ABSTRACT: Recent advances in linguistic theory and methodology have given greater scientific validity to the study of ancient toponyms. This article re-examines the origin of the various place-names of the Roman province of Lusitania, rejecting some proposed etymologies while offering several new or modified ones. The paper concludes with a tabulation of the proportion of Indo-European, Celtic, Latin, and other roots in the toponyms of the province.

RESUMEN: Avances recientes en teoría lingüística y en metodología han dado más validez científica al estudio de la toponimia antigua. En este artículo se examina de nuevo el origen de los topónimos de la provincia romana de Lusitania, tanto rechazando unas etimologías anteriores como ofreciendo algunas nuevas o modificadas. Para terminar, se comparan las proporciones de radicales indo-europeos, célticos, latinos, y otros en la toponimia de la provincia.
TOPONYMS OF LUSITANIA: 
A RE-ASSESSMENT OF THEIR ORIGINS

I. Introduction

Ancient Lusitania not only experienced several successive influ-
exes of inhabitants and languages – Pre-Indo European, Indo-European,
Celtic, Iberian, Greek and Roman – but preserved them for posterity
in its repertory of place-names. These toponyms may be formed from
personal, ethnic or divine names, from hydronyms, or from common
nouns. They serve as a valuable fossil record of the various linguistic
layers associated with the region’s cultural history\(^1\).

While the presence of different languages in Lusitania has long
been recognized, early attempts to identify the etymology of specific
toponyms were plagued by false assumptions or flights of fancy (CUR-
CHIN forthcoming). For instance, W. VON HUMBOLDT (1821; 1879) pro-
posed that several town-names – *Aritium Vetus, Burdua, Lavara, Mont-
tobrica, Moron, Serpa, Talabara* and *Talori* – were related to Basque
words. Subsequent investigators (SCHULTEN 1931: 784; BERTOLDI 1953;
GARVENS 1964) claimed a Basque connection for *Arandis, Balsa, Men-
diculeia, Obila* and *Verurium*. Meanwhile, SCHULTEN (1930; 1955)
asserted an Etruscan origin for *Achale, Agonis, Mons Herminius* and
*Moron*, based on a supposed similarity to Etruscan words. Names of
possibly Indo-European yet non-Celtic etymology were supposed to
represent a Ligurian or Illyrian layer. Thus *Aravi, Langobriga* and
*Vipasca* were identified as Ligurian (SCHMOLL 1959: 109; ALBUQUER-
QUE 1962: 207; MENÉNDEZ PIDAL 1968: 162-63), while *Baedorus, Ble-
tisama, Conistorgis, Ebrobrittium, Lama* and *Salmantica* were consi-
dered Illyrian (TOVAR 1957; LOMAS 1980: 59-60). Nowadays scholars

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ties Research Council of Canada.