 8–9; Hübner, *CIL* II 3239 *ad loc.*, leaves open the possible reading [*restitu*]tor*i m[unicipii]* (a reading accepted by Mackie 1990: 143, n. 5). Zahrnt (1989: 176) admits that most promotions to *municipium* occurred under the Flavians. Stylow (1986) has published five inscriptions which attest new Roman citizens *per honorem* in Baetican towns explicitly designated as *municipia* and which date to A.D. 75 and later. I disagree, therefore, with the claim of Gordon *et al.* (1990: 143, n. 190), that the inscriptions do not necessarily show the connection between the Latin right and the towns' municipal status. For peregrine communities becoming *municipia* simultaneously with the conferment of the *ius Latii*, see also Abascal and Espinosa 1989: 43.

<sup>25</sup> Effect of *ius Latii*: see Mackie 1983: 26, 41, 60, 73, n. 26, and Appendix II (pp. 201–210); Galsterer 1971: 37–50, esp. 49; Curchin 1990: 87; Abascal and Espinosa 1989: 44; Millar 1977: 404–405; Stylow 1986: 298. Heightened importance of local councils: see now Le Roux 1991a: 570, and Galsterer 1988: 86–87.

<sup>26</sup> Chap. 82 concerns the construction and alteration of roads, ways, rivers, ditches, or drains of the *municipium* at the behest of the *duumviri* and *ordo* “*sine iniuria privatorum*” (ll. 32–33) and is essentially tralatian from *Lex Coloniae Genetivae* LXXVII [44 B.C.]. Chap. 83, concerning building, calls for *corvée* labor of *municipes* or *incolae* including those who have a field or fields within the boundaries of the *municipium*; the preceding stipulation comes from the final clause of the *Lex Coloniae Genetivae* XCVIII.

<sup>27</sup> Castro 1988: 318.

new foundations.<sup>28</sup> And although it is conceivable—in the absence of thoroughly published data—that some of these settlements had their inception in the post-Flavian era, many of them will have started in the Flavian period. In an area of the SE of the modern province of Córdoba surveyed by Carrillo and others, 25 of 29 sites datable to the second half of the first century A.D., i.e., 68% of the survey sample of 37 sites, have their foundation in this period. It is in this region that a number of sites abandoned since the Republican period—and even from the full Iberian period (“ibérico pleno”) from ca 425 to 225 B.C.—were reoccupied in the Flavian era.<sup>29</sup> Of a total of 121 Paleolithic through Islamic sites in an area roughly 100 km<sup>2</sup> in the environs of Fuentes de Andalucía which corresponds, in substantial measure, to the *territorium* of Obulcula (La Moncloa, Seville prov.), 35 show Iberian occupation, 19 reveal late Republican or Julio-Claudian material, while fully 74 sites are datable to the second half of the first century A.D. and, more specifically, to the Flavian era.<sup>30</sup>

Areas, moreover, which were nearly or entirely devoid of pre-Flavian settlement register numerous villas of Flavian date. A dramatic example of newly settled land comes from the modern province of Granada where Roman farms having a Flavian foundation are abundant in an intensively surveyed area 13 to 17 km east-north-east of Iliberri (Granada), along the watershed of the Río Aguas Blancas.<sup>31</sup> Of 13 sites, three are prehistoric, dating to the Chalcolithic-Bronze Age periods, while the remainder are of Flavian date and later. The farms rest at elevations of between 1,000–1,200 m and yield evidence of hydraulic installations (basins lined with waterproof cement), *tegulae*, amphorae, glass, Spanish red-slip ware (*terra sigillata hispanica*), and even remains of dressed masonry walls. The new villa-based farmsteads seem to have exploited both arable and forest land.<sup>32</sup> All the villas identified in an area immediately to the south-east of the Laguna de Fuente de Piedra in the north-western part of Málaga province have a Flavian inception;<sup>33</sup> they lay probably in the north-west portion of the *territorium* of the *municipium Flavium Liberum Singiliense*, i.e., Singilia Barba (El Castillón, Málaga

<sup>28</sup> Carrillo and Hidalgo 1991: 52.

<sup>29</sup> Carrillo 1991: 236, who aptly notes “una auténtica colonización rural” during the Flavian era.

<sup>30</sup> Fernández 1987. The Flavian *post quem* is indicated by the presence of *terra sigillata hispanica* and the complete absence of earlier red-slip finewares at the sites. The published data simply will not permit one to say how many of the 19 sites showing Republican and Julio-Claudian material continue an Iberian foundation. For the cessation of the importation of South Gallic *sigillata* in Portuguese territory during the 70s A.D., a phenomenon which proceeds *pari passu* in Baetica, see Smit Nolen 1988: 73. On Obulcula’s location, see Ponsich 1979: 54–55.

<sup>31</sup> Buendia and Villada 1989: 123–127.

<sup>32</sup> Prehistoric sites: Cerro de la Ventanilla (123–125, no. 1); Alto del Crucero del Gallo (125, no. 2); Fuente del Hervidero (125, no. 3). The Roman sites are utterly devoid of Italian or Gallic *sigillata*, yielding only Spanish *sigillata* and African red-slip wares. See Buendia and Villada 1989: 129 for the villas’ economic base, and 127–129 for four of six habitations in the upper basin of the Río Fardes as having a Flavian inception.

<sup>33</sup> See Loza Azuaga 1982–83.

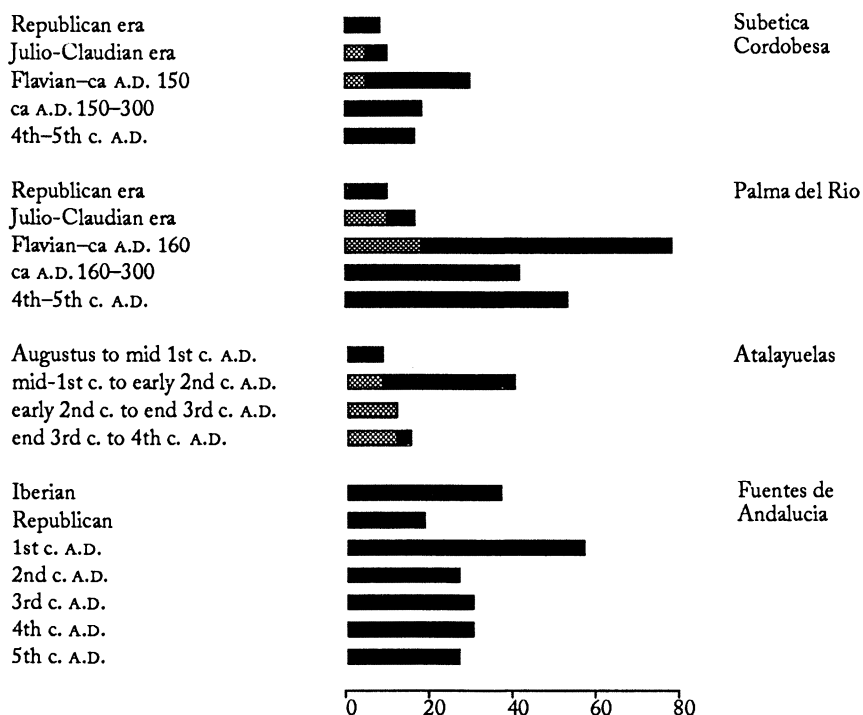


Fig. 1. Recorded numbers of sites per period in selected regions. Where the published data permits, the shaded portion of the bar indicates the number of sites from the previous period continuing in the following one.

prov.).<sup>34</sup> Figure 1 illustrates the magnitude of the explosion in rural settlement under the Flavians.

Although not the focus of this paper, the evolution of these sites in the later second through fifth centuries A.D. deserves some comment. The graphs above are consistent in suggesting an appreciable drop-off in numbers of sites in the later imperial period. To be sure, some of this may be the result of consolidation of property but the change may be more apparent than real, due to the failure,

<sup>34</sup> On Singilia Barba see Wiegels 1985: 58, and Atencia 1988. The only Iberian rural habitations in the area known to me rested at elevations of 500 to 700 m in the Sierra de los Caballos to the west of the *laguna*; the sites are consistent in showing no Roman material, save for some desultory imitations of Campanian A ware (Cerro Colorado). It is evident that the late Republican and Julio-Claudian periods in the region witnessed a regime in which the native population lived in *oppida* such as the hilltop one at Singilia Barba, which was abandoned, probably during the Flavian period, for an urban settlement on lower-lying ground. On the Iberian sites in the Sierra de los Caballos, see Recio and Ruiz Somavilla 1989-90: 95-102.



for reasons which are as yet unknown, of many sites to register tell-tale African *sigillata* after the cessation of Baetican *sigillata* production, which occurred, on the conventional chronology, ca A.D. 160.<sup>35</sup> A cautionary illustration of the problem is provided by the site at the Cabeza Baja de la Encina Hermosa in the SW of the province of Jaén. This was an Ibero-Roman *oppidum*, which was probably promoted to municipal status under the Flavians, but whose Roman name is unknown. Its excavators allege that the *oppidum* was abandoned after ca A.D. 130–150, but such an early date is surely incorrect: a fragment of a paleo-Christian sarcophagus, dating ca 315–335, was discovered in the necropolis immediately south of the town, while one of the weights excavated in a *taberna* of the *oppidum* seems to be late imperial.<sup>36</sup> The Cabeza Baja, so far as I know, has yielded not one sherd of African *sigillata* and it seems prudent, therefore, to leave open the possibility that many villa sites in the *conventus Astigitanus* which are devoid of the African finewares continued to be inhabited and exploited during the later imperial period.

### III. THE INTENSIFICATION OF RURAL SETTLEMENT UNDER THE FLAVIANS IN ITS SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

The new rural foundations in the *conventus Astigitanus*, aside from sharing a similar chronology, are of generally uniform size, employ the same simple materials and building techniques, and exhibit unassuming residential space and adornment in the Flavian period.<sup>37</sup> But these initial rural dwellings were no simple peasant cottages, as is shown by, for example, the villa “El Ruedo” (Almedinilla, Córdoba prov.). In its earliest, Flavian phase it consisted of a series of rooms surrounding a patio, with painted stucco walls, brick floors and a brick-lined drainage canal.<sup>38</sup> It is not until the second century that some rural dwellings begin to be embellished with mosaics, and to exhibit a clearly differentiated *pars urbana* and *pars rustica*.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Roca Roumens 1976: 100 for the end of *sigillata* production in Baetica. See Carrillo and Hidalgo 1991: 57 for property concentration in the region of Palma del Río between A.D. 160–200 due to invasions of Mauri and Septimius Severus’ confiscations of property belonging to the partisans of Clodius Albinus.

<sup>36</sup> Early date: Hornos *et al.* 1989: 207 and Choclán and Castro 1990: 216. Sarcophagus: Recio 1973: 357–360 and fig. 4. Weight (*uncia*): Romero de Torres 1915: 568–569. For parallels of Constantinian date or later see de Palol 1949: 134, no. 6 (from La Alcazaba, Málaga prov.), 136, no. 1 (Braga, Portugal), and 138, no. 6 (from Smyrna).

<sup>37</sup> Castro 1988: 318; Choclán and Castro 1990: 207–211.

<sup>38</sup> Carrillo 1990, esp. 83–84.

<sup>39</sup> Carrillo (1991: 238) identifies an initial period of consolidation and development of rural sites followed by one of splendor during the second century. I am unable to identify any mosaic in either a rural or urban context in the *conventus Astigitanus* which can be dated on any basis—stylistically or stratigraphically—before the second century A.D.: see Blázquez 1981: 49–54 and 59–63 and Blázquez 1982: 13–19, 25–31, 37–38, and 41–46. Furthermore, I have not encountered a single example from Baetican archaeology of a second century or later mosaic with traces of an earlier one underneath.

A certain prosperity, similarly, is apparent in *turres* reutilized during the Flavian period as farmsteads. A case in point is the pre-Flavian *turris* of possibly late Republican construction at the Cerro del Espino (Torredelcampo), 2.5 km to the west-north-west of Atalayuelas.<sup>40</sup> During the evidently more peaceful conditions of the Flavian period it underwent two successive alterations which saw an outer fortification circuit leveled to form a platform for rooms. Rooms and work areas also spilled out beyond the central tower in the Flavian era. Structures and features associated with this second building phase include two tanks lined with waterproof cement, stucco painted in red, black, and yellow, Spanish red-slip ware, terracotta lamps from Isturgi (Los Villares de Andújar, Jaén), thin-walled ceramics, coarseware, *dolia*, and roof tiles. Native construction techniques are also apparent in the Flavian rebuilding of what was pretty evidently a large farmstead, such as the use of adobe walls and earthen floors or pavements consisting simply of closely-set pebbles.<sup>41</sup>

The economic regime in most areas of the *conventus Astigitanus* affected by expanded settlement seems to have been one of mixed farming. Archaeological and epigraphical evidence suggests that grain, olives, and the vine were cultivated, sometimes in combination.<sup>42</sup> I think many areas of the *conventus* were tied, in some way, to olive oil exports to Rome and the army. Certainly, the regions most profoundly affected by the intensification in rural settlement were, for the

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The initial period of the villa "Casa del Mitra," situated 2.2 km NW of Cabra (ancient Igabrum), dates to the Flavian era, when the structure possessed a single story and consisted of a series of rooms surrounding a central, colonnaded patio. In the central portion of the patio, and open to the air, was a basin supplied with water from a lead pipe leading from the west side of the structure. At some point in the later empire—probably in the later third century—the patio and rooms on the south and east sides were substantially modified. In these rooms were laid four geometric mosaics, which, on stylistic grounds, can be generally dated to the third and fourth centuries A.D. A more precise *terminus post quem* for the mosaics was provided by the discovery, in 1981, of a *sestertius* of Philip the Arab, dated A.D. 248, below the mortar bedding of one of the mosaics. On the coin find and building phases of the villa, see Jiménez and Martín-Bueno 1992: 66–67 and 71–78, respectively.

<sup>40</sup> Choclán (1990: 161) notes the discovery of a sole fragment of pottery from the period of the "ibérico antiguo," i.e., pre-fourth century B.C.; the piece was found outside a homogeneous stratigraphic context and is probably an intrusion. Other Iberian ceramics are dated by the excavator, *loc. cit.*, to between the third and mid-first centuries B.C., which certainly leaves open a lower dating of the precinct, as a whole.

<sup>41</sup> Choclán 1990: 160–163. On the fusion of native and Roman construction techniques cf. also Choclán and Castro 1990: 208.

<sup>42</sup> Choclán and Castro 1990: 209. *Lex Iritana* chap. K with its reference to the *vindemiae* certainly leaves open the possibility of viticulture at Irti. The villa "Las Viñas" in Zamoranos, situated 4 km NW of Iliturgicola, and possessing a Flavian *terminus post quem*, yields evidence both of cereals cultivation (in the form of grain mills and storage pits) and of the vine in the form of abundant remains of Dressel 3 wine-bearing containers recovered at the site: see Leiva and Madruga 1992: 249–250. Moreover, for possible salt production around the brackish Laguna de Fuente de Piedra, mentioned above, see Gozalbes 1986: 180–182, and cf. Recio and Ruiz Somavilla 1989–90: 108–109 for possible salt production around the ancient lake—now evaporated—at the "Arroyo Albina," 3.5 km west of "La Laguna."

most part, outside the main region for the production and export of olive oil, which extended from Hispalis to Astigi to Corduba and was closely tied to the river Guadalquivir.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, many of the new Flavian farmsteads were situated in marginal upland areas of the *conventus*. Nevertheless, informed commentators have noted that olive oil destined for overseas export is likely to have been produced well outside the aforementioned triangular region.<sup>44</sup> There is increasing archaeological evidence for oil production, from the Flavian era on, particularly in the area of the *conventus Astigitanus* known as the “depresión de Antequera,” which includes portions of the territories of ancient Anticaria, Aratispi (Cauche el Viejo, Villanueva de Cauche, Malaga prov.) and Singilia Barba.<sup>45</sup> Some of this oil production may very well have been exported. The new rural settlements also would have owed their inception and prosperity to the demand for agricultural commodities and goods generated by the towns of the *conventus Astigitanus*, as well as those located outside the *conventus* in the valley of the Guadalquivir. I will return briefly to the preceding point below. Furthermore, the new foundations were integrated into the wider Roman economy by market exchanges—the ubiquity of imported finewares alone exemplifies this point—and not simply by the claims of rents and taxes. I mean by “market exchanges” the coming together in civic areas of the towns of the *conventus Astigitanus*, as well as of towns peripheral to the *conventus* such as Obulco, Isturgi, Corduba, Malaca, or Hispalis, *inter alia* (see map), of persons “with goods to sell or money for purchases irrespective of their social relationships,” following the definition of Greene.<sup>46</sup> To be sure, the areas under consideration were monetized, as the discovery of coins in rural and urban locations shows;<sup>47</sup> and to the use of money in the form of coin we may add the use of chits, notes of exchange, and credit.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Ponsich 1974 and 1979; Mattingly 1988: 38–44, who, depending on Ponsich’s vague date ranges, is unable to assign precise *termini a quo* to oil-producing farms and villas in the region, though generally noting that many of them have a first century A.D. inception (38).

<sup>44</sup> Marginal location: Choclán and Castro 1990: 209. For the widespread production of oil in the valley of the Baetis, beyond the Hispalis-Astigi-Corduba triangle, see Mattingly 1988: 41 and 43, n. 46, who notes, following Ponsich 1983: 106–107, the use of animal skins in transporting oil down small streams and overland.

<sup>45</sup> For a major villa-centered oilery “El Callumbar,” situated 4.5 km SW of Anticaria and having a Flavian inception, see Romero 1990. For olive-oil-producing villas and farmsteads surrounding the Laguna de Fuente de Piedra, west-north-west of Singilia Barba, see Gozalbes and Muñoz 1986. For an urban oilery of Flavian date at Aratispi, see Perdiguero 1989. The Flavian villa “Los Corrales,” located immediately to the SE of the Laguna de Fuente de Piedra, yields an oil press and the lip of an oil-bearing Dressel 20 amphora: Loza Azuaga 1982–83: 197–200.

<sup>46</sup> Greene 1986: 47.

<sup>47</sup> For rural and urban sites in the *conventus Astigitanus* disclosing coins, see my Appendix, below. Public subscriptions honoring local worthies *ex aere conlato*, which begin in the Flavian era, also presuppose local monetization; see, e.g., *CIL* II 2025 Singilia Barba; *CIL* II 2022 Singilia Barba and *AE* 1985, 563 = *EE* IX 233a Ipsca.

<sup>48</sup> On the credit and fiduciary arrangements—constituting monetization—of the Appianus estate in the Fayum district, see Rathbone 1991: 318–330; *idem* 398 for the apparently high level of coinage

It is a reasonable assumption that Vespasian augmented the Spanish tribute.<sup>49</sup> Elites in both newly promoted Flavian *municipia* and the older Caesarian or Augustan colonies and *municipia* not exempt from tribute confronted this added fiscal burden. At the same time élites in the new *municipia* of the *conventus Astigitanus* faced additional financial pressures. On top of meeting the property qualification for entrance to the *ordo* and holding magistracies, local senators and magistrates would have had to make certain out-of-pocket expenditures as part of their routine duties.<sup>50</sup> New Roman citizens *per honorem* faced the necessity of paying the *vicesima hereditatum* and *vicesima libertatis*.<sup>51</sup> The establishment, possibly during the reign of Vespasian, of the cult of the divinized emperors at a province-wide level entailed added expenditures for local élites.<sup>52</sup> Numerous communities of the *conventus* undertook new building in the Flavian era. This ranged from the reconstruction of the civic center as at Iponoba (Cerro Minguillar, Baena, Córdoba prov.), Iliberri, and Iliturgicola (Cerro de las Cabezas, Fuente Tójar, Córdoba prov.), or the extension of a pre-existing *oppidum* as at Atalayuelas, a possible Flavian *municipium*, to the construction of a new town altogether as at Sabora (Cortijo de la Colada, Cañete la Real, Málaga prov.) and Ipolcobulcula (Carcabuey, Córdoba prov.).<sup>53</sup> Local élites in newly municipalized communities began to employ marble for inscribed monuments, for sculpture, and as a building material, instead of less costly limestone or granite. The Flavian era also saw an upsurge in local benefactions—part of them building-projects—as the more

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in general circulation in the third century A.D. Egyptian countryside; and *idem* 408–409 for the suggestion that the Egyptian example is not unique. For the widespread and normal use of monetary exchanges in rural areas of the Roman Empire, see Howgego 1992: 20–22.

<sup>49</sup> Guichard 1990: 46 and 57, on the basis of Suet. *Vesp.* 16.1: *non enim contentus ommissa sub Galba vectigalia revocasse, nova et gravia addidisse, auxisse tributa provinciis, nonnullis et duplicasse, . . .* I think that the imperial biographer is here referring to all the provinces with the phrase *auxisse tributa provinciis*.

<sup>50</sup> Curchin 1990: 25, 27, 61–62 and 106–111.

<sup>51</sup> Guichard 1990: 48–49 and 56. Pliny *Pan.* 37.1–4 has in mind Spanish *cives novi ex Latio*, i.e., those who acceded to the Roman citizenship through officeholding or immediate kin of former officeholders, when he signals their obligation to pay the 5% inheritance tax as direct heirs under the Flavians, an obligation which was dispensed with in the case of those *veteres cives* whose citizenship pre-dated the Flavians: so Guichard 1990: 45–46 and 57.

<sup>52</sup> Vespasian the founder of the provincial cult: Etienne 1958: 130 and Fishwick 1987: 1.2, 219–239, esp. 238–239. But cf. now Paillier (1989), who dates the inception of the imperial cult in Narbonensis and Baetica to Domitian, and specifically to A.D. 86.

<sup>53</sup> Iponoba: Muñoz 1987. Iliberri: Rodríguez Oliva 1993: 201. Iliturgicola: Vaquerizo Gil *et al.* 1992: 183–184 for construction activity, including a porticoed public space, at the *oppidum* in the Flavian era. Atalayuelas: Castro and Choclán 1988: 130–131 and Castro 1989: 207–215. Sabora: *CIL* II 1423 = *ILS* 6092 = *FIRA* I<sup>2</sup> 74, on which see Atencia 1987 and McElderry 1918: 80. Edmondson (1990: 167) emphasizes the desire of the Saborenses to move their hill-top *oppidum* to the plain below on economic not political grounds: i.e., they wanted to be in closer proximity to satisfactory agrarian conditions and to the Roman road network “and hence other urban centres in the region and especially their markets.” Ipolcobulcula possibly a foundation *ex novo*: Carrillo 1991: 235–236.

well-to-do reinforced their claims to pre-eminence.<sup>54</sup> On a more negative note, Baetica was probably subject to sporadic *indictiones* or supplementary requisitions of products in kind under Domitian.<sup>55</sup> All in all, the cumulative cash and other outlays of local élites in the *conventus Astigitanus* during the Flavian era can be reckoned as nothing less than massive. From where else would their income derive if not from agricultural interests and activities, supplemented perhaps by some quarrying?<sup>56</sup>

I see the new rural settlements of the Flavian era, therefore, as the creations, primarily, of decurions, local officeholders, aspirants to office and the *ordo*, and a somewhat more epigraphically elusive body of individuals whose census rating debarred them from the *ordo* but who staffed municipal juries.<sup>57</sup> To be sure, local élites exploited land in the pre-Flavian era without establishing residences on it, but the establishment of dispersed rural residences must mean that these same persons, as a whole, were farming privately-owned land more intensively during the Flavian period.<sup>58</sup> Chap. K of the *Lex Iritana* calls for the decurions to suspend public business for up to sixty days for the harvest and the vintage. This implies that decurions had to supervise these activities personally. From this we can infer that local élites owned villas in the countryside.<sup>59</sup> The workforce on these estates would have been slaves and some dependent freedmen—a supposition that finds some support in rural epigraphy of the zone—supplemented perhaps by the freeborn and freed who continued to live in the *oppida* which had now been

<sup>54</sup> Use of marble: Stylow (1991: 26), who notes the self-advertisement of the élites according to the best Roman models, and see also Segura 1993: 116–117 for the utilization of marble from Igabrum in the *conventus Astigitanus* and at Corduba. Local benefactions: Mackie 1990: esp. 184, 189. Montenegro (1975: 47–48) underscores the contemporary financial difficulties of Flavian towns deriving from exorbitant outlays devoted to building projects. On the relative shortage of public funds and the concomitant importance of individuals for subsidizing public works see Mackie 1983: 103 and 119, and cf. Galsterer (1971: 84), who highlights the role of magistrates of Flavian *municipia* in privately financing building-projects.

<sup>55</sup> So Guichard 1990: 65, on the basis of Pliny *Pan.* 29.4–5.

<sup>56</sup> For marble quarries as a source of municipal wealth at Igabrum, see Segura 1988: 112–130 and 1993. Limestone quarries at Anticaria (Antequera) were a source of wealth of the Baetican *Fabii Fabiani*: Canto 1978. I do not believe that mining contributed in any significant way to the wealth of local élites of the *conventus Astigitanus*: Domergue (1987: 150–151 and 189) lists only two foundries (“El Cortejillo” and “El Ochavillo”) and one gold mine (“Hoyo de la Campana”), respectively, within the boundaries of the *conventus Astigitanus*. The foundries are situated within the modern municipalities of La Carlota and La Rambla, in the NW of the *conventus*, and the mine is located only a few km east of Granada.

<sup>57</sup> Jurors: see *Lex Iritana* chap. 86; Abascal and Espinosa 1989: 104, 111, 118 and 145 (number of local jurors at least 15); and Curchin 1990: 25 for their debarment from the *ordo*.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Alcock 1989: 16 and 25, quoting Osborne 1987: 69–70: “As a rule, it ‘seems extremely likely that, the more numerous the traces of human activity in the landscape, the more intensively that land was exploited.’” For the intensive production of cereals (and legumes) for the local market by slave-staffed estates see Spurr 1986: x and *passim*.

<sup>59</sup> Curchin 1993: 82.

converted into Latin *municipia*.<sup>60</sup> And the relatively modest character of the new farmsteads and villas, at least in their initial stage, certainly is in line with the property qualification for judges at Irni, which stood at 5,000 sesterces and the possible census minimum of 20,000 sesterces for decurions and magistrates at that *municipium* and others in the *conventus Astigitanus*.<sup>61</sup>

Who, finally, were the persons and what were the legal mechanisms which connected the Flavian *municipia* and other communities of the *conventus Astigitanus* with each other and with the remainder of the province? Ørsted sees the Latin *municipium* of Segermes in proconsular Africa as linked to the wider Roman economy primarily by a handful of *domini* who, after collecting up to a third of local produce from *coloni* or tied tenants as rent, purchased the remainder for export to Rome and the army. In such a model the *domini* prospered, while the *coloni* saw no significant increase in their disposable wealth.<sup>62</sup> The Spanish evidence, however, does not fit this model and points to a different regime. To begin with, there is no direct evidence for the existence of Baetican *coloni* during the Principate. Secondly, we see no distinction—at least in the Flavian period—between villas and smaller or humbler farms such as marks the territory of Segermes, and which prompted Ørsted to postulate the existence of five or six villa-inhabiting *domini* tied to 60–70 households of *coloni* through *locatio-conductio*.<sup>63</sup> Thirdly, *seviri Augustales* and other freedmen, who are amply attested in those communities in the interior of the *conventus Astigitanus* which were promoted to municipal status under the Flavians, could easily have been independent traders. By purchasing and then selling the surplus produce of local élites, they could have channelled this produce either for overseas export, as in the

<sup>60</sup> Slavery the fundamental prop of the rural economy of the *conventus Astigitanus* in the early Principate: Castro and Choclán 1988: 133 and Ruiz *et al.* 1991: 35. Rural slaves and *liberti*: note, e.g., “[K]ara [T]uti [s]erva” from the villa El Santo Siervo III near Ecija (*CIL* II 5455, and Durán and Padilla 1990: 113, no. 130); “Princeps, dispens(ator)” from the *villa rustica* at the Cortijo de Vieco, 5.5 km S. of Cañete de las Torres (Córdoba prov.), for whom see Portillo *et al.* 1985: 192–193, no. 10; “Turpio l(ibertus)” who dedicated a herm to his patron Afra, attested at the Cortijo de Consuegra, 2 km NE of La Lantejuela near Osuna (Portillo *et al.* 1985: 200–201, no. 21); the freedman Q. C(...) Hermes attested at the Huerta de el Cañuelo, the site of a villa situated 800 m SE of Ulia (Montemayor, Córdoba prov.), for whom see Cortijo 1990: 35–36 and *AE* 1978, 410; an apparent funerary inscription attesting freedmen (?) Cornelii at the *villa rustica* Pasada Valera (Cabra), for whom see *AE* 1983, 539; and Fufcia Q. l(iberta)?] Heracl[...] from the Cortijo El Fiscal, 8.5 km NW of Igabrum, for whom see *AE* 1983, 540. For dependent freedmen as rural tenants see Foxhall 1990: 103.

<sup>61</sup> See Le Roux 1991b: 105–106, for a decurional census of 20,000–25,000 sesterces (taking as analogy the relationship between *ducenarii* serving on the jury panels at Rome and Roman senators).

<sup>62</sup> Ørsted *et al.* 1992, esp. 79–83.

<sup>63</sup> Ørsted (1992: 90) estimates that “the number of decuriones may have been quite small, to judge from the fact that there are only 4 or 5 large *villae* in the surrounding countryside, and also from the apparent absence of private domus in the town, . . . .” The number of decurions at Irni, by way of contrast, was a statutorily mandated 63, and if we add a minimum 15 jurors to that number then we arrive at a plausible minimum of 88 villa-inhabiting landowners in that relatively remote Flavian *municipium* of Baetica.

case of oil, or to the larger and, presumably, more affluent towns in the lowlands and along the Baetis and lower Singilis such as Hispalis, Urso, Astigi, Ucubi, Tucci, and Corduba. The aforementioned towns and others, situated in the main oil-producing and exporting region of Baetica, would have constituted numerous centers of demand and consumption for non-oil and non-cereals commodities and staples from the interior and, as a consequence, would have been able to provide coins and credit to back-country communities. Desirable commodities and staples from the interior—either absent or in short supply in the lowlands—would likely have included, but not have been restricted to, salt, salted meat, hides, marble, wine, fruits, wood, pitch, and game. It is likely, as I have argued elsewhere, that commercial interests lay behind the frequent presence of freedmen in upland Flavian *municipia* who originated in the towns of lowland Baetica.<sup>64</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

To sum up, the pattern of rural settlement in the *conventus Astigitanus* in the pre-Flavian period consisted mainly of widely scattered *oppida* and fortified farmsteads. The early Flavian period witnessed a fundamental change in local organization when scores of communities in the *conventus* were endowed with Roman-style constitutions. Local élites responded to this juridical change, as well as to increased internal and external demands for cash and other outlays, by investing in villa-centered intensive agriculture. The result was an intensification of rural and urban building activity, which shows up repeatedly in regional archaeological surveys of the *conventus Astigitanus*. The Roman aristocratic ideal of the productive rural household became a common reality in this portion of Baetica by the end of the first century A.D.

#### APPENDIX

The rural and urban sites arranged below, in alphabetical order, are among those—the list could expand rapidly—in the *conventus Astigitanus* revealing coins. Sites producing hoards of exclusively third-century issues and later are omitted.

<sup>64</sup> Salt: see above, n. 42. Salted meat and pasturage: see Gozalbes and Muñoz 1986: 21. Hides, wood, and pitch would have been in particular demand by small-boat and skiff builders and operators (*lintrarii* and *scapharii*) along the Baetis and lower Singilis. Marble and wine: see above, nn. 42, 54, and 56. Cf. Ponsich 1974: 289–290 on the relative unimportance of the vine in the lowlands of the middle Guadalquivir valley, coupled with abundant cereals cultivation in the same region. Fruits: for pruning and cutting tools, dating ca A.D. 150, from the Cabeza Baja de Encina Hermosa, see Castro *et al.* 1993: 458. In the early 1840s Castillo de Locubín and surroundings were exporting fruit to lowland towns (including Martos): Madoz 1847: 190. Game: for the hunting of deer, boar, and even bear until the Middle Ages in the area of Fuente Tójar (Córdoba prov.), see Vaquerizo Gil *et al.* 1992: 173. For *Augustales* and *liberti*, sometimes possessing dual *origo*, with connections to both interior towns and those along the Baetis and lower Singilis, see Haley 1991: 63–66 and 104. On independent freedmen see now Haley 1990.

Cabeza Baja de Encina Hermosa (Castillo de Locubín, Jaén prov.): *oppidum* [*Municipium Flavium Ignotum?*]; numerous coins excavated in area unspoiled by clandestine excavators (Hornos *et al.* 1989: 207).

La Canaleja (Montilla, Córdoba prov.): villa; Ibero-Roman, Republican, and Imperial coins (E. Ruiz 1991).

Casa del Mitra (Cabra, Córdoba prov.): villa; Roman Imperial issues (Jiménez and Martín-Bueno 1992: 79).

El Cascajo (Ecija): villa; Ibero-Roman to late Imperial issues (Durán and Padilla 1990: 76, no. 35).

Casilla del Zorro (Ecija): villa; coins from Claudius to Gordian III (Durán and Padilla 1990: 77, no. 37).

Los Castellones (Campillo, Málaga prov.): villa; coins from Domitian to Severus Alexander (Caballero Mesa 1973: 206–212).

Cortijo del Canal (Granada prov.): villa; coin of Crispus (Raya de Cardenas *et al.* 1990: 225–232).

Cortijo de las Valbuernas I (Ecija): villa; Imperial, Visigothic, and Arab coins (Durán and Padilla 1990: 116, no. 141).

Las Encinillas (Ecija): villa; coins from Vespasian to Gordian III (Durán and Padilla 1990: 91, no. 57).

La Estrella (Ecija): villa; Ibero-Roman to late Imperial coins (Durán and Padilla 1990: 91, no. 59).

Haza de Estepa (Sierra de Yeguas): villa; numerous coins of the first to second centuries A.D. (Recio and Ruiz 1989–90: 105, no. 18).

Huerta Cuevas (Ecija): villa; Ibero-Roman, Republican, Imperial, and Arab coins (Durán and Padilla 1990: 93, no. 65).

Laderas de Morana (Lucena, Córdoba prov.): Ibero-Turdetanian *turris* converted into villa complex; Ibero-Roman coins and *dupondii* of Vespasian, Domitian, and Trajan (Lara 1990: 23).

Malpica II (Ecija): villa; Ibero-Roman, Republican, Imperial, and Arab coins (Durán and Padilla 1990: 98, no. 83).

Pasada Valera (Cabra): villa; Imperial coins (Bernier *et al.* 1981: 46, no. 39).

San Rafael (Ecija): villa; coins from Claudius to Honorius (Durán and Padilla 1990: 112, no. 127).

Sierra de Yeguas (Málaga prov.): *villa rustica*; unspecified coins (Ruiz and Recio 1990: 461–463).



La Suerte Alta (Ecija): villa; Ibero-Roman, Republican, and Imperial coins (Durán and Padilla 1990: 114, no. 134).

Tarancón I (Ecija): villa; coins from Claudius to Theodosius (Durán and Padilla 1990: 114, no. 135).

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