

The Building Projects of Hispania's *Optimus Princeps*

“No other foreign land has ever held such influence over the destiny [of Spain] and of its inhabitants in a manner so persistent and decisive [as the Roman Empire] through the transformation of Romanization” (Barcelo, 2007). Throughout the Roman principate, many emperors initiated building projects that would bespeak their benevolence towards the Roman people. These benefactions were not limited to the capital itself. Monuments were constructed outside of *Italia* as a means of Romanizing, urbanizing, and monumentalizing the provinces of the empire (Boatwright, 2004). Specifically, this paper will focus on the province of *Hispania* and the argument will concentrate on the reign of Rome's first non-Italic emperor, Trajan, a native of *Hispania*. Unfortunately, resources are limited on Trajanic architecture in *Hispania* and even fewer manage to analyze how these architectural contributions correlated to those which were gifted to the Roman people in the capital. Nevertheless, it is evident that Trajan was concerned with his homeland's urban development as a truly Roman province. By discussing Trajan's relationship with *Hispania*, it will become apparent that he was the first emperor to build monumentally in the province since Augustus and that it was under Trajan's influence that Roman Spain began to evolve and flourish. Furthermore, it will be argued that the building projects of Trajan mimicked his projects that were conducted in the capital, indicating that Trajan tended to *Hispania* in the same manner that he tended to the heart of the Roman Empire. The themes of Trajan's building projects in *Italia* and *Hispania* were utilitarian in nature and his monuments fulfilled the necessary urban armatures that were required of every Roman city. Through his building projects, Trajan exhibited motivation to demonstrate his attempt to revitalize the Augustan tradition and to authenticate *Hispania* as a truly Roman province.

Bibliography

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Apr. 2012.

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