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CULTURAL INTERACTIONS AND CHANGING LANDSCAPES IN EUROPE

(2nd century BC / 2nd century AD)

INTERAÇÕES CULTURAIS E PAISAGENS EM MUDANÇA NA EUROPA

(séc. 2° a.C. / séc. 2° d.C.)

Proceedings book of the International Symposium: Cultural Interactions and Changing Landscapes in Europe (2nd century BC / 2nd century AD)
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(séc. 2° a.C. / séc. 2° d.C.)
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CULTURAL INTERACTIONS AND CHANGING LANDSCAPES IN EUROPE

IRON AGE HILLFORTS OF BOTICAS

POVOADOS FORTIFICADOS DA IDADE DO FERRO DE BOTICAS

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Catálogo da exposição paralela ao "Simpósio Internacional: Interações Culturais e Paisagens em Mudança na Europa (séc. 2° a.C. / séc. 2° d.C.)"

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Cultural Interactions and Changing Landscapes in Europe (2nd century BC / 2nd century AD)

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Luís Fontes, Gonçalo Cruz & Mafalda Alves (Orgs)

BOTICAS CÂMARA MUNICIPAL

Sociedade Martins Sarmento

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'ELECTIVE AFFINITY' AND THE IRON FIST OF IMPERIALISM: RESPONSES IN BRITAIN TO THE ADVENT OF ROME

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'Elective Affinity' and the Iron Fist of Imperialism: Responses in Britain to the advent of Rome

Abstract

In line with broad trends in the study of the Roman phenomenon, the examination of Rome's influence upon and subsequent conquest of much of Britain has undergone shifts in views and comprehension in recent decades. In apart this is a matter of how Roman imperialism was viewed in philosophy and practice. Continuities with some structures and forms of the proceeding Iron Age could be identified but how they should be interpreted became a matter of much debate. Recognition of the extractive and draconian nature of modern imperialisms also came to be influential in recent thinking: and from this perspective Roman Britain would pay for the honour of being a part of the empire. More commonly agreed amongst scholars is, above all, the diversity in regional experiences, in settlements, and material expression across the Roman province; the heterogeneity of impact and response. All this makes the study of Britain during the Roman era more fascinating and demanding of attention than had hitherto been realized.

Resumo

Nas últimas décadas e de acordo com as tendências gerais existentes sobre o estudo do fenómeno Romano, a análise da influência de Roma sobre grande parte da Grã-Bretanha e a sua subsequente conquista sofreu alterações de prisma e compreensão. Não obstante, esta é uma questão de como o imperialismo romano foi visto na filosofia e prática. A identificação de continuidades em algumas estruturas e formas da Idade do Ferro era possível, mas o modo como elas deveriam ser interpretadas tornou-se um assunto de grande debate. O reconhecimento da natureza extrativa e draconiana dos imperialismos modernos também se tornou influente no pensamento recente: e, partindo dessa perspectiva, a Grã-Bretanha romana pagou pela honra de ser parte do império. Mais comumente aceite entre os académicos é, acima de tudo, a diversidade existente ao nível das experiências regionais, do povoamento e da expressão material um pouco por toda a província romana; a heterogeneidade do impacto e a respetiva resposta. Tudo isso torna o estudo da Grã-Bretanha durante a era romana atualmente muito mais fascinante e criterioso.

1. Introduction

The transition from Iron Age societies to the creation of the Roman province of Britannia was a major process of change. Within that process there were profound alterations in practice and experience but also many dimensions of continuity; this was a complex and varied reconfiguration. The transformation has proved a challenge to interpreters raising questions about the nature of the indigenous societies, Roman imperialism and the response to Roman expansion. This has led to contrasting views and more latterly the realization that accounting for the character of change is not straight-forward. In terms of the Roman conquest of Britain we know how it happened, how it was possible and largely why. Yet at the political-cultural level deeper questions remain especially regarding post-conquest changes. How forced was this shift? What forms did this imperialism take? What degree of choice and possibility did the new circumstances engender? How did forms of expression alter as the advent of Rome was experienced? Why was this process arguably so successful? How different were these societies in the first place? This examination will start by looking back at some earlier thinking and then consider recent approaches, with the recognition that there are no simple answers. It will be seen that most commentators see power and material culture as key foci.

For much of the 20th century the transition in southern Britain from Iron Age 'tribal' society to Roman province was simply seen in terms of an historical sequence of events and an adaptation to new styles under Roman imperialism. A certain receptiveness in southern Britain to the coming of Roman was broadly accepted (following initial patchy hostility), while an underswell of latent antagonism and periodic violence was envisaged in the area that is now northern England (the territory of the *Brigantes*) and with peoples inhabiting Scotland. The study was focused upon sites and 'facts', often influenced by a search to verify the limited statements found in ancient historical sources. From the 1970s, but gaining particular momentum in the 1980s, more theoretical assessments emerged and the nature of Iron Age society, Britain under Rome, and the nature of transition were more problematized. New dimensions in the archaeological record were recognized and innovative theories and methodologies for exploring them have flourished over the last three decades. This has made for a richer, more stimulating and varied field for study. There has then, been continual evolution in thinking over the past thirty years, enhanced by fieldwork and excavated discoveries. To comprehend current approaches, examination of the developments in explanation provides an introduction. Accordingly the first section here outlines the historiography and trajectories of thought. These paths have brought us to a point at which it is fruitful to consider the character of the transformation from a number of angles. How different was Iron Age society in its institutions, customs and expressions in southern Britain from those of the Roman world? How close or contrasting were Roman imperial systems in Britain from what had gone before? Was the transition largely about 'change at the top', taking a comparatively laissez-faire course, or was the burden heavy, extortionate and plain nasty. Questions of structure and agency, choice, or the lack of choice (disempowerment), are relevant. What degree of affiliation with what Rome represented was there amongst the indigenous elites and in turn amongst the peoples of southern Britain? Was there willing choice in 'jumping on-board

the Roman bandwagon' (an elective development). Was the empire in fact tolerant and accommodating of variety and the creator of conditions of opportunity: peace, prosperity and well-being?

2. Earlier Trajectories of Study

2.1 The status quaestionis before 1980

Studies of the Iron Age in Britain before c. 1980 were dominated by the investigation of hillforts which had been a preoccupation from the 1930s following Wheeler's work at Maiden Castle, Dorset (Wheeler 1943). Cunliffe's seminal work at Danebury, the hillfort in Hampshire that is the most extensively explored example in Britain, had been underway since 1969 (Cunliffe 1984). The prevailing view was that hillforts were about power. They were seen as the product of stratified societies following a chiefdom model. The difficulty was that there was no direct evidence that this was the case, certainly at the time when hillforts were at their most prominent in the Middle Iron Age (MIA). Nonetheless this idea, influenced by medieval social organization, was popular despite its weakness (cf Frankenstein and Rowlands 1978, 73-4).

The investigations at these and other sites, showed that hillforts in southern Britain had become less important after the MIA after c. 200 BC. Investigations had also extended to the exploration of the Late Iron Age (LIA) oppida-like complexes spread over large areas, with associated earthwork dykes and banks, such as the major foci outside Verulamium (Wheeler and Wheeler 1936) and Colchester/Camulodunum (Hawkes and Hull 1947). By the mid-1970s Cunliffe was also investigating the coastal site at Hengistbury Head, Dorset, a place of manufacturing and consumption of Continental imports that had its heyday in the later second and earlier first centuries BC (Cunliffe 1987). The LIA cremation cemeteries at Aylesford and Swarling in Kent indicated associations in practice between southern Britian and northern Gaul (Evans 1890; Birchall 1965). With further discoveries the Aylesford-Swarling burial rite was seen to extend across much of southern England, with continuities in furnished cremation into the Roman era, as on the Continent. Pioneering studies of amphorae by Peacock (1971) and Gallo-Belgic fine wares by Rigby (1973) showed the importation of goods and artefacts into Britain for decades prior to the Claudian invasion, though in the case of amphorae numbers were low compared to Gaul. By c. 1980 quite an amount was known on the LIA, imports and close Continental connections. Iron Age scholars were also more open to theory and models through the decades before c. 1980 than their Romanist counterparts. This tendency arose partly from the need, given the absence of a framework provided by ancient history, for the interpretation of the evidence, and the sequence of development through the Iron Age. Examples occur in contributions to the volume edited by Jesson and Hill (1971) where various models follow Processualist-type thinking. The advance of theoretical studies with applied methodologies can be seen with the volumes edited by Cunliffe and Rowley (1976) and Cunliffe and Miles (1984).

By contrast before c. 1980 there was very little by way of theoretical approaches to the study of the Roman era in Britain. The literature was dominated by narratives that told the 'unfolding story' of Roman Britain based around the historical development of sites and with considerable deference to the small amount of ancient Roman sources mentioning Britain. *Britannia*, by Sheppard Frere (1967), then Professor of the Archaeology of the Roman Empire at Oxford University, was typical. It was a very widely read text of 'conventional authority' (cf similarly Salway 1981; Todd 1981). The academic questions being asked revolved around issues of chronology and stratification such as the sequence on the northern frontier (Hadrian's Wall etc.), town development (dating of town walls), and 'the end of Roman Britain'. In large part this was a reflection of the Classical education of the scholars involved and an enduring mind-set that did not see the study of the past much in terms of people, ideas, expression or processes. This determined what was attended to in research, though it was also a function of the types of sites mainly explored at this time: military sites (largely an academic sponsored focus), towns (driven by post-war reconstruction and modern redevelopment (eg Canterbury, London and Winchester)) and villas (a focus for amateur local societies).

2.2 Interpreting change: the passing of dominant paradigms

During the 1970s and especially the 1980s an influential narrative was the idea that the absorption of Britain into the empire was the outcome of, if not an inevitable historical process, then a logical progression. Two tenets of this thinking were Cunliffe's view of the emergence of towns and the interpretation of the phenomenon of Roman/Continental imports into LIA Britain.

2.3 From the Hillfort to the Town?

With the first of these, Cunliffe forwarded the idea of the emergence of towns in Roman Britain (and thereafter) from Iron Age precursors. This model envisaged a development from hillforts, through 'oppida', to early towns of Roman Britain (Cunliffe 1976). The sequence proposed a closely unfolding set of steps, proceeding from the MIA to the 'emergence' of urban life in the Roman era. This idea was bound up with Processualist thinking characteristic of the time, which saw all three types of sites primarily as 'central places', with an emphasis on presumed fundamental economic and political roles and functions. Hence they were, from this view, performing the same roles as time progressed, serving regional hinterlands, often in the same place, or at close-by geographic locations. This was an influential model. From this perspective the Roman civitas capital of Cirencester, which became the second largest town in *Britannia*, was seen in terms of a progressive relationship to the LIA Bagendon complex 4.5km to the north-east (Moore 2007). Equally the model could be thought to apply to the Roman town of Canterbury. Here a hillfort type site at Bigbury, on the high ground to the west of the valley in which Canterbury was subsequently constructed, was seemingly abandoned in the second half of the first century BC, and around this time the first occupation in the area of what was to be Canterbury is attested, by imports and structural remains of Augusto-Tiberian date (Blockley *et al*. 1996). This settlement, with oppidum like elements, was in turn re-manifested at this location following the Claudian conquest as the Roman town of *Durovernum Cantiacorum*, civitas capital of the *Cantiaci*. In this model the scale of sites (indicated by earthworks and spreads of finds) and proximity or over-writing of an earlier site, attested in several instances (Silchester being another) were taken as indicators of a continuity of centralized authority, production, commerce and consumption. However, what seemed on the face of it a readily interpretable, logical progression, ran up against awkward questions, often coming out of the site data or lack of it. On examination chronologies did not fit smoothly and we now have a more nuanced view of the changing role of hillforts in Britain, which sees a central place function as no longer a necessary reading of these sites, for they had other and changing roles. Whereas in the Processual era they were seen as the precursor to towns, with oppida as proto-urban 'steps along the way', we are now more hesitant in using such loaded terms, though Moore (2017) has revisited the oppida/urban question. Regional and specific variety, complexity, and difference between sites have come more to the fore and new comprehension results from the more extensive data to hand (Gwilt and Haselgrove 1997). Such configurations thereby complicate earlier attempts to generalize and propose streamlined models.

2.4 The active role of material culture in the LIA

Imports from the Roman world, including Italian wine and metal accoutrements for its preparation and serving, plus fine pottery from Italy and Gaul, were seen in the 1970s and 1980s as indices of a process of change, indeed, an 'active' bringer of change. Present in well-furnished burials (eg Stead 1967; Foster 1986) and at sites where other indicators of status and power occur such as so-called coin-mould trays (Elsdon 1997), these items seemed preferentially to have been acquired by elites in Britian. The idea that chiefdoms were an Iron Age reality seemed to be confirmed by the historical sources and wide striking of coin in the LIA by people claiming kingship and dynastic legitimacy, as coins became prolific in southern and eastern Britain. In the last decades of the Iron Age some of these dynasts imprinted their names and those of their capitals' onto coins in abbreviated Latin. Some striking items of silverware, Arretine and Gallo-Belgic cups, plates and beakers, together with sets of amphorae and firedogs attested (by conventional interpretation) to privileged lives. These finds and assemblages were read as expressions of conspicuous consumption, by the elevated few, and formed the starting-gate for some influential interpretative thinking. Their novelty in Britain made them powerful, as exotic items in themselves (often shiny, ultra-smooth, in unprecedented shapes, of different technology and decoration), but also for what they represented. In terms of the model proposed by Haselgrove, an association with the super-power of Rome, and the control of the distribution of these 'luxuries' was seen as a motor for political change. Haselgrove (1982) posited a gift exchange-patronage system in which imports from the Roman world were key to political authority. The price paid for 'the gift' was that of loyalty and allegiance in politics and conflict.

These imports were the vanguard of what was to become a change in style – of material culture and consumption patterns, as Britain moved into the Roman period. The

Figure 3
Some of the repaired *terra sigillata*/early samian from the Later Iron Age complex at Bagendon (showing drilled holes for repair via lead rivets). These fine table ware vessels date to before the Claudian conquest and may represent luxury imports or diplomatic gifts. (Photos: Lloyd Bosworth, University of Kent).

role of artefacts in this process remains a key focus (Willis 1994). The level of interest (and difficulty in replacing) can be seen in the frequency and care taken to repair broken sigillata vessels at pre-conquest Bagendon where riveting is common (Fig. 3). Yet what explained that wide change in consumption, style, and choice? During the 1980s and into the 1990s this change was seen as a fundamental expression of Romanization (Millett 1990; Blagg and Millett 1990). From the Romanization perspective the wide uptake of 'things Roman' by the people of the new province of Britain was seen as unproblematically straightforward (see below). Indeed, Romanization was argued by Haselgrove, in some of his earliest work (1984), to be underway before the Roman conquest, with the interest in wine and the adoption of Roman artefacts in second and first century BC Gaul and Britain seen as akin to a softening up-process leading elites to identify with Rome, covert the imports, and the control of access to and distribution of these commodities as means to power. This was seen as in part explaining why Caesar met some political ('tribal') groups who could be allies. Rather than 'trade following the flag' this was the flag following trade. Caesar's conquest of Gaul, whilst fulfilling a personal agenda was consistent with the interests of the Roman state. The flag followed trade as with much of the territorial acquisition of the British Empire in the 18th and 19th centuries. The acquisitive possibilities were attractive to both traders and the State.

2.5 Towards Romanization

Remaining with artefacts, just as Haselgrove had seen imports as a catalyst for a new configuration of elite relations and connections with the Roman world, the Romanization theory (see below) saw material culture as having a vital role in social change, in the transition of indigenous groups to provincial society under Roman rule. The approach sought to explain the seeming ready up-take of Roman lifestyles in urban and villa living, the widespread adoption of Roman forms in material culture and saw a relatively smooth transition in the case of Britain into the imperial domain. The Boudiccan revolt, severe as it was, could be attributed to specific local causes. Accordingly, that event might be excepted, as that episode apart, there was a lack of rebellion or resistance to Rome in southern and eastern England following the initial conquest (Webster 1993). Earlier, in Gaul, following its conquest in the 50s BC, bloody and traumatic as that decade was, there seems to have been relatively little resistance or revolt. The 'Roman peace' was perhaps surprisingly firm and early to take hold, seeming to support an idea of Gallic peoples being relatively amenable to Roman ways. Likewise the commentators of the late 20th century saw a relatively smooth transition in southern Britain. The role of the elite was seen as crucial (Haselgrove 1987; Millett 1990; Woolf 1998), following the maxim perhaps that the leading ideas of any age are the ideas and practices of the ruling elite (paraphrasing Marx). In terms of the Romanization perspective local elites threw their lot in with Rome in order to preserve their status under new conditions. From this view, indigenous elites adopted Roman cultural expression from self-interest. Emulation of the elite by lower social ranks, following in line, was seen as the explanation for the stability of these new provinces. The thinking seems to have been that non-elite people would desire Roman style items as represented status and desirable fashion; that equally might be displayed as a sign of one's own standing. Motivations and alternatives were not explored and this came to be seen as a major flaw of the model.

For a few years the Romanization 'explanation' held sway, dominating narratives. This can be seen in titles of books and articles appearing at this time. On the face of it this 'smooth adoption' seemed self-evident to archaeologists and historians, through the presence of Roman style pottery in graves, mass imports of samian, unprecedented local production of flagons and mortaria, the relatively rapid construction of towns (at least in the time of the second generation, post-conquest) and the broad practices of consumption that seemed to mirror metropolitan Roman mores. All seemed testimony to the people adopting a 'follow my leader' path: a population consenting to the ways of empire.

2.6 Romanization

Millett's *The Romanization of Britain* (1990) was the culmination of what was then the new thinking. It included a distinct methodological approach drawing much more on the archaeological data (collated, quantified and synthesized) than previous general books on the province. It proved a seminal for its methods, ideas, and interpreta-

tive, context-based, analysis. Millett's Romanization model can be characterized thus: LIA society was stratified (as indicated by coins and privileged burials) with levy/tribute/'tax' likely to be common. Soon after contact with the Roman world or following conquest, most local elites one way or another 'opted-in' with Rome to retain their power (land, herds, authority). These stratified societies were familiar with hierarchy so the coming of Rome was essentially 'change at the top' so the impact was not profound (1990, fig 14). Rome had no large bureaucracy and was disinclined to interventions so the local elites found a role ruling for Rome through office holding. Millett saw the outcome as effectively Rome ruling with a 'light hand'. The indigenous elites continued to enjoy privilege (as suggested by Fishbourne palace and other first century AD villas), with lifestyles of conspicuous consumption, retention of lands, civic status, and office holding peppered with acts of public munificence. They invested in urban/civic amenities for the public good with a dedication recording their name/s as the benefactors.

This model also inclined to see a climate of deference to and desire for things Roman: a Roman hegemony. This saw lower ranks following the elite through emulation, implicitly as they wanted their 'piece of the action' and 'followed the fashion', as with the infamous 1980s 'yuppie' trend for 'fast money' and flash goods, wantonly displayed', which may have subconsciously influenced the model. Overall this was a 'top down' model of change permeating society; the sub-theme being that all had something to gain from membership of this first European Union. Thus in 1990 provincial society looked Roman or looked to become Roman: the thought-logic being, who would not want to live in a villa?

Regions of "unsuccessful Romanization" as Millett saw it were two-fold. Firstly the frontier hinterlands where, the model suggested, there was a distorting impact of the presence of the garrisoning Roman army as military rule stifled civic governance, and where a military command economy was a drain, or had a skewing effect, precluding a 'normal' economic interactions. Secondly, there was an evident lack of uptake of Roman style and institutions in areas such as the south-west peninsula (the civitas of the *Dumnonii*), much of Wales and in upland England (Figs. 1 & 2). This was accounted for by the fact that these were areas where there was apparently no firm elite/stratified society in the Iron Age; that is areas with no oppida, no embedded coin use, comparatively low levels of material culture, and very few imports. Hence there was no existing elite to emulate nor seemingly a culture involving status display via artefacts. Thus, in terms of this model there was unlikely to be receptivity to the coming of Rome. Put another way, Rome had little to work with and Romanization could not take root. There was a marked overlap with these areas being the 'upland zone' and having an extensive presence of the Roman military. A significant consideration though were the 'positive aspects' of a Roman military presence: income and markets, representing the possibility of improved life-chances for some. If the Roman frontier guard had its downside why was it that along the German Limes there was flourishing trade, urban life, villas, craft-technological application, and social integration; this was seemingly 'successful' Romanization on the frontier.

2.7 Challenges to Romanization

Romanization and the thinking proposed was soon to draw critical fire. Fundamentally it was seen as too Processualist, published when thinking in Roman studies was about to move with pace towards a Post-Processual perspective. Soon this would be a paradigm shift, reflecting the wider contemporary fashion of post-modernist approaches. Romanization implied an inevitable, near universal, conscious or unconscious positive embrace of the empire and the changes it carried with it, but, the critics argued, the reality was more complex and problematic, both theoretically and in practice: not all embraced the change.

Figure 1
The tribal areas of the Late Iron Age in England and Wales which became the *civitates* of the Roman province (based on Millett 1990 fig 16, with amendments).

Figure 2
The principal towns and legionary centres of the Roman province (square symbols) together with later Iron Age sites mentioned in the text (circle symbols). (Prepared with Lloyd Bosworth, University of Kent).

Consistent with a Processualist approach, Millett's book was seen to 'lack people', with limited attention to the circumstances and varied customs of people and the 'choices' available to peoples when confronted by Rome. A review by Freeman saw it as too elite focused and following an assumption that everyone 'wanted in' on what Roman represented (Freeman 1993). Others saw weakness in the argument that the trappings of Iron Age elite power (martial equipment, 'the right to bear arms', warrior status, etc.) could be replaced by emulation and 'conspicuous consumption' of imported luxuries and up-take of *Romanitas*. It was argued that the archaeological record shows a varied reaction to the advent of Rome than the Romanization model acknowledged or accounted for. The evidence, it was argued, pointed to a differential uptake of Rome forms with marked regional variation, which in the critique, came to be termed 'discrepant experience' (Mattingly 1997). Terrenato (1998) in more nuanced evaluation pointed to the uptake of Roman institutions and material forms but alongside variation, regional selection and distinction he termed 'bricolage'.

Whilst large regions of the south and east of England, and to an extent south Wales, appeared more readily to embrace Rome, with evidence for developed Roman culture/ life styles, other regions and social strata, it was highlighted, showed selective opting into the Roman world, or an endurance of old traditions. In the case of the latter: a lack of interest in towns; the endurance of vernacular building traditions; little uptake of Roman material culture. Pennine England and Cumbria, for instance, had few villas, settlement centres or deep engagement with Roman artefacts.

By the late 1990s the critique of Romanization and discussion around the issues had taken published form (Mattingly 1997). Webster initiated the concept of 'creolization' following observations of the adaptation of peoples of African descent shipped into slavery in the Americas in response to circumstances of dislocation and profound disempowerment. Expressions encoded tradition and 'resistance' in a subverting underworld of diverse forms from song to material item as new identities were fashioned to cope and overcome (Webster 2001): was this how it was for many in Roman Britain? This reminded scholars of Roman Britain that experiences of empire are often not positive, especially for the majority. A 'post-colonial' view of Roman imperialism was forwarded, particularly by Mattingly and Hingley: imperialisms tend to be harsh and exploitative, with a net negative impact upon the colonized. Thus Rome was not a 'light hand' but an iron fist' (Mattingly 2006; Willis 2008). The paradigm had changed. What was now seen as central for study were identity, power relations, gender, 'resistance', landscapes, meaning in objects, diversity in the military community and textured in-depth local studies exploring experience, hybridity and adaptations under the Roman yoke.

2.8 The Iron Fist of Empire?

Mattingly's *An Imperial Possession* (2006) was a culmination of new thinking on Britain in the empire and in significant part a response to *Romanization*. It reflected post-colonial and Post-Processual perspectives emergent through the 1990s as applied to the Roman era, following in the vein of the *Dialogues* (Mattingly (1997). In the 2006 book we again see archaeological study exploring changing paradigms: new thoughts reflecting wider contemporary intellectual trends. The author declared this to be a controversial book (Preface xi), something one could not imagine Salway or Frere suggesting of their works a generation earlier; he wished to stride into new realms of assessment. He tells the reader the book will explore: "identity, communities and regions", "discrepant identities in the Roman empire" and "the experience of people in Britain under Roman rule and as such it is far more social history than political history" (2006, xv, xii; 5, 17), areas not covered by Frere, Salway, Todd or Millett.

The book was uncompromising and the view of imperial exploitation imposed on the province made for grim reading. If lay readers happened upon the book expecting to reinforce an ambrosia view of the convivial productive villa estate in summer sun (promoted maybe by visiting excavated villas on public display) they were in for a different type of tour (2006, 524). Mattingly outlined the impact of Roman rule as he saw it, the political, economic and cultural consequences and the limitations it brought. The bleak experience of imperial subjugation, in what he argues was a military province, was to pay for itself. The province had an unusually high proportion of troops holding Wales, deployed across the centre of Britain and used in campaigning and patrols in Scotland. In Mattingly's view Rome would not have subsidized the province in maintaining this garrison: local taxes would ensure holding Britain was not a financial burden. Hence the army was a central player in the province from Mattingly's perspective, not simply a policing force. Coloured by knowledge of 19th and 20th century imperialisms he saw a Roman agenda of exploitation and the imposition of enforcement via a harsh fist of iron (2006, 12). This permeating hegemonic extractive rule, as he saw it, was in marked contrast to the 'light hand' approach implied by Millett; Mattingly saw in Britian outcomes equivalent to the underdevelopment and social limitations of recent empires.

Millett had emphasized cultural continuities from the Iron Age and a minimal impact of the imperial system upon the politics and economics of localities. From Mattingly's contrasting view what scope was there for community or individual expression of identity? The structure and agency debate was weighed by Mattingly and the scope for choice and autonomy considered, in relation to oppida and towns, cultural identity and expression (2006, 267, 319). However, more was at work in the province than the imperial agenda and that agenda did not break some indigenous traditions: regionality endured. Creighton's *Britannia*, published at the same time as Mattingly's tome, highlighted the role of past monuments and understanding of landscape and power in the creation of the new province. Custom and practice endured, to be remade, despite Roman impositions.

3. on

3.1 Why incorporate Britain in the Empire?

Weighing the reasons for the Roman invasion of Britain in AD 43 is a poplar question for University essay questions. Examining the context of the invasion can shed light on the nature of LIA Britain and its relations with Rome, and raises questions about the deeper value Rome may have seen in a successful long term acquisition, not just immediate goals. Prominent in any list of explanations is the orthodox deduction that the new emperor Claudius needed the legitimacy a military victory would provide, and selected a relatively soft target that Rome had been eyeing for some while. Other factors warrant consideration. One driver of the rolling Roman expansion of this era was the Roman military, the dominant institution of state, unless there was a strong emperor. Roman army officers had careers to think about and pressure for campaigning from the military was doubtless a factor as success served collective and individual purposes. These though were short term motives.

One debateable realm was whether Britain was viewed as rich in metals and minerals to justify conquest and sustained incorporation. Certainly Britain's geography and physical resources seem to have been known from an early date, as with the early quarrying of Purbeck marble. Metals were listed by the geographer Strabo as an export of LIA Britian (*Geog.* II 4.5). Not long after the conquest Rome was exploiting Wealden iron and lead and silver from the Mendips and Derbyshire, together with gold from south Wales. Some of these sources do not seem to have been important in the Iron Age, but were exploited with a great intensity in the Roman era. The level of silver being extracted in the LIA is not known; judging from its infrequent use in fashioning artefacts it was not a favoured metal (cf *Conquest of Gaul* V.12). Only when there was a shortage of gold was silver used for coins (eg Score 2012). Caesar may have encountered little booty (Mattingly 2006, 47) yet rumours or knowledge of precious metals may have been at play. Gold is seen widely in artefacts of LIA Britain, in torc hoards and coin deposits (Stead 1993), and this prominence may have been known to Rome. Gold sources existed in Scotland and Ireland in addition to Wales. Yet these were remoter parts of the British Isles and, given only the latter was successfully incorporated into the empire, it seems unlikely that securing these sources was a priority.

The acquisition of slaves has been thought a reason for Rome's interest in Britain. In LIA Gaul the exchange value

was allegedly one slave for an amphora of wine, and this report might not be too wide of reality (Tchernia 1983, 99). At that time late Republican Italy had a wine glut (Sealey 2009) and a huge appetite for slaves. The numbers of amphorae arriving in Gaul became colossal (Loughton 2003) so if they may be regarded as a rough proxy for numbers of slaves passing into Roman captivity then the scale of human 'traffic' is astounding even if it were ten amphorae per slave. By the mid-Augustan period the flow of wine to Temperate Europe was in marked decline as demand in Rome and metropolitan Italy had risen such that there was little to spare for export (Sealey 2009). War (and diplomacy, via tribute) as a means to acquire slaves from the empire's neighbours, may have held attraction, especially if emperor and state had a stake in the profits from sale. Was such thinking a motive for the Claudian invasion? We are told by Strabo (*Geog*. 4.5.1) that one of the principal exports from LIA Britain was slaves. Finds of shackles and a padlock at Bigbury, Canterbury, of this period, where they were associated with high status metalwork (Thompson 1983), seem testimony to this trade in humanity. The proximity of Bigbury to the Continent seems to underscore this probability. Slave chains are rare in Iron Age and Roman Britain so it is pertinent to note their presence amongst the Llyn Cerrig Bach hoard on Anglesey, by the coast, raising the possibility of slave exchange of this period across the Irish Sea. Securing Britain as province could formalize on-going access to slaves, 'manpower', and military recruits.

Prominent in Rome's calculations will have been agricultural produce, primarily grain, a British export noted by Strabo (*Geog*. II 4.5). The Iron Age in Britain was an exceptional period of arable expansion and intensive grain cultivation (Millett 1990, 56-7) fostering population growth. Rome had an enduring need for secure grain supplies to feed its large army and wider population, and this was central to the political economy of the state (Hopkins 1983). Britain probably looked like an attractive source, and following conquest is likely to have fulfilled this role. Military and state contracts to supply grain almost certainly lined the purses of British farmers, providing prosperity that was in turn invested in Roman forms of display in the rural villas.

The case for the conquest of Britain being more than a Claudian 'vanity project' or short term expediency lies in the fact that Rome invested in the enterprise after his passing and despite the psychological and material blow suffered by the Boudiccan revolt of AD 60/61 when the province was almost lost. Britain was to be a long term project, too good to give up. A refortification of the south followed for a number of years, which explains the temporary halt of expansion of the province. The Flavians, given their personal/family connections with the Claudian victory campaigns were unlikely to give the province up, and nor were the consolidators, Trajan and Hadrian. Besides, the assets of the new province were thriving economic communities, not least London which established itself as an extraordinarily vibrant port, entrepôt and commercial hub (Perring 2015).

3.2. Contact and its traces revisited

On completion of his PhD thesis, which included a catalogue of imported material culture from the Continent, Fitzpatrick (1989a; 1989b) argued that the absolute quantity of imports was comparatively meagre. Likewise Rigby, British Museum expert on imported Gallo-Belgic pottery, was wont to say that all such pottery found in Britain could have fitted onto one ship. Maps of the distribution of Dressel 1 amphorae from the 1990s (Tyers 1996, fig 55) have not altered in general emphases, though numbers of findspots have increased. Equally, the general picture with regard to Gallo-Belgic pottery has not broadly changed since the 1980s (Timby 1987; Timby and Rigby 2007). That said, a series of site discoveries show importation was at least higher and more frequent than had been thought thirty years ago (eg Manley and Rudkin 2005; Atkinson and Preston 2015). Whilst Britain was on the fringe of distribution systems and quantities were moderate the evidence attests to sustained contact in the 150 years prior to the Claudian invasion, pointing up firm levels of familiarity and interaction between Britain and the Continent.

On-going work at Silchester has enhanced previous indicators that this oppidum was a major complex with an orthogonal street grid, rectilinear structures and property plots and in receipt of Gaulish and Roman imports in the decades prior to the Claudian invasion (Fulford and Timby 2000). In these fundamentals its morphology resembles that of oppida in northern France, exemplified in the Aisne Valley. It develops to become the civitas capital of the *Atrebates* (Figs 1 & 2). New work at the Bagendon complex, including extensive geophysical survey has enhanced knowledge of this oppidum. Unlike Silchester its heyday ends with the Claudian conquest (with a campaign fort established nearby at the site that then develops as the regional civitas centre: Cirencester). The publication of fresh evidence from Stanwick, North Yorkshire (Haselgrove 2016) shows that contacts with the Roman world were not limited to the south as Stanwick is far to the north of shores facing the Continent (400kms north of London). At Stanwick, a likely tribal centre, a wide range of pre-conquest amphorae, exceptional terra sigillata and other fine wares show an extraordinary level of contact. These top quality suites from Italy and Gaul at Bagendon and Stanwick may well represent diplomatic goods rather than traded luxuries. Rome was well-versed in the art of diplomacy as a means to secure its holdings, further its interests and out-flank hostile tribes. Given the prevalence of feasting in the Classical and Barbarian world one can envisage a scenario in which these goods are not simply passed over but for table setting: the feast ingredients, the means to prepare, cook and serve might have been brought with the embassy, along with master chefs as otherwise the gifting might not fulfil its potential in a convivial atmosphere or be mis-interpreted on receipt. Taking the long view these complexes had chequered histories: Silchester and Canterbury saw continuity beyond the conquest; Bagendon and Stanwick ceased to be 'centres', replaced by Roman developments nearby; Camulodunum became a Roman colony (Fig 4): transitions varied.

3.3 Friendly kings and foes

Creighton's *Coins and Power* (2000) demonstrated a sea-change in coin imagery and inscriptional evidence on LIA British coinages that he related directly to the system of 'hostage' taking by Rome from her allies and tribes paying tribute. This was the system whereby children of the top echelon of families of Rome's neighbours were schooled and socialized in Rome. Thereby coming to internalize Roman culture, and on maturity, returning to their homelands to live and perhaps rule, in a manner echoing Roman customs. And perhaps they remained 'loyal' as client kings under Roman patronage and (ultimately) authority (Braund 1984).

Three intriguing discoveries suggest potentially close relationships between the British rulers and Rome. From the Lexden Tumulus at Camulodunum came a medallion with the image of the emperor Augustus (Foster 1986). The burial is thought to date from c. 10BC and the presence of this potent symbol implies a positive recognition by the *Trinovantes/Catuvellauni* of the importance of Rome and the emperor. Secondly, an unexcavated Roman fort at Camulodunum is known from aerial photography in the Gosbecks area, long thought to be at the core of the oppidum (Crummy 1997, 16). Its date is uncertain but Creighton has raised the possibility that both this fort and pre-palace features and finds at Fishbourne could represent units of the Roman army in Britain before the Claudian conquest, supporting – or perhaps policing - 'friendly kings' (Creighton 2001; 2006, 54-64).

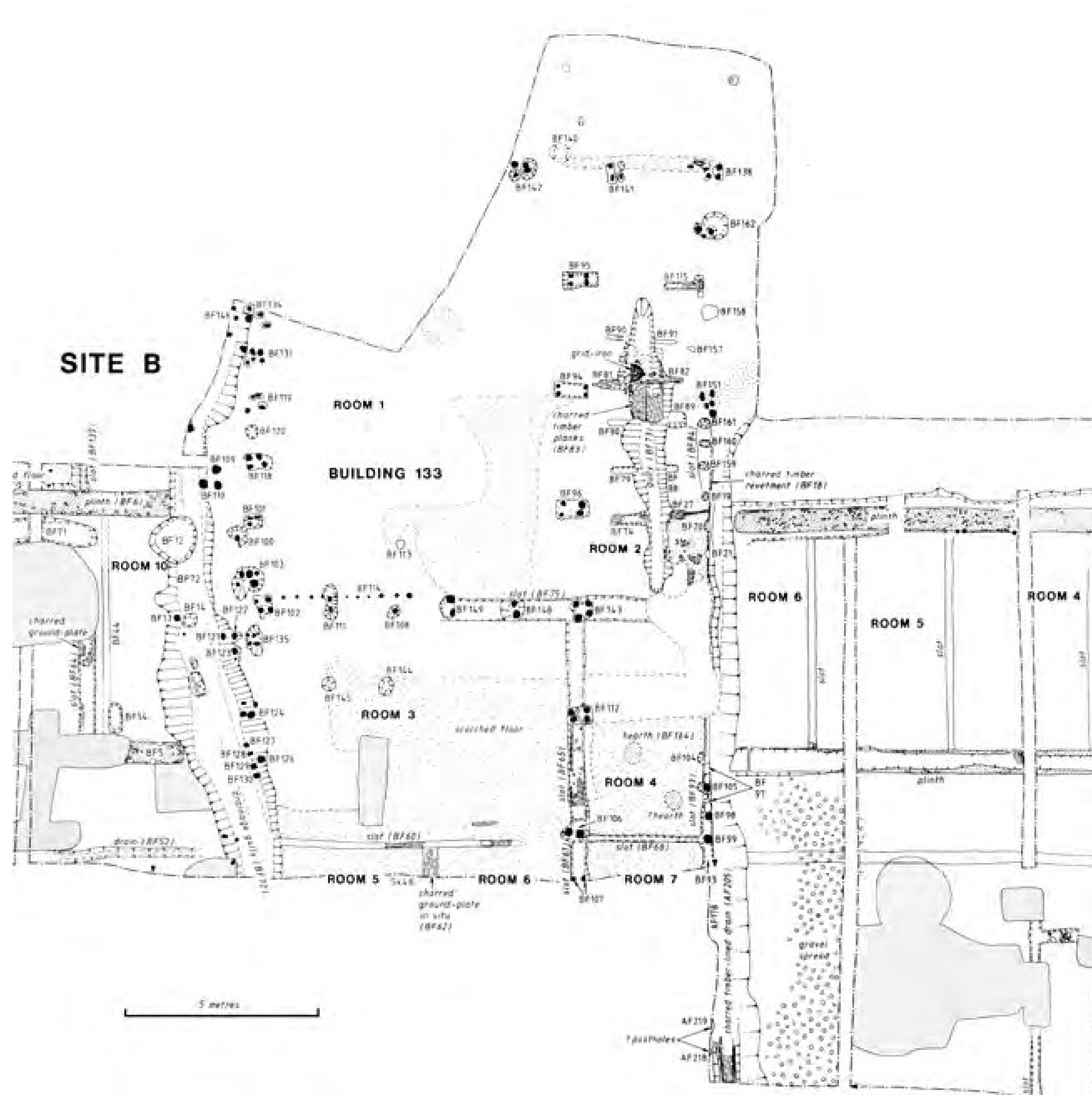

Figure 4

The Roman march through southern Britain in AD 43 and formalized surrender and disarmament of a proportion of the British tribes that followed was a swift process. This has been regarded as evidence of the receptiveness to Rome of the elites and populous of the southern tribes, and if not a *fait accompli* to adjust to, rather than resist to the death. This would explain the fact that few forts of the conquest period are known in southern Britain; those that are known for this period (and slightly later in date) cluster by the Fosse frontier between the Humber and Exeter: defining the area of initial Roman 'land grab'. This fertile arable lowland of south-eastern Britain proved in the long run the most prosperous and the most embracing of Roman institutions.

Cogidubnus, ruler of the southern *Atrebates* and recognized by Rome as a 'rex in Britain' seems to have been a friendly king complicit in the invasion (Hind 1989; Manley 2002). This underscores Roman diplomacy and that some local elites already marched in step with Rome, facilitating a relatively smooth period of absorption into the empire, for some. Resistance was fierce though in the Durotrigian area to the west (Webster 1993, 107-10), so again regional variation is a marked feature.

3.4 Romanization: the view from here

Romanization came to be regarded as a precarious word, almost a toxic term, for it implied thinking that was widely critiqued. If used, then the term is seen to need qualification, expressing an awareness that the writer knew the term to be problematically charged. Nonetheless it seems to still have use as a convenient shorthand word by students of the era, a label endeavouring to convey a complex set of cultural changes and long term processes that when it is not used need more 'long-hand' sketching. Employing provisos these days might not be necessary but be taken as given. There is a view that Millett was taken too literally as presenting a grand theory rather than this being a more heuristic tool. It is interesting to note leading Dutch scholars rehabilitating the approach in the light of enhanced perspectives (Roymans and Derks 2015, 12). Millett moved on, noting more recently, in assessing the results of the Hayton, East Yorkshire, survey, that Roman rule may have created 'landscapes of opportunity and resistance' but there were others of "mutual indifference" (2015, 545).

Mattingly envisaged draconian imperialism with territories divided to create extensive imperial lands at the expense of local civitates (Mattingly 2006), but this is unproven, *Centuriation* for settling veterans does not seem to have had a major footprint and contestation may have been localized (Black, 2006, 44-5). There is no evidence that Britain was taxed to the point of extortion: no 'taxes riots' are documented, and Fulford (1984) had argued that on the contrary the net flow of wealth was from the empire to Britain.

Many people within the borders of empire did 'opt for Rome' and a globalization occurred (Hingley 2005). As Beard (2012) has emphasized the success of the empire was that despite its authoritative systems, its patrician structures it could accommodate, could offer, could enable. That is a strong explanation as to why it came to stay. 'Roman' meant the coming together and was the outcome of a complex mix of peoples, traditions and ideas. There was no uniformity of response; outcomes varied, but where they did so this was within a broad diverse cultural shell, where some elements were shared by many, others less so. Selective parts of the Roman package were taken up here and there, as with the regionality of the LIA of Temperate Europe (Gwilt and Haselgrove 1997, 7). This was the success of the Roman phenomenon, integrated through flexibility, accommodation, and the ability to include many strands.

The many roadside settlements, Small Towns and villas in southern and eastern England with stone rectilinear build-

ings and other Roman forms may be taken as indices of a successful transition under Roman rule or at least the up side of Roman infrastructure and investment in minerals and produce. Yet variability in the uptake of Roman forms and the endurance of traditions is instructive. Region-wide vernacular choices were made and re-made, in some realms (both social and geographic) wherein little seemed to change from the Iron Age. Reception of Roman pottery varied: some LIA traditions endured, while elsewhere there was adaptation and firm uptake: so-called London ware from the Thames estuary comprised bowls in the form and zoning of samian prototypes but fired grey not red following indigenous custom (Fig 5). Curiously, settlement in the second century AD between Roman Gloucester and Cirencester includes traditional roundhouse forms, but in stone, combined with high levels of samian (Mudd *et al*. 1999). At Ingleby Barwick in north-east England, the villa complex combines Roman structural forms with remarkably low levels of material culture, reflecting the LIA pattern of modest artefact assemblages (Willis and Carne 2013). Nearby Faverdale has a mortarium made in an Iron Age fabric: a real hybrid! Selections from the 'Roman package' were often combined with prior custom; things changed at varying pace and encoded different agendas. These were all ways of being in the Roman empire, whether those inside its bounds were enthusiastic, hostile or indifferent.

3.5. *Britannia*: A distinct Roman province?

Mattingly saw distinctiveness to the British experience under the empire, including the prominence of the military and the comparatively slow urbanization (2006, 278). Quite why there was such a large force garrisoning Britain is a conundrum unless one accepts a long term lack of accommodation with Rome amongst the garrisoned zones and enduring threat from Ireland and Scotland. A failure to pacify Scotland may support this view. Frequent unrest in the northern frontier zone is suggested by historical, epigraphic and numismatic records. On the other hand the idea that Hadrian's Wall was more a tax barrier and an inhibitor to cattle rustling has been posited by a renowned scholar of the Wall (Dobson 1986). A slow urbanization in Britain is broadly discerned (away from London and the *coloniae*) but that was also the case in Gaul in the decades following Caesar's conquest. The picture is not simple. Tacitus (*Agricola* 21) states that the construction of civic amenities was encouraged, though provides no evidence. The roadside shops at Insula XIV in Verulamium are of very early construction and argued to be of local initiative (Millett 1990, 69-70 fig 18). Roman towns in Britain are, however, comparatively small with modest levels of investment compared to some cities in Gaul. Perhaps this is an index of population density or indeed how heavily Britian was taxed rather than its productivity and wealth generation, much profit being creamed off by the state (if Mattingly is right). It was not until well into the Flavian era that forum-basilica structures were in place at London and Silchester, perhaps as a proportion of the money to build them came from local citizens and funds needed to accumulate. Small Towns and roadside settlements in Gaul are often more elaborate with a greater range of civic features than seen in Britain.

4. Conclusion

In the south and east of Britain in the LIA elites developed relationships with the Roman state, often perhaps pragmatic and precarious. There was an influx of imports evidently positively received. How these imports are understood and relate to change remains a key focus. Politics and trading do not explain Roman invasion and the transformation but they are the background that offer some explanation to the changes that occurred. The nature of Roman *Britannia* was complex. We no longer believe in single sweeping models as it is now seen as a nuanced process. At a broad level the province is a tale of two ex-

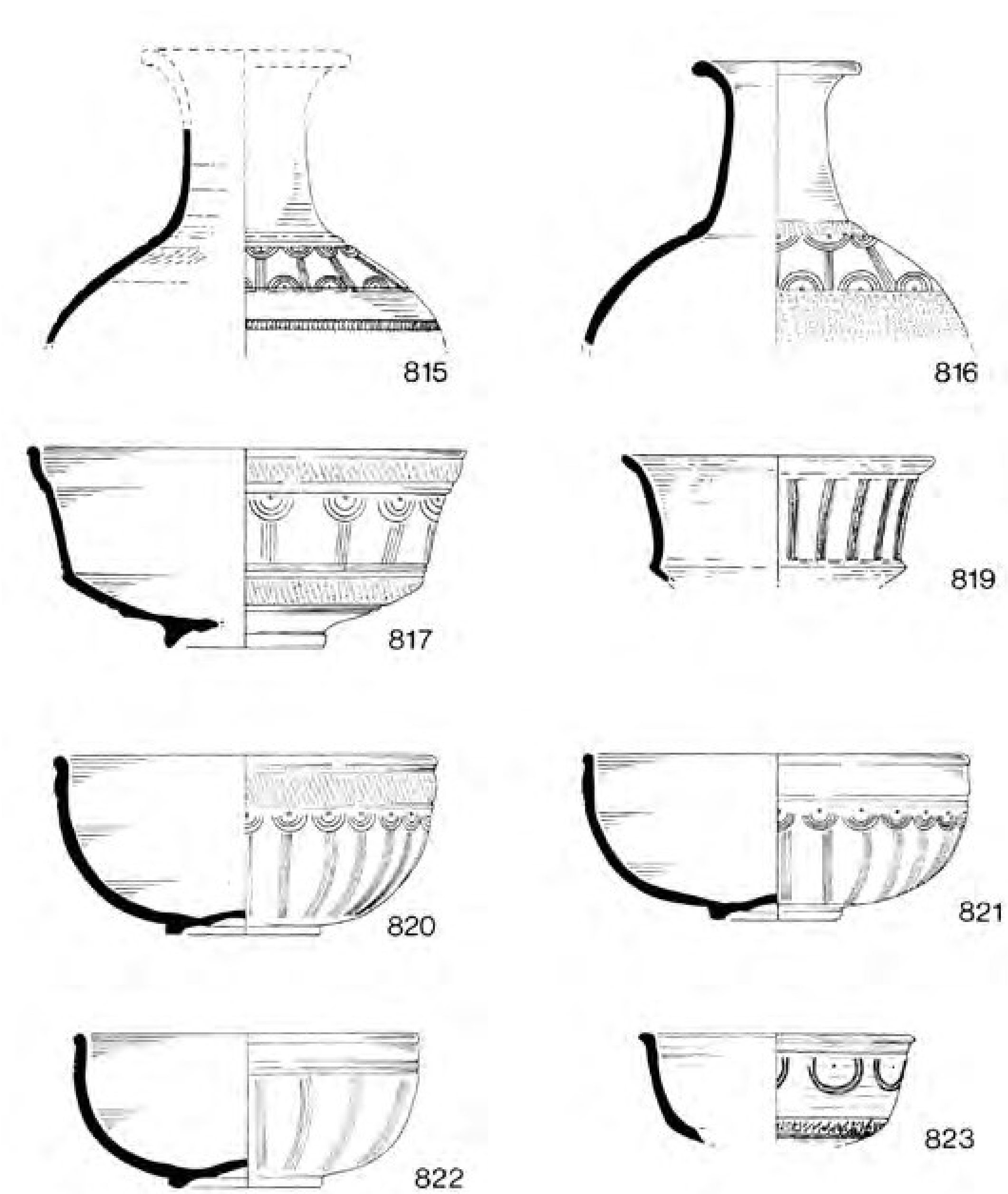

Figure 5

periences: the lowland south-east with numerous villas, developed towns and roadside settlements, rural industries and high levels of material culture. To the west and north almost the opposite is true, though as we have seen this needs some qualification (Taylor 2007). Groenman van Waateringe (1980) suggested (to paraphrase) that the empire expanded to incorporate those societies that were essentially similar to itself, in terms of hierarchic political/power systems, cultural customs, mixed economies and firm levels of material culture/consumption, but struggled to deal with those that were not similar in these ways. The British experience and variability of cultural expression in transition arguably exemplifies these fundamentals. Accounting for contrasting responses must include recognition of the geographic fundamentals of landscape (for agriculture, resources and movement), cultural tradition and possibilities of choice. The regions and peoples that embraced Roman forms most fully were those of the lowland south and east, with mixed high yield farming, accustomed through the LIA to hierarchy and Continental and then Roman contact, where traditions were less enhanced and adaptable. Who lived there is unlikely to have been static and will have included people of various backgrounds, certainly after the conquest. This area, and especially its elites, gained most from being in the empire; elsewhere the stories differ.

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