

# Landscapes and the Augustan Revolution

The Transformation of the Western Provinces between the Republic and the Early Empire

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## Introduction

### Augustus and the Provincial Landscapes

A Global Revolution

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# Augustus and the Provincial Landscapes

## A Global Revolution

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### Research and the Importance of Context

Science and research are best understood as a continuous dialogue amongst individuals with a shared interest in a particular topic or question, with initiatives often originating from informal conversations amongst colleagues. This book is a testament to such a reality as it stems from our discussions on the increasing prominence of landscapes as a methodological approach to understanding the classical past as well as addressing specific questions related to the various forms of transition between the Late Republic and the Empire across the western provinces of the Roman Empire. These discussions, rooted in the epigraphy of roads and the analysis of territorial and landscape transformations, evolved over time to encompass broader inquiries into how these shifting historical contexts impacted other provinces and aspects of life. Ultimately, these conversations led us to propose and organise a session at the 2021 EAA conference in Kiel, Germany, focused on landscapes and the Augustan Revolution.<sup>1</sup> The interest generated by our proposal amongst both contributors and attendees demonstrated that our questions resonated with a broader group of researchers across the disciplines of Classical Archaeology and History, resulting in rich and engaging discussions during and after the session. It was following an invitation from Routledge that we embarked on the journey culminating in this volume, where the original session contributors are joined by colleagues conducting research in other regions of the Roman West including Italia, Corsica and Sardinia, and North Africa.

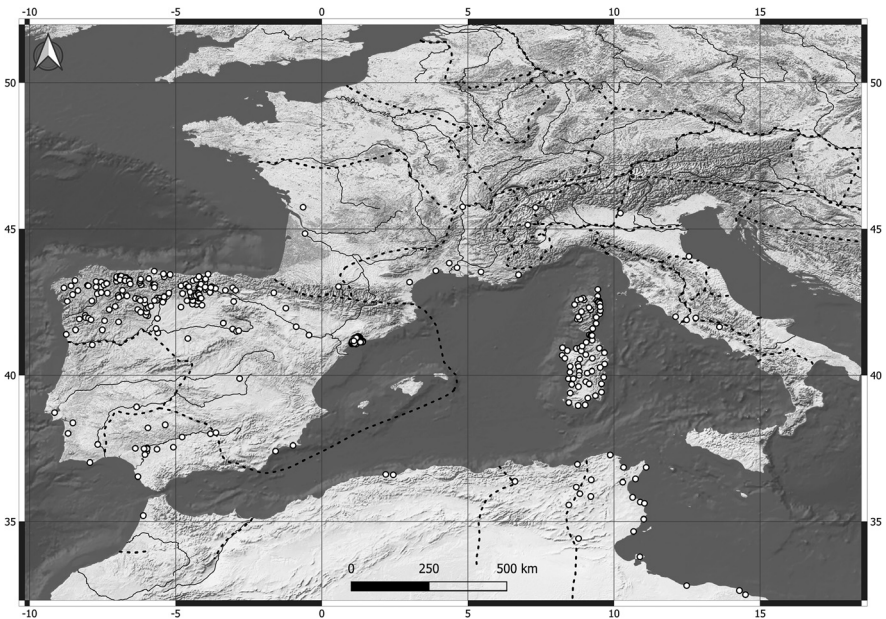
At first glance, this volume might appear to lack a singular thread connecting all contributions, given the wide diversity of approaches, study areas, types of evidence examined, and scales of analysis employed. This diversity is, however, intentional. The book does not focus on the study of a single landscape from multiple perspectives, nor does it examine a singular aspect across different landscapes. Instead, it departs from conventional paradigms within landscape studies, shifting its focus from enduring settlement patterns to the nuanced exploration of a defined geographical area (i.e., the Roman West)

1 Moreno Escobar and España Chamorro (2022).

## 2 *España-Chamorro and Moreno Escobar*

and a specific temporal frame (i.e., Augustan times). Far from posing a challenge, these characteristics serve as strengths, allowing for the multidisciplinary approaches in this volume to explore different, yet interconnected, landscapes during a pivotal moment of transformation. In this way, by investigating the dynamics of change during the transition from the crisis of the Roman Republic to the establishment of the Imperial regime, this volume offers a unique scholarly opportunity to trace the metamorphosis of landscapes within a new socio-political order under Roman Imperial rule. More importantly, this approach enables the identification and highlighting of the diverse responses of local communities to these changing circumstances across various regions of the western provinces of the Roman Empire, as illustrated in Figure 0.1.

The first of the three principal facets that provide coherence and context to this volume pertains to its **methodological approach and object of study**: the landscape. In recent decades, the conceptualisation of landscapes has undergone a significant transformation. Originally perceived as mere backdrops to human activity or as providers of resources, a view commonly held in cultural history and processual studies, landscapes are now understood as complex constructs, comprising both tangible elements and symbolic aspects that reflect and integrate a multitude of factors (social, economic, etc.). Contemporary approaches have increasingly emphasised the bidirectional relationships between communities and the areas



*Figure 0.1* Map of the places discussed in the volume  
Source: Map made by M.C. Moreno Escobar.

they inhabit, particularly within phenomenological and post-modern frameworks. These evolving perspectives, informed by discussions within both geography and archaeology (notably the influential works of T. Ingold and C. Tilley),<sup>2</sup> have led to more nuanced understandings of landscapes, now also understood as artistic and visual entities,<sup>3</sup> as objective and distinctive realities,<sup>4</sup> and even as tools for regional and territorial management.<sup>5</sup> This has also influenced the related conceptualisations of territories as delimited,<sup>6</sup> controlled,<sup>7</sup> or identitarian spaces,<sup>8</sup> among other interpretations. From these perspectives, landscape emerges as a construct of a system of meaning, its symbolic dimensions reflecting and integrating various social, economic, historical, political, and ideological factors.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, landscapes (and territories) are recognised as social constructions, generated through the interaction between communities and the spaces they inhabit, transform, and experience. Their continuous development over time renders their diachronic analysis particularly apt for understanding how past societies have changed and transformed through time.<sup>10</sup> In sum, an approach centred on landscapes underscores the importance of seeking and examining the effects of historical events and processes beyond individual sites or material assemblages, embracing broader scales of analysis that include entire regions and landscapes.

The impact of these new understandings on research has been both profound and widespread, influencing not only the numerous projects and publications focused on landscapes but also the manner in which archaeological research is conducted and disseminated. Landscapes have become a prominent topic of discussion in both specialised conferences (e.g., Landscape Archaeology Conference) and general forums (e.g., Roman Archaeology Conference, Computer Applications in Archaeology, European Association of Archaeologists, World Archaeological Congress). This volume represents one of the latest contributions to this growing research trend. The diversity of the chapters it contains, which cover a wide range of approaches and span various geographies, further demonstrates both the rich potential of landscape studies and the plurality within the discipline.

The second facet structuring this volume pertains to its **temporal and historical scope**: the period of governance by the first Roman emperor, Augustus, under whom the profound transformations of the Late Republican structures

2 E.g., Ingold (1993) and Tilley (1994; 2004).

3 Cosgrove (1985).

4 As applied in initiatives such as the 'Historical Landscape Characterisation' by Swanwick (2002) and the 'Atlas de los paisajes de España' by Mata Olmo et al. (2003).

5 Outlined in the definition of landscape by the European Landscape Convention, promoted by the Council of Europe (2000).

6 Gottmann (1973) 1.

7 Sack (1983); Smith (1990); Storey (2002) 14–16.

8 Slowe (1990); Boisier (2003).

9 España-Chamorro (2021).

10 Moreno Escobar et al. (2020).

culminated and solidified into the Roman Imperial system—a process defined here as the Augustan Revolution. Augustus stands not only as a pivotal figure in the political history of Rome but also as a catalyst for broader changes across various domains. While the crisis and transformation of the Republic into the Imperial system significantly impacted the socio-economic systems, the provincial government and administrative structures were also thoroughly reformed following the civil wars and the establishment of the *Pax Augusta*, despite its uneven implementation across the Roman provinces. The diffusion of certain building techniques, production methods, literary and artistic models, urban planning processes, and other innovations had enduring effects on the landscape, driving a holistic change that spread throughout the empire in what Ronald Syme famously termed a ‘revolution’.<sup>11</sup> Thus, we can justifiably speak of an Augustan Revolution, as numerous literary, historical, archaeological, artistic, and epigraphic studies have demonstrated the widespread nature of these profound transformations and of their multifaceted impact on the landscape and its perception.

A notable example of this impact is seen in how Imperial expeditions, such as those undertaken by Agrippa,<sup>12</sup> contributed to the development of a generalised cartographic model of the world<sup>13</sup>—the *Orbis pictus*, located in the *Porticus Vipsania* (also known as *Porticus Agrippae*)<sup>14</sup>—and the integration of the hodological perspective into the Roman conception and representation of space.<sup>15</sup> However, the influence of these new ways of representing and conceptualising space extended far beyond Rome, rapidly expanding to the reorganisation of Italy and the western provinces. In Italy, these transformations can be seen in the restructuring of the regions, whose numbering can be interpreted as part of a process of re-territorialisation and political adaptation, reshaping the understanding of Italy as the centre of *Romanitas*. In doing so, Augustus effectively dissolved previous cultural distinctions, establishing instead a continuous space where administration was modelled on geography rather than on people, traditions, or history. In this context, the Augustan notion of Italy as the ‘mother’ of a ‘royal people’ was rendered a constructed fiction.<sup>16</sup> In contrast, the provinces experienced this process of re-territorialisation through different means, involving a blend of emotional and

11 Syme (1939). See the current debate about Syme’s legacy in Yakobson (2022) 93–106.

12 It is important to note how the *Orbis pictus* was an initiative linked originally to Caesar but continued and completed by Augustus through Agrippa. Further information in Dilkes (1985) 40–4; Nicolet (1988) 104–7; De Hoz (2010) 132; and Pliny, *NH* 3.17.

13 K. Brodersen’s (2001) proposal was not to believe that the *Orbis Pictus* ever existed, since, according to his interpretation, it would have been an epigraphic text.

14 There could also have once existed an earlier map of Italy in the temple of Tellus, following Varro, *De re rust.* I 2, 1–2.

15 About the hodological space, see Janni (1984).

16 Nicolet (1988) 273.

practical components, deeply intertwined and aimed at ensuring effective governance. This process was significantly influenced by ethnic factors in the conceptualisation of provincial space.<sup>17</sup> The restructuring also prompted an adjustment in models of social interaction, shifting from a primary focus on economic exploitation to a new system built on colonial settlements, a novel legal framework,<sup>18</sup> and new forms of social and symbolic engagement of local communities and the Imperial power<sup>19</sup> including a new and complex system of land survey and division designed to establish and sustain an effective and enduring administration.

The third and final facet focuses on the **geographical scope**: the western provinces of the Roman Empire. Closely linked to the previous discussion, the Augustan Revolution initiated a new set of social and identity systems tied to the integration of provincial communities and societies into the Imperial political structure. The formation of these systems can be seen as part of a broader process that had been unfolding in the western provinces since the late Republic.<sup>20</sup> This process took on distinctive characteristics in the western provinces, where Imperial policies were deeply intertwined with socio-economic dynamics, and urbanisation allowed the first emperor to significantly reshape these regions.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, the impact of Augustan policies can be uniquely examined in the western provinces due to the diverse range of landscapes and geographies they encompass. Analysing these regions offers a comprehensive understanding of the tension between the overarching guidelines of Augustan policy—often involving the establishment of military colonies and veterans' settlements—and their varied manifestations across different environmental contexts.

Economic considerations were closely connected with these developments, particularly in the exploitation and management of local resources and their flow into the Imperial circuits that sustained the economic expansion during the early Roman Empire. The initiation of large-scale production and trade of olive oil in Baetica, the extraction of gold and silver from mines in the north and east of Hispania Citerior, the quarrying of marble in North Africa, and the exploitation of marine and halieutic resources from islands and coastal areas all serve as evidence of the creation of a vast interconnected economic network. Ultimately, studying Augustan policy in the context of the western Mediterranean allows for an examination of the interactions between local communities and individuals with diverse cultural backgrounds within the framework of Roman political hegemony, shedding light on the transformation and creation of local and global identities within the new Imperial context.

17 España Chamorro (2022) 94.

18 Mataix and Álvarez (2023).

19 Moreno Escobar (2025).

20 Moreno Escobar (2025).

21 Ando (2021) 40.

Within these facets, the following contributions explore a wide range of themes, from urban development and structure to the representation of identities through funerary contexts. All these topics provide evidence for the myriad ways in which the transformations introduced by Augustus fundamentally altered the structure of the Roman Empire and impacted the lives of those within its borders. This is achieved through multidisciplinary approaches (i.e., material analysis, dispersal models, GIS techniques, historiographical studies, reinterpretation of archaeological records and spatial models, theoretical analysis of textual sources) which collectively generate a comprehensive perspective on these transformations. Given the focus on landscapes, many contributions notably employ non-invasive research methods, such as geophysical surveys, architectural surveys, and remote sensing imagery and LiDAR. Additionally, there is a significant reliance on the integration and re-analysis of both legacy and published data to shed new light on ongoing and emerging debates.

In terms of archaeological evidence, the ‘usual suspects’ of Classical Archaeology are well-represented: ceramics, inscriptions, funerary traditions, and architecture (both civilian and military). These are complemented by the examination of archaeological sites as units expressing modes of occupation within the landscape, directly linked to the understanding of landscape as a dynamic social construction. However, these types of evidence are explored in ways that emphasise the experiences of the individuals and communities who produced, built, and inhabited them, thus providing fresh insights into their integration—whether voluntary or coerced—into the Roman Empire.

### **Finding the Common Ground**

Balancing such a diverse array of topics and approaches is made possible by organising them around key themes and agents of change, each addressed in separate sections within this volume: Connectivity Landscapes (Section 1), Military Landscapes (Section 2), Rural Landscapes (Section 3), and Provincial Landscapes (Section 4).

#### ***Connectivity Landscapes***

The exploration, experience, and habitation of landscapes are fundamentally linked to mobility. Connectivity is an intrinsic quality of landscapes and a crucial factor of historical and social development over time. The Romans, fully aware of the significance of connectivity, strategically planned the political organisation of provincial environments around road infrastructure. Roads were essential in linking different regions, contributing to the creation of a unified political, military, economic, and ideological entity.<sup>22</sup> However,

22 Hächler and Horster (2021) 13.

Rome did not develop a new road system from scratch; instead, it heavily relied on pre-existing communication and territorial networks.<sup>23</sup>

The Roman transport system played a pivotal role in consolidating newly annexed territories and facilitating the spread of territorial administration, Roman authority, and the Roman way of life.<sup>24</sup> The cultural equilibrium on which the Empire largely depended was anchored in its communication network, highlighting its critical importance. Despite the significance of roads, the primary axis of communication remained, as it had been before and continued to be thereafter, maritime contact across the Mediterranean.<sup>25</sup> These communication routes were the fastest and most reliable means of introducing and managing the new territorial administration, which often led to a form of enforced but tangible integration frequently reinforced by the extension of citizenship—an aspiration for many communities.

This section delves into the impact of road construction and territorial development on the transformation of landscapes, offering both a broad analysis of the western provinces and focused case studies, such as those of Sardinia and the Transpadana region in northern Italy.

Starting with a broad examination of road construction and reorganisation in the western provinces, S. España-Chamorro's contribution, titled 'Augustus and the Transformation of the Roman Road Network in the Western Provinces: An Epigraphical Perspective', delves into the epigraphic evidence associated with these developments. This chapter presents a comparative analysis of how road networks were reorganised under Augustus in Gaul, Hispania, and Africa, exploring the broader implications and varying historical interpretations that can be drawn from each case. The contextual information of the milestones provides precise data on place, distance, and chronology thanks to the Imperial formulae used in the inscriptions. These markers give us precise temporal ranges, allowing for a deeper understanding of the routes constructed or refurbished at the dawn of the Empire and revealing the significance of these routes as sites for the placement of public messages—objects that were, in essence, crucial elements of rural propaganda.

J. Lewis' chapter, 'Sardinia and the Roman Road System: Accessibility before and after the "Augustan Revolution"', examines the chronological evolution of Sardinia's road system around the time of Augustus and its impact on the island's overall connectivity. By employing quantitative methods, this study explores the effects of road construction on accessibility across the island by explicitly modelling potential movement and accessibility between towns and ports, providing a clear comparison between Republican and Imperial times. This analysis yields more nuanced insights into Sardinia's role in supplying Rome and the long-term effects of Augustan road-building initiatives on the island's infrastructure.

23 España-Chamorro (2021).

24 España Chamorro (2019).

25 Horden and Purcell (2000) 23.

C. Botturi's chapter, 'The Impact of Rome on the Landscape through the Study of Burial Distribution: Cultural Influences and Identity Negotiation in *Transpadana* in the First Century CE', focuses on the integration of pre-existing cultural identities within the transforming landscapes of northern Italy at the start of the Empire. Using remote sensing imagery alongside a synthesis of diverse archaeological data, Botturi applies an innovative approach to the study of cemetery landscapes—a method not commonly employed in classical archaeology—that casts new light on longstanding questions. Despite the integration of *Transpadana* into Italy in 42 BCE, thereby removing it from the provincial domain, Botturi's work underscores the distinct shifts between pre-Augustan and Augustan policies within the Italian peninsula. This comparison offers a clear precedent for Augustan policy in the provinces, with the transformations in *Transpadana*'s landscapes during Augustus' reign serving as a perfect parallel to the changes seen in newly integrated territories across other provincial regions.

### *Military Landscapes*

The role of the Roman army is closely connected to road policy and territorial transformations, particularly in Hispania, where these dynamics have been studied in two distinct regions. The term 'army' inherently brings to mind the adjective 'military', suggesting a landscape shaped or profoundly altered by military activities. In the ancient Mediterranean basin, nearly every landscape can be considered a military landscape, even if this connection isn't immediately apparent. Therefore, the chapters in this section focus on clearly defined military landscapes, with particular emphasis on battlefields, military camps, campaigns, and evidence of troop movements. Interpreting military landscapes presents notable challenges, partly because they often serve as palimpsests—layers of historical use and reuse—shaped by the protracted nature of conflicts over time. Consequently, their historical analysis hinges on precise archaeological dating. Technologies such as LiDAR can uncover previously unknown structures, potentially leading to the discovery of new sites, but it is the contextualisation and interpretation of these findings within specific events, conflicts, and periods by researchers that truly imbue this material evidence with meaning.

The first contribution in this section, titled 'Parametrising the Roman Army's Behaviour in Northern Iberia', is authored by J.M. Costa-García. This contribution provides a comprehensive overview of current research on the Cantabrian Wars, examining their material evidence and offering both old and new interpretations of local communities and their interactions with Rome. Costa revisits this well-known war theme of the Augustan period, casting new light on these military campaigns that ultimately led to the final conquest of Hispania and the establishment of the *Pax Romana*. Beyond merely assessing the political impact of the war, Costa explores its military progression and its effects on the landscape, based on the analysis and

interpretation of new materials, sites, and other recently unearthed archaeological evidence. Contrasting with the more common approach of publishing studies on individual camp sites or specific archaeological findings, Costa's analysis transcends these local perspectives, evaluating their broader impact on the landscape and offering a large-scale synthesis and interpretation of the region's historical development during these campaigns.

Further insights are offered by R. Mataloto, A.M. Elliott, and C. Roque's chapter, '*There is No Final One; Revolutions are Infinite—The Transformation of the Central Alentejo during the First Century BCE*'. These researchers integrate sparse archaeological evidence with the results of their fieldwork across several sites in the Central Alentejo region of Portugal. Their aim is to explore the local dynamics of change from the end of the Republic to the beginning of the Empire in this part of Lusitania. Beyond providing new archaeological data for a relatively under-researched region and period, this work emphasises how the *Pax Augusta*, and the broader pacification and reorganisation of Lusitania, are part of a much larger, older cultural process. This process reflects the evolving relationship between Rome and the Iron Age II communities of Lusitania from the second century BCE onward, where these communities were first controlled, then managed, and eventually transformed and integrated into the Roman Empire.

### ***Rural Landscapes***

From the Roman army, we now turn to explore the role of towns in the articulation and organisation of landscapes—a research topic with a long tradition in Classical Archaeology, which has recently extended to the study of smaller towns. Unlike in our post-modern urban perspective where the significance of the surrounding territory for a city's survival may be difficult to grasp, in Antiquity, the inseparable relationship between *urbs* (city) and *territorium* (territory) was crucial. The connection between a city and its assigned land fundamentally shaped the worldview of the time; a city was incomprehensible without its associated land.<sup>26</sup> Roman land surveyors meticulously categorised this land (*ager*), distinguishing between cultivated land in its various forms and uncultivated land.<sup>27</sup> The hierarchy of the Roman countryside was intricate and governed by a complex legal system.<sup>28</sup>

26 It is very uncommon that cities without assigned territory are quoted in the Roman Land Surveyors treatise, see Castillo Pascual (2011) 38.

27 For the categories of cultivated land, see especially Frontinus, *De agrorum qualitate* (where he creates some mensural categories of the *summa divisio*) and Hyginus, *De condicionibus agrorum* (an analysis of questions regarding the boundaries, although focusing on the categories of soil in its second part). Also of interest are the other treatises by Frontinus, *De controversiis* (analysis of the different types of boundary disputes which sometimes relate to soil categories), *De limitibus* (technical aspects), *De arte mensoria* (topographical representation and measurements); by Hyginus, *De limitibus*, *De generibus controversiarum*; and by Siculus Flaccus, *De condicionibus agrorum*.

28 See the recent volume of Mataix et al. (2023), especially part 3.

This section examines the impact of Augustan interventions on landscapes on two different levels: provincial capitals and smaller towns. Through five case studies—Tarraco, Mirobriga, Regina, Los Bañales, and Urci—this section provides diverse perspectives on the real impact of the Augustan Revolution on rural provincial areas across Hispania.

M.C. Moreno Escobar, in her chapter ‘Landscape Transitions in Tarraco (Tarragona, Spain): Further Understanding of Provincial Communities and their Integration into the Roman Empire’, presents an archaeological analysis of the Tarraco hinterland’s occupation on both sides of the Francolí River, spanning from the Late Republican to the Early Imperial periods. Moreno Escobar focuses on the landscape evolution of Tarraco, the capital of the former Republican province, and its re-establishment under Augustus. By integrating both published and archival data into a unified resource and re-evaluating this data within a common conceptual framework, she enables a more detailed analysis of historical trends in this region with a greater temporal resolution. This in-depth analysis allows us to trace the lines of change in a landscape that had undergone several structural transformations since Iberian times, culminating in a shift in the Roman model of interaction during Augustus’ reign. The productivity of the landscape was intensified, accompanied by changes in the hierarchical structure of its territories. By synthesising a vast amount of data generated through previous research and fieldwork projects and contextualising these materials territorially, Moreno Escobar’s use of spatial models helps to pinpoint these changes in the landscape and to highlight the significance of roads and river courses in shaping the transformation of this and other areas during the Augustan period.

At the scale of small towns, J. Andreu Pintado and J. Larequi Fontaneda’s chapter, ‘Augustan Take-off, Severan Crisis: Economic Bases and Urban Sustainability of a *Parvum Oppidum* of *Hispania Citerior*: Los Bañales in Uncastillo (Zaragoza, Spain)’, explores a small town in northern Hispania. This study synthesises decades of excavation and fieldwork data to develop a promising interpretative model for small towns in *Hispania Citerior*. The authors focus on the economic foundations of Los Bañales, linking geography, demography, and economy with provincial politics to demonstrate how the political context influenced the rise and fall of urban phenomena. A key aspect is its emphasis on the role of local elites in these historical dynamics, highlighting how their actions and decisions were crucial to the town’s development and sustainability.

Similarly, F.J. Hermann, G. Schörner, and F. Teichner examine towns in Lusitania in their chapter, ‘MiReg—A Comparative Study of the Urban–Rural Relationship in the Western Part of *Hispania* (the “Roman Far West”)’. This chapter provides an overview of the MiReg project’s interdisciplinary approaches and aims to cast new light on the relationship between *urbs* (town) and *rus* (countryside) in the cases of Mirobriga and Regina Turdulorum. The study engages with significant archaeological debates, such as the use of non-invasive methods, and underscores the complexity and diversity of

perspectives needed to study the impact of Augustan reforms on the town–countryside relationship. This contribution is particularly valuable for understanding how the Augustan changes affected rural environments in Lusitania, revealing that these impacts were not uniform across the western provinces. The variations in how these changes manifested across different regions highlight the diverse expressions of the Augustan reforms, offering a nuanced view of their broader implications.

A. Quevedo, J. Bellviure, and J. de Dios Hernández García present a compelling case study in their chapter ‘The Roman City of Águilas and its Hinterland: An Overview from the Late Republic to the Eve of the Empire’, which serves as a counterpoint to the penetration of Augustan change in another smaller area of Hispania Citerior. This study examines the transformation of Águilas from an Early Republican economic landscape into an integrated part of the Roman Imperial economy. The authors emphasise the town’s connection to its rich inland mining resources and its strategic maritime geography, particularly the two adjacent bays that provided exceptional advantages for maritime connectivity during the Imperial period. The study illustrates how the town transitioned from an initial focus on exploiting local resources during the Republic to a more integrated agricultural economy under Augustus. This shift reflects a broader pattern of economic opportunism, with local sites orienting towards the sea for efficient export, aligning with the province’s integration into the Imperial economy.

### ***Provincial Landscapes***

The concept of a Roman province underwent significant transformations throughout Roman history, adapting to the evolving policies and expansionist strategies of Rome. Initially, under the Republic, Roman governance resembled a colonial regime, characterised by exclusionary practices towards the communities it sought to integrate.<sup>29</sup> This colonial approach, akin to that of a city-state, proved increasingly unsustainable as Roman expansion continued to succeed and grow in scale.

In response to these challenges, a new system emerged, driven by the administrative reforms initiated by Julius Caesar and fully realised under Augustus. This new approach emphasised centralisation and unity, drawing inspiration from the Hellenistic world. The shift in governance marked a move towards what J. Remesal has described as the ‘Concert of the Empire’.<sup>30</sup> This concept refers to a meticulously organised system designed to foster inter-provincial connection and integration, with the goal of implementing and promoting directives from Rome across the vast expanse of the Empire.

29 For the development of the concept of ‘province’, see Richardson (1986) 9; Crawford (1990) 91; Serrati (2000) 121; Ferrary (2008) 8; Barja de Quiroga (2010); Prag (2012) 53; Dalla Rosa (2015) 19.

30 Remesal Rodríguez (2011).

Under this system, the relationship between Rome and the provincial communities fundamentally changed. Provincials were no longer merely the subjects of Roman colonial rule; instead, they became active participants in the Imperial project, with the potential to pursue careers within the administrative framework of the Empire. This shift represented a significant departure from the coercive and repressive practices of the earlier colonial model. As exemplified by Pliny the Elder in his geographical and administrative description of the Roman Empire (in *Naturalis Historia* Books 3–6), the new system favoured a tutelary form of governance. Pliny's detailed account highlights the Empire's administrative organisation, emphasising the protective and guiding role of Rome over its provinces. This approach reflected a more harmonious and integrated relationship between the central authority and the provincial communities. Pliny's work underscores the Empire's shift towards fostering unity and cooperation within its vast and diverse territories, illustrating the effectiveness of Augustan policies in achieving this Imperial cohesion. In this new context, the provinces were no longer just territories to be controlled but became integral parts of a unified Imperial structure, contributing to and benefiting from the centralisation and interconnection promoted by the Augustan reforms. This evolution in provincial governance highlights the dynamic and adaptive nature of Roman imperialism, which was able to sustain its vast empire through a combination of strategic innovation and pragmatic administration.

The following series of chapters explores this process, focusing on the territorial reorganisation of the provincial domains, with case studies from North Africa, Corsica, and Hispania Baetica. It is important to note that although this volume has already discussed other provincial case studies focusing on roads (see España-Chamorro and Lewis), the research presented in this section adopts more holistic perspectives, considering additional aspects to provide a broader understanding of general policies through the lens of landscapes.

The African landscapes are examined in depth by I. Fumadó Ortega in his contribution, 'An Interdisciplinary Overview on Augustan North African Landscapes'. Through a brief systematisation of the available data and a discussion of the historical context preceding the African territorial organisation, Fumadó provides key insights into the creation of the province of Africa Proconsularis from a macro-territorial perspective. Within this interpretation, the establishment of the colony of Carthage, in particular, but also the other Augustan colonies in North Africa to a lesser degree, led to a significant shift in the geopolitical situation of the area, with Carthage playing a fundamental role in Augustan policy (a further example of the continuation of Caesar's policies).<sup>31</sup> The extensive *peritica* associated with this colony and the transfer of the centre of power from Utica to Carthage led to a reinvention of the territorial administration of an area that had previously seen little change in

31 See for example Hoyos (2020) or Hitchner (2022).

the organisation and structure of its landscapes. Two implications emerge in this context: firstly, the great impact of the Augustan colonisation policy on African landscapes must be understood primarily as a continuation of Caesarian policy. Secondly, the novelty lies in the emphasis on legislative processes to reward or punish local communities, in line with what was happening in the European provinces. This meant that although the implementation of the colonisation policy was diverse and adapted to the new scenario, it maintained the basic lines of the legal and administrative framework of that period which made the *Pax Romana* possible.

The situation in the province-island of Corsica was distinct. C. Díaz Sánchez, in his chapter ‘Changes in the Landscape of Corsica between the Late Republic and the Principate’, explores the socio-economic shifts by analysing the island’s urban and production systems from the Second Iron Age to the beginning of the Empire. The refoundation of the Republican colonies of Aléria and Mariana, Corsica’s main cities, served as the urban centres that facilitated the penetration of new lifestyles and the hierarchical organisation of rural landscapes. It was particularly during the Augustan period that the island began to adopt new means of production, with settlement patterns evolving to align with the new economic landscape.

Finally, V. Moreno Megías’ contribution, ‘Transformation of the Productive Landscape in the SW Iberian Peninsula: Economic Orientation and Infrastructure before and after the “Augustan Revolution”’, vividly illustrates the impact of the economic transformation that the southwestern Iberian Peninsula experienced in tandem with the development of a new provincial administration following the division of the Ulterior. This transformation during Augustus’ reign was, again, a process of parallel change rather than a mere coincidence. Focusing her research on workshops and warehouses dedicated to amphora production, she provides extensive archaeological evidence of a shift in ceramic forms, contrasting with the Late Republican period where a continuity with indigenous forms had been observed. This economic change, visible in the new ceramic forms imported directly from Rome, also influenced the landscape, leading to the creation of new workshops, kilns, and warehouses. This set a precedent for the production boom that would soon envelop the entire *Baetis* Valley. It is during Augustus’ reign that we clearly see this turning point and the beginning of the massive exporting of oil, wine, and salted fish in amphorae to Rome in particular and, more generally, to the entire Empire.

### ***Approaching Landscapes and the Augustan Revolution***

The preceding pages have explored and highlighted the significance of the Augustan period as a defining moment in the Roman Empire, focusing on Augustus’ actions in reorganising the Imperial structures and the multifaceted impact of these changes within the context of the Late Republican crisis. This impact was not confined to Rome and was particularly profound in the

western provinces, influencing every realm of daily life—social, economic, political, and administrative—and affecting local communities and individuals to varying degrees.

The diversity of this impact is well-represented and explored in the contributions within this volume, preserving one of the key strengths and attractions of the original conference: while the specificity of the subject during such a crucial time of political change provides readers with an unprecedented overview, the detailed case studies showcase the multiple sources and approaches that can be employed to explore this period in depth. This approach is not only vital for understanding the Augustan Revolution but also for examining other periods of significant transformation in the Mediterranean and beyond. Although each chapter has a distinct focus, examining certain aspects of the landscapes, they collectively offer a broad perspective, ranging from provincial levels of analysis to specific sites, demonstrating the breadth and extent of the Augustan Revolution in these western provincial territories. These changes, sometimes driven by policies from Rome and at other times resulting from environmental shifts and local adaptations, reveal a general transformation in how the Empire's inhabitants experienced and related to their environments—an issue at the heart of archaeological inquiry.

Furthermore, when viewed in this light, landscapes should be considered alongside images,<sup>32</sup> texts,<sup>33</sup> and other aspects of everyday life in the urban world as a means of revealing the magnitude and impact of Augustan policy. We believe that this book will enable readers to perceive those aspects of the landscape that may not be immediately visible, while also providing a deeper understanding of the pervasive influence of early Imperial politics on the development of Imperial landscapes.

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