

**The Roman Republican Camps at Renieblas (Soria, Spain): Historical Problems and Archaeological Perspectives**

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In the central years of second century B.C.E., when even Carthage had been razed to the ground, Numantia, a small town in the middle of the northern Iberian Plateau, resisted the attacks of one Roman consul after another for 20 years. The end of the Numantine Wars after a prolonged siege in 133 B.C.E. was so tragic (the Numantines decided to commit suicide to avoid slavery according to Appian, *Hisp.* 96–7) that this episode still is one of the most quoted examples of resistance against a foreign invader in nationalist narratives of Spanish history.

Twenty centuries after Numantia's defeat, a German scholar, Adolf Schulten, traveled to Spain and claimed to have found the exact location where the terrible events took place. His excavations at the Roman camps that encircled the Celtiberian town as well as at a hill located 7 km away (Atalaya de Renieblas) unearthed an unusual number of stone structures, ceramic, arms, armors, and coins.

Renieblas figures prominently in analysis of the Roman republican army and the early phases of the conquest of Hispania in today's books. A map of one of the five Roman camps found at the site often illustrates discussions about the basic structure of the army described by Polybius in the book 6 of his *Histories*. The site is also important to elucidate the vexed questions of the supply to the army in the Early Roman provinces, the pay of the republican army, and the beginning of local coinage in a large area of Hispania Citerior. However, the certainties about Renieblas are few because the bulk of materials published by Schulten in the 1910s and 1920 are devoid of archaeological context. Thorough recent studies of militaria, ceramics, and coins from Renieblas at the Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum (Mainz, Germany) by Luik and Jiménez indicate possible alternative interpretations that challenge in some cases traditional views on the site heavily biased toward the information transmitted by classic authors.

In this context, an international team lead by Duke University is setting up a new archaeological project with the aim of shedding new light on complex historical questions.