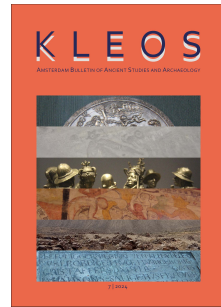




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CONTACT

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Hadrian's Ecumenical Vision of Empire: Reconsidering the ideological function of personifying the Roman provinces on Hadrianic coinage

Grace MacLachlan

ABSTRACT

From as far north as Britannia to as far south as Africa and Mauretania, the provinces of the Roman empire came to be represented as allegorical female figures on a large variety of mediums including statues, mosaics and, most significantly, coinage. The personification of the provinces was a recurring phenomenon on Roman coinage, yet it is not until emperor Hadrian (117-138 AD) that this representational device was used in such a systematic and unprecedented way. This paper explores how Hadrian's utilisation of these personifications challenged the Roman tradition of using images of defeated and conquered provinces fallen to the might of Rome. The usage of coinage will be explored as part of the wider programme demonstrating how these policies worked in tandem to create and propagate an idealised 'ecumenical' view of the Roman Empire under Hadrian and how the empire stood to benefit from reconfiguring their relationship with the provinces. In highlighting and interrogating the ideologically charged nature of these personifications, this paper will also seek to counterbalance past scholarly interpretations of this series. In particular, challenging the dominant interpretation by Jocelyn Toynbee which was heavily influenced by the imperial climate of early twentieth-century Britain. Thus, it is essential to re-examine this ideology in light of the benefits to the imperial power of projecting an ecumenical vision of empire and how it might serve as encouragement for provincial collusion in the project of empire.

INTRODUCTION

Under the emperor Hadrian, in the early 130s AD, coins were minted depicting female figures that represented the Roman provinces. These figures were known as personifications of the provinces and had been a part of Roman iconography since the late Republic. Yet their appearance on Hadrianic coins marks an iconographical shift and creates a focal point through which to

Grace MacLachlan, is a P.h.D candidate at the Department of Ancient History at Radboud University. Her interests lie in Roman imperial history with a specific focus on the role of ideology. Her current project revolves around legitimization, representation, and imperial ideology in the late Third Century CE, with a particular emphasis on the numismatic evidence. She achieved a bachelor's degree in Ancient History and Philosophy from the University of Leeds (2021) and a Masters degree in Ancient History from the University of Leiden (2023).

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examine the changing ideological function of the personifications.

To understand how these coins could function as part of an ideological programme, the capacity of coins to carry messages will be outlined. This will demonstrate the importance and relevance of Hadrian's ideological programme. The study will illustrate the divergence from past representations, highlighting how these changes reflected the aims of the Hadrianic principate. The personifications of Hadrian will then be analysed iconographically, categorising the different types, as well as contextualising their appearance.

As these aims unfold, it is important to address previous scholarship particularly its failure to nuance and scrutinise the value these ideologised personifications held to Hadrian. This paper will also interrogate the influence of the imperial climate of early twentieth-century Britain – particularly how the creation of the Commonwealth of Nations in 1931 impacted Jocelyn Toynbee's seemingly uncritical acceptance of Hadrian's vision of empire. Thus, it seeks to counteract the influence that this imperial climate may have had on Toynbee's suppositions regarding the Hadrianic empire. Applying this critical lens will emphasise the benefits the empire derived from projecting this specific image of provincial unity and cooperation.

COINAGE AS A MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

Coinage is considered the “[...] most pervasive mass medium of the period” for its ability to carry a great variety of messages across great distances, to many people throughout the empire.¹ It was a part of society at all levels. Thus, the imperial core could spread messages far and wide by utilising the two sides of the coins.

Since the Republic, coinage had been used for advertising, celebrating and commemorating first the Roman state and then individuals. In the Principate, the reverse became littered with images emphasising the exploits and virtues of the emperors and the imperial family. Arguably, the importance of coins meant that the choice or selection of themes “[...] to be propagated stemmed from the inner most circles”.² F. Kemmers highlights that breaks or uptakes in new themes during individual reigns can only be explained by personal involvement at the highest hierarchical level.³ Whilst emperors were engaged to differing extents with coinage as a communicative medium, there is little doubt that, as N. Hannestad claims, Hadrian put “[...] great reliance on his

¹ Kemmers, 2021, 339.

² Ibid., 341.

³ Ibid., 341.

coinage to announce clearly his progressive policy".⁴ Thus, his active involvement and the dynamism of coinage creates a perfect medium through which to conduct this study.

THE PERSONIFICATION OF THE PROVINCES

Personifications of provinces are figures represented in art or literature that embody a land or nation.⁵ Whilst an abstract figure of allegorical nature, each personification was meant to represent an actual geographical region.⁶ In part, they might have been modelled on inhabitants, but it is important to distinguish between a personification and a representation of a female inhabitant.⁷ A personification is a solitary figure, appearing isolated or sometimes interacting with the emperor, depicted as sitting, standing, or lying. There are two key types of personifications. The 'realistic' types normally feature the personifications in a mourning posture surrounded by trophies, the emperor, or Victoria. The other is the 'idealistic' type, which depicts a female figure in the Greco-Roman dress. To J. Ostrowski, the 'idealised' figures are often so generic that only the attributes or inscriptions distinguish them from one another.⁸ The Roman habit of personifying enemies or conquered land was an undeniable product of its imperial context.

Personifying the Roman provinces, however, was not a Hadrianic innovation; rather, no other emperor utilised the representational tool to the same extent. Before Hadrian, only twelve provinces had been depicted on Roman coinage.⁹ Hadrian's coinage far surpassed any previous engagement depicting a total of twenty-five provinces, two cities, and one river.

Hadrian's provinces represent a significant departure from the previous ideological function of a personified province. Formerly, the personifications were usually explicitly linked to significant events or contemporary circumstances. This is a prevalent feature in the Flavian use of personifications, which saw a dominance in the imagery of *IVDAEA CAPTA* or *DEVICTA*, referring to their success in the Jewish Wars (see figure 1).

The core of the previous iconography focused on images of submission and conquest and stood to stress and highlight their success against the province or boast that another land had been

⁴ Hannestad, 1986, 190.

⁵ Houghtalin, 1993, 6.

⁶ As Ostrowski comments the term province, when used in reference to personification, does not conform to the strict legal and administrative definition.

⁷ Houghtalin, 1993, 6.

⁸ Ostrowski, 1990, 567.

⁹ Toynbee, 1934, 22.



Figure 1:
Vespasian's IVDAEA CAPTA sestertius (The British Museum, Asset no. 638014001, © The Trustees of the British Museum).

subjugated.¹⁰ Iconographically, they fall into the 'realistic' depictions and the provinces appear with trophies and frequently in positions of mourning. This is stressed by the reverse legends that proclaim CAPTA or DEVICTA. Hadrianic imagery avoided these types and the implicit way they enforced Roman might in favour of promoting images of cohesion and contribution.

THE HADRIANIC SERIES

A distinct feature of Emperor Hadrian's reign was his peaceful journeys around the Roman Empire, visiting his provinces. To commemorate them, a series of coins were issued featuring a staggering twenty-five provinces. The provinces depicted were closely connected to Hadrian's proclivity for travel but, as will be demonstrated, it went beyond this.

Hadrian's coins were intended to convey a message to those within the boundaries of the empire. Two factors emphasise this. Firstly, they were issued on gold, silver and bronze; and of the bronze denominations: *sestertius*, *dupondius* and *as*. This means that these coins were very likely to have circulated amongst all social groups and members of society.¹¹ Whilst in larger volumes in urbanised areas, there is little doubt that coinage was used in rural areas too.¹² Secondly, there is no evidence that these coins were targeted towards a specific audience. Each personification was not deliberately created to be sent to the region it represented to drum up provincial loyalty.¹³ The Egyptian closed currency system

¹⁰ See: Cody, 2003, 103-123.

¹¹ Hekster, 2003, 26-9.

¹² Noreña, 2011, 262.

¹³ The only exception to this is the 119 AD Britannia issue, minted over a decade before the rest of the series, which has been found almost exclusively in Britain. See: Walker, 1988 for more.

provides evidence for this, as it meant that the three personifications representing Aegyptos, Alexandria, and Nilus never circulated there.¹⁴ Instead, they circulated the far corners of the empire representing and contributing to the Hadrianic vision of each of the provinces contributing to the whole.

Each of Hadrian's provincial personification can be categorised into four different types: PROVINCIA, ADVENTVS, EXERCITVS, and RESTITVTORI. R. Abdy has dated the series to the period 130—133 AD.¹⁵ The different types are identifiable by their reverses. The EXERCITVS type focuses on the emperor's address (*adluctio*) to the provincial troops, and as it contains no personification will not be explored.

The PROVINCIA types are identifiable by the representation of a female province on the reverse of the coin. The province is seated, standing, or reclining (see figure 2). She is normally depicted in Greco-Roman dress rather than in her native attire. Identification sometimes comes from items of native dress, but most commonly from attributes that hold significance for, or identify a specific geographical area.¹⁶

The ADVENTVS type shows Hadrian, normally togate, raising his right hand in greeting to the province, who stands facing him, holding an identifying attribute in one hand, and a patera, a sacrifice bowl, in the other (see figure 3). Between them is an altar. The legend reads ADVENTVI AVG followed by the province's name in the locative case.¹⁷ The altar and the legend suggest that these scenes represent the imperial sacrifices that commemorated the emperor's arrival in each province and region so honoured by his presence.¹⁸ Toynbee highlights the importance of the emperor being togate, rather than in military dress, suggesting it further emphasised the civilian nature of the tour and the emperor's desire to be depicted as a Roman citizen rather than a conqueror.¹⁹

The third type is the RESTITVTORI type, which depicts Hadrian raising a kneeling province to her feet (see figure 4). Hadrian, again togate, stands holding a scroll in one hand whilst extending the other to the personification. The personification is draped and shown with an identifiable attribute. In some issues, there is an item of further significance between the two figures. The legends read RESTITVTORI followed by the province's name in the genitive case. This legend refers to Hadrian as the restorer of the province

14 Geissen, 2012, 561.

15 R. Abdy and P. Mittag, 2020, 22- 26. Abdy's dating has superseded Mattingly's previous dating of 134-138 AD (Mattingly, *Coins of the British Museum*, cxx).

16 Kreitzer, 1996, 154.

17 Toynbee, 1934, 4.

18 Kreitzer, 1996, 155.

19 Toynbee, 1934, 4 no.1.



Figure 2:
AEGYPTOS, dupondius/as
(Grace MacLachlan
photographed with
permission of the Hunterian
museum, cat no. GLAHM.
26343).



Figure 3:
ADVENTVI AVG
MAVRETANIAE dupondius/
as (Grace MacLachlan
photographed with
permission of the Hunterian
Museum, cat.no GLAHM:
26333).



Figure 4:
RESTITVTORI HISPANIAE
sestertius (Grace
MacLachlan photographed
with permission of the
Hunterian Museum, cat.no
GLAHM: 26399).

and the scene confirms this by showing him raising the province, representing a more subordinate role of the province to the emperor.²⁰

PREVIOUS SCHOLARLY INTERPRETATIONS

Hadrian spent as many as twelve years of his reign as emperor away from Rome touring his vast empire.²¹ Yet, the emperor was no mere ancient tourist; his travels were politically loaded. M.K. Thornton calls his journeys “[...] striking and innovative features of his reign [...]” citing the fact that he was the “[...] first reigning emperor to depart from Italy except for the purpose of making war or a conquest”.²² The coins represented not only the places that Hadrian visited, but alongside these journeys, they formed part of a wider ideological message of his reign. This link between the emperor’s travels and coinage is perhaps best summarised by H. Mattingly in 1939:

[...] On his return from his last foreign journey... Hadrian decided to tell Rome and the world what he had hoped, planned, and accomplished [...] It was now to be made clear to every Roman that the Empire was no mere system of dependencies, but a living organism, alive in all its part, each member sharing in the common life and contributing something to its maintenance, each enjoying the personal interest and care of the Emperor [...]²³

Mattingly’s uncritical acceptance of this view of a ‘commonwealth’ reflects a wider attitude in early twentieth-century British scholarship and contributed to the failure to interrogate this idea as a part of a wider ideological repertoire under Hadrian. In this vein, discussing Toynbee’s 1934 *The Hadrianic School* is vital as it forms the core of information on these coins and remains the most influential study on the personifications. Toynbee’s iconographic insights remain essential, but her authority leaves modern scholarship reiterating many of her key suppositions. Though extremely useful for its thorough overview of the personifications and their history, her work is particularly entrenched in this imperialist mindset of the early

20 Vespasian issued a coin with very similar imagery, but that is believed to have a more general theme of restoring the Roman state or the *Oikoumene*. (Cody, 2003, 118-119).

21 Scholarly consensus is that these travels were broken up into three major periods. First, August of 117 to August 118 AD; second, spring of 121 to autumn of 125; third, spring of 128 to spring of 134 AD; and a much shorter final fourth period for a portion of 135 AD. (Kreitzer, 1996, 148).

22 Thornton, 1975, 452.

23 Mattingly, 1939, clxxi.

twentieth-century British Empire. This study cannot dismiss her work; instead, going forward, it aims to engage critically with Toynbee's work viewing and understanding many of its suppositions to be a product of its imperial context.

Toynbee's key interpretation is that the series reflects what Hadrian fundamentally stood for: "[...] the idea of the empire as a vast unit, a brotherhood of fellow citizens of the world living together on an equality in prosperity and peace".²⁴ This description, as well as Mattingly's, appears extremely compatible with the Balfour Declaration of 1926 in which Commonwealth states were defined as:

[...] autonomous Communities within the British Empire, **equal** in status, **in no way subordinate** one to another in any aspect of their domestic or external affairs, though **united by a common allegiance** to the Crown, and freely associated as members of the British Commonwealth of Nations [...]²⁵

Ninety years later Toynbee's work remains the leading authority on this topic. Following Toynbee, subsequent analyses have continued to interpret the series as reflecting the peace and prosperity of the empire during the Hadrianic age. However, these interpretations do not nuance nor call into question the ideological value of these personifications to Hadrian and the imperial core. What remains clear is that scholars have thus far failed to elucidate upon the ways that the imperial core benefitted by propagating an idea of unity and shared prosperity.

VISUALISING UTILITY

The personifications are depicted alongside accoutrements that identify their province. They range from flora and fauna to weapons, miniature mountains, and religious items. These attributes were carefully selected to represent each nation based on what was considered their contribution and value to the empire.

On the coins, it becomes clear that within the PROVINCIA type, there is a distinction between the representations of the provinces and how this links to the province's utility to the empire. Abdy argues that each depiction is devised around whether it is a militarised frontier province or part of the protected interior. The latter "[...] recline, relaxed in the security provided by the buffer of the outer reaches of the empire" (see figure 2). The former types

²⁴ Toynbee, 1934, 2.

²⁵ Balfour Declaration, 1926, 2. Emphasis author's own.



Figure 5:
Hadrianic sestertius of Dacia (Grace MacLachlan with permission from the Hunterian Museum, cat.no GLAHM: 26360).



Figure 6:
Hispania reclining (Grace MacLachlan, photographed with permission of the Hunterian Museum, cat.no GLAHM: 26365).

are alert, standing or sitting upright, armed with weapons unique to, or associated with, their nation.²⁶ They are ready to guard the empire's perimeter. On his Dacia coin, Thornton observes that, in contrast to Trajanic depictions, the focus is on the posture and distinguishing weapon (see figure 5). With the falx, the Dacian curved sword, Hadrian announced his expectation of Dacia; she is to defend the empire with her sword, and this is Dacia's contribution to its empire.²⁷

The more idyllic types represent the provinces that were safely within the borders of the empires, yet also similarly highlight the 'utility' of the provinces, namely of the resources that could be exploited. The attributes often refer to the agricultural importance

²⁶ Abdy and Mittag, 2020, 45.
²⁷ Thornton, 1975, 449.

of the province to the empire. Africa's status as the empire's breadbasket is referenced by a cornucopia and corn ears. Sometimes, however, the references appear more obscure.

Hispania appears as a reclining figure resting against rocks with her left arm, alongside two telling attributes (see figure 6).²⁸ The first is an olive branch in her right hand, referring to her economic contribution by recognising the importance of Spanish olive oil production. It is the rabbit located at Hispania's feet that is more puzzling. Toynbee suggested that it may be a humorous reference to claims in Roman poetry of a rabbit-infested Hispania.²⁹ However, she argues that this cannot rank amongst the importance of corn from Africa as a significant contribution to the empire's wealth and worthy of depiction. Instead, she highlights that the word for rabbit, *cuniculus*, also means to "mine" in Latin. Thus, her supposition is that:

The rabbit who burrows in his burrow may be, in fact, an allegory of the miner who burrows in his mine, thus symbolising the world-famous miners of Spain and the mineral wealth she contributed to the resources of Rome and of the Empire.³⁰

Focusing on what they can contribute to the empire, rather than their subjugation and oppression, these depictions represent a significant departure from the previous function. Whilst this has been observed by past scholars, an even more critical lens can be applied, and it can be claimed that an imperial attitude in these coins also appears to represent what Rome can take — what resources it can exploit — for the maintenance of its empire.

NEW IMPERIAL VISUAL LANGUAGE

Arguably, the Hadrianic age does represent a shift in the imagery of imperial communication, a reconfiguration of sorts, in contrast to earlier periods. The most notable observation is this shift away from depiction of violence and subjugation when displaying the personifications being the most notable observation.

This point is emphasised by the Hadrianic treatment of Britannia. In 119/120 AD, after a local uprising or military turmoil in the province, a Britannia coin was issued on bronze (see figure 7).³¹ It shows the province sitting on rocks armed with a spear and

²⁸ Abdy argues that the inclusion of the rocks in the depiction is that although she was a peaceful province under Hadrian, Hispania was known as a rocky and mountainous region.

²⁹ Toynbee, 1934, 104.

³⁰ Ibid., 105.

³¹ Abdy and Mittag, 2020, 46. They further argue that this type was deliberately sent to Britain to remedy the short supply of bronze coinage on the island.



Figure 7:
Britannia of 119/120 CE (Source: The British Museum, 66o822oo, © The Trustees of the British Museum).



Figure 8:
Britannia of PROVINCIA series of 130-133 CE (The British Museum, 687157oo1, © The Trustees of the British Museum)

a shield with a spiked boss. Despite the suggested military turmoil, she looks straight ahead, vigilant, not down and dejected. Toynbee suggests this is not Britannia CAPTA.³² With the military history of native revolts in the first century, such as Caratacus and Boudica, and the military turmoil that prompted its minting, this image of Britannia is significant in its departure from previous

³² Toynbee, 1934, 55.

imagery. On Hadrian's Britannia, there is no reminder of the subjugation of Britain nor the reinforcement of Roman supremacy following the revolt.

A point that further highlights the ideological significance of Hadrian's 119 Britannia coins is that her depiction has barely changed in the later series (see figure 8). In many ways, the 119 Britannia is the archetype of the armed and vigilant frontier province types, taking a share in the defence of the empire.

The continuity of Britannia's representation underscores that the contemporary history of the province itself was not the driving force behind the Hadrianic utilisation of provincial personifications. Rather, how they could be utilised as part of this wider ideological and iconographical programme was key. Toynbee's interpretation is that alert and vigilant Britannia formed part of a sisterhood of militarised personifications that worked in tandem to give the idea of definitive and strong frontiers around the empire.³³ Her uncritical vision of Hadrian's empire fails to emphasise how these peoples, now depicted as stalwart defenders of the Roman empire, were once its enemies. Presented in this way, their images demonstrated the 'imperialising' of their enemies and the achievement of the empire, in not only the pacification of these nations but in reconfiguring their image to represent the extent and control of the Roman empire.

ECUMENICAL VISION OF EMPIRE

The dignity given to the provinces in their interaction with the emperor on the ADVENTVS and RESTITVTORI types marks the most significant departure from imperial imagery of the personification. The ADVENTVS type, in particular, where the province meets the emperor on equal footing and sacrifices alongside him, emphasises this. These types elucidate more clearly the aims of the overall series.

By showing the provinces alongside the emperor, Hadrian's vision unfolds. In presenting the provinces as integral to the empire, C. Ando argues that Hadrian "[...] retreated from an imperialist mentality that divided the world into people they had already conquered and people they had yet to conquer".³⁴ He further argues that Hadrian's coinage series announced that all those "[...] who had the capacity to appreciate the benefits of empire now lived within its borders".³⁵ In many ways, Hadrian's vision of his empire was about more than just peace around the empire; it was about cultivating a relationship between the

³³ Toynbee, 1934, 96.

³⁴ Ando, 2013, 330.

³⁵ Ando, 2013, 330.

emperor and the provinces, one that saw the emperor as the guarantor of their continued peace and the benefactor of their prosperity.

The emperors had long been viewed as the givers of 'civilisation' to their provinces. This created a rhetoric that blurred the reality of resource exploitation — whether natural, agricultural or manpower — by the Romans in the provinces and conquered territories. In many ways, this ignores the cruciality of the resources and benefits these provinces gave to Rome in maintaining the empire. Instead, Hadrian presented himself as an emperor who understood and appreciated the contributions of the provinces and what Rome owed to them. Consequently, he acknowledges what the empire takes from the provinces. Still, he reformulates the image of resource exploitation as recognition — almost praise — of the provinces' contribution to the empire's well-being, prosperity and peace, granting agency to the provinces in this way. Viewing the images in this light, it becomes clear that the personifications are depicted in this way because, ideologically, it benefitted the imperialist power to spread a message of a common goal or heritage.

THE ERASURE OF IMPERIAL VIOLENCE

However, peace did not abound. It is extremely significant to note that the Hadrianic depiction of Judaea does not refer to the tumultuous history between Hadrian and Judaea. As with Britannia in 119 AD, little trace exists of the contemporary Bar Kokhba revolt in the Hadrianic treatment of Judaea. To Toynbee, the Bar Kokhba revolt was the "one serious blot upon the Pax Hadriana". She claims:

The war was but an unpleasant, passing episode, a regrettable necessity, no fit occasion for a permanent record of the triumph of Roman arms. Hadrian had, after all, brought the sword to Judaea for the time being only; what he ultimately brought was peace.³⁶

To Toynbee, Hadrian did not follow the Flavian precedent in representing Judaea as subdued and defeated because it would have been "[...] completely alien to Hadrian's whole attitude and policy".³⁷ Instead, Judaea is almost indistinguishable from many other personifications. Whilst many scholars argue that Hadrian's Judaea highlighted his ecumenical vision, it seems that Hadrian did not want his depiction of Judaea to act as a reminder of the

³⁶ Toynbee, 1934, 119.

³⁷ Ibid., 119.



Figure 9:
Hadrianic sestertius depicting Judaea. Source: <https://vridar.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/hadrian-judea.jpg>

realities of empire and what questioning imperial power entailed. His actions in Judaea reveal that, when confronted with rebellion, an imperialist mentality remained behind his ecumenical attitude.

L. Houghtalin highlighted traceable hints of the revolt in Hadrian's depiction of Judaea. Most of the coins are of the *PROVINCIA* and *ADVENTVS* types. Unusually, on the *provincia* types, Judaea is always accompanied by the emperor.³⁸ P. Cimadomo suggests that "[...] Judaea could not yet stand alone on the coins, because it was not yet completely pacified".³⁹ To him, the emperor's presence was part of Hadrian's intention to show that it was he who pacified Judaea and finally brought this notoriously rebellious province into the folds of the empire.⁴⁰

Even more unusual is a rare coin that follows the artistic conventions of the *RESTITVTORI* types without the distinguishing legend *RESTITVTORI IVDAEA*. Judaea is on her knees before the emperor. In contrast to other *RESTITVTORI* types, Judaea is more submissively on both knees, kneeling perhaps in clemency, rather than being raised from one knee.⁴¹

The almost complete erasure of contemporary history in Judaea's representation reveals the fundamental importance of this ecumenical vision of Hadrian. Yet, his treatment of Judaea demonstrates that threats to the unity of his empire were treated harshly demonstrating that behind the veneer of unity and peace lay traces of the same attitude of his predecessors. Hadrian only sought to disguise it to better maintain control of his empire.

³⁸ Houghtalin, 1993, 353.

³⁹ Cimadomo, 2022, 109.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 110.

⁴¹ Houghtalin, 1993, 353-4.

CONCLUSION

Hadrian's attitude towards the empire appears to mark a drastic ideological shift in the role of the provinces within the empire. With his coinage, the imperial core no longer aims to demonstrate the might of the empire, but to show its appreciation and acknowledgement of the provinces' role in maintaining it. The personifications of the provinces no longer reinforce the dichotomy between conquered and conqueror. Instead, Hadrian transformed the images into ones that represented his vision of empire, his achievements, and his accomplishments.

Hadrian's use of coinage highlights his desire to spread his message across the empire, informing his subjects of the peace and prosperity and emphasising that this came from provincial cooperation in the imperial enterprise. Hadrianic imagery appealed to the constituent parts of the empire and encouraged them to understand themselves as part of a whole, fostering a sense of common citizenship. Their differences, in the shape of their attributes, are only to distinguish the province and highlight its usefulness to the empire. Cultivating this unity encouraged and facilitated provincial cooperation, peace and stability across the empire.

In observing this shift, past scholars have been happy to proclaim these coins' observable equality, peace and prosperity as a hallmark feature of the Hadrianic empire. There is the failure to acknowledge that Hadrian, as the producing authority, sought to project a specific image of his empire, demonstrating that Hadrian understood that provincial co-operation was essential to maintaining the empire. The personification of the provinces worked to create a vision of 'empire' that was a Hadrianic construct, not a representation of reality.

Yet, this facet of the personifications is rarely emphasised. This article aimed to reconsider the use of the personifications of the provinces by Hadrian, moving away from the idea that they reflect a true state of happiness, equality and prosperity for all those within the borders of the empire. Instead, it stressed the ideological benefits of presenting images of the empire that reflected this. This study engaged with and critiqued the influence that the British imperial climate had on Toynbee's work. It sought to counteract this influence by focusing on the benefits that formulating these images of cooperation and unity brought to the imperial powers, rather than the provinces. In doing so, highlighting that imperialistic undertones remained in Hadrian's attitude toward empire hidden under his reformulation and visualisation of provincial cooperation and collusion and demonstrating how Hadrian justified the practices of empire in this way.

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