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Identifying Global and Local Ritual Traditions in Roman Provincial Capitals of Hispania

Recent archaeological scholarship has continuously been moving away from the narratives of 'Romanization' first put forward by 19th and early 20th century scholars such as Theodor Mommsen, Francis Haverfield, and Camille Jullian. In this paper, I aim to do so by looking at the Roman provincial capitals of Corduba and Tarraco and the observable differences in ritual traditions between the Iron Age and the Roman period in those cities, and fitting these patterns of continuity and change into the broader narrative of globalization due to Roman imperial conquest in the Mediterranean.

Colonia Patricia, named Corduba during the Roman Republic and now known as modern Cordóba, is located on a hill on the Guadalquivir River. Indeed, it is one of two provincial capitals in Spain (out of three) that is strategically positioned on a major river in Spain, and played a crucial role in transporting the rich mineral and agrarian products of the region out to sea.[1] Some of these key goods were olives and olive oil, and an analysis of the pottery at Monte Testaccio in Rome has revealed that around 149 CE, a known Valerii family exported some of the fragments found in Rome from Corduba, as well as other Roman cities in Spain such as those associated with modern Écija and Seville.[2] The mineral deposits of the region were exploited through intense mining in the area. So important were these mines to the wealth of southern

[1] Curchin, Leonard A., *Roman Spain: Conquest and Assimilation.* New York: Routledge, 1991, 12.
[2] Lowe, Benedict. *Roman Iberia: Economy, Society and Culture.* London: Duckworth, 2009, 137.

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Spain and to those who controlled them that in the 1ˢᵗ century CE, the right to own or benefit from a mine was completely transferred from private control to that of the state.[3] Corduba was the designated recipient of the local mineral deposits retrieved from the earth, and the routes from the mines to the city were also later placed under state protection and command.[4]

These resources were first used by the local Iron Age tribe called the Turdetani. Little concrete information is known about this group, and scholars are in fact, not entirely sure how to distinguish who the Turdetani were as a coherent unit, if one existed. Any literary evidence about this group comes from the Roman perspective, and an approach to defining the identity of the Turdetani from the sources of colonizers, which tended to distort or simplify their subjects, is problematic since "we cannot assume an archaeological (or 'cultural') identity based on historical sources whose reliability is in question."[5] Presently, they are defined as the group living in southeastern Spain after the end of the mystical culture of Tartessos in the 6ᵗʰ century BCE and before the beginning of Roman interaction and conquest in the 3ʳᵈ century BCE. Yet, neither of these shifts can be considered a "true cultural break" from the indigenous perspective—rather, "between these *termini*, the peoples inhabiting southern Spain evolved in varying ways, showing a highly diverse range of responses and adaptations both internal and external."[6] Viewing cultural change as a break or an endpoint undervalues the continuity of cultural traditions and undermines efforts to understand the kinds of cultural exchange that can occur when multiple cultures interact.

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[3] Lowe, *Roman Iberia,* 107.
[4] Lowe, *Roman Iberia*, 108.
[5] Downs, Mary. "Turdetani and Bastetani: cultural identity in Iberian and early Roman Baetica." *Journal of Roman Archaeology, Supplementary Series* no. 29 (1998), 42.
[6] Downs, "Turdetani and Bastetani," 52.

However the Turdetani might be understood, there was not a settlement exactly at the site that would later become Corduba, but there was one not far off at Colina de los Quemados. This *oppidum* with a long history was on the right bank of the Guadalquivir River. It acted as a redistribution center for metals, mainly silver and copper, and at its height, it covered over 50 hectares.[7] As it was an important Iron Age trading site, the inhabitants of Colina de los Quemados interacted with and actively adopted elements of other cultures, even well before the arrival of the Romans. Possibly as early as the 7th century BCE, they were creating wheel-thrown pottery, an innovation likely brought to them by the Phoenicians on the Mediterranean coast and found in levels alongside Phoenician amphorae.[8] Generally, it seems the Turdetani were receptive to the technology of other cultures, so long as it was devoid of symbolic content. For example, after contact with the Phoenicians, they readily began using not only the potter's wheel, but also foreign construction techniques, new methods of processing iron and silver, as well as agricultural innovations, but resisted changing any of their ritual or funeral traditions.[9] The Turdetani of Colina de los Quemados also encountered other cultures through longer-distance trade: there is Attic pottery in the 4th and 5th century BCE levels of the site, and some dwellings have layers rich in fragments of both indigenous wares and Campanian A, B, and B-oide imitation wares.[10]

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[7] Ventura, Angel, Pilar Léon, and Carlos Márquez. "Roman Cordoba in the light of recent archaeological research." *Journal of Roman Archaeology, Supplementary Series* no. 29 (1998), 87-88.

[8] Morgenroth, Ulrich. *Southern Iberia In the Early Iron Age.* Oxford, England: Archaeopress, 2004, 55.

[9] Escacena, José Luis and Marîa Belén. "Pre-Roman Turdetania." *Journal of Roman Archaeology, Supplementary Series* no. 29 (1998), 24-25, 36.

[10] Ventura et al, "Roman Cordoba," 88.

As the Romans encroached into the Iberian Peninsula, they also began to take advantage of the rich resources of the Guadalquivir area, first through taxes (imposed as early as the 170s BCE) and then through direct control. The town of Corduba was established either in 169-168 or 152-151 BCE by M. Claudius Marcellus as a Latin colony. Strabo describes in his *Geography* that the colony was comprised from its founding of Roman and "chosen" local settlers (3.2.1), perhaps supported by the choice of the colony's name, Corduba, which could be cognate with the native name for the Guadalquivir River or based on an old form of 'Tord' or 'Turd,' in reference to the Turdetani. It has been suggested that the "chosen" native colonists may even have been the aristocratic elite of the Colina de los Quemados site, which itself remained in use until the 1st century BCE.[11] However, there is evidence of a wall splitting Corduba in two, possibly separating an indigenous side from a Roman one. Such a *dipolis* is attested only at Corduba and at Empurias, in northeastern Spain, which was a Roman colony founded on an earlier Greek-established colony. Perhaps then, early Roman Corduba was not so much a mixed settlement as a divided one. Walled, with enclosed houses of stone and mudbrick, Republican Corduba was later monumentalized by both Julio-Claudian and Flavian building projects, particularly once the city became a veteran colony (Colonia Patricia) under Augustus in 15 BCE and designated the capital of the province of Hispania Ulterior.[12] As a provincial capital, Corduba became the site of many imperial government functions, and because of its aforementioned strategic importance for the control of trade and resources, was also often home to a significant Roman military presence. Soldiers at Corduba, which was the winter quarters for the army, could further uphold

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[11] Knapp, Robert C. *Roman Córdoba*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983, 9.
[12] Keay, Simon. "The development of towns in early Roman Baetica." *Journal of Roman Archaeology, Supplementary Series* no. 29 (1998), 64.

the peace in small garrisons and thus had direct contact with Turdetanian communities near continuously even from the earliest years of conquest.[13]

Cities in Baetica such as Corduba were considered even from Roman times to have been fully converted to the Roman way of life. Strabo again writing about the region goes so far as to say that the Turdetani and other local groups were "not far from being all Romans."[14] The indigenous groups of southeastern Iberia were considered to have especially lost their religious traditions. While not much is known about what Turdetanian ritual practices or beliefs would have consisted of, it is likely that devotional activities "focused upon large open-air communal sanctuaries on hilltops, where individuals deposited votive offerings to placate divine forces."[15] These votive offerings often took the form of warriors or women, often small bronze statuettes, but sometimes near life-size statues, such as the famous 'Lady of Elche' from Illici. There was likely also an animal cult, and the monumental lions of Baena and the bulls, stags, and horses of other nearby sanctuaries at Obulco and El Cigarrelejo may have functioned as guardians of the underworld.[16] Importantly, there is no evidence that the Turdetanian gods were ever personified.

The ritual practices of the Roman Imperial colony of Corduba are difficult to locate, due to the paucity of the archaeological record. Much of what has been excavated has been at the monumental urban centers, and there is a general lack of focus on classical archaeology at Andalusian universities.[17] When rituals are attested, they are completely different from the pre-Roman traditions, and generally can be grouped into three categories: worship of the 'typical' Greco-Roman gods, worship of the imperial cult, and worship of Eastern cults. As for the first,

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[13] Keay, Simon. *Roman Spain*. London: British Museum Publications, 1988, 72.
[14] Strabo, *Geographies,* 3.2.15.
[15] Keay, *Roman Spain*, 19.
[16] Ibid., 19-20.
[17] Keay, "The development of towns," 58.

there seems to have been a general adoption of the classical pantheon, and a life-size so-called 'Stooping Aphrodite' attributed to Doidalsas of Bithynia was possibly on display in one of the public baths in Corduba.[18] Moreover, the municipal coinage of Corduba in some cases displays ritual implements used in sacrifice, a necessary element of Roman worship. Eastern cults that can be located in Corduba are those of Cybele or Magna Mater and the 'Emesa Triad,' primarily through epigraphic evidence. Though a temple to Cybele has not been found, there is a concentration of altars at the intersection of modern Cordóba's Sevilla and Gondomar Streets inscribed with commemorations of the *taurobolia pro salute imperatoris*, which suggests the possibility of a temple in that area to Cybele in at least the first half of the 3rd century CE. One of these was dedicated by Publicus Valerius Fortunatus who underwent such a *taurobolium* and memorialized his union with the goddess on March 25th, 238 CE.[19] The 'Emesa Triad' of Eastern gods is attested at Corduba only by a single altar dedicated by a group of possibly merchants to the three deities Helios (Baal), Kypris (Astarte), and Athena al-Lat. It also mentions Syrian sun-god Elagabal, who was introduced at Rome by the emperor Elegabalus/Heliogabalus.[20]

The majority of the ritual evidence at Roman Corduba is for the imperial cult. Under the Julio-Claudians, there was not yet official worship of the living emperors as divine, but the Augustan monumentalization of the city resulted in the construction of a large forum with a large hexastyle temple, likely to the already-deified dead members of the Imperial family. Among the remains of this forum, a 3-meter tall Claudian-era acrolithic marble torso, identified as Romulus

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[18] Ventura et al, "Roman Cordoba," 96.
[19] Keay, *Roman Spain*, 166.
[20] Ibid., 168.

and carrying a mythological-style military *lorica* was found.[21] Based on this find, it has been

suggested that the entire Corduban forum was decorated with mythical figures from Roman

history, rather like the Forum of Augustus at Rome was, and may be possibly be a direct

reference to that structure, which was a crucial piece of the emperor Augustus' propaganda

program, reinforcing his right to supreme command. Later, during the Flavian dynasty when the

provincial imperial cult was formally established, Corduba became a significant center of

imperial cult worship for Hispania Ulterior, since each provincial capital drew "upon the

religious and political loyalty of all the communities in each province."[22] A third monumental

plaza in Corduba was dedicated by the *flamines* of the imperial cult at this time, and the

construction of an additional extramural temple for the worship of the imperial cult, complete

with portico, was finished by the Flavian period.[23] It would seem then that the inhabitants of

Corduba were fully 'Romanized' indeed.

However, indigenous beliefs can be located if one looks closer, even in those beliefs and

practices that on the surface seem purely Roman. For example, it has been suggested that the

predominance of imagery showing or suggesting the sacrifice of animals may not be merely an

enthusiastic adoption of the ritual practices of the Roman conquerors, but a conscious syncretic

way of continuing some aspects of the traditional Turdetanian animal cults. That is, some of the

local Turdetanian admiration of the power of animals may have transferred from devotion to

them to sacrifice of them, and the adoption of sacrifice was not merely a reflection of Roman

practices. In a similar way, temples to abstract deities with Latin names, such as the temple to

Tutela in Corduba, may not be Roman in origin, but rather pre-Roman antecedents glossed with

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[21] Ventura et al, "Roman Cordoba," 96.
[22] Keay, *Roman* Spain, 158.
[23] Keay, "The development of towns," 74.

a Latin name.[24] Most curiously, well after Roman conquest, in the funerary evidence from Corduba, there are not only attempts made to draw connections to Corduba's indigenous past, but also to an imagined Punic one. Less than a century after the founding of Roman Corduba, inhabitants of the city were burying their dead according to Roman funerary rite, adhering to the concept of a *pomerium*, and in one case, even depositing the dead in a monument imitating the Tomb of Augustus in Rome.[25] Yet simultaneously, some individuals decided to be cremated and place their ashes into "containers resembling the shapes and painted decoration of pre-Roman pottery" but critically "were not copies of the pottery used in the region for four hundred years before Augustus, but Roman wares freely inspired by local shapes and decorations, present in the region for several centuries, in order to confer a 'traditional' appearance."[26] Others deposited their remains in tombs similar in style to those of Punic North Africa, built and decorated inside with painting, making use of Roman designs, but denying the user the ability to access the tomb again, like a 'true' Roman would on important holidays, and strikingly excluding *sigillata* from the funerary goods.[27] Considering that Corduba was never a Phoenician or Punic settlement itself, this practice seems out of place for Spanish Romans to adopt well after being conquered by the Roman Empire, but it may be an expression of resistance to the Roman imperial control, rather than a continuity of older traditions.

Corduba is not unique in these phenomena, however; similar indicators for the persistence of local traditions despite seemingly overwhelming evidence of the community's

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[24] Curchin, *Roman Spain*, 173.
[25] Jiménez, Alicia. "A Critical Approach to the Concept of Resistance: New 'Traditional' Rituals and Objects in Funerary Contexts of Roman Baetica." In Fenwick, C., Wiggins, M., and Wythe, D. (eds.) (2008) *TRAC 2007: Proceedings of the Seventeenth Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference, London 2007*. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 19.
[26] Jiménez, "A Critical Approach," 20.
[27] Ibid., 21.

adoption of Roman belief and practice can also be found in a second Roman Iberian provincial capital, Tarraco (modern Tarragona). Located to the north, Tarraco is the only Roman provincial center in Spain not located on a major river and was "little more than an open beach" in terms of its strategic importance, though important as the meeting point of the Republican Roman road to Italy.[28] It was also only five days by ship away from Rome and had easy access to the swiftest route to the rich Ebro valley,[29] and although Roman colonies were originally founded to serve as supervisory centers, they "rapidly became focuses for the agricultural and mineral exploitation of given areas," and Tarraco certainly did, due to its location at the confluence of all of these routes and its proximity to the gold mines in Gallaecia and Asturia.[30] Grain, oil, and wine, all crucial products in the ancient Mediterranean economy, were also produced in the regions around Tarraco.[31] These resources were used both by the Romans and those living at the site before their conquest.

These local inhabitants were the tribe of Iberians named the Cessetani. Similarly to the Turdetani, little is known for certain about these people, though they certainly had a large settlement at Tarraco, intensively occupied[32] and defended by a rampart constructed with Cyclopean masonry.[33] The Cessetani settlements of northeastern Spain developed simultaneously with the Greek colonies farther north between the 5th and 4th centuries BCE, and were perhaps influenced by their development. It is likely even that in a system of trade

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[28] Curchin, *Roman Spain*, 12.
[29] Curchin, *Roman Spain*, 112.
[30] Keay, *Roman Spain*, 49.
[31] Ibid., 70.
[32] Keay, Simon. "Processes in the Development of the Coastal Communities of Hispania Citerior in the Republican Period," in Blagg, T. F. C., and Martin Millett. *The Early Roman Empire In the West.* Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2002, 119-148, 121.
[33] Curchin, *Roman Spain*, 112.

exchange, the larger Cessetani sites like Tarraco supplied a variety of products, including grain, other cereals, fruits, vegetables, metals, and ceramics to the Greek colony of Emporion (later Roman Empuriae), in exchange for imports.[34] Based on the evidence from these larger settlements, Cessetani society was likely highly stratified, with urban sites controlling smaller, more rural and agriculturally-productive ones, and extracting from them the produce needed to sustain a trade relationship with Emporion. Otherwise, the Cessetani tribe of the "so-called Iberians are a total mystery," though again, as with the Turdetani, we must not fall into the trap of imagining that there was a sharp break between the pre-Roman and Roman periods or cultures.[35]

The Cessetani first encountered Roman direct military action in M. Porcius Cato's march south to quell a series of revolts in Iberia in 197 BCE following the Roman conquest of Spain. As he headed toward the Turdetani, a flurry of towns and tribes capitulated to Cato, who claimed to have subdued over 300 such cities, and the few cities that resisted were captured one by one.[36] Tarraco itself was captured by the Scipios, and until becoming a Roman colony, enjoyed an allied status with Rome, rather than one of tribute.[37] Founded as a Roman colony around 45 BCE by Julius Caesar, the existing settlement at Tarraco was incorporated into the new city, with a forum and a theater added to it, as well as a new name: Colonia Iulia. The colony became also the provincial capital of Hispania Citerior Tarraconensis, the largest province in Spain and in greater Europe. As at Corduba, Roman power was maintained by a military garrison located in the upper part of the city, and in addition, "there was also a small fleet or mobile land force

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[34] Keay, "Processes in the Development," 123.
[35] Curchin, *Roman Spain*, 18.
[36] Ibid., 30.
[37] Ibid., 112, 104.

based at Tarraco, which protected the east coast as far north as Blandae" in the 1st century CE.[38] These soldiers, once discharged as veterans, often stayed close to the camp, as attested by the epigraphical record, particularly of the funerary kind.[39] Other than soldiers, the first Romans in Tarraco were mostly officials, ship-owners or merchants, tax or mining contractors, and moneylenders.[40] All of these groups interacted with the local inhabitants of Tarraco in the lower town to such an extent that so-called 'Ibero-Roman' structures can be identified close to the Augustan forum, although little else is known about the organization of Tarraco before the emperor Augustus heavily re-organized the city.[41]

Once again, similarly to that of the Turdetanians, little is known about Cessetani ritual, or even more broadly, about Iberian ritual. Likely, they too performed rituals and votive devotions in the open air, and both shared the characteristic that their gods were never 'personalized' and only rarely worshipped with images of any kind.[42] Some aspect of the Iberian ritual must have involved the use of cave sanctuaries, since a few sites, such as the Cova de Font Major de l'Espluga de Francolí near Tarraco, were actually used through the Late Empire.[43] Whether those using them conceived of them in the same way as the indigenous Cessetani did is unknown, but the continuity of the space nonetheless is intriguing and reflects some kind of persistence of the traditional ritual after Roman conquest.

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[38] Keay, *Roman Spain*, 61.
[39] Curchin, *Roman Spain,* 97.
[40] Keay, *Roman Spain*, 72.
[41] Keay, Simon. "Urban transformation and cultural change," in M. Díaz-Andreu and S. Keay (eds), *The Archaeology of Iberia: the dynamics of change.* New York: Routledge, 1997, 192-209, 198.
[42] Keay, *Roman Spain*, 146.
[43] Ibid., 161.

Other features of the ritual lives of the inhabitants of Roman Tarraco that are suggested by the material evidence are Eastern religions and the Roman pantheon. The Egyptian cult of Isis was particularly popular in Roman Spain, with major centers at Emerita, the third provincial capital of Hispania, Valentia, and Igabrum, and likely also spread to towns like Emporiae and Tarraco through their rich trading links.[44] Images of the classical Roman gods and goddesses, as well as the typical Roman sacrifice are also numerous in the city; for example, a marble relief depicts a priest and an attendant preparing to make a bull sacrifice with ritual implements such as a hatchet, a bucket, and a long-handled axe.[45]

Yet, as at Corduba, the most well-attested rituals are that of the imperial cult, almost certainly because Tarraco was another center of its worship. For scale, the city extended over an area of almost 70 hectares, and of this, 25-30% consisted of public buildings, "essentially symbolic in character."[46] While not all of these were associated with the imperial cult, those buildings would have been among the most monumental and visible, particularly the octastyle temple of Augustus and the now-lost altar of Augustus in the lower town. Images of this altar minted on coins from Tarraco suggest that it was decorated in the typical Augustan style, with bucrania and fillets, as well as oak and a shield, and topped with a palm tree, perhaps symbolizing Augustus' victories, particularly in Egypt.[47] Further imperial cult infrastructure was located in the upper town, most heavily built-up during the Flavian period, which included another temple and precinct of Rome and Augustus, intended as the meeting place for the meetings of the provincial council.[48]

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[44] Ibid., 166.
[45] Keay, *Roman Spain*, 172.
[46] Keay, "Urban transformation," 203.
[47] Ibid., 198.
[48] Ibid., 202.

Again, the evidence seems to suggest overwhelmingly that the Roman religion supplanted local traditions, but this is an oversimplification. While the inhabitants of Tarraco certainly do seem to have adopted the Greco-Roman pantheon, individuals did so in ways unusual in consideration of the larger patterns of the Empire. For example, there is a strong preference at Tarraco and its surrounding areas for nature gods, which may have been a way for the indigenous communities to continue the worship of their traditional deities, but under Roman names. One such god is Silvanus, who is rarely attested outside of Pannonia, but does show up in the epigraphical record at Tarraco.[49] Likewise, the worship of Luna Augusta at Aeso or of Jupiter and Sol together at Argote, towns not far from Tarraco, are possibly "thinly disguised survivals of sun and moon cults."[50] Another odd focus of devotion at Tarraco is the Greek goddess of revenge, Nemesis, whose image is painted beneath the city's amphitheater, and often appealed to people of lower social standing.[51] Another ritual outlier specific to Tarraco is the treatment of the emperor as a living god. Instead of worshipping the recently-deceased emperor Augustus as *divus,* the inhabitants of Tarraco referred to him on coinage as *deus*. Rather than an expression of eager sycophancy, this praise might reflect the way that the indigenous locals conceived of supreme rule and divinity. While new for the Romans, "the cult of the leader was an established phenomenon in pre-Roman Spain, where *devotio Iberica* entailed not only respecting, but worshipping, and, if necessary, dying for him."[52] Such devotion to the imperial cult is not found elsewhere in the western Roman Empire.

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[49] Dorcey, Peter F. *The Cult of Silvanus: A Study in Roman Folk Religion*. Leiden: Brill, 1992, 43.
[50] Curchin, *Roman Spain*, 165.
[51] Keay, *Roman Spain*, 159-160.
[52] Curchin, *Roman Spain*, 162.

Interestingly, as at Corduba, there is also a possible imagined Punic nostalgia in the ritual of Tarraco. Not only is there attested a priest of the cult of Caelestis, which concealed the worship of the Punic goddess Tanit in an identification with Juno, at Tarraco, named Caius Avidius Primulus,[53] but also a *clipeus* with the head of Jupiter Ammon, a syncretic Punic god on it, found in the imperial cult complex itself.[54] As at Corduba, Tarraco was never a Phoenician or Punic site, but did have trading contacts with the Phoenicians and Carthaginians.

In both these two case studies, it has seemed at first that the local voice in a provincial capital has been hard to find, even invisible. Specifically considering ritual, "the evidence for religious practice in Roman Spain is copious, though never sufficient to give us a thorough comprehension of so complex a subject."[55] For example, at Corduba, unless one looks very closely for possible echoes of the indigenous traditions, it would seem as though no Turdetani settlers had existed at all, despite the literary evidence that the city was of mixed foundation. What are some of the factors that might explain this paradox?

Part of why the local is so difficult to locate in these contexts is the effects that Roman imperial power and culture had on the inhabitants of these provincial capital cities. Despite religion being one of the most conservative aspects of culture, the personal consequences of not appearing to be 'Roman' and the pressure to assimilate surely must have been strong forces in the adoption of new gods, at least on the surface.[56] To refer to the case at Corduba again, perhaps the reason rituals nostalgic for a Punic or indigenous past only exist in the funerary

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[53] Keay, *Roman Spain*, 160.
[54] Ibid., 146.
[55] Curchin, *Roman Spain*, 154.
[56] Ibid., 155.

context is because outside of the city, away from the imperial center (and safe from the judgment of the living), was the safest place a deceased individual could make public their true beliefs.

The adoption of Roman religious practice was also an internally-driven process. Local elites would have been empowered by the choice to consciously project outward their 'Roman' ways, especially in a colonial capital. An individual who performed well as a Roman on the local level might have achieved upward social mobility. For example, a freedman named Lucius Licinius Secundus, *sevir* of Barcino (modern Barcelona) and Tarraco at the same time in the 2nd century CE was honored with over 20 statues in the forum of Barcino and gained wealth and prestige.[57] Wealthy local elite families competed for municipal positions, which they could use to give back to their communities through public construction, or euergetism, and some of these positions were even available through participation in the imperial cult.

However, there is much less evidence for how Roman ritual and culture in general were used or adopted by the lower classes of Iberian society. Except in instances like the worship of the goddess Nemesis in Tarraco, who was particularly popular with poorer citizens, it is difficult to locate the beliefs of those who did not leave monuments or inscriptions, frustrating since "it is precisely these humbler folk whom one might expect to form an unromanised substratum, with more [indigenous] beliefs and superstitions."[58] Overt self-identification with the Roman imperial state thus reflected the unequal balance of power both between the center and the provinces and between local elite families and others whose perception of Roman ideology and symbolism may have been very different.[59]

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[57] Keay, *Roman Spain*, 78.
[58] Curchin, *Roman Spain*, 155.
[59] Keay, "Urban transformation and cultural change," 209.

Finally, the adoption of Roman ritual and other aspects of culture was done in ways unique and specific to each city or area with which the Romans came into contact. While there are many similarities between the patterns of ritual practice at Corduba and Tarraco, there are also differences. Likewise, the persistence of native traditions in urban planning and in material culture is much more pronounced in the countryside than in the city, which suggests that "non-Roman elements of the population may have reacted differently to symbols of Roman imperial ideology, implicitly rejecting the social contradictions that it masked and instead adopting elements of the Roman cultural suite … in a piecemeal fashion."[60] Further, "While the adoption of Roman buildings, inscriptions, names, eating habits etc. may have been inspired by prototypes in the *coloniae*, provincial capitals, and Rome itself, it does not necessarily follow that the communities in which they appear shared the same Roman social, religious, or cultural values."[61] In short, 'Roman' culture, if such a thing can be defined, was not adopted uniformly across the Roman Empire, but was borrowed from or taken up in decisions made within the ongoing cultural context of change and continuity of each community.

Globalization theory can be useful for comprehending the various features explored in this paper. Globalization theory applies the concepts of modern globalization to the ancient past. Though it might seem so, theorists like Witcher argue the framework is not anachronistic because globalization should not be conceived of as unique to the modern world, but rather as, "a series of trends—such as time-space compression and relativizing perceptions of self and others—which can be traced back into the past and which varied in scale and intensity."[62]

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[60] Ibid., 207-208.
[61] Woolf, G. *Becoming Roman: the Origins of Provincial Civilization in Gaul.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 135.
[62] Witcher, R. "The global Roman countryside: connectivity and community." In T. de Haas, T.C.A. & Tol, G.W. Leiden: Brill. 28-50., in T. de Haas and G. Tol (eds), *The Economic*

A globalization perspective on ancient Rome firstly sees local communities as part of a larger system, not homogenized uniformly across the Empire but brought closer by increased interconnectivity. As we have discussed, Tarraco and Corduba did not 'become Roman' in the same way, but were especially encouraged to assimilate to the increasingly global Roman culture, here explored through ritual practices, because of their status as provincial capitals. These capitals as hubs of the province given special attention by the imperial center of Rome were "most sensitive to the broader political changes in the Roman Empire," and, through a globalization perspective, it is thus because of their higher degree of involvement in the global Roman system that they seem more heavily 'Romanized' than other cities or the countryside.[63]

Yet, the simultaneous phenomenon of the 'glocal' sees the re-assertion of characteristics and practices considered part of a local identity in spite of or in response to a perceived cultural convergence. In this context, local continuities may be seen as one of "a whole series of local and localizing phenomena [including] ethnicity, nationalism, indigenous movements [that] can be understood as global products" and thus "localizing strategies are themselves inherently global."[64] The assertions of local identity in Corduba and Tarraco, such as the revival of 'indigenous' ceramic urn design or the continued use of a cave sanctuary site, perhaps argued to be different phenomena of indigenous resistance or persistence, can through globalization theory be reconciled as two different manifestations of the same desire of individuals in a provincial

Integration of Roman Italy: Rural Communities in a Globalising World. Leiden: Brill, 2017, 28-50, 29.
[63] Keay, "Urban transformation and cultural change," 195.
[64] Friedman, J. "Global system, globalization and the parameters of modernization," in M. Featherstone, L. Lash and R. Robertson (eds), *Global Modernities*. (Theory, Culture and Society 36). London: Sage, 1995, 69-90, 73.

capital to re-assert the perceived local identity, as the world around them became increasingly more global and less familiar.

Finally, "globalization presumes neither a core dichotomy nor a pre-determined outcome,"[65] and applies a broader historical scope in its analysis, demanding that "the Roman period [be] understood comparatively in relation to earlier, contemporary and later societies and not as a unique historical phase."[66] This aspect of globalization theory recognizes the difficulties and problems inherent with seeing each phase of occupation of a site as distinct and not overlapping or interacting at all with any others. For example, the existence of variations in the 'typical' patterns of Roman ritual worship cannot be comprehended or analyzed without an understanding of what the indigenous ritual traditions were pre-existing in the region.

Through an analysis of the histories and ritual practices, both colonizing Roman and traditional indigenous, at the Roman provincial capitals of Corduba and Tarraco, it is clear that in both cases, rather than a complete obliteration of the local cultures, local traditions or mindsets could and did persist in the religious lives of the inhabitants of those cities while they simultaneously openly presented as Roman. These patterns change can best be understood from a globalization perspective, as they occurred within the broader network of Roman imperial conquest in the Mediterranean, offer examples of the re-assertion of local identity during periods of increased global cultural interaction, and are best understood with a full grasp on the complexity of each culture.

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[65] Witcher, "The global Roman countryside," 30.
[66] Ibid.

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