

Marx Hardy Machiavelli Joyce Austen
Defoe Abbot Melville Montaigne Cooper Emerson Hugo
Stoker Wilde Christie Maupassant Haggard Chesterton Molière Eliot Grimm
Garnett Engels Schiller Byron Maupassant Schiller
Goethe Hawthorne Smith Kafka
Cotton Dostoyevsky Kipling Doyle Willis
Baum Henry Nietzsche Hall
Leslie Dumas Flaubert Turgenev Balzac Willis
Stockton Vatsyayana Crane
Burroughs Verne
Curtis Tocqueville Gogol Busch
Homer Tolstoy Whittman
Darwin Thoreau Twain
Potter Zola Lawrence Dickens Plato
Kant Freud Jowett Stevenson Andersen Harte
London Descartes Cervantes Burton Hesse
Poe Aristotle Wells Voltaire Cooke
Hale James Hastings Shakespeare Irving
Bunner Richter Chambers Alcott
Doré Chekhov da Shaw Benedict Pushkin
Swift Dante Shaw Wodehouse Newton



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The Romanization of Roman Britain

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PREFACE

The following paper was originally read to the British Academy in 1905, and published in the second Volume of its Proceedings (pp. 185-217) and in a separate form (London, Frowde). The latter has been sometime out of print, and, as there was apparently some demand for a reprint, the Delegates of the Press have consented to issue a revised and enlarged edition. I have added considerably to both text and illustrations and corrected where it seemed necessary, and I have endeavoured so to word the matter that the text, though not the footnotes, can be read by any one who is interested in the subject, without any special knowledge of Latin.

F. HAVERFIELD.

OXFORD, April 22, 1912

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CHAPTER I

THE ROMANIZATION OF THE EMPIRE

Historians seldom praise the Roman Empire. They regard it as a period of death and despotism, from which political freedom and creative genius and the energies of the speculative intellect were all alike excluded. There is, unquestionably, much truth in this judgement. The world of the Empire was indeed, as Mommsen has called it, an old world. Behind it lay the dreams and experiments, the self-convicted follies and disillusioned wisdom of many centuries. Before it lay no untravelled region such as revealed itself to our forefathers at the Renaissance or to our fathers fifty years ago. No new continent then rose up beyond the western seas. No forgotten literature suddenly flashed out its long-lost splendours. No vast discoveries of science transformed the universe and the interpretation of it. The inventive freshness and intellectual confidence that are born of such things were denied to the Empire. Its temperament was neither artistic, nor literary, nor scientific. It was merely practical.

Yet if practical, it was not therefore uncreative. In its own sphere of everyday life, it was an epoch of growth in many directions. Even the arts moved forward. Sculpture was enriched by a new and noble style of portraiture. Architecture won new possibilities by the engineering genius which reared the aqueduct of Segovia and the Basilica of Maxentius.[1] But these are only practical expansions of arts that are in themselves unpractical. The greatest work of the imperial age must be sought in its provincial administration. The significance of this we have come to understand, as not even Gibbon understood it, through the researches of Mommsen. By his vast labours our horizon has broadened beyond the backstairs of the Palace and the benches of the Senate House in Rome to the wide lands north and east and south of the Mediterranean, and we have begun to realize the true achievements of the Empire. The old theory of an age of despotism and decay has been overthrown, and the

believer in human nature can now feel confident that, whatever their limitations, the men of the Empire wrought for the betterment and the happiness of the world.

[Footnote 1: Wickhoff, *Wiener Genesis*, p. 10; Riegl, *Stilfragen*, p. 272.]

Their efforts took two forms, the organization of the frontier defences which repulsed the barbarian, and the development of the provinces within those defences. The first of these achievements was but for a time. In the end the Roman legionary went down before the Gothic horseman. But before he fell he had done his work. In the lands that he had sheltered, Roman civilization had taken strong root. The fact has an importance which we to-day might easily miss. It is not likely that any modern nation will soon again stand in the place that Rome then held. Our culture to-day seems firmly planted in three continents and our task is rather to diffuse it further and to develop its good qualities than to defend it. But the Roman Empire was the civilized world; the safety of Rome was the safety of all civilization. Outside was the wild chaos of barbarism. Rome kept it back from end to end of Europe and across a thousand miles of western Asia. Through all the storms of barbarian onset, through the carnage of uncounted wars, through plagues which struck whole multitudes down to a disastrous death, through civil discord and sedition and domestic treachery, the work went on. It was not always marked by special insight or intelligence. The men who carried it out were not for the most part first-rate statesmen or first-rate generals. Their successes were those of character, not of genius. But their phlegmatic courage saved the civilized life of Europe till that life had grown strong and tenacious, and till even its assailants had recognized its worth.

It was this growth of internal civilization which formed the second and most lasting of the achievements of the Empire. Its long and peaceable government—the longest and most orderly that has yet been granted to any large portion of the world—gave time for the expansion of Roman speech and manners, for the extension of the political franchise, the establishment of city life, the assimilation of the provincial populations in an orderly and coherent civilization. As the importance of the city of Rome declined, as the world

became Romeless, a large part of the world grew to be Roman. It has been said that Greece taught men to be human and Rome made mankind civilized. That was the work of the Empire; the form it took was Romanization.

This Romanization has its limits and its characteristics. First, in respect of place. Not only in the further east, where (as in Egypt) mankind was non-European, but even in the nearer east, where an ancient Greek civilization reigned, the effect of Romanization was inevitably small. Closely as Greek civilization resembled Roman, easy as the transition might seem from the one to the other, Rome met here that most serious of all obstacles to union, a race whose thoughts and affections and traditions had crystallized into definite coherent form. That has in all ages checked Imperial assimilation; it was the decisive hindrance to the Romanization of the Greek east. A few Italian oases were created by the establishment of *coloniae* here and there in Asia Minor and in Syria. But all of them perished like exotic plants.[1] The Romanization of these lands was political. Their inhabitants ultimately learnt to call and to consider themselves Romans. But they did not adopt the Roman language or the Roman civilization.

[Footnote 1: Mitteis, *Reichsrecht und Volksrecht*, p. 147; Kubitschek, *Festheft Bormann* (Wiener Studien, xx. 2), pp. 340 foll.; L. Hahn, *Rom und Romanismus im griechisch-röm. Osten* (Leipzig, 1906).]

The west offers a different spectacle. Here Rome found races that were not yet civilized, yet were racially capable of accepting her culture. Here, accordingly, her conquests differed from the two forms of conquest with which modern men are most familiar. We know well enough the rule of civilized white men over uncivilized Africans, who seem sundered for ever from their conquerors by a broad physical distinction. We know, too, the rule of civilized white men over civilized white men—of Russian (for example) over Pole, where the individualities of two kindred and similarly civilized races clash in undying conflict. The Roman conquest of western Europe resembled neither of these. Celt, Iberian, German, Illyrian, were marked off from Italian by no broad distinction of race and colour, such as that which marked off Egyptian from Italian, or that which now divides Englishman from African or Frenchman from

Algerian Arab. They were marked off, further, by no ancient culture, such as that which had existed for centuries round the Aegean. It was possible, it was easy, to Romanize these western peoples.

Even their geographical position helped, though somewhat indirectly, to further the process. Tacitus two or three times observes that the western provinces of the Empire looked out on no other land to the westward and bordered on no free nations. That is one half of a larger fact which influenced the whole history of the Empire. Round the west lay the sea and the Sahara. In the east were wide lands and powerful states and military dangers and political problems and commercial opportunities. The Empire arose in the west and in Italy, a land that, geographically speaking, looks westward. But it was drawn surely, if slowly, to the east. Throughout the first three centuries of our era, we can trace an eastward drift—of troops, of officials, of government machinery—till finally the capital itself is no longer Rome but Byzantium. All the while, in the undisturbed security of the west, Romanization proceeded steadily.

The advance of this Romanization followed manifold lines. The Roman government gave more or less direct encouragement, particularly in two ways. It increased the Roman or Romanized population of the provinces during the earlier Empire by establishing time-expired soldiers—men who spoke Latin and who were citizens of Rome[1]—in provincial municipalities (*coloniae*). It allured provincials themselves to adopt Roman civilization by granting the franchise and other privileges to those who conformed. Neither step need be ascribed to any idealism on the part of the rulers. *Coloniae* served as instruments of repression as well as of culture, at least in the first century of the Empire. When Cicero[2] describes a *colonia*, founded under the Republic in southern Gaul, as 'a watch-tower of the Roman people and an outpost planted to confront the Gaulish tribes', he states an aspect of such a town which obtained during the earlier Empire no less than in the Republican age. Civilized men, again, are always more easily ruled than savages.[3] But the result was in any case the same. The provincials became Romanized.

[Footnote 1: English writers sometimes adduce the provincial origins of the soldiers as proofs that they were unromanized. The conclusion is unjustifiable. The legionaries were throughout recruited

from places which were adequately Romanized. The auxiliaries, though recruited from less civilized districts, and though to some extent tribally organized in the early Empire, were denationalized after A.D. 70, and non-Roman elements do not begin to recur in the army till later. *Tiberius militem Graece testimonium interrogatum nisi Latine respondere vetuit* (Suet. *Tib.* 71).]

[Footnote 2: Cic. *pro Font.* 13. Compare Tacitus, *Ann.* xii. 27 and 32, *Agr.* 14 and 32.]

[Footnote 3: Tacitus emphasizes this point. *Agr.* 21 *ut homines dispersi ac rudes, eoque in bella faciles, quieti et otio per voluptates ad-suescerent, hortari privatim adiuuare publice ut templa fora domos exstruerent.... Idque apud imperitos humanitas vocabatur, cum pars seruitutis esset.*]

No less important results followed from unofficial causes. The legionary fortresses collected settlers—traders, women, veterans—under the shelter of their ramparts, and their *canabae* or 'bazaars', to use an Anglo-Indian term, formed centres of Roman speech and life, and often developed into cities. Italians, especially of the upper-middle class, merchants and others,[1] emigrated freely and formed tiny Roman settlements, often in districts where no troops were stationed. Chances opened at Rome for able provincials who became Romanized. Above all, the definite and coherent civilization of Italy took hold of uncivilized but intelligent men, while the tolerance of Rome, which coerced no one into conformity, made its culture the more attractive because it seemed the less inevitable.

[Footnote 1: The best parallel to the Italian emigration to the provinces during the late Republic and early Empire is perhaps to be found in the mediaeval German emigrations to Galicia and parts of Hungary (the Siebenbürgen Saxons are an exception), which Professor R.F. Kaindl has so well and minutely described. The present day mass emigration of the lower classes is something quite distinct.]

The process is hard to follow in detail, since datable evidence is scanty. In general, however, the instances of really native fashions or speech which are recorded from this or that province belong to the early Empire. To that age we can assign not only the Celtic, Iberian, and Punic inscriptions which we find occasionally in Gaul, Spain, and Africa, but also the use of the native titles like Vergobret

or Suffete, and the retention of native personal names and of that class of Latin *nomina*, like Lovessius, which are formed out of native names. In the middle Empire such things are rarer. Exceptions naturally meet us here and there. Punic was in almost official use in towns like Gigthis in the Syrtis region in the second century, and Punic-speaking clergy, it appears, were needed in some of the villages of fourth-century Africa. Celtic is stated to have been in use at the same epoch among the Treveri of eastern Gaul – presumably in the great woodlands of the Ardennes, the Eifel and the Hunsrück.[1] Basque was obviously in use throughout the Roman period in the valleys of the Pyrenees. So in Asia Minor, where Greek was the dominant tongue, six or seven other dialects, Galatian, Phrygian, Lycaonian, and others, lived on till a very late date, especially (as it seems) on the uncivilized pastoral areas of the Imperial domain-lands.[2] Some of these are survivals, noted at the time as exceptional, and counting in the scales of history for no more than the survival of Greek in a few modern villages of southern Italy or the Wendish oasis seventy miles from Berlin. Others are more serious facts. But they do not alter the main position. In most regions of the west the Latin tongue obviously prevailed. It was, indeed, powerful enough to lead the Christian Church to insist on its use, and not, as in Syria and Egypt, to encourage native dialects.[3]

[Footnote 1: Jerome, *Comment. in epist. ad Galatas*, ii. 3. His assertion has, however, met with much scepticism in modern times, and it must be admitted that he was not a very accurate writer.]

[Footnote 2: K. Holl, *Hermes*, xliii. 240-54; William M. Ramsay, *Oesterr. Jahreshefte*, viii. (1905), 79-120, quoting, amongst other things, a neo-phrygian text of A.D. 259; W.M. Calder, *Hellenic Journal*, xxxi. 161.]

[Footnote 3: Mommsen (*Röm. Gesch.* v. 92) ascribes the final extinction of Celtic in northern Gaul to the influence of the Church. But the Church was not in itself averse to native dialects, and its insistence on Latin in the west may well be due rather to the previous diffusion of the language.]

In material culture the Romanization advanced no less quickly. One uniform fashion spread from the Mediterranean throughout central and western Europe, driving out native art and substituting

a conventionalized copy of Graeco-Roman or Italian art, which is characterized alike by its technical finish and neatness, and by its lack of originality and its dependence on imitation. The result was inevitable. The whole external side of life was lived amidst Italian, or (as we may perhaps call it) Roman-provincial, furniture and environment. Take by way of example the development of the so-called 'Samian' ware. The original manufacture of this (so far as we are here concerned) was in Italy at Arezzo. Early in the first century Gaulish potters began to copy and compete with it; before long the products of the Arretine kilns had vanished even from the Italian market. Western Europe henceforward was supplied with its 'best china' from provincial and mainly from Gaulish sources. The character of the ware supplied is significant. It was provincial, but it was in no sense unclassical. It drew many of its details from other sources than Arezzo, but it drew them all from Greece or Rome. Nothing either in the manner or in the matter of its decoration recalled native Gaul. Throughout, it is imitative and conventional, and, as often happens in a conventional art, items are freely jumbled together which do not fit into any coherent story or sequence. At its best, it is handsome enough: though its possibilities are limited by its brutal monochrome, it is no discredit to the civilization to which it belongs. But it reveals unmistakably the Roman character of that civilization.

The uniformity of this civilization was crossed by local variations, but these do not contradict its Roman character. If the provincial felt sometimes the claims of his province and raised a cry that sounds like 'Africa for the Africans' he acted on a geographical, not on any native or national idea. He was demanding individual life for a Roman section of the Empire. He was anticipating, perhaps, the birth of new nations out of the Romanized populations. He was not attempting to recall the old pre-Roman system. Similarly, if his art or architecture embodies native fashions or displays a local style, if special types of houses or of tombstones or sculpture occur in special districts, that does not mar the result. These are not efforts to regain an earlier native life. They are not the enemies of Roman culture, but its children—sometimes, indeed, its adopted children—and they signify the birth of new Roman fashions.

It remains true, of course, that, till a language or a custom is wholly dead and gone, it can always revive under special conditions. The rustic poor of a country seldom affect the trend of its history. But they have a curious persistent force. Superstitions, sentiments, even language and the consciousness of nationality, linger dormant among them, till an upheaval comes, till buried seeds are thrown out on the surface and forgotten plants blossom once more. The world has seen many examples of such resurrection—not least in modern Europe. The Roman Empire offers us singularly few instances, but it would be untrue to say that there were none.

But while it is true generally that Romanization spread rapidly in the west, we must admit great differences between different districts even of the same provincial areas. Some grew Romanized soon and thoroughly, others slowly and imperfectly. For instance, Gallia Comata, that is, Gaul north and west of the Cevennes, contrasted sharply in this respect with Narbonensis, the province of the Mediterranean coast and the Rhone Valley. This latter, even in the first century A.D., had become *Italia verius quam provincia*. The other lagged behind. Neither the Latin speech nor the Latin forms of municipal government became quickly common. Yet even in northern Gaul Romanization strode forward. The Gaulish monarchy of A.D. 258-73 shows us the position north of the Cevennes just after the middle of the third century. In it Roman and native elements were mixed. Its emperors were called not only Latinius Postumus, but also Piavonius and Esuvius Tetricus. Its coins were inscribed not only 'Romae Aeternae', but also 'Herculi Deusoniensi' and 'Herculi Magusano'. It not only claimed independence of Rome or perhaps equality with it, but it aspired to be the Empire. It had its own senate, copied from that of Rome; *tribunicia potestas* was conferred on its ruler and the title *princeps iuventutis* on its heir apparent. At that date it was still possible for a Gaulish ruler to bear a Gaulish name and to appeal to some sort of native memories. But the appeal was made without any sense that it was incompatible with a general acceptance of Roman fashions, language, and constitution. Postumus, if he had had the chance, would have made himself Emperor of Rome. Though the native element in Gaul had not died out of mind, at any rate its opposition to the Roman had become forgotten. It had become little more than a picturesque and interesting contrast