CREATING ETHNICITIES & IDENTITIES IN THE ROMAN WORLD

EDITED BY
ANDREW GARDNER
EDWARD HERRING
& KATHRYN LOMAS

CREATING ETHNICITIES & IDENTITIES
IN THE ROMAN WORLD

CREATING ETHNICITIES & IDENTITIES IN THE ROMAN WORLD

EDITED BY
ANDREW GARDNER
EDWARD HERRING
& KATHRYN LOMAS

INSTITUTE OF CLASSICAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF ADVANCED STUDY
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This volume arises from two inter-related sessions presented at the 7th Roman Archaeology Conference, held at UCL and Birkbeck College in March 2007. One of these focused exclusively on identity-formation in Italy in the period of Roman conquest and afterwards (*c*.300 BC – AD 100), while the other addressed the processes of creating and maintaining ethnic identities throughout the Roman world. In particular, each panel explored the role of Roman ethnic categorisations in influencing the ethnic identities of groups within the empire. Both panels also sought to facilitate a cross-disciplinary approach to this area of study, by addressing the problems posed by a range of archaeological, visual, epigraphic and literary evidence. For present purposes, the core of papers delivered at the conference has been augmented with additional contributions in order to extend the chronological and geographical coverage of the volume.

The editors would like to thank also the organisers of the 7th Roman Archaeology Conference for accepting our panel sessions, and also all the speakers who took part in the conference sessions on which this book is based, and who helped to make these panels a success. We would also like to thank our contributors for their patience during the preparation of this volume. We would also like to acknowledge the support of our respective institutions, the Institute of Archaeology, University College London, and Classics at the National University of Ireland, Galway.

<div align="right">

Andrew Gardner
Edward Herring
Kathryn Lomas

</div>

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

Kevin Butcher
Professor of Classics
Department of Classics and Ancient History
University of Warwick
Coventry CV4 7AL
United Kingdom

Rachael Dann
Assistant Professor, Egyptian Archaeology
Carsten Niebuhr Section
University of Copenhagen
Snorresgade 17-19
Copenhagen S Denmark

Andrew Erskine
Professor of Ancient History
School of History, Classics and Archaeology
University of Edinburgh
Teviot Place
Edinburgh EH8 9AG
United Kingdom

Andrew Gardner
Senior Lecturer in the Archaeology
of the Roman Empire
Institute of Archaeology, UCL
31-34 Gordon Square
London WC1H 0PY
United Kingdom

Ralph Häussler
Senior Lecturer, School of Classics
University of Wales Trinity Saint David
Lampeter Campus
Ceredigion SA48 7ED
United Kingdom

Edward Herring
Dean, College of Arts, Social Sciences, and
Celtic Studies
National University of Ireland, Galway
Galway
Republic of Ireland

Elena Isayev
Senior Lecturer in Ancient History
Department of Classics and Ancient History
University of Exeter
Exeter EX4 4RJ
United Kingdom

Amanda Kelly
School of Classics
University College Dublin
Belfield
Dublin 4
Republic of Ireland

Kathryn Lomas
Honorary Senior Research Associate
Institute of Archaeology, UCL
31-34 Gordon Square
London WC1H 0PY
United Kingdom

Matthew Peacock
15 Edinburgh Road
Holt
Norfolk NR25 6SL
United Kingdom

Roman Roth
School of Languages and Literatures
University of Cape Town
Private Bag Rondebosch 7701
Cape Town
South Africa

Jane Rowlandson
Honorary Senior Research Fellow in Ancient
History, Department of Classics
King's College London,
Strand, London WC2R 2LS 22LS
United Kingdom

ABBREVIATIONS

ADAJ	*Annual of the Department of Antiquities of Jordan*
ADelt	*᾽Αρχαιολογικόν Δελτίον*
AE	*L'Année Épigraphique: Revue des publications épigraphiques relatives à l'antiqué Romaine. Paris, 1888-.*
AION (Ling)	*Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli, Dipartimento di Studi del mondo classico e del Mediterraneo antico, Sezione linguistica*
AJA	*American Journal of Archaeology*
AJP	*American Journal of Philology*
ANRW	H. Temporini (ed.), *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* (Berlin 1972–)
AntCl	*L'Antiquité Classique*
ArchCl	*Archeologia classica*
ArchEph	*᾽Αρχαιολογική Εφημερίς*
ARepLond	*Archaeological Reports*
ARP	*Accordia Research Papers*
ASAtene	*Annuario della Scuola Archeologica Italiana d'Atene*
ASNP	*Annali di Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa, Serie III.. Classe di lettere e Filosofia*
ASP	*Archivio Storico Pugliese*
BAR	*British Archaeological Reports*
BASOR	*Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*
BASP	*Bulletin of the American Society of Papyrologists*
BCH	*Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique*
BICS	*Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*
BMCR	*Bryn Mawr Classical Review*
BSA	*Annual of the British School at Athens*
ChrÉg	*Chronique d'Égypte*
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptorum Latinorum. Consilio et auctoritate Academiae litterarum Regiae Borussicae. Berlin-Brandenburgische: Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1862-.*
CIS	*Corpus inscriptionum semiticarum*

CJ   *Classical Journal*

CP   *Classical Philology*

CQ   *Classical Quarterly*

CRAI   *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres*

Ergon   *Τό Έργον τῆς Ἀρχαιολογικῆς Ἑταιρείας*

EtCret   *Études Crétoises*

FGrH   F. Jacoby, *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (Berlin 1923–)

FHN   *Fontes Historiae Nubiorum (Bergen).*

GaR   *Greece and Rome*

GRBS   *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*

HSCP   *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*

HTR   *Harvard Theological Review*

I.Lamp   P. von Frisch (ed.)*, Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien, VI : Die Inschriften von Lampsakos* (Bonn, 1978)

IANice   G. Laguerre 1975. *Inscriptions antiques de Nice-Cimiez (Cemenelum, Ager Cemenelensis) (Paris).*

IC   M. Guarducci, *Inscriptiones Creticae* I-IV (Rome 1935-50).

IGLS   *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie*

IK   *Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien, 16: Ephesos (Bonn) 1980.*

ILLRP   H. Degrassi, *Inscriptiones latinae liberae rei publicae* (Rome 1957–

Insc. It. *Inscriptiones Italiae*

JAnthArch   *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology*

JAOS   *Journal of the American Oriental Society*

JEA   *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*

JJP   *Journal of Juristic Papyrology*

JRA   *Journal of Roman Archaeology*

JRAI   *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*

JRS   *Journal of Roman Studies*

KE   *Κρητική Εστία*

KhrChr   *Κρητικά Χρονικά*

MeditArch   *Mediterranean Archaeology. Australian and New Zealand Journal for the Archaeology of the Mediterranean World*

MÉFRA   *Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome*

MHR   *Mediterranean Historical Review*

NSc   *Notizie degli scavi di antichità*

OJA   *Oxford Journal of Archaeology*

PastPres   *Past and Present*

PBSR   *Papers of the British School at Rome*

PCPS   *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*

PP   *La parola del passato*

QSAP   *Quaderni della Soprintendenza di Archeologia nella Piemonte*

RE   *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*

REA   *Revue des études anciennes*

RÉg   *Revue d'égyptologie*

RIG II.1   *M. Lejeune 1985. Recueil des Inscriptions Gauloise, vol. II.1. Textes gallo-grecs
             (Paris).*

RIG IV   *J.-B. Colbert de Beaulieu and B. Fischer 1998. Recueil des Inscriptions
             Gauloises, vol. IV. Les légendes monétaires (Paris).*

RMD I   M. M. Roxan, *Roman military diplomas 1954-1977* (London)

RSL   *Rivista di Studi Liguri.*

ScAnt   *Scienze dell'Antichità: Storia, archeologia, antropologia*

SCO   *Studi Classici e Orientali*

SEG   *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*

SHAJ   *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan*

SIG³   W. Dittenberger, *Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum* (Leipzig 1883–)

ST   H. Rix, *Sabellische Texte: die Texte des Oskischen, Umbrischen und
             Südpikenischen* (Heidelberg, 2002).

StEtr   *Studi Etruschi*

TAPA   *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philosophical Association*

WorldArch   *World Archaeology*

TMArchives   *Papyrus archives in Graeco-Roman Egypt*
                 (Leuven Homepage of Papyrus Archives), online at:
                  http://www.trismegistos.org/arch/index/php

ZDPV   *Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins*

ZPE   *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*

The standard abbreviations of papyri are listed in J. D. Sosin *et al.* (edd.), *Checklist of
             editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic, and Coptic papyri, ostraca and tablets*

             [Last updated 11 September 2008], at:
             http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/texts/clist.html

CREATING ETHNICITIES AND IDENTITIES
IN THE ROMAN WORLD

KATHRYN LOMAS, ANDREW GARDNER,
AND EDWARD HERRING

The expansion of Rome across Italy, the Mediterranean and beyond entailed encounters with a wide range of peoples, most, if not all, of whom already had well-established cultural and ethnic identities before the arrival of Rome. In many cases, however, the ethnicity of the conquered peoples has largely been perceived through the lenses of Roman ethnographic writing, and also of the administrative structures which imposed Roman geographical and juridical boundaries that may have borne little or no relation to existing cultural and ethnic identities. Archaeology, and to a lesser extent epigraphy, allows us some insight into the nature of these identities which go beyond the Roman perceptions, but these are inevitably limited and cannot provide a full conspectus of local identities.[1] In recent years, there has been a progressive trend towards prioritizing the local, internal, viewpoint of a culture's identity over that of Rome, or of any other external source. Indeed, many scholars have deliberately moved away from use of ancient sources in their approaches to identity in the Roman world, regarding them as irredeemably tainted by a Roman world-view.[2] This approach, however, misses out a potentially vital element in the formation and maintenance of identity, namely interaction with other cultures. Ethnic and cultural identities do not emerge or exist in a vacuum. Internalizations, adaptations, or reactions against the ethnic categorizations devised by outsiders can be an important element in the ways in which identities evolve.[3] As the dominant political and cultural force – especially amongst elites – Rome was a critical factor in shaping the development of the ethnic and cultural identities of the inhabitants of the empire.

In this volume, we wish to explore both how Roman ethnographies, administrative systems and ethnic categorisations were part of strategies of imperial control, and how people living in particular places internalized them and developed their own senses of belonging to an ethnic community. The formation of such identities seems a vital part of the process of Roman imperialism, and one which runs against the grain of homogenization implied by traditional narratives of cultural change. Nonetheless, comparisons across the empire may reveal similar kinds of processes of boundary formation and symbolic community-building. By the same token, differences may be revealed which offer instructive insights into the transformation and variation in Roman imperialism.

---

[1] Barth 1969: 12-3; Jones 1997: 105-26.

[2] Spivey and Stoddart 1990: 120.

[3] Barth 1969: 113-7; Jenkins 1997: 53-70.

This volume arises from two inter-related sessions presented at the 7th Roman Archaeology Conference, held at UCL and Birkbeck College in March 2007. One of these focused exclusively on identity-formation in Italy in the period of Roman conquest and afterwards (*c.*300 BC-AD 100), while the other addressed the processes of creating ethnicities throughout the Roman world, although in the event, the focus was primarily on the western empire. For present purposes, these have been augmented by additional papers to improve geographical and chronological coverage. Case-studies have been drawn both from the provinces and frontiers and from the heart of the empire, and from chronological periods ranging from the 3rd century BC to the 3rd century AD. By examining a variety of regions and chronological periods, we hope to explore the dynamic interaction between imperial and local power-structures and the formation of ideologies of shared culture and origins in specific localities.

Definitions of ethnicity

The study of ethnicity in both the ancient and modern worlds is fraught with complexity and contestation. Even producing a workable definition of ethnicity within the context of the ancient world is challenging. The processes of ethnic identity formation and self-identification can be difficult to determine from material evidence alone, as a shared material culture is not invariably an indicator of a common sense of cultural or ethnic identity in the wider sense.[4] However additional textual evidence, far from clarifying the situation, can sometimes complicate it. Textual evidence for the ethnicity of ancient Italy, for instance, is for the most part external to the cultures in question and relates to ethnic categorisation rather than self-definition – a factor which may also pose problems for defining ethnicities in other parts of the Roman empire. Greek ethnicities, for instance, are better documented by the Greeks themselves, but the tangled cultural and ethnic identities of some parts of the Greek East, and of the western provinces can pose just as many difficulties as those of Italy. It can be problematic, therefore, to identify ethnicity or other forms of cultural identity with any degree of certainty.

Definitions of identity which can be applied to ancient societies are also difficult to construct. One way in which ethnic groups can be defined is by a set of observable criteria, such as a shared history, shared mythology or genealogy, common language, common ethnic name, and shared social structures, religion and material culture,[5] but this approach can have its pitfalls. Not all of these criteria need be present in any single ethnic group. In some cases, we have no evidence for common ethnic names other than those ascribed by Greeks and Romans, mostly from outside the group in question and often not contemporary with the societies described. Other criteria on this list cut across ethnic and cultural boundaries and were shared by groups which did not necessarily regard themselves as possessing a common identity.

Linguistic boundaries, for instance, may not coincide with those of material culture, or with those of shared social customs and practices. The close association of language and ethnicity may, in any case, be a modern preoccupation arising from the development of the

---

[4] Barth 1969: 12-13.

[5] Smith 1986; Hall 1997; Jones 1997.

nineteenth-century nation-state.[6] In other cases, material cultures can be similar but the self-defined ethnicity of the possessors can be different. Polybius,[7] for instance, described the Veneti and Celts of northern Italy as indistinguishable in their cultures by his day, but also noted that they spoke different languages, clearly perceiving them as separate ethnic groups.

This approach can lead to a somewhat static view of ethnicity, which is inappropriate given that one of the defining criteria of ethnic identity is its variability over time.[8] Furthermore, ancient ethnic groups did not exist in isolation and cannot be defined only by their own cultures. Interaction with other cultural and ethnic groups is also important in the maintenance and reshaping of group identities. Studies from Barth onwards have stressed the need to examine boundaries between ethnic and cultural groups, and the way these are maintained, as important elements in the creation and reinforcement of identity, and other studies have emphasised the need to examine the constant interplay between self-constructed identities and ethnic categorisation by outsiders.[9] This is particularly true of periods of intense contact and exchange, such as occurred within the Roman empire.

Jenkins models ethnicity as consisting of the following components: cultural different-iation; a shared culture set of cultural meanings which are transmitted and reproduced by social interaction; variability and flexibility; and an interplay between the collective and the individual and between internal and external.[10] This may be useful as a basic approach. In particular, the emphasis on the process of interaction between ethnic and cultural groups in shaping and maintaining identities is important in culturally varied regions. Ethnicity is transactional rather than an unchanging set of cultural attributes, and is shaped by interactions with others, as much as by self-definition. Ethnic labelling or categorisation of one group by another, external, group plays a vital role in creating and maintaining identities. It is also closely connected with the development of power relations.[11] Ethnic labels and attributes applied by the Romans to other cultures or areas within the empire cannot, therefore, be dismissed as secondary to self-constructed identities, but play an essential role in creating ethnic and cultural identities.

Many of these issues are linked to the uniquely complex nature of Roman identity. Most ancient cultural identities were in some way, or to some extent, linked with concepts of ethnicity, or to the still more bounded concepts of citizenship. Greek identity, for instance, was defined – at least in the archaic and classical periods – by a set of well-defined ethnic and cultural characteristics. Greek language, common cults, and a sense of shared kinship and ancestry were as central as Greek cultural practices.[12] Membership of a polis also came to be a central part of being Greek, and by the 5th century, citizenship was increasingly circumscribed by issues of descent and parentage. Although Greek identity in the Hellenistic period became more a matter of culture than of descent, there was still a strong element of

---

[6] Lomas, below pp. 71-73.

[7] Pol. 2.17-23.

[8] Jenkins 1997: 40.

[9] Barth 1969; Jenkins 1997: 53-70.

[10] Jenkins 1997: 40.

[11] Jenkins 1997: 70-73.

[12] Hdt. 8.144; Hall 1997: 34-48, 2000: 30-35.

ethnicity and ancestry in the ways in which Greek identity was defined. Nor were the Greeks unique in this respect. Ideas of ancestry, kinship and descent are a central part of how many societies define themselves and their cultures.[13]

Being a Roman was fundamentally different. The heterogeneous and ethnically mixed nature of Rome was an important part of Rome's own foundation myth, legitimizing the later mutability and transferability of Roman status and the multi-ethnic nature of the city of Rome by linking it to the actions of the founder, Romulus.[14] The separation between ethnic origin and citizenship began in the fourth century BC and was formalised in 338 BC when Rome imposed a reorganization of Latium and parts of Campania in the aftermath of the Latin War in 341-38. From this point onwards, both Roman citizenship and Latin status were transferrable legal statuses with no ethnic link or significance. Being a Roman, in the legal sense, was a matter of either having citizen parents, being born into a community with citizen status, or having citizenship granted as a political act. Roman status was, from this point, something which could be acquired, and even, in extreme cases, revoked.

Increasingly, *Romanitas* was not a matter of birth or ethnicity but was a mutable and ever-changing cultural identity. 'Roman' was not necessarily something which one was, or was not, but something which could be aspired to by adopting the appropriate cultural attributes. However, *Romanitas* was not an unchanging or well-defined cultural package but was in a state of constant fluctuation. Aspects of Roman culture changed over time, or fell into disuse. The Roman culture of the Augustan period was very different from that of the earlier period of contact with non-Roman peoples. There were also significant variations between different areas of the Roman world, and between different social and economic contexts and interest groups.[15]

A further issue which is rarely addressed is the very different experiences of different parts of the Roman world; indeed, this is an area in which modern academic divisions have proved unhelpful.[16] Italy, which came into contact with Roman culture at a much earlier date, and in very different circumstances, from the rest of the Mediterranean, is often treated in isolation. Similarly, the western provinces are often discussed separately from those of the Greek-speaking and Greek-influenced eastern empire. Moreover, Egypt is all too often treated in isolation from all groups. One of the aims of this volume is to try to address these questions of cultural and ethnic identity in the context of the entire Roman world, rather than in artificial regional groupings.

The 'Romanization' problem

The use of the term 'Romanization' has become increasingly problematic in recent years. The word has become associated to an unacceptable degree with a colonialist and top-down model of cultural change which assigns a role of passive recipient to the inhabitants of the Roman empire.[17] However, there is still a high measure of debate and disagreement over

---

[13] Smith 1986: 22-31.

[14] Herring 2009; Dench 2005: 15-24.

[15] Wallace-Hadrill 2008; Revell 2009.

[16] For an honourable exception, see Keay and Terranato 2001.

[17] Barratt 1997; Mattingly 1997; 2010.

whether to redefine forms of 'Romanization' for the twenty-first century, or to abandon the term as irredeemably tainted by its associations. A number of alternative models have been suggested, but none of them ultimately provides a fully satisfactory solution. The concept of hybridity or creolization, in which elements of Roman and non-Roman culture merge together to form new and hybrid cultural forms is an attractive one, but it is not without difficulties.[18] One feature of the Roman world which must not be forgotten is that of the power balance between Roman and non-Roman cultures. Roman administrators mostly did not forcibly impose their culture and ways of life, but relied on voluntary adoption of the type described (albeit in an ideologically-charged text) by Tacitus:

> Agricola gave private encouragement and official assistance to the building of temples, public squares and private mansions. He praised the keen and scolded the slack, and competition to gain honour from him was as effective as compulsion. Furthermore, he trained the sons of the chiefs in the liberal arts and expressed a preference for British natural ability over the trained skill of the Gauls. The result was that in place of distaste for the Latin language came a passion to command it. In the same way, our national dress came into favour and the toga was everywhere to be seen. And so the Britons were gradually led on to the amenities that make vice agreeable – arcades, baths and sumptuous banquets. Tac. *Agr.* 21

Nevertheless, the culture of the politically and socially dominant group was Roman, and the cultural playing-field was not level, particularly when considering the public expressions of culture. One of the major problems of the creolization or hybridization model is that it does not take into account this imbalance of power to a sufficient degree.

Another highly influential model has been that of globalization versus localism.[19] In this formulation, Roman culture acts as a form of cultural globalization, but co-exists and interacts with local cultures. Although a powerful new tool for examining the impact of Roman culture, however, it also runs the risk of creating a binary polarity, and has been critiqued for underplaying the intricacy of interactions between local and global elements of Mediterranean culture.[20] It also remains unclear whether the Roman Empire is a viable case of 'early' globalization, or simply a partial analogy for an entirely modern process. If the latter, then this may require some reassessment of the explanatory power of the theory, and a re-evaluation of how we can use it to shed light on cultural interactions in the Roman world.

A crucial problem faced by all of these various models is that they all tend to set up a binary divide between Roman and non-Roman. This is a particular problem for the study of ethnicity in regions where many different ethnic and cultural groups intersect. In Egypt, for instance, some groups – such as the Nubians – are marginalised, and Greek culture (which is not, of course, indigenous to the area) becomes an important symbol of the culture of Roman Egypt. Elsewhere in the Greek East, there are complex patterns of interaction and interference between Greek, Roman, and various local cultures.

Studying interaction in terms of a binary opposition between Roman and local cultures runs the risk of masking the plurality that was possible within Roman identity. While there

---

[18] Webster 1996. For a critique of the weaknesses of this approach, see Hodos 2010.

[19] Hingley 2005.

[20] Witcher 2000; Pitts 2008; Hodos 2010.

was not equality of esteem, local identities were acknowledged and could be valued, provided that they were consistent with and subordinate to allegiance to Rome. We see this in famous passages of Ennius and Cicero.[21]

There is also the question of the extent to which Roman culture was part of a feedback loop which resulted not just in the transformation of other cultures, or alternatively the reinvention of local identities in response to Roman culture, but also the reinvention of Roman culture in response to those of other regions. The transformation of some aspects of Roman culture and changes in concepts of *Romanitas* in response to contact with the Greek world is well-known, but is also not the only example. Erskine (this volume) examines the evidence for the impact on Rome of Carthaginian culture, above and beyond the context of the Punic wars. In this case-study, Roman culture is analysed not as a discrete entity, but as a part of a Western Mediterranean cultural *koiné*.

Finally, there is a strong tendency to approach cultural and ethnic identities by taking the most formal group-level identity – often that of the city or state, and mainly defined by elite males – as representative of the entire community. In point of fact, many other social factors, such as gender, social class, economic status, or membership of a sub-group within the community may act as important modifiers of ethnic or cultural identities, or how they are displayed.[22] All of these factors suggest that we need a more nuanced and pluralist approach to the topic.

Creation and representation of ethnic identities

The creation and representation of ethnic and cultural identities is a complicated process with a seemingly endless number of variations. It is also not a linear process, but one which can be cyclical, or double back on itself, creating a bewildering number of hybrid identities. One key theme of this volume is to restore the agency of the inhabitants of the Roman empire, as players who exercise active cultural choices in appropriating, adapting or, rejecting aspects of Roman culture, in embedding it within their own cultures, and in using it to redefine and to express their own cultural identities. Studies of Roman provincial identities have demonstrated the importance of *habitus* and the processes of inhabiting Roman identities in day-to-day life.[23] Cultural practices such as dining, the adoption of new forms of dress, or the modification of existing ones, the adoption of new behaviours connected with hygiene and health care, and many other aspects of daily life helped to create a new culture just as much as the more obviously high-profile aspects such as adoption of Roman forms of government and public life.

Several papers raise the important question of how we can side-step our modern perspectives and learn how to know what to look for, and how to interpret it, in reconstructing ancient cultural identities. Kelly's paper examines how Roman bathing practices, as adopted in Crete, may have served as an index of cultural interaction and of adoption of some aspects of Roman lifestyle, particularly in terms of leisure practices and forms of personal care. However, although epigraphic evidence demonstrates that baths were both built and used by

---

[21] Aul. Gell., *NA*. 17.17.1; Cic., *Leg*. 2.2.5.

[22] Herring and Lomas 2009; Revell 2009.

[23] Woolf 2003: 60-76, 241-49; Revell 2009: 40-56.

local as well as Roman elites, they were still much more closely connected with Roman culture and lifestyles on Crete than with the culture of the indigenous elite.

The interplay of language, material culture, settlement patterns and identity is examined in two papers. Isayev's contribution traces the development of the south-central Italian region of Hirpinia and the changes it underwent as a result of Roman policy in the third-second centuries BC, highlighting the important changes in settlement patterns, linguistic, and material culture. Lomas examines the role of language in the creation and maintenance of identities. Language is central to many modern studies of identity, and is often uniquely privileged as a marker of ethnicity. In the Roman world, however, its role as an identity marker is more complex. In many areas of Italy, there is evidence of language contact, bilingualism, and use of common 'link' languages well before the Roman conquest, casting doubt on the role of language as a primary marker of identity.

A number of the studies included in this volume address the problem of how to reconcile written and archaeological sources. As already noted, this is a particular problem faced by scholars of early Italy, for which there is a rich corpus of ethnic categorization by Greek and Roman authors which may, in some cases, have directly contributed to changing regional identities and the ways in which they were expressed.[24] Häussler, in particular, provides a detailed examination of the complexities of local identities in north-west Italy before and after the Roman conquest. There are significant disparities in forms and strengths of identity in different parts of this region in the pre-Roman period, and the active revival or elaboration of some aspects of local culture – such as script, language, and coinage – in the early Roman period, suggests that some aspects of local identity became better defined and more prominent after the conquest.

However, this problem is not unique to Roman Italy. Dann's study of identity in Nubia raises important questions about how to reconcile the ethnic attributions of ancient sources with archaeological evidence, and also of the problematic relationship between race/ethnicity and archaeology in early Nubian studies. Her chapter also raises an important methodological problem. Artefacts which were in use for a long period of time, or may represent heirlooms dating to preceding periods, may have developed many different layers of significant meaning over time, and are thus difficult to interpret with any degree of certainty.

Three contributions on ethnicity and identity in the eastern empire throw some of these issues into stark relief. Rowlandson takes on the massively complex question of Egyptian identity and highlights the extent to which the identity of Roman Egypt is largely a Greek Egyptian identity, while the identities of non-Greek Egyptians are rarely discussed, and are often informed by negative Roman views of Egyptians. Picking up a theme explored by Dann's study of Nubia, she explores the extent to which ethnic minorities in the region are frequently ignored. The unusually copious written evidence from the region allows for a detailed examination of the role of Greek culture in the development of non-Greek identities in the Roman world, as well as examination of the interplay of state, cultural, and ethnic identities.

Peacock and Butcher have less written evidence to work with, but both tackle the thorny problem of how Greek culture fits into the process of Roman imperialism – Peacock by examining Nabataean culture and Butcher by analysing the development of religious

---

[24] Bradley 2000: 255-69

architecture in the Lebanon. Butcher, in particular, highlights the problems posed by a binary model of Romanization versus native resistance for a region where Hellenism is an important aspect of non-Roman culture. He advocates for the need to take power-relationships into account when constructing models of cultural interaction, and to consider the reinvention and revival of traditions, the changing significance of traditions, and the divergence between ancient and modern interpretations of cultural phenomena. New styles of religious architecture may have been simply appropriated for the purposes of established cultural practices, and there is evidence for ritual continuity, as well as for the integration of new elements into well-established sanctuary structures. Peacock also problematizes the relationship of Greek, indigenous, and Roman cultures in the Eastern empire. In particular, he re-evaluates the chronology of cultural change in Nabataea, pointing out that Greek was in the process of displacing the indigenous language for official purposes well before the Roman conquest, and that many aspects of Nabataean culture (and especially Nabataean religion) were highly fluid and in a constant state of development.

Two contributions to this volume challenge the traditional cultural approach to the subject completely. As already noted, Häussler observes that in north-west Italy, changes in material culture – both after the Roman conquest and during the period of Celtic migration which preceded it – may reflect changes in socio-economic groupings and economic developments as much as changes in ethnic identity. Roth takes up a similar theme even more forcefully, arguing that patterns of production and consumption of material goods, and patterns of trade are highly influential in shaping ethnic and cultural identities, but are also too often neglected in the study of ethnicity. In particular, he makes a strong case for a greater consideration of economic aspects of cultural change. The increasing intensity of contact between Romans and non-Romans, especially in Italy, promoted economic exchange as well as cultural contacts, although as Roth and several other contributors point out, this may reinforce rather than dilute the strength of regional identities.

Finally, Erskine's contribution focuses on the impact of the growing empire on the culture of Rome itself. Although, as he notes, the influence of Greek culture on Rome has been very extensively explored, the influences of some of the other cultures with which Rome came into contact have received far less attention. Rome, however, was at the centre of a complex network of contacts and interactions in the western Mediterranean, including contacts with Punic settlements. His paper explores the influence of Punic culture – one of the major cultures of the western Mediterranean – on Rome, and the extent to which this frequently overlooked factor influenced Roman culture in the middle Republic.

Perhaps the most important theme arising out of all the contributions in this volume is that it is essential that we escape from the tendency to view cultural identities in the Roman world through the prism of binary interactions, but start to view them as complex and polyvalent processes, involving many different social, economic, and cultural groups. The famous quotation from President Carter's Pittsburgh speech might be usefully invoked as a way to rethink *Romanitas* and its relationship to the individual:

> We become not a melting-pot but a beautiful mosaic. Different people, different beliefs, different yearnings. Different hopes, different dreams.[25]

[25] President Jimmy Carter, Pittsburgh, 27th October 1976.

Bibliography

Barrett, J. C. 1997. 'Romanization: a critical comment', in D. J. Mattingly (ed.), *Dialogues in Roman imperialism: power, discourse, and discrepant experience in the Roman Empire*: 51-67. Portsmouth, RI.

Barth, F. 1969. 'Introduction', in F. Barth (ed.), *Ethnic groups and boundaries. The social organization of culture difference*: 3-38. Bergen and London.

Bradley, G. 2000. *Ancient Umbria: state, culture, and identity in central Italy from the Iron Age to the Augustan era*. Oxford.

Dench, E. 2005. *Romulus' asylum: Roman identities from the age of Alexander to the age of Hadrian*. Oxford.

Hall, J. M. 1997. *Ethnic identity in Greek antiquity*. Cambridge.

Hall, J. M. 2002. *Hellenicity: between ethnicity and culture*. Chicago.

Herring, E. 2009. 'Ethnicity and culture', in A. W. Erskine (ed.), *A companion to Ancient History*: 123-33. Oxford.

Herring, E. and Lomas, K. 2009. 'Introduction', in E. Herring and K. Lomas (eds), *Gender identities in Italy in the 1ˢᵗ millennium BC*: 1-6. Oxford.

Hingley, R. 2005. *Globalizing Roman culture: unity, diversity, and empire*. London.

Hodos, T. 2010. 'Local and global perspectives in the study of social and cultural identity', in S. Hales and T. Hodos, (eds) *Material culture and social identities in the ancient world*: 3-31. Cambridge.

Jenkins, R. 1997. *Rethinking ethnicity. Arguments and explorations*. London.

Jones, S. 1997. *The archaeology of ethnicity: constructing identities in the past and present*. London.

Mattingly, D. J. 1997. 'Introduction. Dialogues of power and experience in the Roman Empire', in D. J. Mattingly (ed.), *Dialogues in Roman imperialism: power, discourse, and discrepant experience in the Roman Empire*: 7-26. Portsmouth, RI.

Mattingly, D. J. 2010. *Imperialism, power, and identity: experiencing the Roman Empire*. Princeton.

Pitts, M. 2008. 'Globalising the local in Roman Britain: an anthropological approach to social change', *JAnthArch* 27.4: 493-506.

Revell, L. 2009. *Roman imperialism and local identities*. Cambridge.

Smith, A. D. 1986. *The ethnic origins of nations*. Oxford.

Spivey, N. and Stoddart, S. 1990. *Etruscan Italy: an archaeological history*. London.

Terrenato, N. 2001. 'Introduction', in S. Keay and N. Terrenato (eds), *Italy and the west: comparative issues in Romanization*: 1-6. Oxford.

Wallace-Hadrill, A. 2008. *Rome's cultural revolution*. Cambridge.

Webster, J. 1996. 'Ethnographic barbarity: colonial discourse and "Celtic warrior societies"', in N. Cooper and J. Webster (eds), *Roman imperialism: post-colonial perspectives*: 111-24. Leicester.

Witcher, R. 2000. 'Globalization and Roman imperialism: Perspectives on identities in Roman Italy', in E. Herring and K. Lomas (eds), *The emergence of state identities in Italy in the first millennium BC*: 213-26. London.

Woolf, G. 1998. *Becoming Roman: the origins of provincial civilization in Gaul*. Cambridge.

ITALIAN PERSPECTIVES FROM HIRPINIA
IN THE PERIOD OF GRACCHAN LAND REFORMS
AND THE SOCIAL WAR

ELENA ISAYEV

Introduction[1]

Once the dust had settled from the fallout of the Hannibalic War a new Italian confidence gained momentum in the middle decades of the second century BC, not so much in opposition to Rome as alongside it. Prosperity and growth are apparent in the archaeological record with evidence of settlement regeneration, increased building activity, and investment in monumental architecture. Projects such as the exceptional sanctuary at Pietrabbondante as well as other forms of cultural display incorporated Hellenistic influences with new Roman-led trends and pre-existing Italic models. Underpinning this visible wealth, and energised in part by the successful campaigns in the eastern Mediterranean, was a self-assurance and authority among Italian communities that if required could be used as leverage to gain power and exert influence. In the early first century BC there was enough wealth and leadership capability to fuel the organisation of resources and a substantial network, centred on Corfinium, which with the backing of a large army posed a serious threat to Roman hegemony during the Social War. The aim of this study is to build on a positively dynamic image of second century BC Italy and to contextualize within it forms of Roman intervention, especially in the region of ancient Hirpinia just to the east of Campania which, I will argue, provides a microcosm of the transformations in the south-central Apennine landscape (Fig. 1).

The appeal of Hirpinia as a case study derives from the particular blend of evidence connected with the region. Alongside the written texts this also includes the largest surviving concentration of Gracchan boundary markers (*termini)*, other forms of epigraphic material, a substantial road network, and archaeological traces of rapid change
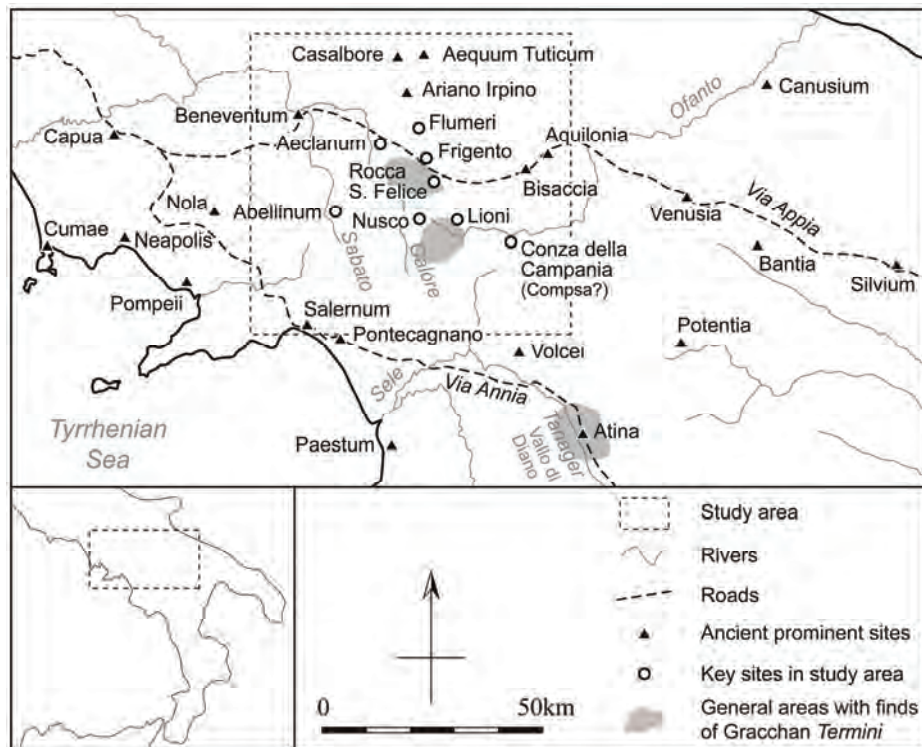
Figure 1: Region of ancient Hirpinia and surrounding area with key sites in south-west Italy

in settlement during the period. Combining these sources clarifies the context of schemes, such as the land policies of the Gracchi. But it would be wrong to think that such pressures simply exacerbated tensions between Roman and non-Roman. Ancient authors note, either directly or by implication through reference to places, individuals, and military campaigns in the region, that Italic communities were divided as well. The evidence from Hirpinia brings into doubt any sense of regional cohesion during this transitional period, and highlights the role of powerful individuals. It suggests that allegiance was not necessarily guided by ethnic or geographic-based identities, but rooted in wider reaching frameworks, especially the elite networks that superseded them, and formed the main basis for action. Individuals such as Minatius Magius could clearly draw on resources and had access to substantial manpower in Hirpinia to amass a legion, according to Velleius,[2] in support of the Roman cause during the Social War. Equally other prominent elites from the region had their own Hirpinian power base, as for example the inhabitants of Compsa, that could be relied on to challenge the opposing forces as part of the *socii*. The fact that these two opposing forces, both based in Hirpinia, may have shared a strong sense of the same ethnic identity and participated in the same cultural circles did not necessarily play a decisive role in terms of allegiance. The approach of this paper is to present a possible narrative of events and processes in the late second and early

---

[2] Vell. Pat. 2.16.1-3.

first century that is not solely dependent on a Roman – Italian dichotomy, but also incorporates within it the recognition of a third element: the dialogue between Italians who supported, or had close links with, Rome and those who did not. Although this makes cause and effect more difficult to ascertain, especially in the light of the *Italian Question*,[3] it provides space in which to consider the circumstances that differentiated those Italians who chose to be *socii,* and those, from the same communities, who fought against them. If we can grasp the needs of these opposing groups and what it is that defined their relationship, then we can get closer to understanding the situation which resulted in the Social War and the role of Rome within it.

Ancient Hirpinia and external pressures

The area which the ancient sources refer to as Hirpinia or identify as the land of the Hirpini[4] is mountainous on its westside along the river Sabato with a gentler undulating landscape as one moves east away from the Monti Picentini along the river Ofanto to Apulia. To the south a low mountain curtain separates it from ancient Lucania, which hinders easy access to the west coast. Hirpinia's inland terrain, intermittent low plains flanked by hills, is not as easy to negotiate as the more accessible large tracts of flat terrain that are characteristic of Campania. Whether because of its topography or perhaps for reasons of diplomacy, it seems not to have been marked out for occupation for settlers or colonization in the immediate aftermath of the Hannibalic War.[5] Throughout the second century BC there is increasing density of settlement in the region, but not necessarily in the same locations; some sites which had occupation in the previous century were abandoned or destroyed, while others were newly founded or rebuilt following a period of decline. In the first century BC there was a period of monumental restructuring and consolidation, as has also been noted for the post-Sullan era in other parts of the peninsula.[6] The specific circumstances which led to the abandonment of one site and the embellishment of another are difficult to access through the material remains alone. While some of the traces in the archaeological record can be dated accurately enough, any links with known historical events must remain speculative. We are better placed to consider the context of change and continuity from a broader chronological perspective in order to ascertain the pattern of settlement and landscape use in the region.

During the Second Punic War, ancient historical narratives indicate that, unlike the neighbouring Pentri to the north who mainly stayed allied to Rome, most of the Hirpini transferred their support to the Carthaginian side following the Roman defeat at Cannae.[7]

---

[3] As outlined by Mouritsen 1998. For an extended discussion of the issues and the role of *Corfinium/Italica* see Isayev 2011.

[4] For example in reference to events in the Hannibalic War: Livy books 22 and 23; in reference to acquisition of territory by Gaius Quinctius Valgus: Cic., *Leg. Agr.* 3.2.8; or a description of the territory: Strabo, *Geog.* 5.4.12.

[5] For discussion see below pp. 11-14.

[6] Most notably Gabba 1994, especially chapter 6, pp. 83-91.

[7] Livy 22.61.11-12; 23.1.1-6; 23.39; 23.41-43; 27.15.

Hirpinian communities, such as Compsa,[8] provided bases for Hannibal's movements from Apulia and Lucania, through the curtain of the Monti Picentini into Campania. Their lack of allegiance to the Roman cause may be in part owed to pressure on the territory a generation earlier, as a consequence of the Pyrrhic Wars. In 268 BC the Latin colony of Beneventum was founded in place of an earlier major Italic centre, possibly named Malies or Maleventum, positioned at a key intersection of routes and rivers in the north-west of Hirpinia.[9] The foundation of this colony is the most substantial Roman intervention that we know of within the region prior to the Hannibalic War. It was placed in a landscape that had high levels of occupancy throughout the fourth and third centuries BC.[10] Evidence of activity in this period is plentiful at other substantial settlements in the area, such as Abellinum, one of the sites located near the Sabato river in the west,[11] and in the area of ancient Compsa along with others situated within the Ofanto valley.[12] In the north, adjoining Pentrian territory, there are archaeological remains from this period at a substantial sanctuary at Casalbore and settlements to the south of it, such as Ariano Irpino. [13] Further east, near the region of Daunia the site of Bisaccia, may have been the ancient Romulea which along with Aquilonia was conquered by Rome in the third Samnite war in the 290s BC.[14]

In central Hirpinia at the prominent city of Aeclanum the material of the pre-Roman phase is more difficult to access due to later rebuilding of the site, but there is enough to suggest occupation by the end of the third century BC.[15] Not far from this centre the ancient sanctuary of Mefitis at Rocca San Felice has votives dating from as early as the sixth century BC with continuing signs of worship throughout the period, except for a lacuna in the evidence during the second century BC.[16] To date, most of the sites in this part of the region, along the route of the Via Appia, show evidence of activity from the

---

[8] Livy, 23.1.1-4.

[9] Pliny, *NH* 3.105. See Giampaola 2000 and Torelli 2002, for a summary of the history and archaeology of Beneventum. There is also some dispute as to the legend on the coins from the earlier site and whether it reads MALIES or as suggested by Crawford MAIIES: Crawford 2011, Campania/CAMPANIA Coinage 2 (Vol. II, 381).

[10] Giampaola 2000.

[11] Colucci Pescatori 1991: 106-7; Pescatori Colucci 1996a: 97-112. For an overview of the settlement pattern in Hirpinia during the Archaic period, with preceding bibliography see Johannowsky 2006.

[12] Barbera and Rea 1994; Colucci Pescatori 1991, 89-90. Other sites in the area include Morra de Sanctis, Gangemi 1996b, 74-75; Romito 1986: 533-34.

[13] Johannowsky 1991a: 60-68; Johannowsky 2001; Bonifacio 2001; Gangemi 1996b: 74-75.

[14] Romulea: Livy 10.17.7-11, the association with Bisaccia is supported by Oakley 2005b: 208; Aquilonia: Livy 10.44.2-5; Barbera and Rea 1994: 68; Colucci Pescatori 1991: 86; Colucci Pescatori 1975: 30; Gangemi 1996a: 57; *contra* Johannowsky 2004: 293, and Salmon 1989: 233-35, argue for Carife as Romulea.

[15] Colucci Pescatori 1975: 36-37; Colucci Pescatori 1991: 98; Pescatori Colucci 1996b: 232-40.

[16] Bottini *et al.* 1976; Colucci Pescatori 1975: 31-34; Colucci Pescatori 1991: 94; Rainini 1985; Rainini 1996: 81-96.

second century BC, some with a break or reconfiguration in the final decades followed by a considerable increase in building activity in the post-Sullan era.

The communities in Hirpinia would have been well aware of the substantial population flows into the neighbouring areas that were initiated by Rome even prior to the Punic Wars. The territory south of the region, around Pontecagnano, must have already been *ager publicus* in the third century BC, allowing Rome to settle thousands of the Picentini who were moved there from the north-east of Italy, forming what became the Ager Picentinus.[17] On the other side of Hirpinia, to the north, the area known as the Ager Taurasinus was already *ager publicus* by 180 BC (and possibly from the early third century BC), when more than 40,000 Ligurians were forcibly transferred there from the north-west of Italy.[18] How much of Hirpinian territory was itself also Roman *ager publicus* at this time is more difficult to assess; there may have been veterans already being settled in the region, especially those of Scipio Africanus.[19] The overall impression is one of a region which from the third century BC onward was rapidly being surrounded and filled with new settlers who were migrating there from distant parts of Italy, many of them transplanted *en masse*.

Roads too were being extended into the hinterland linking Latin and Roman colonies, which made any external presence more immediate as well as entrenching a particular system of connectivity. The new network sought out lower terrain, often favouring larger centres, and tended to bypass areas enclosed by mountains where the population was primarily distributed across multiple smaller settlements. By the third century BC the Via Appia extended from Capua to Beneventum, but the date of the section running south-east to Venusia, that eventually continued to Brundisium, is less clear.[20] The question rests on whether its construction coincided with the building of the second century BC Leproso stone bridge that carried the Via Appia across the Sabato river on the west side of Beneventum.[21] Although the structure may have superseded an earlier wooden bridge, the investment nevertheless suggests a consolidation of the route framework in the second century. It must have formed part of a project which also incorporated the Via Annia through the Vallo di Diano along the Tanager river to the south, connecting Reggio to Capua, which was most likely built in the years 130-128 BC.[22]

---

[17] Strabo, *Geog.* 5.4.13 (251) records that Rome transplanted some of the Picentines to a region in southern Campania, near modern Pontecagnano, in 268 BC. Pliny, *NH* 3.70, also notes that the town of Picentia was either in the territory of Salernum or inland from it.

[18] Livy 40.38.1-7; 40.41.3-4: Briscoe 2008: 504-07; Torelli 2002: 70, 130-31; Tagliamonte 1996: 152; Johannowsky 1991b: 463.

[19] Livy 31.4.1-3; 31.49.5: Briscoe 1973: 62, 161. For discussion see: Taylor 1960: 92; Tagliamonte 1996: 151.

[20] For a general discussion of the Via Appia see Laurence 1999: 13-20, 25; della Portella *et al.* 2004. For more detailed studies of the route see the various surveys carried out by Quilici and Quilici-Gigli 1994; 1996; 2003; 2004.

[21] Giampaola 1994: 659; Torelli 2002: 104.

[22] The construction of the road is recorded on an inscription from Polla: *ILLRP* 454; Wiseman 1987: 125, for discussion of the Via Annia (Popilia) and the relevant dates.

The extension of the Via Appia and the Via Annia fits into the context of land reclamation, especially during the Gracchan period. Stone *termini*, which were placed along territorial boundaries, are evidence of direct Roman intervention in land use at this time. The *triumviri,* whose names are inscribed on the boundary markers, were responsible for the repossession, division, and redistribution of the land, and there is strong evidence to suggest that their efforts were concentrated around the main routes, as pointed out by Gargola and Uggeri.[23] Out of a total of 19 known *termini* associated with Gracchan land division in Italy, six have been found just south of Hirpinia near the Via Annia in the Vallo di Diano in the region of ancient Lucania; they date to the years 132-131 BC.[24] Of the seven known *termini* from Hirpinia itself, primarily dating to 130-129 BC, four were located relatively close to the Via Appia near Aeclanum,[25] the other three were found in the southern part of the region situated along the expansive valley of the river Ofanto leading to ancient Compsa.[26] Although few of the markers were found *in situ*,[27] and the dating of some is not precise,[28] on the whole there is sufficient evidence to show that the land division policies of the Gracchan period were at least in part focused in this area. The two concentrations of the *termini*, one in Lucania and the other in Hirpinia, were situated on the enclosed, low-lying plains, with some near the newly consolidated road network. It is as if there was a reclamation of the remaining *ager publicus*, once the more accessible and extensive fertile areas in the surrounding regions, and in the north of Italy, had been used up.[29]

---

[23] For a list and details of all the Gracchan *termini*, see Uggeri 2001. For an overview, see Gargola 1995: 158-59.

[24] The Gracchan termini in the Vallo di Diano: *ILLRP* 469-72; *CIL* I² 2932a; *CIL* I² 2933. See also summary and extended bibliography in Uggeri 2001: 42-45, nos. 3-8.

[25] *ILLRP* 473 and for the other three see Kajava and Solin 1997: 316, no.5, fig.5a-b; 317, no.6, fig. 6a-b; 321, no. 11. See also summary and extended bibliography in Uggeri 2001: 49, nos. 10-13.

[26] One found near Montella: *CIL* I² 2934. See also Colucci Pescatori 1991: 92, fig.6; Uggeri 2001: 45, no. 9. Two found near Lioni and Nusco: Colucci Pescatori 1991: 89-92; Camodeca 1997: 268, n.39. See also Uggeri 2001: 49-50, nos.14-15.

[27] In the Vallo di Diano, the two *termini* found near Sala Consilina, not far from the Via Annia, were *in situ: ILLRP* 471-472.

In Hirpinia two of the *termini* found near Rocca San Felice, a short distance from the Via Appia, were *in situ*: Uggeri 2001: 49, no.11 = *CIL* IX 1024; *ILLRP* 473 = *CIL* IX 1025, *CIL* I² 645.

[28] From the Vallo di Diano, a number of the *termini,* have clearly datable inscriptions with the names of the *triumvirs* of 132-131 BC: near Atena Lucana, *ILLRP* 470; from Sicignano degli Alburni, *ILLRP* 469; and the two found *in situ* from near Sala Consilina *ILLRP* 471-72.

From Hirpinia four of the *termini* have clearly datable inscriptions with the names of the *triumvirs* of 130-129 BC: the one found *in situ* near Rocca San Felice – Uggeri 2001: 49, no.11; another also near Rocca San Felice – *ILLRP* 473 = *CIL* IX 1025, *CIL* I 555, *CIL* I² 644 *cf.* p.925; one near Nusco – Uggeri 2001: 49, no.14; and another near Lioni - Uggeri 2001: 50, no.15. For the latter two see also Colucci Pescatori 1991: 89-90. The remaining five *termini* (out of a total of thirteen), from Hirpinia and Vallo di Diano are not securely dated.

[29] Mouritsen 1998: 145-49, considers the possibility that although land in South Italy may have been made *ager publicus* in an earlier period, after the Hannibalic War, the Romans focused their

Abellinum and the Gracchan context

Another pocket of Hirpinian territory that may have been primed for Gracchan settlement was near Abellinum along the river Sabato, mid-way between Beneventum and Salerno. Even in the pre-Gracchan period any project would have had to fit into an already developed landscape. Traces of a centuriation grid, coupled with a record in the *Liber Coloniarum* of a Gracchan colonial foundation, make a strong case for the activities of the land surveyors.[30] The problem is identifying when. In the fourth century BC the Sabato valley supported a high density of habitation, mainly in small-size settlements, known primarily from remains of dispersed necropoleis.[31]

At the site of Abellinum, situated near modern Atripalda, there are settlement remains located on a raised plateau some 25 hectares in area, which was encircled by a double circuit wall in the third century BC.[32] Little is known of this earlier phase of the centre since most of the excavations to date have focused on the Roman period site overlying it, but there is material and evidence of building activity from the second century BC.[33] The substantial post-Sullan restructuring included a new fortification wall in *opus reticulatum*, large private residences, and monumental public spaces.[34] Until the Social War the site was probably a *civitas foederata* and then became the Sullan and Augustan *Colonia Veneria Livia Augusta Abellinatium,* the name that is displayed as part of the Imperial inscription of AD 240.[35] However, the notation in the *Liber Coloniarum* suggests that the colony was a Gracchan foundation: *Abellinum, muro ducta colonia, deducta lege Sempronia*.[36] Some have argued that a pre-Sullan foundation date is also supported by the use there of *praetores duoviri,* an earlier formulation for the town's chief magistrates.[37]

energies on settling colonists in Cisalpine Gaul in the first part of the second century BC, and only when extra land was needed did they begin to pursue a process of land reclamation in southern Italy. He suggests that the Gracchan land commissioners had begun with the Roman area and once that was exhausted turned to Italian holdings. Bispham 2007: 72, suggests that some of the *ager publicus* would not have been redistributed to Roman settlers but left in the hands of the original owners.

[30] *Liber Coloniarum* I, 229, 16-18L: Campbell 2000: 179, 413-14; Chouquer 1987: 166, 247, 249; Pescatori Colucci 1996a: 101-02; Camodeca 1996: 177.

[31] Fourth and third century BC burials along the Sabato valley are discussed by Pescatori Colucci 1996a: 100.

[32] Colucci Pescatori 1975: 38-39; Colucci Pescatori 1991: 106-17; Pescatori Colucci 1996a

[33] Pescatori Colucci 1996a: 102.

[34] From the second and early first centuries BC there are remains of walls in *opus incertum* and also tiles with Oscan stamps: Crawford 2011, Hirpini/ABELLINVM 5-8 Stamp (Vol. II, 951-54); Colucci Pescatori 1991: 107;. Colucci-Pescatori also notes the remains of a public inscription (unpublished) probably pre-Sullan: Pescatori Colucci 1996a: 102.

[35] Known in the Severan period as *Veneria Livia Augusta Alexandriana Abellinatium: CIL* X 1117. For commentary on the name and the date of foundation see: Campbell 2000: 179, 413-14; Rives 1994: 301-02; Keppie 1983: 19, n.54; Colucci Pescatori 1975: 38.

[36] *Liber Coloniarum* I, 229, 16-18L.

[37] *CIL* X 1131, 1134-35, 1137-38, 1140: Pais 1923: 203-04, 252-55; Mommsen in *CIL* X p.127; with comments in Campbell 2000: 414.

Furthermore a small section of a centuriation grid of 14x14 *actus* has been identified near the site.[38] According to Chouquer, judging by the size of the grid squares, it could be either Gracchan or Sullan, but not Augustan.[39] However, the dating is speculative and the most plausible period for the colony's foundation remains Sullan.[40]

The historical context of Abellinum resembles that of Grumentum, a centre founded in the third century BC in the Sinni-Agri region of Lucania. Here too the main evidence for a Gracchan colony is a record in the *Liber Coloniarum* of centuriation '*limitibus Gracchanis*' in the surrounding countryside.[41] But this phrase may also be used to indicate centuriation 'in the Gracchan style' rather than implying a Gracchan date and so far no traces of any grids have been identified in the area.[42] Neither Abellinum nor Grumentum have any Gracchan *termini* found in their immediate vicinity, which could mean that there were no boundary disputes or simply that none of the boundary markers have survived. Both of the centres are situated on low lying plateaux, in territory that in the fourth century BC was densely settled by largely unfortified small nuclei. In the case of Abellinum these were located along the river Sabato, and at Grumentum they were dispersed among the valleys of the Sinni and Agri rivers.[43] It is possible that both of these sites, perhaps in agreement with Roman authorities, but not necessarily, became key centralizing points for the outlying populations who may have decided to congregate within fortified enclosures in the period of the Second Punic War. The city of Aeclanum, as we will see below, may have had a similar centralizing role in a later period for its surrounding territory. We know that Grumentum was one of the sites fought over during the Hannibalic War[44] and more than a century later was destroyed in the Social War,[45] although it is uncertain by whom. What is clear from the archaeological remains is that both centres benefited from substantial rebuilding in the post-Sullan period and flourished in the following centuries, but the nature of the Gracchan activity and whether it had local support is more difficult to ascertain.[46] Whether these centres were set up as Italian initiatives or Roman-aided Italian initiatives, they provided new opportunities for display and positions of power for the local elites. Such reconfiguration of the settled landscape which shifted from a diffuse to a centralized pattern may have unbalanced existing hierarchies and posed a challenge to alternative centres of power, such as at Compsa.

---

[38] According to Johannowsky the division is 13 *actus* (see Pescatori Colucci 1996a: 101-02), which would place it more firmly in line with the unit of division in the Gracchan period as suggested by Chouquer, as for example used at Suessa, Caiatia and Verulae: Chouquer 1987: 247.

[39] Chouquer 1987: 168-69.

[40] Campbell 2000: 413-14.

[41] *Liber Coloniarum* I, 209, 5-10L: Campbell 2000: 165, 402-03.

[42] Patterson 1993: 189-93, 191; Campbell 2000: 402-03

[43] For Grumentum see discussion in Isayev 2007: 91-95, 210-11.

[44] In 215 BC, Livy, 23.37.10-13 and in 207 BC Livy, 27.41-42.

[45] Appian, *BC* 1.41.

[46] Campbell 2000: lvii-ix outlines some of the concerns of trying to map remains of grids found through archaeological exploration onto the data contained in the *Liber Coloniarum.*
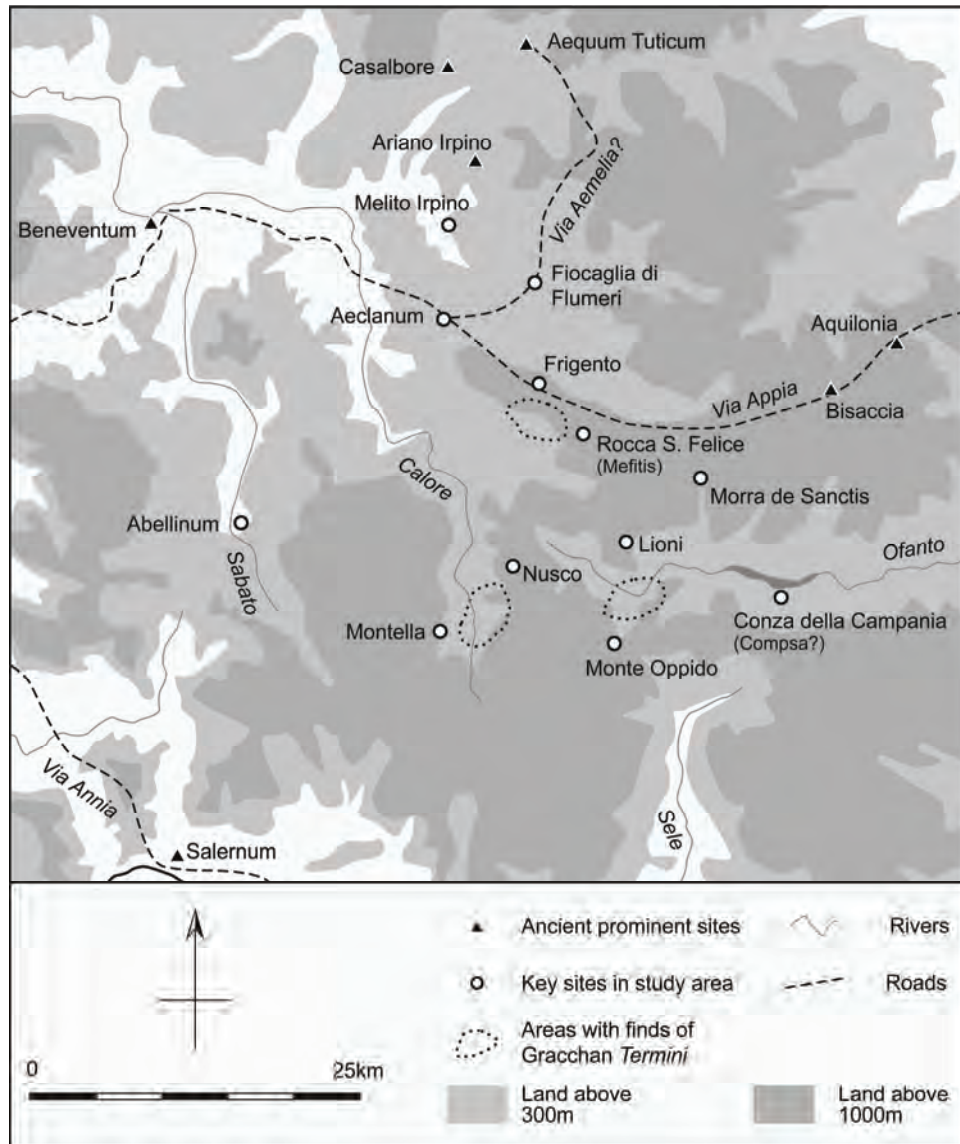
Figure 2: Road network with key sites of the second-first century BC, and locations with finds of Gracchan *termini,* in the study area of Hirpinia.

Compsa, Aeclanum, and the places in-between

The internal part of Hirpinia which we turn to next has very clear evidence of Gracchan intervention, and archaeological projects provide further insight into the varied forms of activity in the landscape during the last two centuries BC. The focus here will be on the centres of Aeclanum and Compsa alongside evidence from sites in the surrounding territory, which also incorporates the route of the Via Appia and the locations of the Gracchan *termini* (Fig. 2). Through such a snapshot I hope to expose the diversity of

community responses to the challenges and opportunities this period presented, which makes it difficult to privilege any single trajectory of cause and effect.

Compsa and Aeclanum are located some 25-35km away from each other at opposite ends of the area where the majority of the Gracchan *termini* were found and have several things in common. They are both mentioned in ancient texts for having divisions in allegiance within their communities: in Compsa the Mopsii had the protection of the Romans in the second Punic War, when the city was handed over to Carthage; in Aeclanum the resident Magii helped Sulla's Roman contingents with military operations, including those against nearby Compsa, despite the fact that he besieged their hometown. Hence both of the centres were destroyed in the Social War, a narrative to which we will return at the end of the paper. A major difference, however, is that while we are relatively certain that the archaeological remains of the major ancient centre at Passo di Mirabella are those of Aeclanum, we do not know the precise location of ancient Compsa.

Compsa

From ancient texts we have a good sense of the general position of Compsa in the south-east of Hirpinia, where there are several sites within 10km of each other, which are possible candidates. It has generally been assumed that Conza della Campania is the location of the original Compsa.[47] This is partly because of the name, Conza, which could be a corruption of Compsa, but also because of its strategic location at an altitude of 500 metres near the Sella di Conza. The Sella forms a natural raised land bridge from Apennine Hirpinia to Lucania linking two key river valley routes: the Ofanto, which leads to the Adriatic, and the Sele, which flows south to the Tyrrhenian.[48] Currently there is intensive research at Conza della Campania, primarily because of the abandonment of the site following its tragic destruction by the earthquake of 1980,[49] which has allowed archaeologists to examine previously inaccessible areas. The most prominent ancient feature of the site is the post-Sullan forum surrounded by remains of public buildings.[50] Earlier reports mention pre-Roman material,[51] which has also been traced in the most recent excavations, but the findings are only preliminary and there is still much uncertainty about the extent of the pre-Roman settlement on this site and whether it was ancient Compsa.

Other sites in the surrounding territory have evidence of earlier habitation, such as for example Morra de Sanctis[52] on the north side of the Ofanto, but here most of the finds to

---

[47] Colucci Pescatori 1991: 87; Barbera and Rea 1994.

[48] I am very grateful to Gabriella Colucci Pescatori and Vincenzo di Giovanni for taking the time to share their latest findings about the site and their ideas about Conza della Campania, especially its important location in the landscape.

[49] The earthquake, measuring 6.8 on the richter scale, affected numerous sites across Hirpinia and Campania, but it was Conza della Campania near the epicentre that suffered the most extensive destruction. Over 2000 people died and some 10,000 were injured, leaving 300,000 homeless.

[50] Barbera and Rea 1994: 18-19.

[51] Discussion of the difficulties of tracing material from earlier investigations: Barbera and Rea 1994: 12-13.

[52] Gangemi 1996b: 74-75; Romito 1986: 533-34.

date are primarily from funerary contexts of the Iron Age and Archaic period. Perhaps a more likely candidate for a prominent settlement is the site on Monte Oppido, near Lioni, on the other side of the Sella land bridge from Conza della Campania. It is situated at an altitude of 1000m in a strategic position just at the head of the river Sele and in greater proximity to the find spots of the Gracchan *termini*. There are also remains of a fortification wall with a perimeter of some 2km, and finds which suggest occupation in the fourth and third centuries BC.[53] It is possible that ancient Compsa was located at Monte Oppido or at Conza della Campania, if not at another site in the vicinity, which has yet to be discovered. It may also be the case that the site was moved, perhaps from Monte Oppido to Conza della Campania which was at a lower altitude, less defensible and closer to the new road system. It would fit within the context of mass population transfers which had already begun in the mid-third century BC, and thus be comparable to the resetting of communities at Volsinii and Falerii.[54] Whether this hypothesis holds for Compsa will only become evident with new results from the ongoing archaeological projects, and will depend on the extent of the pre-Roman settlement remains at Conza della Campania.

Aeclanum and the Mefitis sanctuary at Rocca S. Felice

We are better informed about the site of Aeclanum.[55] It was founded at some point in the third or second century BC near modern Passo di Mirabella on a key ancient route that became the Via Appia between Beneventum and Venusia.[56] Livy's omission of the site from his narrative of events in the Hannibalic War suggests that either it was an insignificant settlement or that it did not exist before the late third century BC. The date of Aeclanum's foundation and also its position suggest that perhaps, in the same way as Abellinum to the west, or the more south city of Grumentum in Lucania, Aeclanum may have been a centralizing point for earlier smaller settlements, which were prevalent in the area before the Second Punic War.

It may be that prior to Aeclanum, the prominent sanctuary of Mefitis at the sulphur pools of Rocca S. Felice, Valle d'Ansanto, acted as a point of focus for the sites.[57]

---

[53] Colucci Pescatori 1991: 89.

[54] Falerii: Polybius 1.65 records a revolt by the inhabitants of Falerii Veteres in 241 BC, also mentioned in more general terms by Livy, *Periochae* 20. Zonaras 8.18, notes the move of the population to a new site. Archaeological evidence supports the creation of a new site around the mid-third century BC, at Falerii Novi some 5km away on lower ground, at modern S. Maria di Falleri: Keay *et al.* 2000: 1-2, 82-85.
Volsinii: According to Pliny *NH* 34.34 the city was sacked in 264 BC, and Zonar. as 8.7 notes that the population was transferred elsewhere: Pailler 1987: 529-34.

[55] This was the later second century AD *Colonia Aelia Augusta Aeclanum*: *CIL* IX 1111, *cf.* p.99; Colucci Pescatori 1975: 37, n.107. I would like to thank Roberto Esposito for generously taking the time on a very hot afternoon, in July 2005, to explain the complexity of the site and its stratigraphy.

[56] Colucci Pescatori 1975: 37; Colucci Pescatori 1991: 98-99; Pescatori Colucci 1996: 232-40.

[57] A shrine to Mefitis at the site is noted by Pliny, *NH* 2.208, and also attested in a dedicatory Oscan inscription from the second century BC, *ST* Hi 3 = Crawford 2011, Hirpini/ABELLINVM 1 (Vol. II, 945): *lúvkis. vele[í is -?-]. mefiteí.[-?-]. <a>ravinaí. [-?-].* Verg., *Aen.* 7.563, vividly describes the valley of the sulphur pools as the opening to the underworld. Reports on the excavations at the site:

Because of the noxious gases this cult site has been a difficult place to investigate, and while a few structures and a significant number of votives have been recovered, including exceptional wooden statues and figurines, the central area of the sanctuary has still to be found. The cult site has evidence of use dating back to at least the sixth century BC, with high levels of activity through to the third century BC. We have little material for the second century BC from the sanctuary, but Mefitis worship clearly did continue in the area as signified by the Oscan dedication on an altar to the deity by *Siviiú Magiú* outside the gate at Aeclanum.[58] The lack of evidence could be seen as a period of decline at Rocca S. Felice, possibly as a result of Aeclanum overseeing the cult of Mefitis, but not enough of the finds have been found *in situ* to support or disprove such a hypothesis. This did not signal the end of the sanctuary at Rocca S. Felice as there is evidence of new structures not long after the Social War[59] and ongoing use of the site right through to the Christian era when in the fourth century AD Santa Felicita became the main figure of worship.

Most of the remains from the settlement of Aeclanum date to the Imperial period with little pre-Sullan material, which is mainly recorded in early archaeological reports of investigations carried out by Sgobbo in the 1930s and Onorato in the 1950s.[60] The few second century BC finds from the city consist of architectural terracottas, which may have belonged to a public building, and some pottery.[61] Other evidence of pre-Sullan activity comes from the territory immediately surrounding the site, including an Oscan inscription put up by Gavis Magiis,[62] the altar with the dedication to Mefitis mentioned above,[63] a number of other Oscan dedications on blocks reused in later buildings,[64] and Oscan stamped tiles.[65] We have better evidence of post-Sullan restructuring, particularly of the fortification wall, the earliest levels of which are in *opus quasi-reticulatum*.[66] It has been dated to the first half of the first century BC, with the help of an inscription which records the munificence of Gaius Quinctius Valgus, *patronus municipii*.[67] Valgus was a Sullan supporter, who clearly benefited from the proscriptions allowing him to become wealthy

---

Bottini *et al.* 1976; Rainini 1985; Colucci Pescatori 1991: 94. For the cult of Mefitis see also de Cazanove 2003; Poccetti 2005; Isayev 2010.

[58] *ST* Hi 4 = Crawford 2011, Hirpini/AECLANVM 3 (Vol. II, 959).

[59] Rainini 1985: 119.

[60] Sgobbo 1930; Onorato 1960: 27-29.

[61] Colucci Pescatori 1991: 99.

[62] *ST* Hi 1 = Crawford 2011, Hirpini/AECLANVM 4 (Vol. II, 961). See n.106 below.

[63] *ST* Hi 4 = Crawford 2011, Hirpini/AECLANVM 3 (Vol. II, 959). See n.107 below.

[64] *ST* Hi 5 = Crawford 2011, Hirpini/AECLANVM 2 (Vol. II, 958); *ST* Hi 6 = Crawford 2011, Hirpini/AECLANVM 1 (Vol. II, 957). Sgobbo 1930, suggests that along with the altar dedication (*ST* Hi 4) these may be the remains of a small cult site to Mefitis just outside the city gate.

[65] *ST* tHi 2-3 = Crawford 2011, Hirpini/AECLANVM 7-8 Stamp (Vol. II, 965-66). As suggested by Carlo Franciosi unpublished.

[66] Colucci Pescatori 1975: 37.

[67] *ILLRP* 2.523 = *ILS* 5318, *CIL* I(2) 1722. See also p.27 below.

enough, according to Cicero, to possess much of Hirpinian territory.[68] Cicero's comments against Valgus' son in law, in the *de Lege Agraria Contra Rullum*, also highlights tensions about land possession and access, which in regions such as Hirpinia must have been substantial. While we know that Valgus was the beneficiary of the confiscated land, we do not know whose land it was prior to his occupation of it, and what had become of those communities and individuals that would have once viewed it as their own.

Frigento

The same Valgus, whose munificence contributed to the construction of the walls at Aeclanum,[69] was also one of the *quinquennales* who oversaw the creation of most of the public structures including the gates, forum, curia, cisterns, and a porticus at a *municipium* in the late Republican period, which may have been on the site of Frigento, where the inscription was found.[70] Bispham argues that Frigento was probably not a *municipium* but a *vicus* as it would have been too small to support a substantial settlement or the number of magistrates suggested by the inscriptions. Instead, he prefers the possibility that some of the inscriptions were brought to the site of Frigento for reuse from another nearby *municipium*.[71] Remains of this small but potentially important settlement lie some 10km south-east of Aeclanum. The location of the site was either near or right on the Via Appia and only a few kilometres from the Mefitis sanctuary at Rocca S. Felice. Early pottery from the site, dating to the fourth and third centuries BC, suggests some activity but it is unclear in what capacity; this is partly due to the limited accessibility to the ancient site, which has been superseded by a modern town.[72] In the surrounding territory, which stretches to the sanctuary at Rocca S. Felice, were found three of the Gracchan *termini*, but there is little evidence to suggest what activity was going on at the site itself at this time. Inscriptions and material provide evidence of occupation at Frigento in the latter half of the first century BC, but its status and extent is still uncertain.[73]

Melito Irpino

A similar distance from Aeclanum as Frigento but situated to the north are the remains of an ancient site at Melito Irpino, which was last investigated in the 1880s.[74] It is clear from

---

[68] Cic., *Leg. Agr.*3.8; 3.3: Salmon 1989: 230-231; Santangelo 2007: 72 n.21, 162

[69] See n.67 above. For discussion see: Colucci Pescatori 2000: 49.

[70] *ILLRP* 2.598: *C. Quinctius C. f. Valgus / L. Sepunius L. f. quinq(ue)n(nales) / murum portas forum / porticus curia(m) cisterna(m) / d(e) d(ecurionum) s(ententia) facie(ndum) curar(unt) ei(dem)q(ue) prob(arunt).* For discussion and text see Bispham 2007: 498, Q79. Other inscriptions from the late republican period include *praefecti*: *ILLRP* 2.600, and a *quattuorvir*: *ILLRP* 2.599.

[71] Bispham 2007: 303-04 echoes the scepticism of Colucci Pescatori 2000: 48-50, as to the nature of the site, which they both suggest was a *vicus,* at least in the period before Valgus' munificence.

[72] Colucci Pescatori 2000: 48-49.

[73] Bispham 2007: 303-04; Colucci Pescatori 2000: 48-50.

[74] Pecori 1880; Pecori 1881. I would like to thank Michael Crawford for bringing these site reports to my attention.

the early excavation reports that this was a significant settlement, perhaps covering some 20 hectares.[75] It is difficult to ascertain the precise chronological outline, but if, as suggested by Pecori,[76] the site is that of ancient Cluvia which resisted Rome in the Samnite wars, then we would expect it to date at least to the fourth century BC. For the moment this remains a very speculative interpretation[77] and the description of the material in the reports is not precise enough to identify the finds with this period. Evidence for the later period is much more conclusive. The remains of Oscan tile stamps,[78] Latin inscriptions, coins, as well as substantial Roman buildings including a bath complex, temples, and numerous tombs all attest to the prominence of the site in the Late Republican and Imperial periods.[79]

Flúmeri

Although these towns were the focus of rebuilding after the Social War, and some of them feature in historical narratives, in the current state of archaeological investigations we can gain a better insight into the regional situation between the Hannibalic and Social wars from the brief existence of a less well-known site at Fioccaglia di Flúmeri.[80] Here, in a plain fed by the Ufita river only 12km north-east of Aeclanum and 8km equidistant from Frigento and Melito Irpino, a small twelve hectare unfortified settlement was built *ex novo* in the second century BC. The site was well positioned in close proximity to, if not as argued by Camodeca, directly on two of the main routes in the region: the Via Appia and Via Aemilia.[81] From the narrow strip of the site that has been excavated it is possible to see that the settlement was organised around a regular street grid, which incorporated public buildings as well as high-class atrium houses.[82] The comfortable life of the residents may be ascertained from remains of architectural decorations similar to examples from Capua and Cumae, painted wall plaster, and also amphorae, some imported from as far afield as Cos.[83] More local workshops were used to supply pottery[84] and at least some of the building material, as suggested by the Oscan tile stamps.[85] Then, in the early first century BC,

---

[75] Pecori 1880: 483.

[76] Pecori 1880: 486-87.

[77] Oakley 2005a: 409, in reference to Cluvianum/Cluviae in Livy 9.31, prefers to see Piano di Laroma identified with the ancient site, following La Regina's suggestion.

[78] Pecori 1881: 328; *ST* tHi 1 = Crawford 2011, Hirpini/AECLANVM 12 Stamp (Vol. II, 970).

[79] Pecori 1880: 484.

[80] Johannowsky 1990; Johannowsky 1991a; Johannowsky 1991b.

[81] Camodeca 1997: 265, 268. Camodeca suggests that the Via Appia ran to the north via Grottaminarda and on to Flúmeri, before turning south to follow the Ufita valley. See also Johannowsky 1991a: 69.

[82] Johannowsky 1991b: 455, 461.

[83] Johannowsky 1991b: 455-57, 468.

[84] Johannowsky 1991b: 456.

[85] One such stamp in Oscan reads *mais.abutis*; Crawford 2011, Hirpini/AECLANVM 14 Stamp (Vol. II, 972). For others see Crawford 2011, Hirpini/AECLANVM 15-16 Stamp (Vol. II, 973-74). Latin stamps are also noted but only in a general context, Johannowsky 1991b: 465.

activity at the site stopped abruptly following its destruction by a fire, possibly during the Social War, either because it was a Roman or pro-Roman settlement or conversely because of harbouring anti-Roman factions, at the hands of Sulla when he laid siege to Aeclanum.

Appealing as one of these scenarios would be, the evidence is not precise enough to isolate the abandonment of the site conclusively to this or any other specific event. Nor can we definitively ascertain the circumstances under which the site was initially founded, especially considering the limited investigations. Johannowsky and Camodeca favour the argument that the site was a forum created as a centre for the Gracchan settlers who would have benefited from the land distribution of Roman *ager publicus*,[86] which is attested by the four *termini,* dated 130-129 BC, found in the nearby territory of Aeclanum.[87] But the archaeological material would also support a foundation date earlier in the century, perhaps when some of the Roman *ager publicus* was being consolidated in the 180s BC during the transfer of Ligures into the Ager Taurasinus, some 40km to the north.[88] Many theories could be drawn up as to why the site was never reoccupied and used to support either a pro-Roman or an anti-Roman narrative, but one reason must have been its proximity to the newly flourishing city of Aeclanum which was safer and had newly built fortification walls. This, however, does not explain why two other nearby settlements, possibly at Frigento (if it was indeed the home of Valgus' munificence) and Melito Irpino to the north, did have substantial growth in the period following the Social War. Whatever the initiative for Flúmeri's creation, whether Roman or Italian, it was clearly not a military outpost set up to control the local region. The apparent lack of fortifications suggests that the population was not anticipating any threat. This coupled with the high quality of life at the site and evidence of socio-economic interaction with surrounding communities, probably enhanced by the site's positioning near the Via Appia and Aemelia, suggests a stable atmosphere and good relations.

Reconstructing the historical landscape

This section brings together the settlement evidence described above and charts a possible scenario of events in central Hirpinia during the final two centuries BC following the Hannibalic War. From the archaeological remains and textual narratives we know that at least three settlements were active and flourishing in the middle of the second century BC: Aeclanum, where the epigraphic evidence indicates that members of the Magii *gens* had a prominent position (the centre also has evidence of Mefitis worship at a time when there is less evidence of cult activity at the sanctuary of Mefitis at Rocca S. Felice – which does resume in the following period); Flúmeri, the unfortified settlement created in this period with elite housing; Compsa, the community that positioned itself against Rome during the Hannibalic War, which may have been located at the site of Monte Oppido or already at Conza della Campania. The nature of the material and structures at these settlements, cumulatively, suggests an environment characterised by growth, stability, and investment.

[86] Johannowsky 1991b: 463-64; Camodeca 1997: 267.

[87] See n.28 above.

[88] Johannowsky 1991b: 461, tentatively considers the relationship of this settlement to the Ager Taurasinus. Livy 40.38: Briscoe 2008: 504-07.

Wealthy residences, of the kind created at Flúmeri[89] or the structures at Aeclanum adorned with intricate architectural terracottas,[90] were built incorporating the latest decorative styles. Such projects drew on peninsula-wide trends and local manufacturers for pottery and building materials, which is most notable from the remains of stamped tiles found at a number of sites in the area.[91] Perhaps the widespread evidence of Oscan tile stamps throughout the region, which may point to a number of successful manufacturing hubs, is a reflection of a building boom in this period.[92] If the preceding generation witnessed mass movements and other pressures in the wake of the Second Punic War, causing upheaval and uncertainty, by the middle decades of the second century BC such a sense of insecurity seems to have passed as communities adjusted to a new socio-political setting. Otherwise we would not expect members of the elite to choose to invest in building activity in this area and especially at sites created *ex novo* without substantial defenses.

Over the next few decades there are a number of prominent developments in the region, which may have created an imbalance leading to tensions that were strong enough to cause a significant impact on the life of the settlements and the interests of the elite within them. By the last decades of the second century BC the main road network around this region would have been consolidated centering on the Via Appia and the Via Annia (Popilia). Even if arguments remain as to how early in the century this process would have begun, there was clearly substantial activity around the 130s BC signified by the record of road construction on the inscription from Polla.[93] Alongside these developments there was reclamation and division of territory, led by Roman initiative, to which the Gracchan *termini* between Compsa and Aeclanum as well as in the Vallo di Diano are a testament. The territory around Abellinum may have also had a similar division and appropriation of land at this time. What happens next is difficult to pinpoint archaeologically, but the material remains do show a significant change in the period following the Social War.

At a number of sites there is continuous habitation with evidence of substantial building or rebuilding, particularly in the post-Sullan era. This is the case at Aeclanum where the Magii were a prominent *gens* who held high magisterial offices, along with others such as Quinctius Valgus, who in their positions as *quattuoviri* saw to the embellishment of the *municipium*.[94] Melito Irpino also undergoes a substantial reconstruction, as does Abellinum, where the new structures suggest a serious injection of funds and resources. At the same time the previously flourishing settlement of Flúmeri is

---

[89] See discussion above, pp. 22-23.

[90] Colucci Pescatori 1991: 99. See also discussion above, p.20.

[91] Abellinum – Crawford 2011, Hirpini/ABELLINVM 5-8 Stamp (Vol. II, 951-54); Melito Irpino - *ST* tHi 1 = Crawford 2011, Hirpini/AECLANVM 12 Stamp (Vol. II, 970); Aeclanum – *ST* tHi 2-3 = Crawford 2011, Hirpini/AECLANVM 7-8 Stamp (Vol. II, 965-66); Rocca S. Felice, Ampsanctus – *ST* tHi 6 = Crawford 2011, Hirpini/ABELLINVM 4 Stamp (Vol. II, 950); Flúmeri – Carwford 2011, Hirpini/AECLANVM 14-16 Stamp (Vol. II, 972-74).

[92] Currently there is work being done in this area which is now more widely available with the publication of Crawford 2011.

[93] *ILLRP* 454. See n.22 above.

[94] See n.110 below.

abandoned, while a centre may have been created at Frigento some 8km away on the Via Appia, perhaps to replace it. The nearby sanctuary of Rocca San Felice too must have had her patrons as there is evidence of cult activity again at the site. As for Compsa, if the site was previously at Oppido Monte then it could have been moved to Conza della Campania at this time where there is evidence of a new forum and building activity coinciding with the restructuring of the other sites in the first century BC.

The overarching impression, particularly from the archaeological evidence, is that of a period of cautious building and stability in the second century BC followed by signs of rapid changeover apparent through the destruction of some sites and the foundation of new ones, as well as intense building and re-building of settlements. It may be that the flourishing environment is what ironically made Roman impact in the late second century BC so inflammatory, but not in equal measure for all Italians of the region. If some groups did not lose out, or perhaps even benefited from Gracchan reclamation schemes, as a result of reciprocal alliances with Roman based elites, then we would expect there to have been increasing tensions within communities.[95]

As Santangelo and many before him point out, exploits in the Greek east, whether through military campaigns or merchant networks with Italian *negotiatores,* blurred the line between Roman and Italian long before Roman citizenship was extended to the peninsula in the first century BC.[96] There was an interdependence between the different nodes of power: Rome needed the support and knowledge of local elites to increase her empire, while they in turn used the powerful position of the city to realise their own ambitions. These were the foundations of the strategies implemented by Sulla that relied on, and enhanced, the influence of powerful local individuals.[97] We would expect influential Italians, who were not part of the *socii,* to have continued exercising their power by supporting their friends in Rome with whom their wealth was tied. The final section of this paper will consider the experience of such families, and the Magii in particular. Their story presents the varied contexts in which they wielded power and highlights the importance of distinguishing between the needs and expectations of Italians from those of the *socii* – a sub-group of the former.

Internal pressures and the story of the Magii

External pressures, primarily fuelled by Rome, did not have a blanket effect on the area as a whole, nor did they produce a coordinated region-wide response. Conflicting allegiances were already present in the Second Punic War and resulted in opposing courses of action. Livy, 23.1.1-4, describes how in the south Hirpinian town of Compsa members of the Mopsii family had fled with Roman help just in time for the rival faction*,* led by Statius Trebius, to hand over the city to the Carthaginians in 216 BC. Here Hannibal left his

---

[95] Mouritsen 1998: 145-50, discusses the difficulties that commissioners would have had in distinguishing boundaries between public and private land, and points out that the agrarian law which Drusus tried to institute in the early first century BC would not have affected all allies equally. Some Italian elite clearly supported him.

[96] Santangelo 2007: 25

[97] For a recent overveiw of Sullan strategy see Santangelo 2007.

booty and supplies before moving on to Capua, probably in an attempt to gain access to the port at Neapolis, so Livy says. By 214 BC, the Roman general Fabius Maximus had recaptured Compsa,[98] but as we will see from events over a century later, the anti-Roman sentiment persisted. Livy stresses such divisions within Italian communities on a number of occasions. In 23.4.5-8, early on in the Second Punic War, he records in some detail the struggles between different groups in the city and within individual families that finally culminated in the decision to hand over Capua to Hannibal. Neither bonds of friendship, intermarriage, nor even those between fathers and sons prevented members from supporting opposing sides. We may question the extent but not the authenticity of internal divisions described by Livy, who may have exaggerated them to suit his narrative and justify Roman action. Some of his sources must have included well known characters – such as the pro-Roman Decius Magius[99] – additional details would have come from his contemporaries, whose Italian ancestors were rewarded for their support and achieved high positions and magistracies in Rome.

One such descendant was the author Velleius Paterculus who wrote with pride of his pro-Roman ancestor Minatius Magius.[100] The continuing allegiance of members of the Magii family to the Roman side, even when it meant going against their fellow countrymen, earned them tribute in other ancient narratives as well.[101] Some of the Magii may have originated from Capua where we first hear of their actions, but there are also individuals with the same *nomen* who are prominently attested at Aeclanum both in texts and on inscriptions which point to their ongoing wealth and high status as Italy came under Roman hegemony. The earliest extant reference is to the Capuan Decius Magius who is mentioned within Livy's narrative of the Hannibalic war.[102] His story reads a bit like a human-interest piece, and even if we are unlikely to believe the details of his adventures, there is no reason to doubt the validity of the conflicting opinions that it represents and the context of events. It tells of Decius' refusal to support a treaty between Capua and the Carthaginians when in 216 BC the city was handed over to Hannibal. As a result the Capuan senate had to allow his imprisonment by Hannibal, but he managed to escape and take refuge in Alexandria under the protection of Ptolemy. It is questionable whether the anti-Roman Gnaeus Magius of Atella, *medix tuticus* in 214 BC,[103] was not only an opponent but also a relation of Decius.[104] The Magii of Aeclanum may not have

---

[98] Livy 24.20.5

[99] Decius Magius is a key character in Livy's narrative of events, 23.7-10, and his name must have been proverbial for Cicero to use it in his speech against Piso: Cic., *Pison.* 24.

[100] Vell. Pat., 2.16.1-3. See Sumner for discussion of Velleius Paterculus tradition: Sumner 1970: 257-65.

[101] Individuals with the same *nomen* are mentioned in a number of ancient narratives: Livy 23.7-10; 24.19.1-3; Cic., *Cluent.* 21; 33; *Pison.* 24. For complete textual references see *Der Neue Pauly* Vol. 7, 1999: 683-86.

[102] Livy 23.7-10, with discussion in Sumner 1970: 257-58.

[103] Livy 24.19.1.

[104] Sumner argues that the *nomen* is not enough to support a familial relationship: Sumner 1970: 258, n.6.

been direct descendants of the Capuan Decius, as claimed by Velleius Paterculus,[105] but they were the key figures on the pro-Roman side during the Social War.

The pre-war prominence of the Magii in Aeclanum is signified by the two Oscan inscriptions noted earlier, which carry the name of the *gens*, found just outside the site of the ancient centre near modern Mirabella Eclano at Passo di Mirabella. One is on a limestone block which records the act of building by Gavis Magiis Flakís son of Pakis,[106] the other is a dedication on an altar to Mefitis just outside the east gate of the city by Siviiú Magiú, a female member of the *gens*.[107] These may have been the ancestors of the better known Minatius Magius who, according to Velleius, led a legion of Hirpinians he had himself recruited as part of Sulla's contingents helping the Roman commander take Herculaneum, besiege Pompeii, and occupy the Hirpinian town of Compsa.[108] The epigraphic and textual evidence suggests that members of the Magii family held high positions in Aeclanum and commanded enough wealth and power to raise troops to aid Rome during the Social War. This, however, did not mean that the town populace supported the Roman cause – in fact the opposite seems to be true. Appian, *BC* 1.51, records that Sulla in 89 BC attacked Minatius' hometown of Aeclanum which was clearly anti-Roman and awaiting the help of Lucanian troops when the Roman contingent besieged the city and burnt down the wooden walls.

In the case of the Magii, and the Mopsii of Compsa, as well as other members of the Italian elite, allegiance was not necessarily determined by ties to ethnic or place-based community. The choice behind a certain course of action was instead based on networks that stretched horizontally, incorporating individuals and groups of similar status and aspiration through which ambitions could be realized. Evidence from the following centuries shows that the Magii did well to side with their friends in Rome. Velleius proudly records that Minatius was rewarded for his allegiance by the praetorship for his sons in Rome when the number of those elected was still confined to six, that is before Sulla extended the number of praetors to eight in 81 BC.[109] The continuing importance of the Magii, in part upheld by the Roman patronage that they received in the post-war period, is also attested by the two Latin inscriptions from Aeclanum. A late Republican text records a Marcus Magius Surus, son of Minatius, as one of the *quattuorviri* responsible for rebuilding the town's fortifications with the support of Gaius Quinctius

---

[105] Vell. Pat. 2.16.1-3.

[106] *ST* Hi 1 = Crawford 2011, Hirpini/AECLANVM 4 (Vol. II, 961). The inscription in Oscan is: *g(a)v(is). magiis. p(a)k(ie í s). flakís. famatted:* Gavis Magiis Flakís son of Pak. ordered (the making of this).

[107] *ST* Hi 4 = Crawford 2011, Hirpini/AECLANVM 3 (Vol. II, 959). The inscription in Oscan is: *[-?-] siviiú. magiú. [-?-] mefit(ei)[-?-]*.

[108] Vell. Pat. 2.16.1-3.

[109] Vell. Pat. 2.16.1-3. The two sons may have been a P. Magius and a M. Magius, who could have held the praetorship in early 81 BC or several years prior to that date: Brennan 2000: 391, 748, 913 note 302. For the Late Republican careers of the Magii; Sumner 1970: 260; Santangelo 2007: 72, n.18.

Valgus.[110] It is possible, judging from the dating of the inscription in the decades following the Social War, that Marcus' father was the Minatius who was mentioned as aiding Sulla's cause in 89 BC. Somewhat more speculatively we may wonder whether the reason that new walls were needed was because the old wooden ones were burnt down during the siege of the city by the Roman forces under Sulla's command. There is no indication of what happened to the anti-Roman faction's supporters from Aeclanum, but they clearly did not stand in the way of these leading families. An inscription of the Augustan period notes that a member of the *gens*, a Marcus Magius Maximus, gained the highly-sought-after position of *praefectus* of Egypt.[111]

The story of the Magii, although obscure, still clearly shows the ability of individual members of this and other elite Italian families to withstand their opponents and use their influence to raise troops and gain support. But the reason we hear about the Magii in ancient narratives is precisely because they were in conflict with other powerful groups who did not seem to share their vision of a Roman-led Italy. The names and activities of these rival leaders are less well known to us as their praises were not sung in equal measure by historians. We therefore cannot be sure of what their grievances may have been, nor can we take at face value the exaggerated negative characterization of their inherent nature presented by ancient authors.[112]

Concluding narrative

In the period preceding the Social War, some of the Italian elite were content to see their increasing status and wealth spearheaded by Rome, or rather, to align their interests with those of the elite framework which centered on Rome. Other influential Italians, perhaps naively, may have had aspirations of regaining a more autonomous position as true allies, which they probably felt they already were, and operating within elite networks that would have run in parallel to those based in Rome. The historical narrative clearly supports the presence of powerful Italian players on both sides who could wield authority that did not have to be rooted in their own communities, as clearly illustrated by the members of the Magii from Aeclanum.

This paper does not solve the problem of what were the grievances or aims of the *socii* in the first century BC. It reconstructs the archeo-historical context of one region where there is evidence of pressures, both external and internal, that may have led to tensions within communities and strained relations between some Italians and Rome, particularly at the time of the Gracchi. At the same time these very same conditions could have acted to strengthen ties between Rome and other Italian elites, such as the Magii, for whom the Social War provided an opportunity to enhance power and create stronger alliances, not to

---

[110] *ILLRP* 2.523 = *ILS* 5318, *CIL* I(2) 1722: *C.Quinctius C.f. Valg(us), patron(us) munic(ipii), / M.Magi(us) Min(ati) f. Surus A.Patlacius Q.f. / IIIIvir(i) d(e) s(enatus) s(ententia) portas turreis moiros / turreisque aequas qum moiro / faciundum coiraverunt:* For discussion and text see Bispham 2007: 270-1; 476, Q12. For Valgus see also above pp. 20-21.

[111] *ILS* 1335 = *CIL* IX 1125.

[112] See for example the loose living, power hungry, and debauched characterization of the anti-Roman Pacuvius Calavius in Livy's narrative of Capua's decision to side with Hannibal: 23.1-7.

mention showcase their existing potential. The fact that these competing groups of elites would have been culturally similar, as they appear in the archaeological record, or that later authors would write their narratives of events employing homogenising ethnic categories to distinguish between the 'rebel' *socii,* and Roman allies, does not mean that such issues of identity were a determining factor when it came to allegiance.

Most of the settlements in Hirpinia that flourished after the Social War were given the status of *municipia*. Of these, Aeclanum may have been in a category of its own, since we know that when Italians became Roman citizens after 90 BC, the communities in Hirpinia were primarily inscribed in the voting tribe of Galeria, while Aeclanum was inscribed in the Cornelia tribe.[113] According to Salmon this privileged position was the result of the town's pro-Roman element in the form of the Magii, despite Aeclanum's refusal to join the Roman cause.[114] If being inscribed in the Cornelia tribe did indicate a position of privilege then it needs to be seen in the context of the high status of the Magii and their allegiance to the Roman based elite network and not the loyalty of the community as a whole. As for the rebuilding and prosperity of settlements across Italy during the Augustan Age, the rapid turn around suggests that it was a delayed continuation of what had already begun in the mid-second century BC, but now re-oriented around different players and in some cases around new sites.

Bibliography

Barbera, M. and Rea, R. 1994. *Compsa e l'alta valle dell'Ofanto: contributi per una carta archeologica dell'Irpinia*. Rome.

Bispham, E. 2007. *From Asculum to Actium: the municipalization of Italy from the Social War to Augustus*. Oxford and New York.

Bonifacio, R. 2001. 'I materiali votivi del santuario in località Macchia Porcara di Casalbore', *Ostraka* 10: 207-25.

Bottini, A., Isnenghi Colazzo, S. and Rainini, I. 1976. 'Valle d'Ansanto, Rocca S. Felice (Avellino) – il deposito votivo del santuario di Mefite', *NSc* 30: 359-524.

Brennan, C. T. 2000. *The praetorship in the Roman Republic*. Oxford.

Briscoe, J. 1973. *A commentary on Livy, Books 31-33*. Oxford.

Briscoe, J. 2008. *A commentary on Livy, Books 38-40*. Oxford.

Camodeca, G. 1996. 'Istituzioni e società', in G. Pescatori Colucci (ed.), *Storia illustrata di Avellino e dell'Irpinia: L'Irpinia antica*: 177-92. Avellino.

Camodeca, G. 1997. 'M. Aemilius Lepidus, cos. 126 a.C., le assegnazioni graccane e la via Aemilia in Hirpinia', *ZPE* 115: 263-70.

Campbell, B. 2000. *The writings of the Roman land surveyors: introduction, text, translation, and commentary*. London.

[113] Taylor 1960: 92, 111, 310.

[114] Salmon 1989: 232-03; Santangelo 2007: 71.

Chouquer, G. *et al.* 1987. *Structures agraires en Italie centro-méridionale. Cadastres et paysages ruraux* (Collection de l'École Française de Rome 100). Rome.

Colucci Pescatori, G. 1975. *Il Museo Irpino*. Cava dei Tirreni.

Colucci Pescatori, G. 1991. 'Evidenze archeologiche in Irpinia', in *La Romanisation du Samnium aux IIe et Ier siècles av. J.C.* (Actes du colloque: Naples, Centre Jean Bérard, 4-5 Novembre 1988): 85-122. Naples.

Colucci Pescatori, G. 2000. '*Municipium, aliunde, ignotum:* Frigento in età romana', in *Studi sull'Italia dei Sanniti*: 47-55. Milan and Rome.

Crawford, M. H. 2011. *Imagines Italicae*. London.

de Cazanove, O. 2003. 'Le lieu de culte de Méfitis dans les vallées d'Ampsanctus: des sources documentaires hétérogènes', in J. Scheid and O. de Cazanove (eds), *Sanctuaires et sources dans l'antiquité: les sources documentaires et leurs limites dans la description des lieux de culte: actes de la table ronde, Naples, Centre Jean Bérard, 30 novembre* (Collection du Centre Jean Bérard 22): 145-79. Naples.

Della Portella, I., *et al.* (eds) 2004. *The Appian Way: from its foundation to the Middle Ages*. Los Angeles.

Gabba, E. 1994. *Italia Romana* (Biblioteca di Athenaeum 25). Como.

Gangemi, G. 1996a. 'L'Irpinia in età sannitica. Gli Irpini', In G. Pescatori Colucci (ed.), *Storia illustrata di Avellino e dell'Irpinia: L'Irpinia antica*: 49-64. Avellino.

Gangemi, G. 1996b. 'L'Irpinia in età sannitica. Le testimonianze archeologiche', in G. Pescatori Colucci (ed.), *Storia illustrata di Avellino e dell'Irpinia: L'Irpinia antica*: 65-80. Avellino.

Gargola, D. J. 1995. *Lands, laws, and gods: magistrates and ceremony in the regulation of public lands in Republican Rome*. Chapel Hill and London.

Giampaola, D. 1994. 'Benevento', in *Enciclopedia dell'arte antica, classica e orientale* (second supplement, 1971-1994): 658-61. Rome.

Giampaola, D. 2000. 'Benevento: dal centro indigeno alla colonia latina', in *Studi sull'Italia dei Sanniti*: 36-46. Milan and Rome.

Isayev, E. 2007. *Inside ancient Lucania: dialogues in history and archaeology*. London.

Isayev E. 2010. 'Unintentionally being Lucanian: dynamics beyond hybridity', in S. Hales and T. Hodos (eds), *Material culture and social identities in the ancient world*: 201-226. Cambridge.

Isayev, E. 2011. 'Corfinium and Rome: changing place in the Social War', in M. Gleba and H. W. Horsnaes (eds), *Communicating identity in Italic Iron Age communities*: 210-22. Oxford.

Johannowsky, W. 1991a. 'Circello, Casalbore e Flumeri nel quadro della romanizzazione dell'Irpinia', in *La romanisation du Samnium aux IIe et Ier siècles av. J.C.* (Actes du colloque: Naples, Centre Jean Bérard, 4-5 Novembre 1988): 57-84. Naples.

Johannowsky, W. 1991b. 'Insediamento urbano tardoellenistico nella valle dell'Ufita', *PP* 46: 452-68.

Johannowsky, W. 1990. 'L'abitato tardo-ellenistico a Fioccaglia di Flumeri e la romanizzazione dell'Irpinia', in M. Salvatore (ed.), *Basilicata: L'espansionismo romano nel sud-est d'Italia. Il quadro archeologico* (Atti del Convegno, Venosa 1987): 269-279. Venosa.

Johannowsky, W. 2001. 'Ricerche sull'insediamento sannitico a Casalbore', *Ostraka* 10: 227-39.

Johannowsky, W. 2004. 'Materiale di età arcaica e classica da Rufrae, S. Agata dei Goti, Circello, Casalbore, Carife, Castel Baronia, Bisaccia, Morra di Santis', in D. Caiazza (ed.), *Safinim. Studi in onore di Adriano La Regina per il premio I Sanniti*: 275-311. Piedimonte Matese.

Johannowsky, W. 2006. 'Note preliminari sulla situazione etnica e culturale in età arcaica tra Campania, Irpinia e Lucania', in D. Caiazza (ed.), *Samnitice loqui: studi in onore di Aldo Prosdocimi per il premio I Sanniti*: 289-96. Alife and Piedimonte Matese.

Kajava, M. and Solin, H. 1997. 'Schede e notizie: le iscrizioni aliene del Museo Irpino', *Epigraphica* 59: 311-51.

Keay, S., Millett, M. *et al.* 2000. 'Falerii Novi: a new survey of the walled area', *PBSR* 68: 1-93.

Keppie, L. 1983. *Colonisation and veteran settlement in Italy, 47-14 B.C.* London.

Laurence, R. 1999. *The roads of Roman Italy : mobility and cultural change*. London.

Luschi, L. 2005. 'Per L'etimologia di Mefitis', in D. Caiazza (ed.), *Italica Ars: studi in onore di Giovanni Colonna per il premio I Sanniti*: 109-28. Alife and Piedimonte Matese.

Mouritsen, H. 1998. *Italian unification: a study in ancient and modern historiography*. London.

Nagle, D. B. 1973. 'An allied view of the Social War', *AJA* 77.4: 367-78.

Oakley, S. P. 2005a. *A commentary on Livy, Books VI–X. Vol. III, Book IX*. Oxford.

Oakley, S. P. 2005b. *A commentary on Livy, Books VI–X. Vol. IV, Book X*. Oxford.

Onorato, G. O. 1960. *La ricerca archeologica in Irpinia*. Avellino.

Pailler, J.-M. 1987. 'Enceinte, métrologie et politique, Volsinii, colonie romaine au début du IIe siècle av. J.-C.?', *MÉFRA* 99: 529-34.

Pais, E. 1923. *Storia della colonizzazione di Roma antica*, vol. 1. Rome.

Patterson, J. R. 1993. 'Review article. Reviewed works: *L'Ipogeo dei Vimini di Canosa* by E. M. De Juliis; *Paestum: Greeks, and Romans in Southern Italy* by J. G. Pedley; *La Civita di Artena: Scavi Belgi 1979-1989* by R. Lambrechts; *Archeologia dei Messapi: Catalogo della Mostra Lecce, Museo Provinciale 'Sigismondo Castromediano', 7 Ottobre 1990-7 Gennaio 1991* by F. D'Andria; *La Daunia nell'Eta della Romanizzazione: Paesaggio Agrario, Produzione, Scambi* by G. Volpe; *Un Cadastre de Pierre: Le Salento Romain: Paysage et Structures Agraires* by R. Compatangelo; *Todi: Forma e Urbanistica* by M. Tascio', *JRS* 83: 189-93.

Pecori, G. 1880. 'Melito', *Atti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei, NSc* 483-87.

Pecori, G. 1881. 'Melito', *Atti della Reale Accademia dei Lincei, NSc* 324-29.

Pescatori Colucci, G. 1996a. 'Abellinum Romana I', in G. Pescatori Colucci (ed.), *Storia illustrata di Avellino e dell'Irpinia: L'Irpinia antica*: 97-112. Avellino.

Pescatori Colucci, G. 1996b. 'Aeclanum romana: storia di una città', in G. Pescatori Colucci (ed.), *Storia illustrata di Avellino e dell'Irpinia: L'Irpinia antica*: 225-40. Avellino.

Poccetti, P. 2005. 'Mefitis rivisitata (vent'anni dopo…)', in D. Caiazza (ed.), *Italica Ars: studi in onore di Giovanni Colonna per il premio I Sanniti*: 73-108. Alife and Piedimonte Matese.

Quilici, L. and Quilici-Gigli, S. (eds) 1994. *Strade romane: percorsi e infrastrutture*. Rome.

Quilici, L. and Quilici-Gigli, S. (eds) 1996. *Strade romane: ponti e viadotti*. Rome.

Quilici, L. and Quilici-Gigli, S. (eds) 2003. *La Via Appia: iniziative e interventi per la conoscenza e la valorizzazione da Roma a Capua*. Rome.

Quilici, L. and Quilici-Gigli, S. (eds) 2004. *Viabilità e insediamenti nell'Italia antica*. Rome.

Rainini, I. 1985. *Il santuario di Mefite in Valle d'Ansanto*. Rome.

Rainini, I. 1996. 'Il santuario di Mefite nella Valle d'Ansanto', in G. Pescatori Colucci (ed.), *Storia illustrata di Avellino e dell'Irpinia: L'Irpinia antica*: 81-96. Avellino.

Rives, J. 1994. 'Venus Genetrix outside Rome', *Phoenix* 48.4: 294-306.

Romito, M. 1986. 'Morra De Sanctis', in *Neapolis: Atti del Venticinquesmo Convegno di studi sulla Magna Grecia: Taranto, 3-7 ottobre 1985*: 533-34. Taranto.

Salmon, E. T. 1989. 'The Hirpini: 'ex Italia semper aliquid novi'', *Phoenix* 43.3: 225-35.

Santangelo, F. 2007. *Sulla, the elites, and the empire: a study of Roman policies in Italy and the Greek east*. Leiden and Boston.

Sgobbo, I. 1930. 'Mirabella Eclano – monumenti epigrafici oschi scoperti ad Aeclanum', *NSc* 8: 400-11.

Sumner, G. V. 1970. 'The truth about Velleius Paterculus: Prolegomena', *HSCP* 74: 257-97.

Tagliamonte, G. 1996. *I Sanniti: caudini, irpini, pentri, carricini, frentani*. Milan.

Taylor, L. R. 1960. *The voting districts of the Roman Republic: the thirty-five urban and rural tribes*. Rome.

Torelli, M. R. 2002. *Benevento Romana*. Rome.

Uggeri, G. 2001. 'Le divisioni agrarie di età graccana: un bilancio', in S. Alessandrì and F. Grelle (eds), *Dai Gracchi alla fine della Repubblica*: 31-60. Galatina.

Wiseman, T. P. 1987. *Roman studies. Literary and historical.* Liverpool and Wolfeboro, NH.

DE-CONSTRUCTING ETHNIC IDENTITIES:
BECOMING ROMAN IN WESTERN CISALPINE GAUL?

RALPH HÄUSSLER

Ethnicities as constructed identities

The western area of Cisalpine Gaul provides an interesting case scenario to explore methodological problems regarding issues of identity and ethnicity in the second half of the first millennium BC on the basis of the available archaeological, literary, and linguistic evidence.[1] In an area with many long-distance contacts across the Apennines, Alps, and along the Po Valley, the question arises how the various forms of cultural interaction were shaping people's sense of identity. One major concern is, of course, the nature of our evidence. To what extent do pottery types, imported luxury products, funerary rituals, coinage, writing, language, and religion really inform us about issues of ethnicity? Artefact assemblages, for example, seem to change constantly and significant changes that indicate new developments regarding self-identity need to be identified. The second problem concerns the role of external factors in this process. What impact did the Celtic 'invasion' – allegedly in 396 or 388 BC – and subsequent Roman domination really have on people's identity?[2] Another issue concerns the development and nature of these identities: was there ever anything like a 'Ligurian' or 'Celtic' identity in Cisalpine Gaul? In this context, the term 'Celtic' is a convenient shorthand to describe people who wrote and spoke a Celtic language and used artefacts and practices of Transalpine origin. We also have to explore the heterogeneous and geographically diverse character of local ethnicities and the way how these identities evolved when '*ethne*' became Roman-style municipalities.

The most difficult task is to relate the available sources with issues of ethnicity. Our evidence allows us to establish the features of a *cultural* identity – a modern construct which contemporary people might not even have been aware of. Ethnic and cultural identities do not necessarily overlap: modern case-studies have shown that there might be different ethnicities with cultural differences between them being negligible, and *vice versa*, there may be a common ethnic identity despite cultural differences.[3] In addition, every individual has several identities reflecting his relationship to the local community and his adherence to specific social groups.[4]

---

[1] *Cf.* Häussler 2007. All dates are BC unless otherwise stated.

[2] 390 BC: Livy 5.33; 388 BC (Pol. 2.17); 396 BC: Pliny, *NH* 3.21, attributing it to the same day as the Roman conquest of Veii.

[3] *Cf.* Luce 2007: 17 for examples and bibliography; also Barth 1969.

[4] Also see Morgan 2003 for the heterogeneous character and the multitude of identities.

The main problem is that ethnic identities are artificial social constructs, referring to a shared experience.[5] Already for Barth, they are based on subjective, not objective elements: ethnicity is perpetually negotiated and renegotiated by both external ascription and internal self-identification. Important aspects are a common myth of ancestry and a history which all members share;[6] more questionable is the need for a common culture and a specific territory,[7] since cultural 'boundaries' can of course diverge and because societies based on aspects like kinship, migration, and nomadism also develop an ethnic identity. For Smith, *éthnie* are above all historical communities built up on shared memories.[8] Certain aspects of common ancestry are repeatedly stated in our ancient sources, like the alleged Transalpine origin of many Cisalpine peoples and constructed mythological ancestry, integrating people for instance into Hercules' mythological passage across the Alps. Our sources largely deny us information on indigenous aspects of local mythological creation, but it seems that Graeco-Roman mythology was employed by locals to shape their own identity in north-west Italy.[9] We also need to consider the role of sanctuaries, like Briona and Vercelli, as 'geósymboles' and markers of appropriation of land, creating a common identity.[10] This is especially important if we consider the profound changes to the socio-political landscape in the fourth to first centuries when 'chiefdom' societies[11] developed into states, then into *coloniae latinae*, and finally into *municipia* – as a result, the élites of these emerging territorial entities developed new identities and new symbols of power.

Identity and external factors

In the first 200 years after the Roman conquest, Rome was far away for many Cisalpine communities and people focused instead on other economic, religious, social, and religious centres, like Milan, Marseille, and Genoa.[12] Rome may however have shaped local identities by unilaterally defining ethnic and territorial units, for example for reasons of taxation and her demand of manpower. Another important issue is the legal relationship with Rome that defines individual and collective status: for example, in the second century, Cisalpine Gauls and notably the Insubres were excluded from Roman citizenship by *foedus*-stipulations,[13] which does not favour the creation of a Roman or pan-Italian identity in northern Italy. The situation changed when north-west Italy acquired Latin rights in 89 (under the *lex*

---

[5] *Cf.* Barth 1969.

[6] Smith 1986: 25.

[7] Assumed by Smith 1986: 25.

[8] Smith 1986: 2; for Hall (1997: 182) ethnic identity differs from other identities because of its historic dimension; Hall 2002 also focuses on cultural criteria.

[9] Malkin (1998) shows how mythology not only creates one's own identity, but also the identity of other people.

[10] Sanctuaries in early Greece may have performed a similar function; for the term 'geósymbole', *cf.* Agusta-Boularot *et al.* 2010.

[11] For the terminology of tribe, chiefdom, and state, *cf.* Häussler 2000.

[12] Thus turning the centre-periphery model upside down: Häussler 2000; 2007.

[13] Cic., *Balb.* 14.32.

Pompeia)[14] and Roman citizenship in 49, making possible the participation and integration of locals in Italy-wide socioeconomic networks, especially since the grant of *ius Latii* was carried out by turning indigenous communities into Latin colonies without colonists.[15] Such Roman-style municipalities weakened existing patterns of social organisation: archaeologically this is mirrored in rapidly changing, often discrepant identities. The subsequent incorporation of Cisalpine Gauls into a (legally) unified Roman citizen body is not the end of the integration process, but further catalysed the development of new identities. More than ever, the status of an individual or a community was now based on Roman perceptions: Roman symbols of power therefore acquired meaning as local élites aspired to Roman lifestyle while internalising Roman values which now increasingly motivated their actions. Ethnic identities thus developed into municipal identities.

A geography of ethnicity

Different regions reflect distinct societal, economic, and cultural patterning. The major lines of communication follow the river valleys (Po, Ticino, Tanaro) and a selected number of Alpine and Apennine passes; much of our archaeological evidence is centred around these routes and in particular the Aosta Valley, the Lago Maggiore,[16] the Lomellina (at the confluence of Ticino and Po), and the Scrivia valley. Human activity appears to be archaeologically more visible in eastern Piedmont and Lombardy; in western Piedmont, settlements, cemeteries, and imported artefacts are comparatively rare down to the first century BC.[17] Though communities along the Ligurian coast can be expected to be more 'cosmopolitan' by profiting from Mediterranean trade, this was mainly the case for Genoa,[18] which seems to start off in *c*.525 as an Etruscan trading place to open up trade across the Apennines, but 'going native' from the fourth century, at least in its material culture, developing into Strabo's 'emporion of the Ligurians'.[19]

In the sixth to fifth centuries, much of our area of study, especially the Po Valley, was under Etruscan 'influence'.[20] The alleged Celtic invasion in *c*.388 caused a rupture to Cisalpine societies[21] and the Gallic sack of Rome in 387 BC initiated Rome's conquest of Cisalpine Gaul, starting with the submission of the Senones and the foundation of Sena Gallica in 283. The defeat of the Insubres in 222 – and again after the Second Punic Wars

---

[14] Pliny, *NH* 3.138; Asconius (*in Pisonem* 3) only mentions the *Transpadani*, but native communities in Cispadana also acquired Latin rights and not citizenship.

[15] Asconius, *in Pisonem* 3: *Pompeius enim non novis colonis eas constituit sed veteribus incolis manentibus ius dedit Latii.*

[16] These were already important passageways for Transalpine trade in the Golasecca period. Häussler 2000; 2007; De Marinis 1991.

[17] De Marinis 1977; Piana Agostinetti 1988.

[18] *Cf.* Melli 1996; 2004.

[19] Gambari and Venturino Gambari 1987; Milanese 1987: 304-05; Strabo 4.6.1; 5.1.3

[20] Colonna 2004; De Marinis 1988; Malnati and Manfredi 1991; for Piedmont *cf.* Gambari 1989b.

[21] Häussler 2007.

in 196/194[22] – caused the political integration of much of north-west Italy. Yet our area of study was only marginally affected by Roman imperialism compared to the intense colonisation in the eastern half of the Po Valley and we need to assess Rome's 'real' impact in the region in order to understand the forging of new local identities. In the first century BC we can recognise a very complex picture regarding the development of material culture, urbanism, and funerary habits, but only in the Principate do we seem to be dealing with a different geography of change whereby all parts of north-west Italy, however remote, would be interacting, at least economically, with both Italy and the Roman provinces.

Pre-Roman ethnicities

External descriptions of ethnicity

> As for the Alps ... many tribes (*éthnê*) occupy these mountains, all Celtic (*keltikà*) except the Ligurians; but while these Ligurians belong to a different people (*heteroethneis*), still they are similar to the Celts in their modes of life (*bíois*) (Strabo 2.5.28).

Ancient and modern scholarship often focuses on two ethnic entities: Gauls and Ligurians. Some consider the *Ligures* to be one of the great people of antiquity with 'la grande Liguria' said to cover most of north-west Italy and the entire Mediterranean hinterland between Etruria and the Iberian Peninsula.[23] But to talk about a Ligurian *ethnos* is as controversial as Celtic ethnicity.[24] It will be argued that Ligurian and Celtic/Gaulish do not represent pre-Roman ethnicities, but external creations by Greeks and Romans. Similarly the countless 'tribal' names, which make up the complex ethnic patchwork, might have been shaped in response to Roman imperialism, both in the periods of warfare and conquest and subsequently by Roman administrative measures, initiating and catalysing processes of ethnogenesis by which a social group demarcated themselves as ethnically distinct.[25] This process depends on geographical location of particular groups and on interaction with their neighbours. We also need to take into account pre-conquest socioeconomic structures,[26] since indicators for ethnicity may result from the need for emerging state societies to define their territory and their authority by symbols of power which may explain, for example, the strong cultural identity for the Insubrian territory. Most ethnic names in north-west Italy (Fig. 1) are only known from Graeco-Roman authors, especially Cato, Polybius, Livy, Strabo, and Pliny.[27] Only few survive into the Principate, especially as municipal identities, while others are only attested once: does this reflect short-lived identities, changing identities, or merely Roman confusion about the self-definition of other peoples?

[22] Pol. 2.17f; Livy 21-34.

[23] Morandi 2003: 43.

[24] *Cf.* Garcia 2004, 13-25; Morandi 2003; Iasbez 2000.

[25] Hill 1996.

[26] *Cf.* Häussler 2000; 2007.

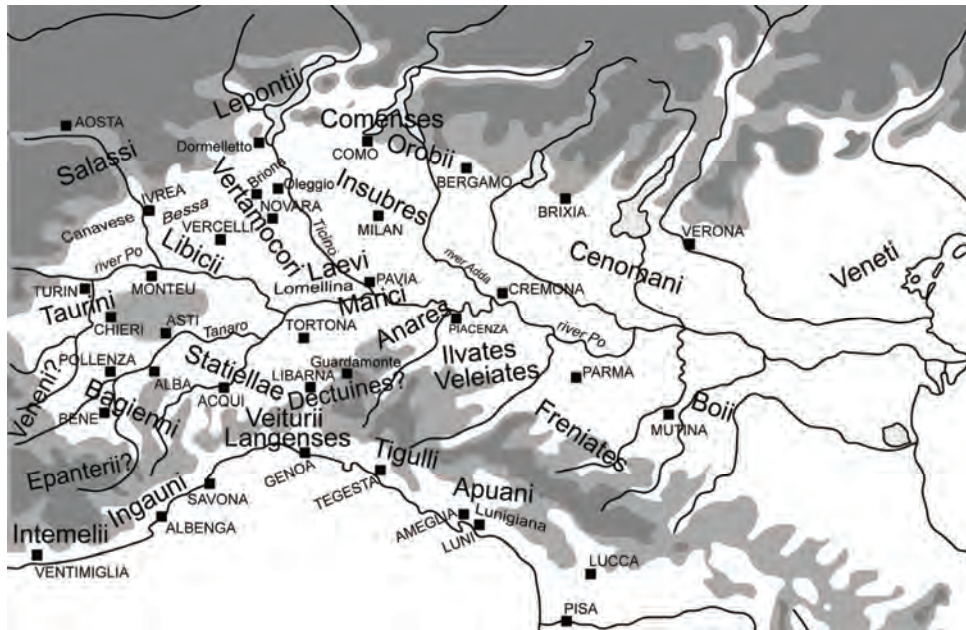[27] Williams 2001: 19-35; Lomas 2007.

Fig. 1 Map of the *éthnies* attested in north-west Italy

The Ligurian-Celtic distinction is a Graeco-Roman construct to categorise local *ethne* as belonging to one or the other 'ethnos', whereby Celtic generally refers to 'newcomers' compared to the 'autochthonous' Ligurian inhabitants. But ethnic perceptions vary: for Polybius, the battle of Trebbia took place *en tè kéltiké*, for Livy it was in Liguria.[28] Ancient authors synonymously use terms like *ethnos, natio* and *gentes*. Livy, for example, reports of a 'council of the Gauls and Ligurians, the two *gentes* of which the large population of that country was composed.' But who exactly are the Ligurians prior to Augustus' creation of the *regio IX Liguria*?[29] The term was first employed by Hecateus,[30] *c.*500 BC, for the indigenous neighbours of Massalia. Greek accounts, like that of Poseidonios, are mythical and ethnographic,[31] but also relatively positive, stressing their virtues and physical force. Some of the Roman accounts are negative, especially those written during the second-century conquest period, focussing on their shiftiness and deceitfulness;[32] positive traits are mentioned after their integration into Augustan Italy.[33]

[28] Pol. 3.77.3; Livy 21.59.10.

[29] Livy 29.5.3. On Ligurians, *cf.* Bats and Tréziny 1986; Garcia 2004; *DNP* 7, s.v. 'Ligures, Liguria' (A. Bertinelli, M. Gabriella); De Marinis 2004.

[30] *Timaeus* 56.

[31] *FGrH* 87 F 58a (Poseidonius); Justin 43.3.13; 43.4.9. Justin 43.5.1 is semi-mythical.

[32] Verg., *Aen*. 11.690: 'like a true Ligurian, born to cheat'; Cato, *Orig.* fr. 31 *HRR*.

[33] *E.g.*, Verg., *Aen*. 10, 185-197.

Liguria seems to be composed of numerous *ethne* (tribes, bands, communities, lineages), most of which are only attested once or twice, for example in Livy's account of the Roman conquest:

> On this side the Apennines there had been the Garuli, the Lapicini and the Hergates; on the other side the Briniates. P. Mucius made war on those who had ravaged Luna and Pisae, and after completely subjugating them deprived them of their arms (Livy 41.19).

Garuli, Lapicini, and Hergates lived somewhere south of the Apennines. The *Briniates trans Apenninum* are probably identical to the Freniates who were defeated by C. Flaminius and M. Aemilius in 187 BC and probably occupied the area between Lucca and Modena.[34] Pliny also lists numerous *ethne* in his *Naturalis Historiae,* largely following a west to east orientation north and south of the Apennines, though not all peoples can be easily identified, while other 'Ligurian' *ethne* are linguistically Celtic, like Eburiates and Caturiges ('rois du combats').[35]

> The more celebrated of the Ligurians beyond the Alps are the Salluvii, the Deciates, and the Oxubii; on this side of the Alps, the Veneni, and the Vagienni [=Bagienni], who are derived from the Caturiges, the Statielli, the Bimbelli[36], the Magelli, the Euburiates, the Casmonates, the Veleiates, and the peoples whose towns we shall describe as lying near the adjoining coast. The river Rutuba, the *oppidum* Album Intemelium, the river Merula, the *oppidum* Album Ingaunum, the port of Vadum Sabatiorum, the river Porcifera, the *oppidum* Genua, the river Feritor, the Portus Delphini, Tigullia, Tegesta of the Tigullii, and the river Macra, which is the boundary of Liguria (Pliny, *NH* 3.7 [25]).

Livy's account on the Apuani is more detailed due to their prolonged military resistance, resulting in the transfer of 47,000 people from the upper Macra near Pisa to Samnium in 180-179, where two settlements perpetuate the memory of the Ligurians: Ligures Baebiani (Circello 15 miles north of Beneventum) and Ligures Corneliani.[37] The Ilvates, subjugated in 197, must have occupied the area between Apennines, Placentia, and Regium,[38] while the Epanterii were only mentioned by Livy in passing.[39] A more reliable source is the *sententia Minuciorum* (117), defining the territory of the Langenses Veituris north of Genoa and also mentioning the neighbouring Dectuines probably located around Libarna.[40] The *tabula*

---

[34] Livy 39.2.

[35] Delamarre 2003: 158, s.v. eburos 'if' (Eburiates), and 111, s.v. catu- 'combat, bataille' (Caturiges).

[36] Their location is uncertain but they are possibly located near Biella.

[37] Livy 40.38; 40.41; for deportation of *Ligures Corneliani et Baebinai*: Pliny, NH 3.105; Livy 40.41; on Apuani *cf.* Barigazzi 1991. Inscriptions mention the *ordo et populus Ligurum Baebiano* and their *res publica*: CIL IX 1466; 1485, but the location of Ligures Corneliani remains unknown.

[38] Livy 32.29.7; 31.4; 31.10.2 = Eleiates of the Fasti Triumphales(?).

[39] Livy 28.46.

[40] *CIL* V 7749 = *ILS* 5946; *AE* 2004, 570.

alimentaria from Veleia[41] also mentions local *ethne*, such as the Tigulli after whom the town Tigullia was named and whose territory must have extended from the coast to the ridge of the Ligurian Apennines.[42] On the *Tropaeum Augusti* from 7/6 BC, forty-five Alpine *gentes*, defeated between 25 and 14 BC, are mentioned, including Lepontii, Salassi, and Caturiges.[43]

The names of the Ingauni and Intemelii survive as municipal toponyms into the Principate: Albium Ingaunum (Albenga) and Albium Intimilium (Ventimiglia). Similarly, the Bagienni, around the upper section of the Tanarus, gave their name to the Augustan veteran colony *Augusta Bagiennorum* (Bene).[44] The Statielli occupied the valley of the Orba (Urbo), the lower Bormida, and the Belbo; [45] despite an episode of deportation and subsequent land allotments *trans Padanum,* the town of Aquae Statiellae must be located in their territory, while the location of their *oppidum* Carsytum remains uncertain.

North of the river Po, the situation is different: there is a smaller number of polities dominating larger areas, above all the Insubres. Already observers in antiquity were confused about local identities, thus providing contradictory accounts: according to Pliny,[46] Augusta Taurinorum 'was founded by the ancient race of the Ligurians', *antiqua ligurum stirpe*, but the Taurini were equally defined as Celts, Ligurians, and *Semigalli*, while Novaria was 'founded by the Vertacomacori, (...) at the present day a *pagus* of the Vocontii and not, as Cato supposes, of the Ligurians, of whom the Laevi and the Marici founded Ticinum'.[47] Both Pliny and Livy consider the Laevi (or Láoi, according to Polybius) to be Ligurian, while for Cato they were Celtic, and their capital, Ticinum, was regarded as Insubrian by Ptolemy.[48]

The name Lepontii, denoting the people inhabiting the region between Lake Maggiore and the source of the Rhine, was first mentioned by Cato in the second century:[49]

> The same author [Cato] also considers the Lepontii and the Salassi to be of Tauriscan origin, but most other writers, giving a Greek interpretation to their name, consider the Lepontii to have been those of the followers of Hercules who were left behind in consequence of their limbs being frozen by the snow of the Alps (Plin., *NH* 3.134).

---

[41] *CIL* XI.1 1147; VI 69 = *ILS* 6675; *AE* 2005, 528-532.

[42] Pliny, *NH* 7.48.

[43] *AE* 2005, 958.

[44] Pliny, *NH* 3.47.117,185; Varro *RR* 1.51.2; *Bagenni* after *CIL* VI 2890.

[45] *Statiellenses* (Cic., *ad fam.* 11.11), *Statelli* (*CIL* III 853). Luraschi 1981.

[46] Pliny, *NH* 3.48.

[47] Celts: Pol. 2.15.8, 2.28.4, 2.30.6; Ligurians: Strabo 4.6.6; Pliny, *NH* 3.128; Livy 5.34.8 ; *Semigalli* : Livy 21.38.5. On origins of Novaria: Pliny, *NH* 3.124.

[48] Ligurian origins: Pliny, *NH* 3.124; Livy 5.25.2; Pol. 2.17.4.; Celtic origins: Pliny, *NH* 3.124; Pol. 2.17.4; Insubrians: Ptol. 3.1.33.

[49] *Lepontios et Salassos Tauriscae gentis idem Cato arbitratus* (Cato, *Orig.* fr. 37 Peter = II 7 Chassignet, in Pliny, *NH* 3.134); on Lepontii *cf.* Baggio Simona *et al..* 2001.

For Livy the Lepontii belong to *antiqua Ligurum gens*, while Pliny reports that they were followers of Hercules as their name was thought to derive from *leipô* ('to leave behind').[50] The earliest inscriptons from the Lepontic area (seventh to fifth centuries) are written in a language believed to be Celtic, thus suggesting a 'pre-invasion' Celtic-speaking population. With regard to the Taurisci, the term was employed for a wide range of Alpine peoples in the time of Cato, from the Taurini in the west to the Norici and Carni in the eastern Alps. In the first century, authors instead referred to local *ethne*, and the term Taurisci was finally employed for the Norici prior to their defeat in 35-33.[51] Though Taurisci primarily denotes 'Celtic' peoples, the Taurini were described as Ligurians by Strabo and Pliny, while toponymic names beginning with *Tar-/Taur-,* common in France, Italy, and Spain, indicate their Celticity.[52]

Strabo and Polybius considered the Insubres to be the largest and most important Celtic people, who also founded Mediolanum/Milan as successor to the Etruscan Melpum.[53] In the context of the alleged fourth-century immigration, Livy reports that *Insubria* was also a *pagus* of the Aedui, while for Pliny, the Insubres derived from the Caturiges.[54] As we have seen, the Insubres seem to have dominated a number of neighbouring 'tribes'. For example, in the second century AD Ptolemy lists Novara, Pavia, Como, and Laus Pompeia as Insubrian towns.[55]

Neighbouring Como was an important sixth to fifth centuries Golasecca agglomeration of a Celtic-speaking population and an important Caesarian colony;[56] according to Ptolemy it was founded by the Insubrians, contradicting Livy who says that the Insubres induced the Comenses to take up arms.[57] For Livy, Como was founded by the Comenses, for Pliny by the Orobii, who are said to have founded Bergamo, though their origin remains unknown.[58] Pliny cites Cornelius Alexander according to whom the name was Greek, meaning 'those who live upon the mountains' (ὄρος, 'a mountain'; βίος 'life') – again, possible a Greek pejorative term rather than a representation or assertion of self-identity. To sum up, ethnic identities were already ambiguous in antiquity. 'Ligurian' and 'Celtic' are terms which represent very little concept of self-identity, other than in

---

[50] Livy 5.35; Pliny, *NH* 3.134.

[51] *Cf. DNP* 12/1, s.v. Taurisci (H. Graßl).

[52] For Taurini, *cf.* Culasso Gastaldi 1997: 95-107; Cresci Marrone 1997: 143-55. For their supposed Ligurian origins, *cf.* Strabo 4.204; Pliny, *NH* 3.123 (*antiqua Ligurum stirpe*). On toponymns, see Delamarre 2003: 291.

[53] Strabo 5.1.6 [212]; Pol. 2.17.4; 2.22. *Insobroi/Insobres* in Greek; for variant spellings and attestations *cf. RE* IX.1, 1589ff, s.v. Insubres. On the Etruscan origins of Milan, see Livy 5.34; Justin 20.5.8; Pliny, *NH* 3.124f.

[54] Livy 5.34.9: *(...) cum in quo consederant agrum Insubrium appellari audissent cognominem Insubribus pago Haeduorum (...). cf.* Pol. 2.17; Pliny, *NH* 3.21 [125].

[55] Ptol. 3.1.30, 32. *Cf.* Gabba 1984 for the alleged Insubrian 'empire'.

[56] Häussler 2007; Strabo 5.213; Suet., *Caes.* 28 for the deduction of 5,000 colonists in Como under Caesar in 59 BC.

[57] Ptol. 3.1.33; Livy 33.36.

[58] Livy 33.36.9; 37.10; Pliny, *NH.* 3.21 [124], quoting Cato.

circumstances where local populations actively adopt these. For instance, the creation of a *regio Liguria* may have prompted new forms of self-identification. Pliny's long list of *gentes* in north-west Italy, in contrast, may merely have been of antiquarian interest as it was largely obsolete at the time of writing.

A further problem is the alleged connections between populations across the Alps, as noted by Strabo.[59] As we have seen, an important factor in the development of self-identities – at least in Graeco-Roman perception – is the alleged Transalpine origin of numerous people from south-east Gaul: Libici (originating from the Salluvii),[60] Vertacomacori (from the Vocontii), Bagienni (from the Caturiges), Insubres (from the Aedui/Caturiges?); the Salassi are Taurisci for Cato, but identical with the south Gaulish Saluvii/Salyes for Strabo and Livy.[61] Other peoples are said to originate from Marseille's hinterland, like Libici and Laevi, who are Ligurian for Pliny, but Celtic for Polybius.[62] Obviously, Polybius and Pliny had different criteria to identify them as Celts and Ligurians respectively: language, myth of origin, and the way of life mentioned by Strabo.[63]

Only a few ethnic labels seem to survive into the Principate, mainly when incorporated into municipal identities, as in Albingaunum or Augusta Taurinorum/Bagiennorum. Literary sources do not provide much information on self-identities in the region, but the Transalpine origin of some 'tribes' was probably important not only to Graeco-Roman authors, but also to local self-identities. It is also interesting to note how Graeco-Roman myths, such as Hercules' passage through the Alps,[64] were integrated into local origin myths, perhaps initiating the numerous Hercules cults in the Transpadana region. In what follows, we need to compare the alleged ethnic identities with our archaeological and linguistic evidence.

Autochthonous ethnicities and identities?

For Classical authors, the Celts were considered new arrivals in north Italy, while Ligurians constituted the indigenous population, though partly 'Celticized' as *Semigalli* or Celto-Ligurians.[65] But on what grounds did Classical authors make such statements and why did Augustus define the *regio IX Liguria* in that way? Was there a common identity among these people or merely Roman perceptions of Ligurian, non-Celtic peoples? Is there any archaeological or linguistic evidence to verify such ethnic labels? Even in the period before the so-called Celtic invasion, there was a population who set up Celtic inscriptions which is associated with the Golasecca culture, suggesting the presence of Celtic-speaking people in north Italy probably dating back to the Urnfield culture.[66] Taking into account both the language of the inscriptions and the presence of Celtic

---

[59] Strabo 5.1.4 [212]: 'Now these Celti are indeed of the same people as the Transalpine Celti.'

[60] Pliny, *NH* 3.17: *Vercellae Libiciorum ex Salluis ortae*.

[61] Pliny, *NH* 3.134; Strabo 4.180.184; Livy 31.38.5.

[62] Pliny, *NH* 3.33; Pol. 2.17.4

[63] *v. supra*; *e.g.*, wearing of breaches and light cloaks, Pol. 2.28.7.

[64] Also *cf.* alleged Trojan origin of Veneti: Strabo 5.1.4 [212].

[65] *Semigalli*: Livy 21.38; Κελτο-λίγυες Strabo 4.6.3; *cf.* Garcia 2004, 22.

[66] Häussler 2007

onomastics at Etruscan Genoa and on the Ligurian Lunigiana stelae,[67] we need to re-think the nature of Ligurian and Celtic ethnicities in north-west Italy. To postulate a Ligurian *ethnos* is controversial since Ligurian is a pejorative term, equivalent to 'barbarian', in Greek sources, and therefore reflects no self-definition of local people across this large stretch of territory.[68]

South of the Po, distinctive cultural features which continued to develop down to the first century, have been identified, such as funerary habits (cremations, *cassetta lithica*), pottery styles, and a particular type of conical buttons.[69] Such archaeological features are not markers for a Ligurian ethnicity; the locally produced pottery with *unghiate* and zigzag decorations is found on Apennine hillforts as well as at Genoa and may represent a social signifier, denoting status.[70] Perhaps a more obvious marker of group identity are the conical buttons as they indicate a particular form of dress. There are also some isolated La Tène artefacts, such as arm rings (otherwise very rare in Italy) which reveal a degree of inter-connectivity between these sites.[71]

In Liguria, toponyms with the suffix *-asco*, such as Giubiasco, are extremely common and are thought to be Ligurian, as are ethnic names in *-aun-* (*e.g.*, Ingauni, Vellauni, Catuvellauni) and the numerous place names in *alba-* (*e.g.*, Albinitimilium, Albingaunum, and Alba Pompeia).[72] However the existence of a Ligurian language is still hypothetical. In the Augustan *regio IX*, onomastic evidence from the Principate shows a particular 'Ligurian' naming practice that is distinct from that of north-west Italy, probably not a sign of ethnic identity, but a result of more intense interaction with 'Romans' south of the Po.[73] Linguistically the distinction between Celts and Ligurians does not seem to be significant since the onomastics and toponomastics of Liguria could be considered Celtic: even Genua seems to be a Celtic toponym, despite the tradition that it was an Etruscan settlement.[74]

In all, language, names, and material culture suggest that there was little significant difference between so-called Ligurians and so-called Celts in pre-Roman times, especially if we consider the degree of 'Celticity' in north-west Italy. The different archaeological character of the area south of the Po may derive from the nature of our evidence rather than from different ethnicities. In Liguria, we mainly have settlement evidence and in the Transpadana, we mostly have funerary evidence, something which is a result of the different forms of socio-political organisation in these areas. The 'repertoire' of available artefacts in *regio IX Liguria* does not change dramatically until the late first century BC, the point at which imports of South Gaulish, Spanish, north Africa pottery and amphorae begin to be found even in more remote areas.

[67] Morandi 2003: 44; Colonna 2004: 11.

[68] Arnaud 2001.

[69] Gambari and Venturino Gambari 1987.

[70] Hodder 1988.

[71] Venturino Gambari 1987: 22, 23, fig. 8.

[72] *Cf.* Delamarre 2003: 37f, s.v. albos; Latin *albus*, Ligurian 'mountain'(?); *cf.*, with caution, list of toponyms by Petracco Sicardi and Caprini 1981.

[73] Untermann 1958.

[74] Delamarre 2003: 177.

Celtic identity in north-west Italy?

The identification of *Galli* is not primarily a form of self-identity, but reflects a Roman viewpoint, perhaps going back to Rome's first encounter with Gallic peoples in the eastern Po Valley, especially with the Senones and the Boii. Our archaeological and linguistic evidence reveals instead the evolution of, and geographical variations in, cultural identities. In addition, inscriptions, personal names, and toponyms also reveal a range of local variations.

The alleged fourth-century Celtic invasion is conventionally considered a major turning point for the spread of La Tène artefacts,[75] but its extent and impact should not be overestimated: a break-down of economic structures may already have caused the disintegration of the Etruscan and Golaseccan urban centres and cemeteries, thus plunging most of our area into an archaeological 'dark age' with few datable artefacts and sites.[76] The spread of La Tène artefacts and funerary practices does not necessarily imply a massive influx of Transalpine people since 'Celticization' is above all a cultural phenomenon rather than the result of mass migration. Instead of large-scale invasion,[77] we are dealing with the re-definition of local identities. Rather than envisaging cultural identities as polarised Celtic, Roman, Etruscan, and autochthonous (Golaseccan, Lepontic, Ligurian) identities, we can see complex dynamic construction of identities, their diversity and variations in the local context, as well as their involvement in the development of a wider cultural identity of north Italy. Also, Transalpine La Tène artefacts were already present long before Livy's invasion date – even in a proto-urban context. For instance, typical La Tène swords with an anthropoid handle were deposited as grave goods, side by side with local and Etruscan artefacts, in the fifth-century cemetery from Como-Ca'Morta.[78] Moreover, small-scale migration across the Alps had been taking place for many centuries.[79] There is, therefore, no direct correlation between the presence of Celtic cultural artefacts and practices, and the alleged fourth-century Celtic invasion.

In the fourth century, we witness a re-shaping of both socio-economic structures and cultural identities, a change which was necessitated by the abandonment of previous socio-geographical focus points, such as the proto-urban centres (*e.g.*, Castelletto Ticino). The artefact distribution also suggests different economic interactions, resulting in a contraction in the distribution of Golaseccan artefacts, which are now largely limited to the 'Lepontic' region.[80] Instead of large-scale cemeteries and monumental grave mounds, we generally find small cemeteries with short chronological occupation reflecting a high degree of migration. A more diverse settlement pattern develops in the Apennines with a large number of small-scale fortified hilltop sites, many of which were created in this period – a feature which perhaps suggests a lack of overall political control. This must have had repercussions

[75] Dated to 390 (Livy 5.33) or 388 BC (Pol. 2.17). For the concept of 'invasion' *cf.* Häussler 2007.

[76] Häussler 2007; Williams 2001.

[77] In many cases we find evidence for co-habitation of 'Celtic immigrants', Etruscans and natives: *e.g.*, Mantova (De Marinis 1988: 183) and Monte Bibele (Guidi 2002).

[78] De Marinis 1986b: 155-70. It is difficult to use military equipment as indicators for ethnicity.

[79] For a gradual immigration of people into north-west Italy *cf.* Gambari 1995.

[80] De Marinis 1977: fig. 2.

on the self-identity of the population, perhaps suggesting that people turned away from collective, possibly urban, identities and Mediterranean symbols of wealth and status, while the social rôle of the 'warrior' in local communities may have increased in importance.

The Transalpine La Tène culture with its brooches, swords, armour, and funerary rituals (inhumation) does not dominate the archaeology of north-west Italy.[81] Local material culture generally seems to be made up of different cultural horizons whereby early Iron Age (Golasecca) artefact types and rituals (*e.g.*, cremation) continued to have a strong influence. The cemetery of Dormelletto (third to first centuries) documents an interesting transition. It started off as a typical La Tène cemetery with regard to grave goods and rituals whereby inhumations represent a completely foreign ritual to the local 'Golasecca' context.[82] Inhumations continued down to the first century, but Golasecca-style cremations became increasingly common from the end of the second century. However, there is no distinction between 'natives' and 'invaders'; cremation might have been employed by an élite because it involved a more elaborate ritual – this may explain why weaponry is only attested in cremation tombs. A similar pattern is found amongst the Cenomani,[83] and perhaps represents adoption of a dual ritual; at the risk of oversimplification, it may have involved cremation for men, and inhumation for women and children. New cultural identities therefore seem to evolve in north-west Italy, taking aspects from both Transalpine La Tène and local cultures.

In Piedmont and in particular south of the Po, La Tène artefacts remain more isolated than anywhere else in north Italy (*cf.* n.81). This implies not only a lack of demand and exchange, but also that the ideological meaning behind La Tène objects was not internalized so that artefacts did not relate to any cultural models with which people could identify. For example at the hilltop site of Guardamonte, occupied from the early Iron Age to the Principate,[84] Golasecca, Ligurian, and Etruscan artefacts indicate that its inhabitants were in contact with long-distance trade networks in the sixth to fifth centuries. The site continued to be occupied, but apart from an isolated La Tène silver spiral ring, the people seem to remain relatively untouched by La Tène objects despite the proximity to major lines of communication. At nearby Serravalle Scrivia, an Etruscan *oinochoe* (second half of the fourth century) suggests continued long-distance trade relations,[85] while a brooch, with a schematic representation of a human face on the arch of a *fibula*, suggests ongoing local engagement with 'Celtic' art in Liguria.[86]

Ameglia is the only major fourth to third-century cemetery in a region otherwise almost devoid of funerary evidence.[87] The record consequently differs from that of the Ligurian

---

[81] Fourth to third century decorative artefacts (torques and, in Insubrian territory, arm rings) can primarily be found in the plains north of Po and east of Ticino and not in the mountains; *cf.* Piana Agostinetti 1988: 158f, fig. 7.

[82] Spagnolo Garzoli 1988.

[83] De Marinis 1977; 1986a: 134-35.

[84] Lo Porto 1957.

[85] Venturino Gambari 1987: 19, fig. 4.

[86] Lo Porto 1957: 24, fig. 9.1.

[87] Maggiani *et al.* 2004.

settlements, especially in the presence of numerous La Tène weaponry sets whose typologies and decorations are well known from Transalpine La Tène areas (*e.g.* 'Waldalgesheim' style decoration), together with La Tène rituals, like the ritually bent sword from Tomb 22. There are numerous possible explanations for these La Tène artefacts without necessarily concluding a Celtic ethnic identity, though a social/political relationship to the polities in the Po Valley seems likely. Perhaps Ameglia (near the Roman colony of Luna, founded in 177 BC) had political and economic advantages by providing an alternative access to a Mediterranean port for the élites and polities of the Po Valley. This would have allowed them to avoid trading with Genoa, perhaps creating political and economic dependence from certain Trans-Apennine polities.

In conclusion, we should not overemphasise the importance of the Celtic invasion. West of Lombardy and south of the Po, La Tène artefacts remained relatively marginal in the fourth to third centuries BC, hardly representing any comprehensive cultural or ethnic identity. People hardly aspired to a 'Celtic' *koiné*. Instead new syncretic cultural patterning evolved out of La Tène, Ligurian, and Golasecca cultural models and material cultures.

The impact of Roman imperialism

Having analyzed the complex cultural patchwork and relative fragile identities of this area during the fourth to third centuries, we now turn our attention to north-west Italy under Roman domination. Although the Roman conquest would be hardly recognisable in the region if our knowledge was exclusively based on archaeological evidence, there are factors that stimulated change in the post-conquest environment: *foedus* stipulations, taxation, road building, economic activities and military recruitment all created a framework within which indigenous people had to act, necessitating a re-definition of identity which was further catalysed by the municipalisation in the first century BC.

> The Insubrian chiefs, seeing that nothing could change the determination of the Romans to destroy them, determined that they had better try their fortune by a great and decisive battle (Pol. 2.32, referring to 223 BC).

Rome's conquest of Cisalpine Gaul was brutal. In the case of the Senones and the Boii one might even speak of genocide with the Romans creating a *tabula rasa* that allowed the development of a new colonial landscape.[88] There are reports of mass killing, enslavement and deportation for our area. Livy, for example, reports that during Marcellus's conquest of Como, 'over 40,000 men were killed in that battle'.[89] He continues: 'Here was a striking instance of the way in which passion stimulates courage, for the Romans were so determined to kill rather than simply to win a victory that they left hardly a man alive to carry the news of the battle'.[90] Apart from mass enslavement (*e.g.*, of the Statielli), people were also deported; for instance, the Apuani were moved *en masse* to Samnium in 180. Although the deportation of the Statiellae was ruled unlawful

---

[88] Purcell 1990; Williams 2001.

[89] Livy 33.36.

[90] Livy 33.37.

by the Senate and they were assigned land in compensation, this was not in their homeland, but *trans Padum*.[91]

Generally, Rome's presence north of the Po was less dramatic with neither colonial foundation (except at Cremona, *v. infra.*) nor road building in the territory of the Insubrians, Taurini, and Vertamocori down to the first century.[92] And yet, Rome was involved in the region. For example, in the area around Vercelli, Roman *publicani* exploited the gold mines in the Bessa region from 143. Lack of any evidence of Roman cultural influence in the area suggests that the actual mining was probably done by the local population.[93] Rome also intervened in order to 'protect' her ally from the invading Cimbri (104) and continued quarrels with the Salassi, from 143, over the mines.[94] The Roman colony of Ivrea (founded in 100) served to prevent Salassan intrusions. Otherwise road building and the associated foundation of *fora* and *conciliabula* were largely limited to the area south of the river Po: the *via Postumia* from Genoa via Tortona to the Adriatic Sea (148) and the *via Fulvia* to the Alpine passes (125) together with the foundation of Forum Fulvii, Asti, Carreum-Potentia, and Dertona.[95] Other Roman intrusions are less visible to us, such as taxation, land confiscations, and the introduction of Roman concepts of private property (*sententia Minuciorum*, *v. supra*). And as early as 178, Cisalpine Gauls are attested serving in the Roman army as auxiliary units.[96] The creation of, for example, a Ligurian cohort can forge a common experience and hence a common identity.[97]

Roman imperialism, therefore, catalyzed already existing societal developments and state formation. Rome defined *ethne* as territorial entities, rather than as kinship groups. Local forms of authority also became increasingly institutionalized. The *lex de Gallia Cisalpina* even attributed a jurisdictional role not only to *coloniae* and *municipia*, but also to *castellae* and *territoria*, *i.e.*, pre-Roman forms of social organization.[98] Authority in a local context was redefined and new forms of magistracies were invented. Providing access to Italy-wide trade networks could have the effect of unbalancing local economies. Tacitus reports that the colony of Cremona, deliberately installed at the margin of Insubrian territory, was the location of an annual fair where 'a great part of Italy was gathered to attend a market'.[99] Like other *fora*, *conciliabula,* and *coloniae*, Cremona potentially played an important role in integrating the indigenous population into the Roman economy.[100]

---

[91] Livy 42.7f.

[92] Taking into account all colonies in Liguria and Transpadana down to Augustus, we probably deal with no more than 25,000 colonists.

[93] Pliny, *NH* 23.21.78; Strabo 4.6.7 [277ff]; Bocca and Centini 1995.

[94] On Salassi expeditions: Cass. Dio 22 fr. 74; Strabo 4.6.7; Livy *per.* 53; Oros. 5.4.7; Obseq. 21.

[95] Fraccaro 1957a; 1957b.

[96] Livy 41.1.8: *castra Gallorum.*

[97] *Cf.* the Ligurian cohort attested in the Alpes Maritimae (*IANice* 49ff) and in Ephesos (*IK-16*, 2305b) with people identifying themselves as Ligurian (*e.g. IK-16*, 2319: *domo Liguriae*).

[98] Probably dating to a period after 49/41 BC: *cf.* Crawford 1996.

[99] Tac., *Hist.* 3.32.2; Gabba 1975; Grassi 1993; Häussler 2007.

[100] *cf.* Grassi 1990-1991; 1993.

However, north-west Italy was not overwhelmed by Graeco-Roman products, and imports, like Campanian black-slip ware, remained extremely rare down to 100 BC. Is it possible that local élites successfully restricted access to these new markets in order to preserve indigenous hierarchies? La Tène artefacts continued to dominate individual and collective cultural identities in north-west Italy down to the first century (*v. infra*).

This leads us to the question, which artefacts would constitute a Roman (or Hellenistic?) identity in late Republican north-west Italy? Certain objects have been interpreted as signs of a Roman identity, but we have to be very careful about such statements, since socio-cultural structures remained largely embedded in local 'traditions' down to the end of the first century. Also, changes in artefact assemblages primarily reveal economic developments, such as an intensifying degree of exchange across Italy. Imports can hardly indicate a conscious decision to display one's aspiration to a Graeco-Roman or Italo-Roman *koiné*. S*trigiles*, for instance, show changing attitudes to the body, with the bearer participating 'in una società evoluta e raffinata',[101] though this is not a manifestation of Roman identity, but the result of interaction within Hellenised Italy. With the further socio-political integration of the Transpadani, the *strigiles* largely disappear again from the funerary record by the first century BC. The most prominent import to north-west Italy is Campanian black-slip ware[102] – *vernice nera* – for some the 'fossil-guide of Romanization'[103] showing a 'clear connection between the advance of Roman culture and the presence of black glaze pottery'.[104] Is this really the case? For example, Volterra is one of the more important production centres exporting to our area of study in the second to first centuries.[105] But the import of *vernice nera* is no different to the import of Etruscan *bucchero* and black-slip ware throughout the pre-Roman period, *i.e.,* goods continued to move along well established trade routes. Considering the presence of Roman colonies, *vernice nera* remains extremely rare down to 100 BC and limited to a small range of forms that were largely used for feasting and banqueting in the funerary context, used side by side with La Tène artefacts.[106] It is therefore dangerous to construct a relation between the import of *vernice nera* and that of concepts of Roman identity. Local workshops also produced a small range of black-slip ware, perhaps to fulfil the increasing demand for black-slip ware as a symbol for rank and status.[107] This may have been less a transfer of culture than a transfer of technical expertise, with Italo-Roman techniques revitalizing local pottery production.[108] Black-slip ware hardly reflects aspirations for Roman lifestyle – after all, imported pottery had been common for many centuries. Only in the second half of the first century BC will we witness a significantly different process, namely the abandonment of local pottery styles, a noticeable rupture in

[101] Grassi 1995: 82.

[102] Morel 1998.

[103] Grassi 1995: 88.

[104] Frontini 1985: 160.

[105] Frontini and Grassi 1998; Morel 1998.

[106] Grassi 1995: 85-88.

[107] Frontini 1985.

[108] Grassi 1995.

archaeological assemblages across the north-west, and new trade contacts to all parts of the empire.

Otherness, state formation and ethnogenesis

How did these constantly re-negotiated local identities develop in an increasingly pan-Italian world? With increasing interaction across Italy we would perhaps expect to find a more 'global' Italo-Hellenic identity in the post-conquest period. Instead our evidence suggests a much stronger local identity, especially aspects that reflect a certain 'Celticity' in writing, coinage, and material culture, as well as the continuous use of rituals and artefacts that go back to the early Iron Age period. Roman presence *per se* did not result in people 'imitating' or 'emulating' the conqueror's culture, but their integration in Roman political and military structures and their involvement beyond their local sphere of influence seems to create the wish to demarcate themselves by a stronger identity. The need to express one's otherness is further stimulated by the accelerating state formation processes. Cisalpine 'states' and their élites required new symbols of power and new forms of communication to display their authority and their collective identity.[109] Consequently coinage, epigraphy, and material culture mirror various identities: political entities, group and ethnic identities, social and economic networks.

In the Republic, local strategies to accommodate Roman imperialism had a more experimental, sometimes contradictory character, whereby the cultural model need not be Rome. Down to the first century BC local identities were constructed by using mainly indigenous artefacts. Dress shows adherence to certain social groups (regarding sex, age, status), but in a period of increased interaction with 'Romans', dress may also have served as a conscious marker of otherness. This important social role of dress may explain why items, like Ligurian buttons and middle La Tène *fibulae*, survived even into the first century AD. Besides imported pottery, there are also new local pottery types. From the second century BC, or thereabouts, the *vaso a trottola* – a wine vessel – emerged as a new form of locally produced prestige object (for example, more than 100 of these were found at the cemetery of Ornavasso-San Bernardo) which was only replaced by Roman-style *olpae* after *c.*40 BC. Increased contact may have revitalized local material culture in the second century by using wheel thrown pottery and imitating Campanian ware.

Funerary evidence & ethnic identity

Funerary evidence is an important source, but we have to bear in mind that tombs are not a mirror of daily life, but may include archaizing trends. The choice of rituals and grave goods reflect the actors involved in the burial, not the identity of the deceased. Grave goods from our region derive from various cultural traditions, including Golasecca, and Cisalpine and Transalpine Iron Age, as well as Italo-Roman. In a first-century BC warrior burial from Esino, 20km north-east of Como,[110] the weaponry consists of La Tène sword, shield boss, at least one knife, two spears, and an axe, and pottery consisting of two eggcup pots, Roman *olpae,* a *vaso a trottola,* and a cup. It also contained an arm-ring with

[109] Häussler 2000.

[110] Tizzoni 1986: 202.

tubular pearls, which stylistically derives from Golasecca II, and bronze double ribbon spirals which derive from Golasecca III.[111] This illustrates the persistence of local traditions as well as the supra-regional interaction, even in a remote location. The cultural model of a warrior burial seems to reflect 'traditional' values and the social role of the deceased. Objects of dress and armour mirror contemporary La Tène patterns, which probably indicate some level of group or ethnic identity. Generally, the Roman influence was limited to isolated luxury imports such as *vernice nera* or strigils, reflecting exchange patterns but not necessarily direct interaction with the conquerors. Above all, meaning and function of the adopted artefact in the recipient society may not be known. Imported luxury objects do not prove the adoption and internalization of an Italo-Roman way of life. In the context of a warrior grave, Italo-Roman artefacts are alien, but prestigious commodities, perhaps of value in a re-distributive prestige-goods network. They might therefore have a different meaning in this context, as compared to their significance in the nearby centres of Comum and Mediolanum. *Romanitas* was not yet an issue at Esino. There is a similar example from Misano di Gera d'Adda (20km east of Milan). A second-century warrior grave contains prestigious Italo-Roman Bronze objects, strigils, coins, black-slip table ware, and a silver mirror. These do not indicate 'l'adozione di usi estranei al mondo indigeno',[112] since they may not display a Roman group identity, but rather demonstrate the deceased's wealth and the status which the people involved in the burial attributed to him after his death. The La Tène objects, like the Misano-type brooches, are perhaps more revealing for the person's identity. Weapons burials can also be found in Vercelli, Novara, and the Lomellina as late as the first century, revealing the continued military and protective role of the aristocracy.

The situation is different on Insubrian soil. Whether initiated by a political move or not, the discontinuity of weaponry reflects an important change in male social roles and a profound transformation in societal behavioural structures. Though conventionally taken as evidence for the disarmament of the Insubres as a result of the *foedus* stipulations,[113] it seems that already in the mid-third century BC warrior graves cluster at the margin of Insubrian territory, for example in the Ticino Valley and east around Bergamo, but not in the centre around Milan. Also near the later Roman *municipium* of Vercelli, weapon graves were found in the cemeteries Borgovercelli and Vinzaglio, dating to *c*.225-175.[114] At Oleggio, people continued to deposit La Tène weaponry such as the distinctive Celtic long sword (often ritually destroyed), despite enfranchizement and precocious urbanism.[115] For many people, the grant of Latin rights in 89 and the acquisition of Roman citizenship *per magistratum* may have been decisive in the abandonment of arms as symbols of power in a funerary context, although other aspects of local group identity persisted. The absence of weapons burials from Insubrian territory may highlight a social development by which the aristocracy's group identity jettisoned the warrior image and adopted new cultural

---

[111] De Marinis 1981: fig. 6.

[112] Grassi 1995: 78-79.

[113] Luraschi 1979; Gabba 1990; Livy 41.19 for disarmament.

[114] Gambari 1985; 1988.

[115] Spagnolo Garzoli 1999b.

symbols and symbols of power that reflect their new role in society and their *Selbstverständnis.* Their capital city, Milan, would of course develop into an important cultural centre (*v. infra*).

Padane drachma – a statement of otherness?

One of the most intriguing developments during the ethnic and state formation processes in north-west Italy is the development of the Padane drachma in the third to first centuries.[116] The drachma circulated north of the Po and along the Transalpine and Trans-Apennine trade-routes and spread to Transalpine Gaul and even to Cornwall (*cf.* Fig. 2), and mirrors the evolution of social, political and economic patterns in Cisalpine Gaul. From *c.*100 BC, the drachma illustrates the splitting up of identities by the adoption of Celtic coin legends. As in the case of Greece, coins can serve as markers of local identity and ethnicity. Without a monetized economy in north-west Italy, the question arises how it was possible that most of Gallia Cisalpina with its cultural diversity and multiple minting authorities[117] could develop a relatively uniform coinage with standardized weight, silver content, size and iconography. Although it did not act as marker of political unity, it is at least an indication of common forms of communication and reckoning. Though not a symbol of a Cisalpine identity, the drachma may have been used in gift exchange and social transactions, notably as payment of soldiers and mercenaries. This may explain why Rome did not introduce the *denarius* after the Social War, but instead minted the *victoriatus*, suggesting the persistence of indigenous socio-economic structures down to the Augustan period. The change in the issuing body may reflect changes in military organization since the Marian reforms, and also the close relationship between the drachma/*victoriatus* and the pay for soldiers and mercenaries.[118]

With the head of Artemis Ephesia on the obverse and a lion on the reverse together with the legend MASSA, the Padane drachma was modelled on the heavy fourth-century Massallia drachma.[119] But why did it imitate Marseille's coinage considering that Marseille had hardly any archaeologically visible economic impact on north-west Italy, except for the

---

[116] Pautasso 1962; Arslan and Morandini 2007; Arslan 2009 for bibliography and updated online catalogue; production of the Padane drachma must have ceased after the Social War, but drachmas circulated down to the first century AD (*e.g.,* Pautasso 1962: 128, no. 25).

[117] Coin distribution indicates a number of minting authorities, like Milan in the west, while Pautasso-type 8 drachmas mainly circulated in the Veneto.

[118] For *victoriatus*, *cf.* Crawford 1974: nos 628-630; 1985.

[119] The Padane drachma's dating is controversial: Brenot 1994 suggests an early date (*c.*300 BC) as it is stylistically derives from the fourth-century BC heavy Massaliote drachma – a date supported by stratigraphic finds from Milan (Arslan 1994: 73).
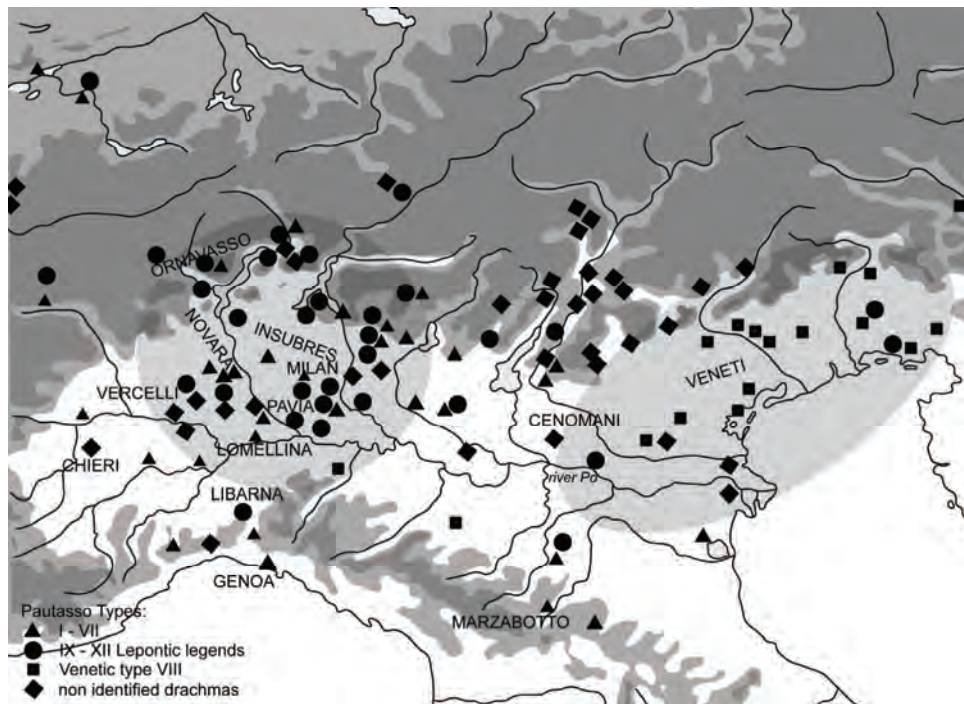
Fig. 2 Distribution map of the Padane drachma

rare import of Massaliote amphorae to Genoa and to Ligurian hilltop sites?[120] Is it a question of identity, going back to the alleged Transalpine origin of some north Italian peoples, or was Marseille chosen in a deliberate attempt to counteract Rome's increasing dominant role? Again, a common decision across Cisalpine Gaul seems most likely during the combined military effort against Rome in the third century.

For the question of identity, iconographic changes during the second century are significant as they reveal rationales and mentalities of the issuing institutions which were significantly different from contemporary Graeco-Roman perceptions. The lion of the original Massaliote drachma acquired abstract forms more comparable to Transalpine La Tène art (Fig. 3). At the same time, the legend *MASSA* degenerated into indecipherable vertical strokes, suggesting that literacy did not play an important role for local élites. This changed within just a few generations when, from *c.*100 BC, a number of legends written in Celtic using the Lepontic alphabet were introduced in the western half of Cisalpine Gaul.[121] The legends *rikos*[122] and *toutiopouos,* probably relating to *rix* (*'rex/reguli'*) and *touta*

---

[120] For Massaliote amphorae finds, *cf.* Venturino Gambari *et al.* 1994: 288-90; Milanese 1987.

[121] Pautasso 1962, types 9, 10, 11, 12; for Milan as mint *cf.* Arslan 1982; also *cf.* third-century *anarekarto/sekedu* coins, possibly predecessors of the drachma (Solinas 1995) reflecting highly evolved forms of social organization.

[122] Lambert 1994 suggests *rikos*; for plural *rikoi cf.* Morandi 1984; Marinnetti and Prosdocimi 1994: 40-41. Delamarre 2003: 295-96; Marinnetti and Prosdocimi 1994: 39-40.
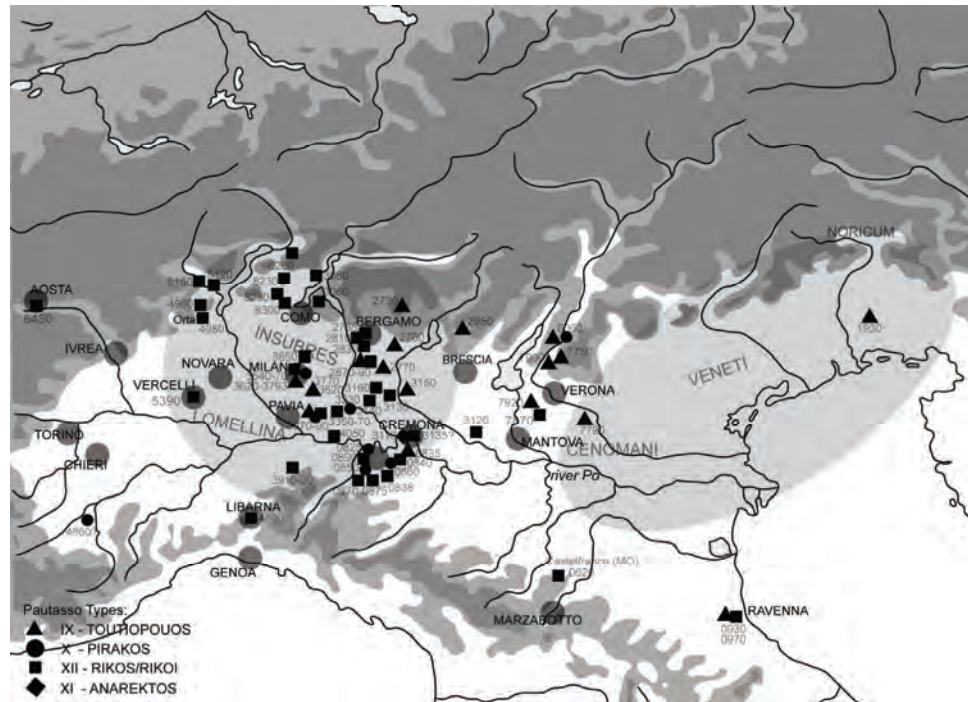
Fig. 3 Distribution map of Padane drachmae with Celtic legends
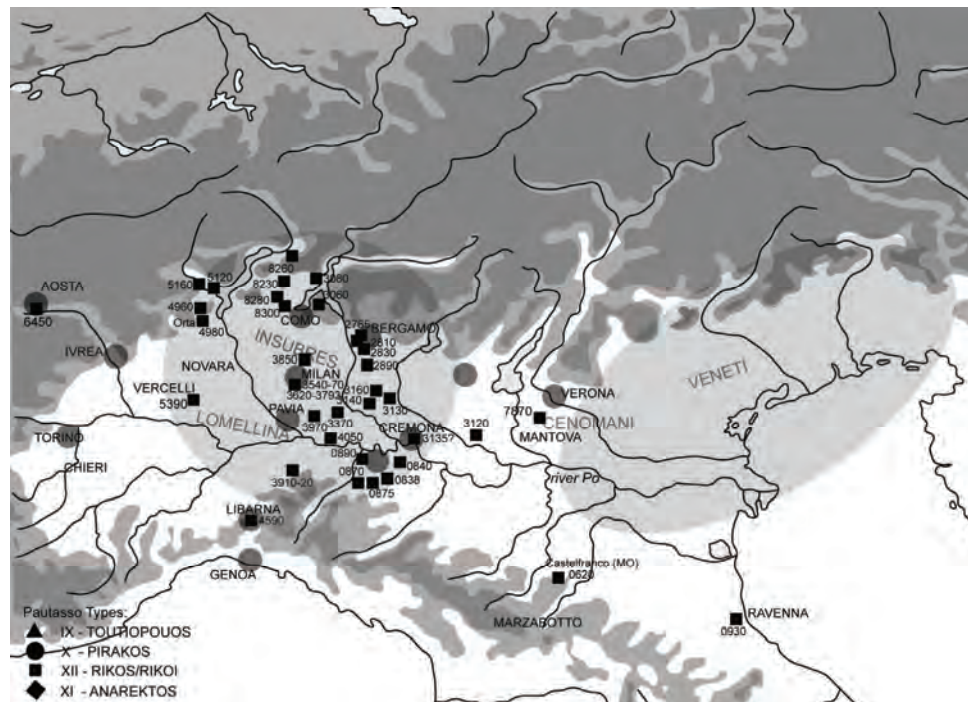
Fig. 4 Distribution map of Padane drachmae with the *rikos* legend

('*populus*'), probably reflect local authorities, while the choice of language and alphabet may have been an obvious one for local people. These latest coins symbolized identities and statehood associated with the people in Lombardy (possibly the Insubres?). As Fig. 4 shows, the *toutiopouos* cover the area between Milan and Verona, while *rikos*-coins are also common around Como, Lago Maggiore, and the Roman colonies Piacenza and Cremona.

A 'national' alphabet?

Throughout Italy, literacy increased during the Late Republic.[123] Interestingly the Gallo-Etruscan Lugano alphabet was adopted by many people in north-west Italy far beyond its original area of usage, for example in Vercelli, the Aosta Valley, in Savoy and the upper Rhône valley.[124] It was even suggested that this alphabet was ideologized as a 'national' Celtic alphabet in an attempt of a conscious rejection of the Latin alphabet.[125] Such conscious statements of cultural resistance are, however, unlikely in the Republic. Instead people probably oriented themselves towards the new cultural and economic hubs of the region, above all Milan.[126] In this respect, the fact that it was possible to 'revive' the Lepontic alphabet in Roman times may indicate its continued usage since its creation in the seventh or sixth centuries. Otherwise one would have expected the use of another alphabet, such as the Greek alphabet, which was already used for the MASSA-Padane dachmas.

Inscriptions also reveal local identities in other ways. A first-century BC dedication from Briona, for example, shows the rôle of the people as authority in action.[127] The phrase *takos toutas,* 'by order of the people/*touta*', also bears close resemblance to the title *toutiopouos* found on the Padane drachma.[128] We also find other institutions such as the *rix/rigani* ('king', 'queen') and the *argantocomaterecus* – a 'moneyer' or 'quaestor', a title that was not translated into Latin.[129] Local governing élites also redefined existing institutions in confrontation with Roman institutions. At Briona, for instance, *lekatos*/*legatus* became a magistrate's title, showing the importance of keeping up good relationships with Rome. The onomastic evidence also shows that post-conquest interaction must have influenced local society more than we would expect from the material culture, which was still dominated by La Tène artefacts. For example, the *Kuitos* in a list of otherwise typically Celtic names from Briona is a Celtic rendering of *Quintus.* We should not however attribute too much importance to the adoption of Italic and Latin names since they may merely have enlarged the local onomastic repertoire rather than being a conscious cultural statement.

---

[123] Häussler and Pearce 2007.

[124] Pautasso 1980; Bocca and Centini 1995; Marinetti and Prosdocimi 1994: 41-48.

[125] Prosdocimi 1991: 56-57; Marinetti and Prosdocimi 1994.

[126] *Cf.* the second-century Insubrian *malus auctor Latinitatis* Caeculius Statius (Cic., *Att.* 7.3.10; Hier., *chron.* 1838) and the lawyer T. Catius (Cic., *fam.* 15.16.1); by the first century, Milan had become an important centre for the study of rhetoric, students having included Vergil (Pliny, *Ep.* 4, 13, 3; Donatus, *VitaVerg* 7).

[127] Campanile 1981; Lejeune 1988: 11-25; Häussler 2007.
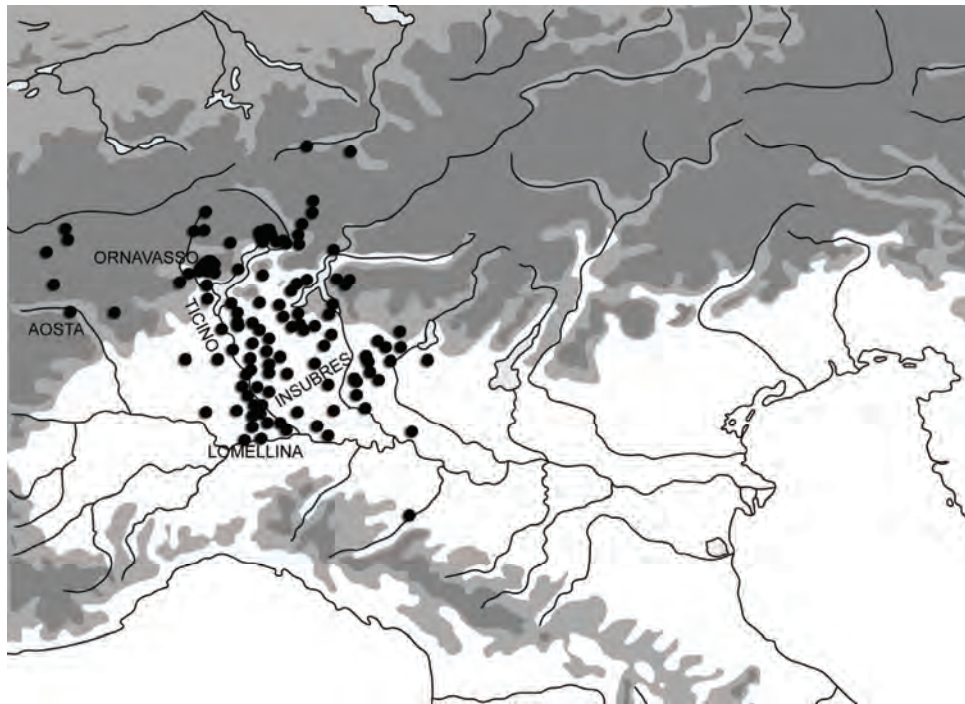
[128] Delamarre 2003: 295-96.

[129] Delamarre 2003: 258.

Fig. 5 Distribution map of *vasi a trottola*

Ethnicity and material culture

The singularity of the Novarese-Lombardy region is also confirmed by the distribution patterns of particular second to first-century artefacts, revealing that there was no uniform 'Celtic' or 'Insubrian' culture, but a multitude of identities (ethnicities?) and/or socioeconomic networks. The only artefact that can be found across the Insubrian territory and beyond is the *vaso a trottola* (Fig. 5) – a pottery type that is specific for the whole region, though less common in Milan itself.[130] Other artefacts, like brooches and pottery, only circulate in smaller areas (*cf.* Figs 6-7). For example, in the Lomellina we find the local Pavese-type brooch and – also circulating on the west bank of the Ticino – egg-shaped pots/*olla*, while other types, like 'eggcup' pots and 'scorpion'-type brooches are common for the Como region and the mountainous region between Lago Maggiore and Bergamo respectively. In this respect, toponyms in *-ate* (also known from Transalpine Gaul) may also be relevant. 201 of the 213 examples found in Italy come from 'Insubrian' territory (between the rivers Ticino and Adda), but interestingly, they are not found in the Po Valley and the Lomellina. This contrasts with 'Celtic' toponyms in *-aco/ico*, which are found across Gallia Cisalpina, but which are concentrated north of the river Po and between Placentia, Genoa, and Dertona.[131]

---

[130] Piana Agostinetti 1988: fig. 16ff.

[131] *Cf.* Piana Agostinetti 1988: 142-48 fig. 2 for further bibliography; the rarity of such toponyms in the area of the Boii and Senones is striking.
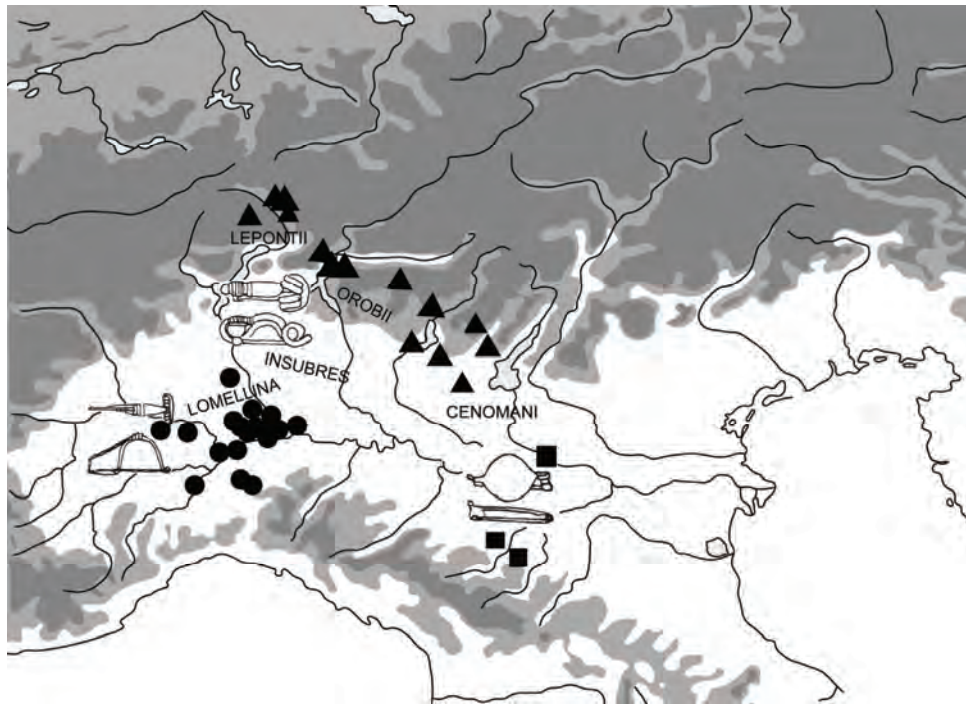
Fig. 6 Distribution map of brooches in north-west Italy
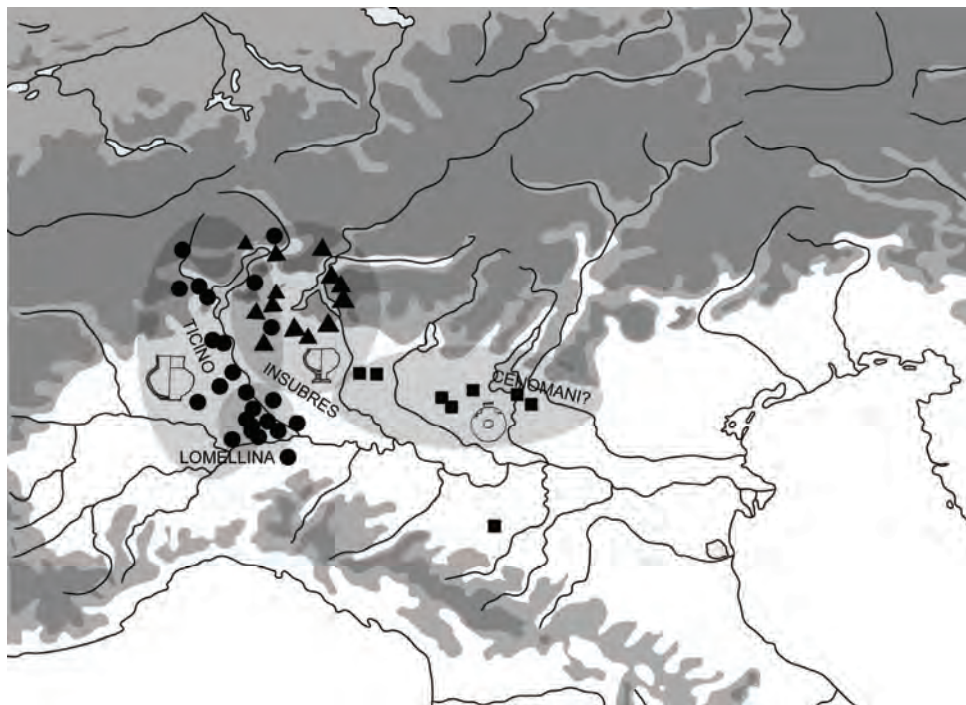
Fig. 7 Distribution map of local pottery in north-west Italy

Piana Agostinetti has suggested 'differenziazioni etniche'.[132] Is there enough evidence to suggest a distinct 'ethnic' identity for the Lomellina (Laevi/Marici?) and of the sub-Alpine region (Comenses/Orobii)? Certain artefacts seem to have very specific functions for a geographically delimited population, but artefact distribution patterns are not clear cut. Instead of an ethnic or cultural marker, we can imagine other forms of re-distribution of locally produced high-status objects: re-distributive networks, lineage, *etc.*

Summmary

Coinage, writing, and the re-emergence of proto-urban centres, most prominently Milan, suggest forms of organization across Cisalpine Gaul which are typical of state societies.[133] This created an awareness of otherness that goes hand in hand with the forging of more visible local identities. Most of these developments must have been slow and incremental and perhaps hardly visible to the contemporary population. Throughout this period, north-west Italy remains, as in previous centuries, orientated towards both the Italian peninsula and Transalpine Gaul. Cultural identities were largely embedded in existing local cultural practices so that La Tène and Ligurian artefacts remain prominent for status display and group identity. In other words, socio-cultural developments must be considered to have taken place within the mechanisms of local societies and we consequently should not overemphasize the extent to which exogenous factors (like the Roman conquest of Cisalpine Gaul) could have initiated these social developments.

Identity crisis: the last generation of 'Celto-Ligurians'

Societies in north-west Italy had undergone an exciting evolution between the fourth and first centuries BC. Writing and coinage show to what extent local societies were capable of adapting to new cultural influences. It is therefore even more surprising that indigenous cultural patterns disappeared just at the 'climax' of this process. In the first century BC, the last generations of 'Celto-Ligurians' experienced a period when indigenous cultural models lost their intrinsic values, their significance, and their ability to motivate and inspire people's behaviour. The reorientation towards pan-Italian cultural expressions implies a profound crisis of legitimation that could no longer be re-negotiated within existing structures. Factors such as Roman citizenship and active participation in Italy-wide affairs by local people created new ambitions and hierarchies that went far beyond the local Cisalpine community. Throughout the course of the first century BC, indigenous material culture and rituals were confronted with those of Italo-Roman origin. This very dynamic picture reflects drastically changing identities.

Variant identities can be identified in, for example, the epigraphic record, such as in the bilingual inscription from Vercelli set up by a certain Akisios/Acisius in the early or middle first century BC.[134] Does his conscious choice of language and alphabet inform us on his identity? Was it deliberate that the Gallo-Lepontic text appears like a mere annexe

---

[132] Piana Agostinetti 1988: 176.

[133] Arslan 1982.

[134] Lejeune 1988; Lambert 1994: possible date after the *ius Latii* grant of 89 BC, but prior to Roman citizenship 49 BC.

in smaller letters, while the Latin text appears relatively clumsy and unconventional for the first century BC? The context of the inscription – the *fines* of a *campus* – was indigenous and in the Latin version Celtic terms had to be paraphrased into Latin, like the *teuoxtom* as *deis et hominibus*.[135] For Motta (2000: 182), the Latin text is aimed for a Latin-speaking audience, while the Celtic one is a statement of ethnic identity. Instead this inscription above all reflects Akisios's ambiguous self-identity. Being part of the Italy-wide political landscape of his time, his actions are still embedded in local traditions as seen by his choice of Lepontic, the Celtic title of his magistracy (*argantocomaterecus*) and the context of a *campus* defined by four stelae, probably a place consecrated for religious ceremonies.[136] And yet, the Latin text dominates the dedication and the direction of writing in these latest Lepontic epigraphy had now permanently changed to left-to-right, as used by Latin, rather than the right-to-left traditionally used by Lepontic script.

Funerary evidence from several sites (Oleggio, Lomellina, Ornavasso) allows us to plot changing identities. The cultural 'mixture' (Golasecca, La Tène, Italo-Roman) is striking, even as late as the first century BC. Both Oleggio and the cemeteries in the Lomellina show similar developments.[137] The wealth of grave goods, especially imports, indicate that we are not dealing with secluded rural populations, but with elites participating in wider socio-political relationships. Despite the proximity to urban centres, La Tène artefacts (pottery, brooches, knifes) dominate funerary assemblages in the Lomellina from the fourth/third down to the first century BC; Campanian ware only appears from *c*.100. For example at Garlasco Baraggia there are 125 tombs from the first century whose grave goods include coarse ware (similar to Golasecca types) and *vasi a trottola*, while the presence of only few pieces of Campanian ware can hardly indicate a strong concept of Roman identity.[138]

With regard to funerary practices, tombs enclosed in a *cassone di lastre* within a tumulus reflect practices known from the sixth to fifth centuries.[139] The late Iron Age 'cassetta' tombs show an extraordinary typological affinity with Golasecca tomb constructions and funerary rituals. Indeed, the highest concentration of the typical *cassetta litica* occurs in the first century BC. This need not indicate a deliberate choice to show one's 'otherness', but probably resulted from the wish by more and more people for a more elaborate display of status and wealth by employing locally available cultural concepts. The 'cheaper' constructions made of *tegulae* (starting *c*.70-50 in the Lomellina)[140] do not *per se* indicate the adoption of Roman rituals, but may indicate the lower status of the deceased.[141] After the mid-first century BC, the use of the *cassetta litica* declined rapidly, though it is still found sporadically during the early empire.[142] The most recent Republican tombs follow

[135] Also, the Celtic word *karnitu* was paraphrased as *locavit et statuit* on the bilingual inscription from Todi: Lejeune 1988: 35-38; Delamarre 2003: 106.

[136] Lejeune 1988: 33; Häussler 2009 on the concept of *campus*.

[137] Vannacci Lunazzi 1980-1982; 1982; 1996.

[138] Bottinelli and Melley 1999.

[139] Gambari 1986; for Lombardy *cf.* Grassi 1996: 78.

[140] *E.g.*, the box of tiles, Tomb 100 in Valeggio, *cf.* Vannacci Lunazzi 1982.

[141] *Cf.* Arsago Seprio, Varese: Grassi 1996: 77-78.

[142] Grassi 1996: 77-78 for the impossibility to make any ethnic identification.

Italo-Roman models where the remains were deposited between two amphorae cut in half. At the same time, we find the typical 'Roman' repertoire of grave-goods, including oil lamps, glass balm vessels and *olpae* instead of *vasi a trottola*. But is the choice of 'Roman' products a question of identity or rather of increasing wealth and accessibility?

Even at Ornavasso, funerary assemblages from the late Iron Age cemeteries of San Bernardo and Persona show comparable chronologies.[143] Imitations of Campanian ware and Italic metal vessels appear *c*.100-40. In weapons graves we find La Tène swords, scabbards, and battle-axes, and from *c*.90, there are the first Italo-Roman swords. The appearance of the typical Roman repertoire of artefacts (*terra sigilata*, glass, glass balm vessels, and mirrors) in the 30s-20s was not a gradual process, but a sudden break in the funerary tradition.[144] Glass vessels became increasingly common from 10 BC-AD 50, while only a few middle La Tène brooches were deposited. 'Romanization' seems to have been a mere episode. After the Augustan period, silver coins, precious metals, or Roman oil lamps disappear, and glass balm vessels are rare. There is no evidence for any tomb constructions or funerary stelae, which are so typical for contemporary Roman cemeteries of the Principate.[145] The massive use of Roman artefacts as grave goods at Ornavasso can be interpreted as indigenous form of status display and not as outward display of a Roman identity.

Dress is very important as a display of identity. On the basis of 146 La Tène brooches from Oleggio, Poletti Ecclesia concluded that people deliberately expressed adherence to a 'Celtic *ethnos*'.[146] Down to *c*.30-20 there were a variety of types, such as the Nauheim type brooches, common in the Novarese, Lombardy and the Ticino. Other indigenous items of dress disappeared in the late first century BC, such as belts in male dress and necklaces in female dress. Throughout the first century BC-AD, it appears that the self-representation of men changed long before that of women. At Oleggio and at Ornavasso, the latest La Tène brooches belong to female graves from the mid-first century AD.[147] Together with the continued presence of conical buttons as typical components of 'Ligurian' female dress,[148] group identity of women seems less subject to socio-cultural change than that of men. This also seems to be the case when looking at representations of women in art and iconography. Does this suggest that women were not faced with the need to adapt their social rôles and identities as much as men? The latter perhaps had fewer cultural choices, considering the need to adapt their social roles to new symbols of power and status. In the first century BC integration into Roman army, hierarchy, and economy seems largely to have been a male affair. It is also possible that cultural conformity to existing male-female relationships continued to be expressed in indigenous (Celtic/Ligurian) customs.

Considering the rapidity of socio-economic change in the world of the living during the first century BC, especially with greater participating in Roman affairs (warfare,

[143] Graue 1974: 102-121; Martin-Kilcher 1998.

[144] Martin-Kilcher's 'Umbruch' (1998: 244).

[145] Martin-Kilcher 1998: 231.

[146] Poletti Ecclesia 1999.

[147] Martin-Kilcher 1998.

[148] Also found in the Lomellina: Arslan 1995.

elections, *etc.*), it seems that the funerary record lags behind. For example, issues of group identity expressed in funerary contexts, such as dress, appear more conservative[149] since the funerary culture mirrors an idealized image of the deceased and of social relations. It reflects intentions, ambitions, and ideologies. It is therefore problematic that we have to rely almost exclusively on funerary evidence in order to recognize the actions and motivations of social agents for this formative period of the Late Republic. Funerary rituals are primarily constructions of the next of kin, who made appropriate choices, manipulating material culture through ritual activities and representing identities other than ethnicity (*e.g.*, gender, age, status).[150] And yet, we are dealing with a radically changing material culture in the first century BC that reveals a profound crisis of legitimization in local society.[151] The increasingly ostentatious burials of late La Tène Lomellina, with the widespread use of decorated pottery, *vasi a trottola*, black slip ware and 'cassetta' tombs, may mirror social competition and tension. The adoption of new symbols of power is a phenomenon which has to be interpreted carefully, since such cultural symbols can be contested and negotiated.[152] The first use of the Charon coin[153] and of amphorae for burial were meaningful choices for the social group to which the deceased belonged, and these choices would in the long run transform local funerary rituals. We witness transformations, perhaps tensions, within social patterns, a process by which a new symbolic framework was adopted which then defined social relations, for example, through the use of fine table ware or glass balm vessels. These, in turn, have different connotations and might be considered a symbolic expression of new emerging identities which reflect the participation in an Italo-Roman/Roman *koiné* and how people viewed their place in the world.

North-west Italy reflects a society in which social relations were re-enacted through material culture, which explains the social necessity for cultural change.[154] While burials mirror questions of age, rank, and gender, concepts of ethnicity or cultural identity may trail behind. The contemporary presence of La Tène and Italo-Roman objects in north-west Italian cemeteries does not reflect opposition to Roman models: it is innovation and not, as suggested by Grassi, 'ancora significative resistenze alla completa integrazione'.[155] The changes to the indigenous funerary assemblages and rituals mirror profound changes since virtually all artefact types changed between the 40s and 20s BC, with the exception of some occasional middle La Tène fibulae and coarse ware pottery. Only by the first century AD do we return to a more stable situation with regard to funerary practices and material culture.

[149] Martin-Kilcher 1998; 2000 also qualifies the funerary evidence at Ornavasso as 'conservative'.

[150] For an interpretation of material culture in the funerary record, *cf.* Shanks and Tilley 1982 and Tilley 1984.

[151] Häussler 2007.

[152] Strauss 1992.

[153] *Cf. e.g.*, Bergonzi and Piana Agostinetti 1987. Naulon show evolution of indigenous afterlife beliefs.

[154] Unlike Greece where material culture was not used to express an identity to any similar extent: *cf.* Woolf 1994.

[155] Grassi 1996: 79.

Particularization of identities in the Principate

Instead of 'experimenting' with identities, the increasing insertion of individuals and social groups into new social relationships and imperial discourses in the Principate affected the spontaneity of the adoption process. External factors increasingly affect the local decision-making process and through their own personal ambitions and aspirations, local people themselves reduced their cultural choices by increasingly following Roman *exempla*. With the extension of Roman citizenship to north-west Italy 49 BC, what identities can we expect? Did people identify themselves with Rome and their Roman-style *municipium* or are their traces of pre-Roman identities and ethnicities?

Despite superficial similarities, archaeology and epigraphy reveal differences which expose different strategies and aspirations employed in the various *municipia*. For example, Novaria presents a strong local identity, while Bodincomagus-Industria illustrates the role of immigrant families as cultural trendsetters. The population of Vercellae looks beyond the *municipium* by displaying its strong ties to Rome with members of senatorial and equestrian rank[156] shaping local social behaviour during the Principate. One of them was Lucius Iunius Vibius Crispus who achieved the consulship three times between Nero and AD 83.[157] According to Tacitus, this was the result of his eloquence that allowed Vibius to 'take today the leading place in the Emperor's circle of friends'.[158] We also recognise influential families, like the *Domitii*, which intermarried and had socio-economic interests across social and geographical boundaries, thus making it difficult to determine their ethnic origin. In any case, by the second century AD this would no longer have been an important distinction. These close links to Rome also made it possible that many of Vercelli's inhabitants served in Rome's prestigious praetorian and urban guards, where they clearly identified themselves not as Libici or Gauls but as citizens of Vercelli.[159]

The situation is different in Novara. Here, some cultural choices (*e.g.*, onomastics and local cults), perpetuated the strong sense of identity that we can recognize in late Iron Age sites like Oleggio, Cureggio, or Briona. But Novara was no cultural backwater. Its élite merely focused on local affairs, such as euergetism for local building projects.[160] Unlike Vercelli and Novara, the people of Bodincomagus jettisoned the Celtic place name in the first century AD in favour of a Latin one, Industria.[161] Two Italic *gentes*, the *Avilii* and the *Lollii*, shaped Industria whose centre was dominated by a monumental Iseion-Serapeion. Locally defined ethnic identities increasingly lost their importance. Élites relied on socio-economic structures beyond the local community, which also made it possible to hold magistracies in more than one community, so that status and *auctoritas* had become independent from local concepts of authority, rendering superfluous the concept of

---

[156] There were 6-8 known members of senatorial families (Alföldy 1982: 358-59).

[157] *CIL* V 6660.

[158] Tac., *Dial.* 8.

[159] *E.g.*, *AE* 1989, 80; *M(arcus) Valerius M(arci) f(ilius) Ani(ensi) Secundus Vercellis mil(es) coh(ortis) IIII pr(aetoriae)*.

[160] Frézouls 1990.

[161] Pliny, *NH* 3.47.

'indigenous' ethnicity. P. Metellus, for example, was *quaestor* of Turin and *duumvir* of Ivrea, and M. Aponius Restitutus was *sevir* of Ivrea and *duumvir* of Industria.[162]

   Lower strata of society also developed a specific identity. For example in the urban environment where a process of differentiation of labour led to the emergence of new social groups, such as craftsmen and merchants, some of them were organized in Roman-style *collegia*, others expressed their self-esteem and social standing by elaborate tombstones with bas-reliefs[163] which served to demarcate them from other social groups. Suburban *necropoleis* show that people of various social status were integrated in urban society, though funerary rituals provided scope for variation. By contrast, the evidence from the Canavese (north of Turin) demonstrates the extent to which non-élite material culture continued to consist of locally produced artefacts in the Principate, not unlike pre-Roman forms. Latin epigraphy was also used in innovative and unconventional ways as a marker of status and ancestral rights, in the context of a centuriated colonial landscape.[164] Altogether, urbanism, migration, and social diversification make it unlikely that pre-Roman ethnic identities continued to matter to local people. With identities responding to Roman structures, pre-Roman ethnicities were supplanted by municipal names.

A new shared experience in the Roman world?

   Est enim ille flos Italiae, illud firmamentum imperii populi Romani, illud ornamentum dignitatis (Cic. *Phil.* 3.5 [13]).

   An parum quod Veneti et Insubres curiam inruperint (...) (Tac. *Ann.* 11.23.3).

What does Cicero mean when he talks about Cisalpine Gaul as the *firmamentum imperii populi Romani*? Was the integration of Cisalpine Gaul already achieved in the 40's BC? As we have seen, despite the integration into the Roman citizen body in 89/49 BC, archaeologically we can hardly identify any aspirations for a Roman identity in north-west Italy in the Republican period. Instead, cultural expressions had a rather experimental and often contradictory character when people tried to negotiate their place in Roman Italy, as coinage, epigraphy, material culture, and funerary rituals reveal. The latter demonstrate many archaising trends, especially in regard to local group identities as reflected in the choice of indigenous dress (fibulae, buttons, belts), while grave goods and rituals show intensifying exchange of information across Italy. Increasing individual wealth and accessibility to markets also mean that more people could receive burials and that societal change, such as the emergence of new social groups, required the enlargement of a repertoire that symbolizes status, rather than ethnicity. In a long-term perspective, trade contacts and the use of imported luxury objects hardly changed in north-west Italy from the sixth to the first century BC. Significant socio-cultural change seems to correlate with increasing participation of local people in Roman structures stimulated by the grant of *ius Latii* and citizenship. Not until the Principate, however, do we recognize a society in which status acquired in Roman structures has become more important than locally

[162] *CIL* V 6955; *NSc* 1903: 44.

[163] Zimmer 1982.

[164] Cresci Marrone 2008; Häussler 1998.

acquired status, rendering local ethnicities almost meaningless. By this date, a pattern of single Roman artefacts embedded in a native cultural model is replaced by a situation in which participation means that a part of the local population internalized Roman values, strove for Roman life-style and identified themselves with the shared history of Augustus' *tota Italia*.

By contrast, the Roman conquest in 222/196 BC *per se* was not a rupture. On the one hand, pre-existing native developments that started in the fourth and third centuries BC, such as Gallo-Lepontic epigraphy, Padane drachma, and urbanism, received a further impetus. Cisalpine material culture continued to develop, as shown by the creation of the *vaso a trottola*. On the other hand, increasing interaction with the Italo-Roman world and the impact of Roman definitions of ethnic boundaries stimulated processes of state formation and ethnogenesis by which people demarcated themselves not only from Rome but primarily from each other. These created stronger local identities, most clearly expressed in the Padane drachma. The choice of the Gallo-Lepontic alphabet and language is not resistance to Rome, but shows that local centres, like Milan, and not Rome, provided the model for socio-cultural change in this period. Ethnicities also evolve in this period. There is the frequently stressed shared experience and history, like the Transalpine origin of many Cisalpine *ethne*, and Greek mythology played its part in inserting Cisalpine groups into a Graeco-Roman mythological landscape. These shared experiences continued to develop as, from Caesar's governorship onwards, Cisalpine Gauls were directly involved in Roman politics and acquired a share of the power with Caesar's grant of citizenship in 49 BC.

Bibliography

Austa-Boularot, S., Golosetti, R., and Isoardi, D. 2010. 'La déesse *Dexiva* du Castellar (Cadenet 84)', *Revue archéologique de Narbonnaise* 43, 2010 (2012): 109-26.

Alföldy, G. 1982. 'Senatoren aus Norditalien. *Regiones* IX, X und XI,' *Epigrafia e ordine senatorio* vol. II: 309-68. Rome.

Arnaud, P. 2001. 'Les Ligures: la construction d'un concept géographique et ses étapes de l'époque archaïque à l'empire romain,' in V. Gotteland and S. Fromentin (eds), *Origines gentium*: 327-46. Bordeaux.

Arslan, E. A. 1982. 'Urbanistica di Milano romana. Dall'insediamento insubre alla romanizzazione,' in *ANRW* II.12.1: 170-210.

Arslan, E. A. 1994. 'La documentazione numismatica in Lombardia,' in G. Gorini (ed.), *Numismatica e archeologia del celtismo padano. Atti del convegno internazionale, Saint-Vincent 8-9 settembre 1989*: 73-84. Aosta.

Arslan, E. A. 1995. 'La nécropole celtique de Garlasco (province de Pavie),' in *L'Europe celtique du Ve au IIIe siècle avant J.-C.: Contacts, échanges et mouvement de populations. Actes du deuxième symposium international d'Hautvillers. 8-10 octobre 1992*: 169-88. Paris.

Arslan, E. A. (ed.) 2009. *Saggio di repertorio dei ritrovamenti di moneta celtica padana in Europa e di moneta celtica non padana in Italia*, www.ermannoarslan.eu [1 March 2009].

Arslan, E. A. and Morandini, F. 2007. *La monetazione delle genti celtiche a Nord del Po tra IV e I secolo a.C. Il tesoro di dracme in argento di Manerbio*. Milan-Trucazzano.

Baggio Simona, S. *et al.* (eds) 2001. *Die Lepontier. Grabschätze eines mythischen Alpenvolkes zwischen Kelten und Etruskern.* Zürich.

Barth, F. 1969. *Ethnic groups and Boundaries*. Bergen.

Bats, M. and H. Tréziny (eds) 1986. *Le territoire de Marseille grecque. Actes de la table ronde d'Aix-en-Provence, 16 mars 1985* (Coll. Etudes massaliètes 1). Aix-Marseille.

Bergonzi, G. and Piana Agostinetti, P. 1987. ''L'obolo di Caronte', 'Aes rude' e monete nelle tombe:la pianura Padana tra mondo classico e ambito transalpino nella seconda età del ferro,' *SCAnt* 1: 161-223.

Bocca, C. and Centini, M. 1995. *Sulle tracce dei Salassi: origine, storia e genocidio di una cultura alpina*. Ivrea.

Bottinelli, L. and Melley, C. 1999. 'La necropolis di Garlasco Baraggia,' in C. Maccabruni, E. Calandra, M. G. Diana and L. Vecchi (eds), Multas per gentes et multa per aequora. *Culture antiche in provincia di Pavia: Lomellina, Pavia, Oltrepò. Atti della giornata di studi (Gambolò, 18 maggio 1997)*: 191-204. Milan.

Brenot, C. 1994. 'Des drachmes marseillaises aux drachmes cisalpines,' in G. Gorini (ed.), *Numismatica e archeologia del celtismo padano. Atti del convegno internazionale, Saint-Vincent 8-9 settembre 1989*: 85-92. Aosta.

Campanile, E. 1981. 'Il *kuitos lekatos* dell'iscrizione di Briona,' in E. Campanile (ed.), *I Celti d'Italia*: 31-34. Pisa.

Colonna, G. 2004. 'Tra Etruschi e Celti, le due facce della Liguria preromana,' *RSL* 70: 5-16.

Crawford, M. H. 1974. *Roman Republican coinage*. London and New York.

Crawford, M. H. 1985. *Coinage and money under the Roman Republic*. Cambridge.

Crawford, M. H. 1996. 'Lex de Gallia Cisalpina,' in M. H. Crawford (ed.), *Roman statutes,* vol. 1: 461-81. London.

Cresci Marrone, G. 1997. 'La fondazione della colonia,' in E. Sergi (ed.), *Storia di Torino. Dalla preistoria al comune medievale*: 143-155. Turin.

Cresci Marrone 2008. 'Épigraphie funéraire et romanisation en Transpadane: marque de propriété foncière ou signe de statut social,' in R. Häussler (ed.), *Romanisation et épigraphie. Études interdisciplinaires sur l'acculturation et l'identité dans l'Empire romain*: 31-41. Montagnac

Culasso Gastaldi, E. 1997. 'Il contesto ligure e i Celti,' in E. Sergi (ed.), *Storia di Torino. Dalla preistoria al comune medievale*: 95-121. Turin.

Delamarre, X. 2003. *Dictionnaire de la langue gauloise.* 2nd ed. Paris.

De Marinis, R. 1977. 'The La Tène Culture of the Cisalpine Gauls,' *Keltske Studije* 4: 22-33.

De Marinis, R. 1981. 'Il periodo Golasecca IIIA in Lombardia,' *Studi Archeologici* 1: 43-286.

De Marinis, R. 1986a. 'L'età gallica in Lombardia (IV-I secolo a.C.): risultati delle ultime ricerche e problemi aperti,' in *La Lombardia tra protostoria e romanità*: 93-174. Como.

De Marinis, R. 1986b. 'L'ideologia funeraria,' in *Como fra Etruschi e Celti: la città preromana e il suo ruolo commerciale*: 155-57. Como.

De Marinis, R. 1988. 'Il Mantovano tra invasioni galliche e romanizzazione: appunti per una ricerca,' in R. De Marinis (ed.), *Gli Etruschi a nord del Po,* vol. II: 183-87. Mantua.

De Marinis, R. 1991. 'I Celti golasecchiani,' in S. Moscati (ed.), *I Celti*: 93-102. Milan.

De Marinis, R. and Biaggio Simona, S. (eds) 2000. *I Leponti tra mito e realtà. Raccolta di saggi in occasione della mostra*. Locarno.

Finocchi, S. (ed.) 1987. *Libarna*. Alessandria.

Fraccaro, P. 1957a. 'Un episodio delle agitazioni agrarie dei Gracchi,' in *Opuscula* III: 77-86. Pavia.

Fraccaro, P. 1957b. 'Via Postumia,' in *Opuscula* III: 195-227. Pavia.

Frézouls, E. 1990. 'Évergetism et construction publique en Italie du Nord (X^e et XIe régions augustéenes),' in *La città nell'Italia settentrionale*: 179-209. Trieste.

Frontini, P. 1985. *La ceramica a vernice nera nei contesti tombali della Lombardia*. Como.

Frontini, P. and Grassi, M. T. (eds) 1998. *Indagini archeometriche relative alla ceramica a vernice nera: nuovi dati sulla provenienza e la diffusione*. Como.

Gabba, E. 1975. 'Mercati e fiere nell'Italia romana,' *SCO* 24: 141-63.

Gabba, E. 1984. 'Ticinum: dalle origini alla fine del III secolo d.C.,' in *Storia di Pavia*: 205-14. Milan.

Gabba, E. 1990 'La conquista della Gallia Cisalpina,' in *Storia di Roma* 2.1: 69-78. Torino.

Gambari, F. M. 1985. 'Borgovercelli. Abitato e necropoli della piena età del Ferro,' *QSAP* 4: 64-5.

Gambari, F. M. 1986. 'Castelletto Ticino (NO): tomba del Bacile,' in R. De Marinis (ed.), *Gli Etruschi a nord del Po*, vol. I: 81-4. Mantua.

Gambari, F. M. 1988. 'Vinzaglio,' *QSAP* 8: 196-97.

Gambari, F. M. 1989a. 'L'iscrizione vascolare della T. 53 di Oleggio-Loreto,' in G. Amoretti *et al., Il Ticino. Strutture, storia e società nel territorio tra Oleggio e Lonate Pozzolo*: 195-97. Turin.

Gambari, F. M. 1989b. 'Il ruolo del commercio etrusco nello sviluppo delle culture

piemontesi della prima età del Ferro,' in R. De Marinis (ed.), *Gli Etruschi a nord del Po, Atti del Convegno. Mantova 4-5 ottobre 1986*: 211-25. Mantova.

Gambari, F. M. 1995. 'I Celti in Piemonte tra il VI ed il III secolo a.C.: I dati archeologici,' in *L'Europe celtique du Ve au IIIe siècle avant J.-C.: Contacts, échanges et mouvements de populations*: 77-84. Paris.

Gambari, F. M. and Venturino Gambari, M. 1987. 'Contributi per una definizione archeologica della seconda età del ferro nella Liguria interna,' *RSL* 53: 99-150.

Garcia, D. 2004. *La Celtique méditerranéenne. Habitats et sociétés en Languedoc et en Provence VIIIe-IIe siècles av. J.-C.* Paris.

Grassi, M. T. 1990-91. 'Insubri e Romani: un modello di integrazione,' *Sibrium* 21: 279-91.

Grassi, M. T. 1993. 'Como: L'influenza insubre e la colonizzazione romana,' in *Como 2050*: 329-32. Como.

Grassi, M. T. 1995. *La romanizzazione degli Insubri. Celti e Romani in Transpadana attraverso la documentazione storica ed archeologica*. Milan.

Graue, J. 1974. *Die Gräberfelder von Ornavasso*. Hamburg.

Guidi, F. 2002. 'Etrusker und Kelten als Dorfgemeinschaft,' *Archäologie in Deutschland* 4: 58-61.

Häussler, R. 1998. '*Resta, viator, et lege*: Thoughts on the epigraphic habit,' *Papers from the Institute of Archaeology* 9: 31-56.

Häussler, R. 2000. 'The dynamics of state societies in northwest Italy,' in E. Herring and K. Lomas (eds), *The Emergence of State Identities in Italy*: 131-156. London.

Häussler, R. 2007. 'At the margin of Italy. Ligurians and Celts in North-West Italy', in G. Bradley, E. Isayev and C. Riva (eds), *Ancient Italy: Regions without boundaries*: 45–78. Exeter.

Häussler, R. 2009. 'Ahnen- und Heroenkulte in Britannien und Gallien – Machtlegitimationoder Bewältigung innerer Krisen,' in J. Rüpke and J. Scheid (eds), *Rites funéraires et culte des morts aux temps impériales* (PawB27): 57-92. Stuttgart.

Häussler, R. and Pearce, J. 2007. 'Empire and literacy in the Roman world,' in K. Lomas, R. D. Whitehouse and J. B. Wilkins (eds), *Literacy and the State in the ancient Mediterranean*: 219–236. London.

Hall, J. M. 1997. *Ethnic identity in Greek antiquity*. Cambridge.

Hall, J. M. 2002, *Hellenicity. Between ethnicity and culture*. Chicago.

Hill, J. D. 1996 (ed.). *History, power, and identity: ethnogenesis in the Americas, 1492-1992*. Iowa City.

Hodder, I. 1988. 'Style as historical quality,' in M. W. Conkey, and C. A. Hastorf (eds), *The uses of style in archaeology*: 44-51. Cambridge.

Iasbez, V. V. 2000. 'I Lepontii e le fonti letterarie antiche,' in R. De Marinis and S. Biaggio Simona (eds), *I Leponti tra mito e realtà. Raccolta di saggi in occasione della mostra*. vol. 2: 243-60. Locarno.

Lambert, P.-Y. 1994. *La langue gauloise. Description linguistique, commentaire d'inscriptions choisies*. Paris.

Lejeune, M. 1988. *Receuil des inscriptions Gauloises (R.I.G.), vol. II, fasc. 1. Textes gallo-étrusques, textes gallo-latines sur pierres, (XLVe supplement à Gallia)*. Paris.

Lomas, K. 2007. 'The Ancient Veneti. Community and State in Northern Italy,' in G. Bradley, E. Isayev and C. Riva (eds), *Ancient Italy: regions without boundaries*: 21-44. Exeter.

Lo Porto, F. G. 1957. 'Gremiaco (Tortona). Il castelliere ligure del Guardamonte,' *NSc* 1957: 212-27.

Luce, J.-M. 2007. 'Introduction,' in J.-M. Luce (ed.), *Identités ethniques dans le monde grec antique. Actes du colloque international de Toulouse, 9-11 mars 2006* (*Pallas* no. 73): 11-23. Toulouse.

Luraschi, G. 1979. Foedus, ius Latii, civitas. *Aspetti costituzionali della romanizzazione in Transpadana*. Padua.

Maggiani, A., Durante, A. M. and Paribeni, E. 2004. 'Le necropoli apuane. Tipologia e rituale,' in R. De Marinis and G. Spadea (eds), *I Liguri. Un antico popolo europeo tra Alpi e Mediterraneo. Genova, Commenda di San Giovanni di Prè, 23 ottobre 2004 – 23 gennaio 2005*: 374-81. Genoa and Milan.

Malkin, I. 1998. *The returns of Odysseus: colonization and ethnicity*. Berkley, California.

Malnati, L. and Manfredi, V. (eds) 1991. *Gli Etruschi in Val Padana.* Milan.

Marinetti, A. and Prosdocimi, A. 1994. 'Le legende monetali in alfabeto leponzio,' in G. Gorini (ed.) *Numismatica e archeologia del celtismo padano. Atti del convegno internazionale, Saint-Vincent 8-9 settembre 1989*. 23-48. Aosta.

Martin-Kilcher, S. 1998. 'Gräber der späten Republik und der frühen Kaiserzeit am Lago Maggiore: Tradition und Romanisierung,' *Xantener Berichte* 7: 191-252.

Martin-Kilcher, S. 2000. 'Die Romanisierung der Lepontier im Spiegel der Kleidung,' in R. De Marinis and S. Biaggio Simona (eds), *I Leponti tra mito e realtà. Raccolta di saggi in occasione della mostra*. vol. 2: 305-24. Locarno.

Melli, P. 1996. *La città ritrovata. Archeologia urbana a Genova 1984-1994*. Genoa.

Melli, P. 2004. 'Genova. Dall'approdo del Portofranco all'emporio dei Liguria,' in R. De Marinis and G. Spadea (eds), *I Liguri. Un antico popolo europeo tra Alpi e Mediterraneo*. Milan.

Milanese, M. 1987. *Scavi nell'oppidum preromano di Genova – S. Silvestro*. Rome.

Morandi, A. 1984. 'Leggende monetali preromane della Lombardia,' in G. Gorini (ed.), *La Zecca di Milano*: 82-5. Milan.

Morandi, A. 2003. 'Il 'celto-ligure', l'etrusco, il retico e il camuno: nuovi dati,' *RSL* 69: 43-89.

Morel, J.-P. 1998. 'La ceramiche a vernice nera del Piemonte: tipologia, storia, cultura,' in L. Mercando (ed.), *Archeologia in Piemonte, vol. II. L'età romana*: 233-52. Turin.

Morgan, C. 2003. *Early Greek states beyond the polis*. London and New York.

Motta, F. 2000. 'La documentazione epigrafica e linguistica,' in R. De Marinis and S. Biaggio Simona (eds), *I Leponti tra mito e realtà. Raccolta di saggi in occasione della mostra*. vol. 2: 181-222. Locarno.

Pautasso, A. 1962. *Le monete preromane dell'Italia settentrionale* (*Sibrium* vol. 7). Pavia.

Pautasso, A. 1980. 'Influenze monetarie del Celtismo padano nell'area elvetica,' in *Studi F. Rittatore Vonwiller* II: 343-61. Como.

Petracco Sicardi, G. and Caprini, R. 1981. *Toponomastica storica della Liguria.* Milan.

Piana Agostinetti, P. 1988. 'Per una definizione delle *civitates* celtiche della Transpadana centrale,' *ScAnt* 2: 137-218.

Poletti Ecclesia, E. 1999. 'Gli oggetti di ornamento e l'evoluzione del costume dal tardo La Tène al tardoantico,' in G. Spagnolo Garzoli, *Conubia gentium. La necropoli di Oleggio e la romanizzazione dei Vertamocori*: 357-70. Turin.

Prosdocimi, A. L. 1991. 'The language and writing of the Celts,' in S. Moscati (ed.), *I Celti*: 51-59. Milan.

Purcell, N. 1990. 'The creation of provincial landscape: the Roman impact on Cisalpine Gaul,' in T. Blagg and M. Millett (eds), *The early Roman Empire in the west*: 7-29. Oxford.

Shanks, M. and Tilley, C. 1982. 'Ideology, symbolic power, and ritual communication: a reinterpretation of Neolithic mortuary practices,' in I. Hodder (ed.), *Symbolic and structural archaeology*: 129-54. Cambridge.

Smith, A. D. 1986. *The ethnic origins of nations.* Oxford.

Solinas, P. 'Il celtico in Italia' *StEtr* 60: 311-408

Spagnolo Garzoli, G. 1988. 'Dormelletto. Necropoli della seconda età del Ferro,' *QSAP* 8: 197-200.

Spagnolo Garzoli, G. 1999. 'La guerra come arte e mestiere,' in G. Spagnolo Garzoli, *Conubia gentium. La necropoli di Oleggio e la romanizzazione dei Vertamocori*: 345-56. Turin.

Strauss, C. 1992. 'Models and motives,' in C. Strauss and R. G. D'Andrade (eds), *Human motives and cultural models*: 161-84. Cambridge.

Tilley, C. 1984. 'Ideology and the legitimation of power in the middle neolithic of southern Sweden,' D. Miller and C. Tilley (eds), *Ideology, power, and prehistory*: 111-46. Cambridge.

Tizzoni, M. 1985. 'The late Iron Age in Lombardy,' C. Malone and S. Stoddart (eds), *Papers in Italian Archaeology* 4 (*BAR Int. Ser.* 245): 37-68. Oxford.

Tizzoni, M. 1986. 'La romanizzazione dei territori alpini: continuità della tradizione preromana in area alpina,' in *La Lombardia. Seconda convegno archeologico regionale. Atti. Como 13-15 aprile 1984*: 199-214. Como.

Untermann, J. 1958. 'Zu einigen Personennamen auf lateinischen Inschriften in Ligurien,' in *Sybaris. Festschrift Hans Krahe zum 60. Geburtstag*: 177-88. Wiesbaden.

Vannacci Lunazzi, G. 1980-1982. 'Una tomba gallica a Garlasco-Madonna delle Bozzole,' in *Studi in onore di Ferrante Rittatore Vonwiller* I.2: 747-65. Como.

Vannacci Lunazzi, G. 1982. 'Aspetti della cultura tardo La Tène in Lomellina,' *RSL* 48: 111-125.

Vannacci Lunazzi, G. 1996. 'Un aspetto della romanizzazione del territorio: la necropoli di Gambolò-Belcreda (Pavia),' *Rivista archeologica dell'antica provincia e diocesi di Como* 165: 119-254.

Venturino Gambari, M. 1987. 'Alle origini di Libarna. Insediamenti protostoriche e vie commerciali in valle Scrivia,' in S. Finocchi (ed.), *Libarna:* 16-26. Alessandria.

Venturino Gambari, M., Perotto, A. and Prosperi, R. 1994. 'Limone Piemonte, loc. Tetti Monsù. Insediamento protostorico,' *QSAP* 12: 288-90.

Williams, J. H. C. 2001. *Beyond the Rubicon. Romans and Gauls in Republican Italy.* Oxford.

Woolf, G. 1994. 'Becoming Roman, staying Greek: culture, identity, and the civilizing process in the Roman East,' *PCPS* 40: 116-43.

Zimmer, G. 1982. *Römische Berufsdarstellungen*. Berlin.

LANGUAGE, IDENTITY, AND CULTURE
IN ANCIENT ITALY[1]

KATHRYN LOMAS

Language is often ascribed an important role in the creation and maintenance of cultural and ethnic identities. Possession of a shared language features prominently in definitions of what constitutes an ethnic group, along with other features such as shared cults, material cultures, socio-political structures, mythologies, and ancestry.[2] In a situation of cultural contact or migration, preservation of linguistic identity often becomes an important part of strategy for maintaining or reconstructing group identity, particularly for groups which form a cultural or ethnic minority within a society.[3] However, many examinations of language and linguistic identity take place primarily in the framework of modern nation states or of the nationalist movements which gave rise to them – a context in which language was highly politicized and in which there is an assumption that language acts as a powerful marker of ethnic and cultural identity.

In the ancient Mediterranean, by contrast, the role of language as a marker of identity is much more problematic. Studies of ancient ethnicity which focus on the Greek world have also identified language as a central element in Greek ethnicity. The Greeks themselves subscribed to the view that their language was fundamental to their identity and was one of the most basic attributes distinguishing them from barbarians.[4] Elsewhere in the ancient

---

[1] This paper was prepared as part of an AHRC research project on 'Developmental literacy in early Italy'.

[2] Smith 1991: 20-25; Jenkins 1997: 47, 130-35; Jones 1997: 56-61.

[3] Many studies of the role of language in the maintenance of identities have been fundamentally coloured by the influence of nationalist movements and the politicization of language in the 19th and 20th centuries. The notion of language as an important aspect of statehood and the belief that linguistic and political boundaries should coincide were central to the ideologies of 19th century nationalist movements. Similarly, languages have become a powerful symbol of identity for ethnic minorities, as demonstrated by the conscious efforts to revive and support Celtic languages in Wales, Ireland, and elsewhere, and the highly politicized role of languages such as Catalan and Basque in establishing claims to political autonomy. *cf.*, in particular, McDonald 1989; Renfrew 1996: 125-37; Jenkins 1997: 130-51; Dorian 1999: 24-26; Thomason 2001; Wallace-Hadrill 2008: 41, 57-70.

[4] Hdt. 5.22, 8.144.2. Studies of Greek ethnicity have created a more nuanced understanding of this, suggesting that this may have varied considerably between different periods of Greek history and areas of the Greek world, but the basic fact remains that language was an important aspect of ethnic identity for the Greeks (Harrison 2002: 11-12). Hall (2002: 111-17) argues that although language was important to the Greeks, the perceived differences between Greek and non-Greek speakers may have been less important in the 8th-7th centuries than they later became in the fifth century. However, *cf.* Morpurgo Davies (2002) on the mutual intelligibility and convergence of dialects in the fifth century.

Mediterranean, however, linguistic identities are much more complex and the role of language in the creation and maintenance of ethnic boundaries is problemati*c*. This is particularly true of Italy in, and after, the period of Roman conquest.

Unlike Greece, Italy was a region of considerable ethnic and cultural diversity, and also one of considerable linguistic variety. Until relatively recently, there has been, perhaps, a tendency amongst scholars to privilege language as a marker of ethnic or cultural identity in Italy. However, in a situation where ethnic and cultural groups co-existed and interacted, and in which ethnic and cultural boundaries may have been fairly fluid, this has had the effect of creating a sometimes spurious (or at least overstated) impression of a cultural and ethnic unity in some areas of Italy which may not actually have existed in the minds of their inhabitants.[5] Greek and Roman ethnographic descriptions – many by writers with little or no direct knowledge of the peoples in question – frequently depict Italian peoples as having a tribal organization, dividing them into ethnically defined chiefdoms for whom which language was an important marker of ethnic and political groups. Archaeological and epigraphic evidence, however, gives a rather different picture, suggesting that the primary unit of organization from the Iron Age onwards was the individual state, and that political, linguistic, and cultural boundaries do not necessarily coincide. This is perhaps most marked in Etruria, where the distinctive character of the language has conferred a possibly spurious sense of a unified cultural and ethnic identity which is not supported by the diversity of the material culture of the region, and which is only now starting to be questioned.[6] However, similar patterns can be seen in other areas of Italy.[7]

In the period after the Roman conquest, which was one of linguistic and cultural contact and change, a simplistic equation of language, culture, and ethnicity is especially problemati*c*. Roughly speaking, the uptake of Latin as an epigraphic language was relatively slow in the third century, but gathered pace from the second century onwards, and eventually displaced local languages in the late second to first centuries.[8] Latin co-exists with other languages for some considerable time, although the extent to which it was used may have depended on a variety of factors such as context, type of inscription, and social status. There is little evidence for the imposition of Latin by Rome as part of the process of

---

[5] For a counter-argument, see Bradley (2000: 19-28) who makes a strong case for the need for a more nuanced approach in the context of Umbria.

[6] Although the whole of Etruria shares the same language, there are important differences in other aspects of culture between the northern and southern parts of the region, and between individual states, to suggest that the region was not as culturally homogenous as has often been implied. There are, for instance, significant differences in settlement patterns and funerary practices between northern and southern Etruria (Barker and Rasmussen 2000: 149-78, 232-43), and in forms and uses of writing (Bagnasco Gianni 2000).

[7] In the Veneto, for instance, there are major differences in material culture between the non-urbanized Alpine areas and the urbanized Po plain (Lomas 2007). Both areas share a common language, Venetic, but evidence for a collective ethnic name and identity is problematic (language: Pellegrini and Prosdocimi 1967; ethnic identity: Marinetti 1999: 400-12; Lomas 2007: 37-9).

[8] There is, however, a fair amount of regional variation. The latest Etruscan inscriptions date to the early first century AD (Kaimio 1975; Benelli 1994), but both Oscan and Umbrian disappear shortly after the Social war (Bradley 2000: 208-11; Crawford 2011).

conquest and annexation, and selection of a particular language to use in a particular context must be regarded as a process of choice, which depended on a range of factors such as the written or spoken context, intended audience, social background of the writer/speaker, *etc.*[9] For instance, it is mostly adopted first as a high-status language for official purposes or for inscriptions set up by members of the elite, while the local language remained in use for private inscriptions or for those written by non-elite social groups.[10] In many areas of Italy and the provinces, Latin may have been a globalizing factor, acting as a link language which enabled contact between elite groups and facilitated the diffusion of Roman culture.[11] However, the continued existence of other languages alongside Latin suggests that language was a highly complex marker of identity, particularly in the period after the Roman conquest. This paper will explore some of these issues in the context of a particularly complex region – Puglia – in this period of Roman conquest.

Culture and society in south-east Italy

Puglia is a large and diverse region, with many variations in culture, economy, and socio-political organization. It had a strong tradition of urban development, beginning in the sixth century BC. This culmination in settlements which can be regarded as fully urban, although – developing rather differently from the Graeco-Roman model – by the late fourth to third centuries BC. The sixth and fifth centuries are marked by a number of significant developments such as a growth in the size and complexity of settlements, construction of fortifications, developments on the sites of important sanctuaries, changes in territorial organization, and greater economic specialization.[12] During the sixth to fourth centuries, settlements acquire organized street plans, larger and more complex buildings, and areas set aside as public space.[13] Many sites – although not all – are characterized by nuclei of houses and associated burials rather than by a single nucleated habitation area and spatial separation between burials and habitation.[14] The fortified areas of sites include areas of burials although some, such as Vaste and Manduria, also have extensive cemeteries outside the walls, sometimes aligned with the roads or gates.

Socially and politically, there are signs that a dominant élite began to emerge in the sixth century. Greek sources describe the region as one of tribal or *ethnos*-based societies ruled by kings, variously referred to as *basileus*, *tyrannos*, or *dunastes*.[15] This broadly agrees with the

---

[9] Valerius Maximus (2.2.2-3) asserts that Roman magistrates refused to communicate with Greek officials in their own language and insisted on using Latin. However, Adams (2003: 558-59) and Wallace-Hadrill (2008: 82-84) argue strongly that this reflects Roman behaviour in the eastern provinces only, and that in Italy, Latin was adopted voluntarily rather than as a matter of compulsion. *cf.* Wallace-Hadrill 2008: 93-96 on code-switching and language-choice.

[10] Woolf 1996; Benelli 2001: 8-10; Häussler 2002: 68-72.

[11] Hingley 2005: 94-102.

[12] Yntema 1986; Boersma and Yntema 1987; Lomas 1993a; Lamboley 1996: 335-42, 350-60; Burgers 1998: 196-204.

[13] D'Andria 1988: 653-715; Lombardo 1991: 38-109; Lamboley 1996: 336-37.

[14] Lamboley 1996: 335-38; Lombardo 1994: 31-32.

[15] Paus. 10.13.10, Thu*c.* 7.33, Justin 12.2.5; Strabo, *Geog.* 6.3.4.

archaeological evidence. An increase in burials with wealthy grave goods in the sixth century supports the emergence of a dominant and wealthy élite at this period, although the contemporary development of urban or proto-urban settlements, each with their own territory and political identity suggests a region of emergent state societies rather than the tribal chiefdoms.[16]

The ethnicity of the region is complex. There is strong evidence for ethnic categorization by Greeks and Romans. Ancient sources describe three principal ethnic groups, mostly referred to as Dauni, Peucetii, and Messapi, whose territories corresponded to the north and south Puglia, although there are also references to Sallentini, Iapyges, and Apuli, which may be alternative ethnic names or denote groups perceived as separate *ethne*.[17] However, this may reflect Greek (and later, Roman) perceptions rather than those of the populations themselves. These names and ethnic boundaries are ascribed by observers from other cultures and periods, and show signs of being filtered through a Greek or Roman sensibilities.[18] What these peoples called themselves is open to question, as no indigenous evidence of a collective ethnic name survives from any part of the region. Where group names are preserved – for instance in coin legends – they are those of the individual states, not ethnic groups. By the fourth century, there is some evidence that a more clearly defined and represented sense of collective ethnic identity was beginning to develop, often using some elements of Greek ethnic categorizations. In northern Puglia, for instance, the cult of Diomedes, who is named by Greek sources as an ancestor of the Daunii became an important symbol of local identity which may indicate the emergence of a stronger sense of collective Daunian identity.[19] Other markers of a distinctive material culture, such as matt-painted pottery, and visual representations of men and women in distinctive local costume also assume a greater importance in the fourth century, possibly a sign that local cultural

[16] Lombardo 1991: 38-109. The collective names which are epigraphically attested all occur in inscriptions on coins and are the names of individual cities or states rather than *ethne*. Rutter 2001: 84-107.

[17] Polybius (3.88.6-8) and Strabo (*Geog*. 5.1.3, 6.3.1) both make reference to a tripartite division of the region between the Messapi – sometimes equated with the Sallentini – the Peuceti and the Dauni. Strabo (*Geog*. 6.3.1) further suggests a division of the region into Apulia, inhabited by Peuceti and Dauni, and the territory of the Calabri and Sallentini – the region more usually known as Messapia. Pliny's inventory of Italy (*NH* 3.101-4) complicates the matter still more by attaching the name Apuli, used by almost all other authors either as a name for the region or as a synonym for the Dauni and Peuceti, to a smaller number of communities in the Gargano area of modern Puglia. In other words, there is little consensus amongst ancient writers – particularly those of the second century BC onwards – about which of these terms indicate geographical areas, which indicate ethnic groups, and how these two categories match up. For discussion of interpretation of these terms and evidence for them, see Lombardo 1991; Herring 2000; Lomas 2000.

[18] In many cases, for instance, Greek etymologies and foundation myths are given for local names, legends, or foundations. For instance, the Greek eponymous ancestors of the peoples of Puglia are said to have been the Cretan Iapyx, son of Daedalus (Hdt. 7.170; Strabo, *Geog*. 6.3.2; Nicander *ap*. Ant. Lib. *Met*. 31), and his sons Daunus and Peucetos. Diomedes is also named as the founder of many Daunian cities (Strabo, *Geog*. 6.3.9-10).

[19] Ps. Arist., *Mir. Ausc*. 79, 106; Lycoph., *Alex*. 630-2; Ovid, *Met*. 14.510-26; Strabo, *Geog*. 6.3.9; Herring 2009.

identities were becoming more defined and more strongly represented in the face of political and cultural encroachment by Tarentum and – later in the fourth century – by Rome.[20] However, the primary collective identity remained that of the state rather than of the wider ethnic group. Although there were no doubt alliances and connections between states, there is no evidence from Puglia itself of any degree of political organization or unity at any level above that of the individual state. Mapping these externally-perceived identities onto the material record is, needless to say, methodologically unwise and fraught with difficulties. There are clear variations between the material cultures, patterns of urbanization, and economic development between different areas of Puglia, but these by no means correspond to Greek perceptions of three distinct *ethne*.

The fourth to early second centuries BC – the period covered by this paper – was one of considerable change and disruption. From *c.*350 BC, Greek condottieri employed by Tarentum were active in the area, and northern part of Puglia was drawn into Rome's orbit during the Samnite wars, from 326 BC onwards.[21] The remainder of the region was conquered during the course of the Pyrrhic war, and by and 267/6 BC the entire region was in alliance with Rome.[22] A Latin colony was founded at Brindisi in 244 BC and by 218 BC, there was a Roman garrison at Tarentum. During the Hannibalic war, both Roman and Carthaginian forces campaigned extensively in Puglia, and a number of communities seceded to Hannibal, although there is no clear indication of which cities did so. Arpi changed sides at least once, and and Manduria supported Hannibal, but others are referred to only as a collection of unspecified cities of the Sallentini.[23] After the war, communities which had seceded suffered reprisals. Much of the region was placed under direct Roman rule and remained so for at least 20 years after the war, partly as a punishment and partly because of periodic outbreaks of unrest, which provoked further reprisals in 185/4.[24] The ports of Brundisium and Tarentum were key bases for Roman campaigns in Greece and the eastern Mediterranean, and were home to substantial Roman fleets. During this period, significant numbers of colonists were settled in the region, some as part of formal colonial foundations at Venusia, Luceria, and Sipontum, but others (many probably sailors from the fleets) possibly as settlers added to existing communities without any colonial reorganization.[25]

The second century was also a period of major social and economic change. Many cities began to reorganize their layout and amenities on much more Roman lines, and the Roman

---

[20] Herring 2007, 16-20

[21] Livy 8.25.3, 9.29.1-2.

[22] Livy *Per.* 15; *Insc. Ital.* 13.1; Flor., *Epit*. 1.14-15.

[23] Livy 24.45-7, 25.1.1, 27.15.4; App., *Hann*. 45-7.

[24] The region was controlled by a Roman praetor at least until 184 BC (Livy 31.29.9-10, 38.42.5-6, 39.39.8-10; 39.41.5-7). Livy records serious unrest in Puglia in 185/4 BC, which was suppressed by Rome.

[25] Livy refers to colonial foundations at Sipontum, on territory confiscated from Arpi in 194 and 183 BC (34.45.1-5, 39.23.3-4), and at Venusia and Luceria (Livy 21.49). Epigraphic evidence suggests that there were also significant number of settlers from the Roman forces stationed at Tarentum and Brundisium, although probably not formally constituted as colonists. For centuriation and evidence for land allotments, *cf.* Grelle 1981: 195.

colonization began to have a greater impact.[26] Surveys of the hinterland of Brindisi, for instance, suggest that cities such as Oria and Valesio shrank in size at this date, and that rural settlement and use of extra-urban sanctuaries such as that of Monte Papalucio diminished.[27] The characteristic *fossa* and semi-chamber tombs described above become much less common and are replaced by less lavish Roman-style burials during the course of the second century, and local pottery forms disappear in favour of grey gloss wares.[28] The onomastic data also suggests that the elite families of the fourth and third centuries lost their pre-eminent position and were replaced by families with Roman or Romanized names.[29] This may not necessarily indicate ethnic change, but could be evidence of assimilation, as positions of power came to be dominated by supporters of Rome. Whatever the precise processes at work, it is clear that the second century was a period of stress and change, during which many aspects of indigenous Puglian cultures began to change significantly.

Language and writing in south-east Italy

Any discussion of identity and language in ancient Italy must inevitably address the nature of epigraphic evidence, the spread of literacy, and the local cultures of epigraphic writing, since our only surviving evidence of non-Latin languages comes in the form of inscriptions.

The alphabet used in this area is closely based on the Greek alphabet, with the adaptation of a number of characters to represent additional phonemes, but is by no means a slavish imitation (Fig. 1).[30] The language most prominently represented, and assumed to have been the indigenous written and spoken language of the region in the pre-Roman period, is conventionally termed 'Messapic', although it appears to have been used throughout Puglia and not to have been restricted to the area identified by ancient sources as politically and ethnically Messapian (*i.e.*, the Salento). Other languages are represented on the fringes of the region. Greek inscriptions are found, particularly in the areas close to the territories of Tarentum and Metapontum, and also at some sanctuary sites. Small numbers of Oscan inscriptions occur in northern Puglia, mainly in the area around Tiati, and in the fourth century BC a distinctive north Puglian dialect – termed Apulian – emerges.[31] This appears to be a dialect of Messapic rather than a separate language, characterized by changes in the vowels (or at least in the way they were transcribed) and the adoption of a slightly different script.[32]

---

[26] Volpe 1990: 41-48; Lamboley 1996: 486-89; Burgers 1998: 265-81.

[27] Burgers 1998: 267-75.

[28] Burgers 1998: 269-70.

[29] Lamboley 1996: 487-93; Burgers 1998: 278-81.

[30] For a recent discussion on the development of the alphabet, see Marchesini 1999; De Simone and Marchesini 2002: 5-10.

[31] De Simone 1988: 335-53; Lejeune 1991: 228-31.

[32] The principal difference concerns the transcription of the vowels written as /o/ and /i/ in Messapic, which are transcribed as /u/ in Apulian (*e.g.,* Messapic *klaohi* or *klohi* becomes *klauhi* in Apulian; *Damatra* or *Damatira* becomes *Damatura*). Upsilon is not part of the regular Messapic alphabet, and its use in Apulian raises the possibility that the emergence of the Apulian alphabet was influenced by

AΔ△ABβDD Ŗ E ERFCIH ⊟I ⊕I ΛΛ M/MN NX†O ΠΓ ⲴPPR Ŗ
ₛₛTT⇡⥊Ψ

A Ϻ AB △△ ЕƐϜΓ ΙⅠƖZZ HⲭΘ⊙ ⊙ΛΛ MM/NNⲭ†
OПΓ ΓPⱤⱤꓝ ₛꟼ ꟽ ꝱ ΣCⲦ ΤⲨΨⲨ
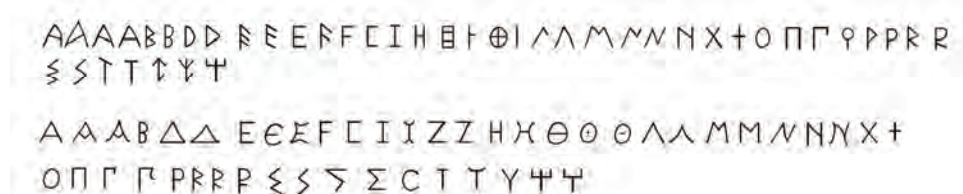
Fig. 1: Messapic alphabets: Archaic, sixth-fifth century BC (top) and third century BC (bottom) (after Marchesini and De Simone 2002)

The earliest Messapic inscriptions from Puglia date to the late sixth century BC, [33] but these are few in number and are confined to a relatively restricted area in southern Puglia and mainly come from votive deposits or other ritual contexts (Fig. 2). Many of these early inscriptions are on pottery, including a mixture of local wares and imported Greek pottery, and are found primarily in ritual contexts.[34] Other early Messapic inscriptions include simple stone *cippi*, probably votive rather than funerary in nature, from Nardò, Vaste, and from an area close to the walls of Cavallino which shows evidence of cult activity.[35] Probable early votive inscriptions from Porto Cesareo, Salve, and Cavallino consist of short inscriptions on pottery or loom weights.[36] In particular, there is a large concentration from Vereto from the ritual cave site of Grotta Porcinara,[37] which has produced both Greek and Messapic dedications, and a smaller one from Monte Papalucio, near Oria, which also seems to have been frequented by Greeks as well as the local Messapic population.[38]

From the fourth century onwards, however, there is an important change in both the numbers of inscriptions, as well as the type of inscribed objects and the nature of Messapic inscriptions (Fig. 3). The number of inscriptions increased sharply, peaking in the third century – the period of Roman conquest and consolidation – and diminishing equally sharply in the second century. It should be noted, however, that the dating of most inscriptions

contact with the Greek world (De Simone 1988: 332-53). On Greek contacts with Daunia and Greek cultural influences in the region, see Herring 2009.

[33] Many Messapic inscriptions are dated primarily on their letter-forms and their chronology – especially that of the earliest inscriptions – is a matter of some debate. The dating of the earliest examples to the sixth century (Marchesini 1999: 173-212; De Simone and Marchesini 2002: 6-11) has recently been challenged and there is a possibility that many may be no earlier than the fifth century (F. Frisone, pers. comm.).

[34] Marchesini 1999: 181-203.

[35] Parlangèli 1960: IM 18.11, 22.113, 22.114, 22.116, and possibly IM 30.110; De Simone and Marchesini 2002: MLM 25 bas, IM 30.11.

[36] Parlangèli 1960: IM 29.11, 0.321, 0.488, 0.490, 0.476, 0.477, 0.478; De Simone and Marchesini 2002: MLM 8 Cav.

[37] Pagliara 1978; D'Andria 1990.

[38] Pagliara 1979; D'Andria 1990.

Fig. 2: Map of south-east Italy

is based on letter-forms rather than archaeological context. Most of these items date from the late fourth to the early second century, with the majority likely to date to the third century, but it is impossible to be more precise about the date in most cases. The geographical distribution is much wider than that of the early inscriptions. The majority are still concentrated in the Salento, but inscriptions are found on a larger number of sites.

Inscriptions continue to be found in votive contexts, sometimes as short inscriptions on votive objects. Fragments of stone inscriptions which may come from sanctuary buildings, or from votive *cippi*, are also found. However, the largest proportion of the fourth to second century inscriptions are funerary inscriptions of a traditional Messapic type, and associated with a local form of burial. The tombs consisted of inhumations in stone-lined *fossa* graves which contained a funerary couch which supported the corpse and the grave goods. The graves were sometimes re-used after a period of time by adding another funeral couch. It is a form of burial which became established in the fourth century as the main form of elite burial in this area.[39] The inscriptions, where they occur, were mostly written on the inside of

---

[39] Lombardo 1994; Lamboley 1996: 339-43, 367-73 and 450-54.
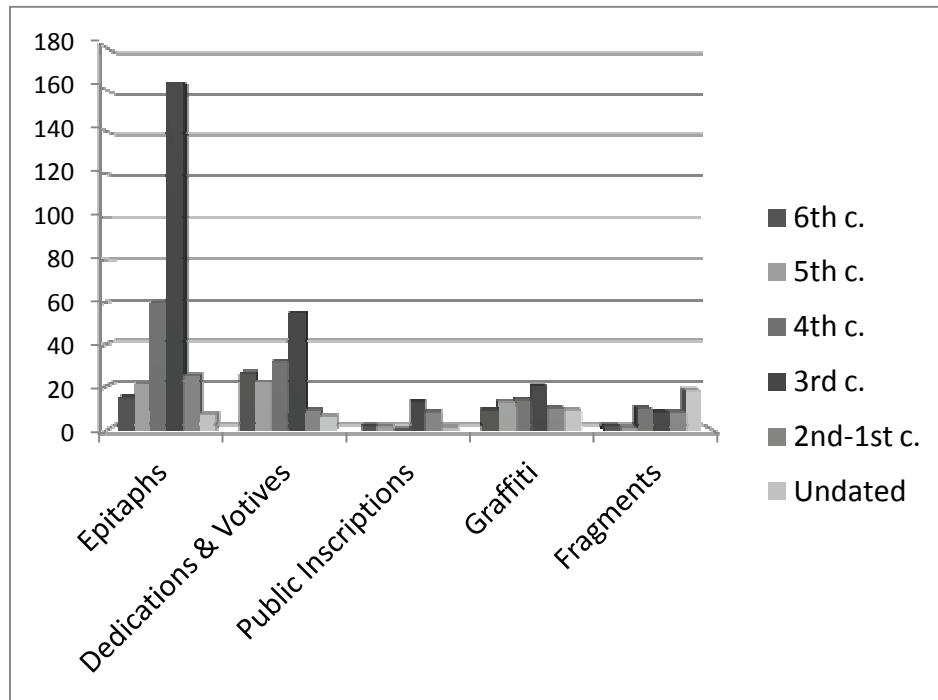
Fig. 3: Chronological distribution of Messapic inscriptions

the stone lining or on the underside of the cap stone, and would have been hidden when the tomb was closed. The majority of them consist only of a personal name, mostly with 2 elements (either name + gentilicial or name + patronymic)[40] and expressed in the genitive case. Typical examples include *valloas libosthihi* ('of Valles Libothes')[41], *graivahi mardihi* ('of Graivas Mardes')[42] and *šaillonna[s] lomiaihi no* ('I am (?) of Šaillonas Lomias').[43] This places an emphasis on the personal and/or family identity of the deceased and on ownership of the tomb by a particular family. The position of the inscriptions ensured that they would have been visible only during the funeral ceremonies, when the grave was open. Some graves are also marked with a small stele or *cippus* above ground, although this practice, while common at some sites in the fifth century, seems to decline in the fourth century BC, and very few of these markers are inscribed.[44] There seems, therefore, to have

[40] For an analysis of Messapic name-structures see Untermann 1955; Däube 1990.

[41] Alezio, third century BC. Santoro 1984: IM 25.118.

[42] Alezio, third century BC. Santoro 1984: IM 25.116

[43] Alezio, sixth to early fifth century. Parlangèli 1960: IM 25.14. For the possible interpretations of *no*, see Prosdocimi 1986.

[44] Lamboley 1996: 340-2. An inscribed example of the third century BC was found at Gnathia (Santoro 1984: IM 3.120). Santoro takes this use of a visible marker as an equivalent of a Greek *sema* and therefore an indication of Hellenization, but since only a small number of inscribed grave markers has been found, it is difficult to place too much weight on this.

been a marked increase in emphasis on elite commemoration in the local language and script at the point when Rome was encroaching on the political independence of Messapic communities, and at which they were undergoing significant social, economic, and cultural changes. The position of the inscriptions, placed within a closed context, suggests that their role as markers of identity was at least partly symbolic and did not depend on public display or visibility.[45]

Very few examples of linguistic Romanization have been found in association with Messapic burial types. The exception to this is a tomb found in the Roman cemetery around Piazza San Oronzo in Lecce which contained two inscriptions on the interior wall, one of which is in Latin language and script. It dates to the late third or early second century BC and commemorates M. Visellius.[46] Despite its Messapic context, the name itself is Latin, or at least Romanized in form, which suggests a local notable who had adopted high profile symbols of Romanization, and possibly gained Roman citizenship. However, this is a rare exception to the rule that Messapic burial customs were strongly associated with Messapic culture and language.

This expansion of a distinctive local burial style and associated Messapic inscriptions coincided with the adoption of two new forms of inscription in the region, which illustrate both the changing forms of epigraphic habit, and the complexities of linguistic identity. From the fourth century BC onwards, there was an increasing use of longer and more monumental stone inscriptions in Messapic, which seem to have a public function. Previously, long inscriptions and particularly those associated with state rather than individual or family identity had been few in number, but this period sees an increase in large inscribed *cippi*, such as those from Monopoli, Carovigno, and Brindisi.[47] These were apparently purpose-made, as a means of placing fairly long texts on public display, and unlike funerary inscriptions, they were probably set up in public places. There is some uncertainty about where they were located as many were not found *in situ*, but it is possible that at least some may have been associated with sanctuaries or cult places. The nature of the inscriptions is open to debate as most survive only in a fragmentary state, but all are long and appear to be records of activity by the state rather than individuals.[48] There are also more building inscriptions of this date, some of which show Hellenized architectural features such as a triglyph and metope frieze above or below the inscription. Like the inscribed *cippi*, most of these inscriptions are highly fragmentary and difficult to interpret, but several use the term *deranthoa*, which is often interpreted as a ruling body analogous to

---

[45] Lomas, forthcoming.

[46] Giardino 1994: 183, tomb no. 139.

[47] Parlangèli 1960: IM 2.21, IM 5.14 and IM 6.13.

[48] The term *klohi* (or *klaohi*) is usually interpreted as an invocation to a god, in the manner of some Greek decrees, deriving from the same root as Greek *kluo* (D'Andria and Dall'Aglio 2003). Those which appear to be official inscriptions of some sort include Parlangèli 1960: IM 21.11 (Galantina, third century), Parlangèli 1960: IM 22.21 (Vaste, third century), Parlangèli 1960: IM 6.21 (Brindisi, third century), Parlangèli 1960: IM 26.15 (Ugento, third to second century), and Santoro 1982: IM 9.19 (Oria, third century).

the senate and which would indicate that they were inscriptions set up by the state. [49] Others include the word *argorian*, believed to be a Messapic term for money and therefore denoting the source of finance or the benefactor who paid for the building or inscription.[50] Unlike the funerary inscriptions, which are of a distinctive local form, these longer inscriptions took forms which suggest the development of more Hellenized, or Romanized, epigraphic culture in third to second centuries, both in the nature and content of the inscriptions, and in the form of the structures to which they were attached.

The other new form of inscription which appears for the first time in the fourth to third centuries is the coin legend. Coinage starts to be widely issued by communities in Puglia in the late fourth century BC, mostly from *c.* 300 BC, although some are as early as 325 and others do not start until after the end of the Pyrrhic war.[51] Coinage is issued by around twenty communities in Puglia and is based closely on Greek weights and models.[52] With only a small number of exceptions, the coins which include inscriptions are inscribed in Greek language and script rather than in Messapi*c*. The issues of cities as diverse as Arpi (ΑΡΠΑΝΩΝ), Nardò (ΝΑΡΗΤΙΝΩΝ), Gravina (ΣΙΔΙΝΩΝ), Azetium (ΑΖΕΤΙΝΩΝ), and Caelia (ΚΑΙΛΙΝΩΝ) all use Greek language as well as Greek script. Many numismatic studies argue that since coinage in southern Italy was adopted from Greek sources, the default language and script for inscriptions was universally Greek. However, this does not entirely explain the language use on coins from Puglia. Some of the coins, notably those from Valesio (which began minting much earlier than some other communities, possibly even as early as *c.* 480-460 BC), Oria, and Ugento have legends which are much more ambiguous and may have been inscribed in Messapic language or alphabet, rather than Greek.[53] The assumption that communities and their rulers would have adopted a foreign technology – particularly one as closely connected with the identity of a community as its coinage – without any modification or adaptation is also worth examining. If Greek was being used as a medium for representing the identity of a community, this suggests that the elites commissioning the coins were making an active language choice and were doing so because the use of Greek served their purposes. The selection of Greek as the language of choice for coinage may be partly functional – it was a widely spoken link language throughout southern Italy – but it also suggests that the local elites were actively using it as a means of representing their cities as part of the Hellenised cultural *koine* of the region in the fourth to second centuries.

---

[49] For instance, a building fragment from Ugento with a triglyph and metope frieze and inscription, which dates to the third to second centuries BC and which was inscribed on the authority of the *deranthoa* (Santoro 1982: IM 26.18). A further example from Salve, near Vereto, appears to have been part of a stele with Greek-style sculpture (Santoro 1982: IM 27.12).

[50] Vereto, third to second century, Santoro 1982: IM 27.12; Vaste, third century, Parlangèli 1960: IM 6.21.

[51] Rutter 2001: Nos 633-823, 1099-1104.

[52] Rutter (2001) lists a total of 135 individual coin-types, issued by around 23 separate states, although it is difficult to be absolutely prescriptive as some of the attributions to particular communities are unclear.

[53] Rutter 2001: nos 730-32 (Valesio), 785-95 (Oria), and 1099-1104 (Ugento). On language and coin legends, see Lamboley 1996: 410-14.

A specific case-study which can be used to illustrate the complexity of the linguistic and epigraphic identity of Puglia in the era of Roman conquest is provided by the inscriptions of the Grotta della Poesia, near Rocavecchia. These demonstrate not just co-existence of several languages but also continuity of cult practice from one culture into another, and they occur in a very distinctively Messapic context. The Grotta della Poesia is a cave, which would have been accessible only by sea in Antiquity, and which was an important cult site from the eighth century BC until the second century AD. It was one of a series of sanctuaries located in natural or artificial caves, and the use of caves for ritual activity seems to be characteristic of cult practices in the region.[54] The Grotta della Poesia is typical of other sites of this type in that during the archaic period, ritual activity was concentrated on a terrace outside the entrance to the cave. Extensive votive deposits and evidence of animal sacrifice have been found in this area.[55] From the fifth century onwards, however, most rituals seem to have taken place in the interior of the cave. Its value for the study of language, however, lies in the extensive number of votive inscriptions carved into the cave wall.[56]

To date, only *c.* 400m^2 of the cave has been explored – roughly 50% of the total area – but the chronology and content of the inscriptions deciphered so far enables some preliminary conclusions.[57] The inscriptions are all records of votive offerings in Messapic and Latin, ranging in date from the late fourth century until the early Empire. They are dated only on letter-forms, but most of the Messapic inscriptions appear to date to the third to second centuries and the Latin ones to *c.* 250-180 BC,[58] and they thus span a key period in the establishment of Roman domination. The scripts used include Latin, Messapic, and the late variant of Messapic known as Apulian, which was associated mainly with the Tavoliere/Gargano area.[59] The inscriptions recording offerings to a Messapic deity, Taotor Andirrahos, who appears to be conflated in the Latin inscriptions with a cult of Jupiter, although this is clearly a Latinization of the same cult.[60] Unusually, they seem to record offerings at the promissory stage rather than recording an offering already made, and the writing down of the promise seems to be an important part of the ritual. The Latin inscriptions use the formula *'ego votum scripsi...'* rather than the more usual *'votum solvit'*,

---

[54] Whitehouse 1992. Other cave sanctuaries include the Grotta Porcinara, near Vereto, which also contains a large number of Latin rock-cut votive inscriptions (Pagliara 1979), and the sanctuary of S. Maria d'Agnano at Ostuni.

[55] Pagliara 1978: 58-68, 77-80; Lamboley 1996: 266-7.

[56] Pagliara 1987: 321-88; De Simone 1988.

[57] Only a small number of the Messapic inscriptions have been published so far, and the Latin texts remain largely unpublished. For the Messapic inscriptions, see De Simone 1988; Pagliara 1987; De Simone and Marchesini 2002: 3 Ro – 24 Ro.

[58] Pagliara 1987: 317-27.

[59] De Simone 1988: 335-53.

[60] The term *andirraihos* may be a reference to the cave and to the underground nature of the cult, as its Latin equivalent appears to be *antrum*. Taotor is a well-documented Messapic deity, and there are epigraphic references to him in IM 12.118 and IM 9.15 (Santoro 1982: 85-86, Parlangeli 1960: 103: both third century epitaphs of priests of Taotor, from Mesagne and Oria), and in IM 14.16 (Parlangeli 1960: 127-28: fourth-century inscription on a large stone dedication to Taotor, from Valesio). However, Rocavecchia is the only example of a specific cave cult of Taotor.

indicating that the inscription is a record of a promise rather than the fulfilment of the offering. The offerings promised are mostly gifts of mulsum, wine, or animals and are often of substantial value.[61]

The sanctuary seems to have been used by a wide cross-section of people, both socially and ethnically. The personal names represented include both those of the local elite and non-elite names identified as possibly those of sailors stationed in the region with the Roman fleet, while the Apulian inscriptions attest to use of the sanctuary by people from other areas of Puglia. This group of inscriptions is also unique in that it covers a mixture of registers of language, ranging from the formal and official to more colloquial forms.[62] The Grotta della Poesia inscriptions therefore attest to both continuity of cult practice and continuity in ways of expressing it, despite the diversity of linguistic and ethnic groups using the sanctuary.

Language, writing, and identity

The evidence reviewed presents a picture of complex interactions, in which language does indeed function as an important element of group identity, especially at the level of the state, but it is clear that this is not a straight-forward an issue of replacement of the indigenous language by Latin, or of a one-to-one correlation between local language and local identity. The changes taking place during, and after, the period of Roman conquest are not uniform and that there is considerable variation between states and between different parts of Puglia. Nor is this a simple case of code-switching, as usually defined. This mostly implies switching between two languages in the course of the same conversation or in the same text.[63] In this instance, what we have is evidence of different language selection according to particular context, rather than code-switching in the strict sense.

In the sixth to fourth centuries BC, Messapic seems to have been a shared language used (at least as a written language) throughout the region. The development of Apulian as a regional alphabet or language is a relatively late phenomenon and is not known before the fourth century BC. Whether it was exclusively a late development is difficult to say for certain, as there are few inscriptions from this area earlier than this date. It appears in the area often associated with the Daunians, and it is possible that it may indicate the development of a more self-conscious sense of Daunian identity in the fourth century.[64] Overall, however, there is little linguistic distinction between different parts of Puglia, despite the attribution of several distinct ethnic groups to the region. Messapic also co-existed with several other non-Messapic languages, notably Oscan, which is found in some areas of northern Puglia, and Greek. However, there is no easy one-to-one correlation between ethnic identity and language. In many respects, material culture appears to be a more sensitive marker of local identity within Puglia. Whereas the region appears to have a reasonable degree of linguistic unity, with one principal indigenous language (although with

---

[61] The Messapic inscriptions are not yet fully understood, but several mention gifts of *vinas* (wine) and the act of writing down the offering (*ipigrave*). *cf.* De Simone and Marchesini 2002: 4 Ro, 5 Ro, 14 Ro, 18 Ro, 24 Ro.

[62] C. Pagliara, pers. comm.

[63] Adams 2003: 18-30, quoting Hoffman 1991: 110.

[64] Herring 2009; *cf.* Herring 2007 on cultural identities elsewhere in the region

some local variations), other aspects of culture shows a much greater degree of diversity. Variations between different areas of Puglia are clearly visible in settlement patterns and typology, material culture, funerary practices, and many other cultural indicators,[65] but are much less evident in use of language. In the period of the Roman conquest, however, Messapic becomes much more prominent as a written and inscribed language, before disappearing during the course of the second century. By looking at the epigraphic evidence, we can trace the early cultural and linguistic reactions to the Roman presence in the region.

The earliest development of writing in the indigenous language and script in the sixth to fifth centuries BC has been linked with changes in state organization and urbanization, and with changes in cultural identities which arose from this process.[66] In the third century, we can possibly see a similar pattern of changing perceptions of ethnic or cultural identity arising out of a situation of conflict and opposition – in this case with Rome – and reflected in changes in written language and the epigraphic record.[67] Inscriptions, however, cannot be interpreted simply as a record of a particular language, but must be considered as evidence for a wider epigraphic culture. Their physical form, content, and general typology also gives some clues as to the cultural influences at work. The epigraphy of third century Puglia is characterized by major changes in the epigraphic habit. The number of funerary inscriptions in the local language and script increased dramatically around the time of the Roman conquest, and these are all of a distinctive local type and associated with a specific and local form of elite burial practices. Both the burial types and the epigraphic commemorations are very different from contemporary Roman practices. This suggests that the Messapic language formed an important part of the identity of elite families, along with particular funerary practices, grave goods, and epigraphic forms. It is perhaps significant that the disappearance of these distinctive forms of burial and commemoration during the first half of the second century coincides with a period of change in the composition of the local elites.

Inscriptions of a more public nature, however, show a slightly different pattern of development. The increase in numbers of longer inscriptions, probably set up as documents relating to state activity, is also a phenomenon of the third to second centuries BC. Relatively few of the inscribed *cippi* of this type, or the longer votive inscriptions or building inscriptions, date to the sixth to fourth centuries, and such inscriptions may not have been part of local epigraphic culture. This increasing number of longer inscriptions of a public or civic nature points to a greater emphasis on civic identity and also a greater emphasis on public display of texts written in the local language and alphabet as a representation of that identity. However, the form of these inscriptions may indicate that the

[65] Lomas 2000; Herring 2000 2007.

[66] Marchesini (1997) associates earlier changes in epigraphic habits in the early fifth century BC, with an increasing consciousness of Messapic identity prompted by the wars between Tarentum and the Messapian area.

[67] Herring (2007) argues persuasively that the increased prominence of some local artefact-types and cultural practices – including writing – in the fourth century reflects an stronger and more specific sense of cultural identity (or at least, the need to display such an identity more prominently) arising out of the political and military instability of the period, and this pattern appears to have accelerated during the third century

local epigraphic culture, which in the earlier period focused on short votives and commemorative inscriptions, was changing in response to other cultural influences.

Whether they were influenced by Greek or Roman epigraphic habits is a more difficult question. Elsewhere in Italy, an increase in the number of public inscriptions such as decrees of magistrates, boundary inscriptions, building inscriptions, *etc.*, is often associated with increasing contact with Rome, and with adoption of aspects of Roman epigraphic practice.[68] In Puglia, however, the increasing use of this type of inscription could just as easily have been the result of contacts with the Greek world. The invocation to Zis which precedes the main inscription on many inscribed *cippi* may be derived from Greek formulae invoking the gods, or various other forms of protection such as *tyche* or *soteria* which were used at the beginning of decrees.[69] The rising numbers of public inscriptions may therefore reflect a greater adoption of a general Graeco-Roman epigraphic culture, but it is not possible to attribute this specifically to the influence of Roman practices on local cultural identities. In any case, the fact remains that the preferred language for local inscriptions remained Messapic at this date, rather than Latin.

At the same time, other important symbols of state identity send a different set of signals. Coin inscriptions, which are perhaps the most direct assertions of state identity since they consist of the state name and/or that of the issuing magistrate,[70] are mostly written in both Greek language and Greek script. It has been argued that the use of Greek in this case is not significant, since all coinage was based on Greek models and use of Greek legends was therefore a default position rather than a specific cultural choice. However, this does not entirely explain the linguistic characteristics of Messapic coin inscriptions. Some issues, possibly including those of Valesio, Oria, and Ugento, have inscriptions which may be Messapic rather than Greek. Many cities continued to issue their own coins for some, or all, of the third century, and in some cases well into the second century. Many of those which did so adopted Roman weights and denominations but retained their pre-Roman images and inscriptions.[71] This suggests that coinage reflected an active choice on the part of the issuers rather than a default acceptance of Greek features. It is also a telling example of the way in which Greek, a non-indigenous language, could be used as a symbol of local identity. Although written language does not appear to have been a significant component of ethnic/cultural identity within the region before the Roman conquest, and does not appear to have been used to differentiate the various different groups within the region, it assumes a much more prominent role when the region was confronted with the stresses and changes of the third and second centuries. Both Greek and Messapic, in different fields of writing, may therefore have come to serve as a signifier of local identity during the early period of Roman contact with Puglia.

[68] For instance, many Oscan public inscriptions of the second century BC adapt Roman epigraphic formulae, although they continue to be written in the Oscan language.

[69] Rhodes and Lewis 1997: 522-23.

[70] Hansen and Nielsen 2004: 144-49.

[71] The chronology of the Messapic coinages also suggests that they may have been connected with issues of civic autonomy and collective identities. They first appear at the time of the Tarentine *condottieri*, and new issues (*e.g.*, at Oria and Ugento) are known from the period of the Hannibalic war and Social war (Rutter 2001).

A factor which is unusual, and which makes tracing the linguistic and epigraphic Romanization of Puglia difficult, is the relatively low number of Latin inscriptions from the region, particularly those of early date. Even allowing for the fact that Latin inscriptions are relatively few and far between in any region before the Social war, Puglia has an unusually small number, and this low epigraphic density persists throughout the Roman period.[72] There are a small number of second or early first century inscriptions from Tarentum, mostly votive or funerary and almost certainly relating to the Gracchan colony of 122 BC,[73] but few other Latin inscriptions. Brundisium probably adopted Latin for official purposes from the foundation of the colony there in 244 BC, as was usual in the case of Latin colonies, and the same is likely to have been true of the colonies founded in the early second century, but elsewhere is little sign of the use of Latin at an early date. The discovery of two Latin inscriptions inside a second century tomb at Lecce[74] provides a rare instance of Latin in a primarily Messapic context, possibly commemorating an individual who had adopted both Latin language and a Romanized name.

This suggests that even if the Latin language had supplanted Messapic as the principal language of the region by the first century BC, the Romanized epigraphic culture and the use of Latin as a language for monumental writing and cultural display which is so prominent in most other regions failed to take root there. In the light of this, the concentrations of Latin inscriptions in the Grotta della Poesia and Grotta Porcinara represent rare opportunities to examine local and Roman language and epigraphic cultures interacting. They are also particularly significant as dedications seem to have been made by people from a range of social and economic backgrounds, and not just by the local elites. As might be expected, the Latin-speaking dedicators record their offerings in Latin. However, whereas public inscriptions tend to adopt more Graeco-Roman features in this period, the votive inscriptions from these cave sites – both Latin and Messapic examples – adhere to the local forms and formulae. Although the Latin-speaking worshippers of Taotor and Batas do so in their own language, they do not import Romanized cult practices, votives, or votive formulae. In this context, the most important aspect of the identity of the cult was not the language of the worshippers, but the formulae of the dedication. This presents something of a contrast with Latin votive inscriptions from other areas of Roman settlement in Puglia, which adhere to more familiar Roman forms.[75]

---

[72] There are some significant concentrations of Latin inscriptions at some of the main urban sites, notably Tarentum (182) and Brundisium (696) in the south of the region, and Luceria (282) and Canusium (536) in the north, but elsewhere, inscriptions are fewer in number than elsewhere in Italy.

[73] *ILLRP* 86; *Insc. It*.13.2.39

[74] Giardino 1994: 183; Benelli 2001: 9-10.

[75] Latin votive inscriptions of Republican date are few in number, but examples include a first century BC dedication to Jove from Venosa ('Sex. Romanus / T.f. Pol. / Iovi vot. / slm.' *AE* 1969/70, 140), which uses the formula *'votum solvit'*, as well as Latin votive inscriptions to Jove Batius (or Vatius) from Leuca, which also use this formula (*AE* 1979, 186, 187, and 189). *E.g.,* 'I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo)Va(tio) / L. Valeri/us Sabinu[s] / v(otum) s(olvit) / [c]um pler(omate)' (*AE* 1979: 187).

One aspect of the subject which is clearly problematic is that on the evidence available, we are unable to make any judgments about the spoken languages of Puglia in this period. It is probable that Messapic and other non-Latin languages persisted for some time after they ceased to be used as written languages. However, it is impossible to trace in detail the processes by which local languages were eroded by Latin as spoken languages due to the absence of evidence. As in other areas of Italy, it seems likely that members of the elite, at least, would have adopted Latin – at least for some forms of public interaction – by the date of the Social War or shortly after, although the precise details and chronology varied from region to region. Moreover, given the presence of Greek inscriptions in some areas of Puglia, and the known contacts between Greek and Messapic communities,[76] it seems reasonable to assume that many people — particularly but not exclusively amongst the elite — had some spoken or written knowledge of Greek. It seems likely, therefore, that in terms of spoken languages, at least at the level of the elite, Messapic and Oscan would have co-existed with Greek and Latin for some time, although possibly used for different types of interaction, with different languages preferred according to whether the interaction was public or private, formal or more casual *etc.*

The role of language as a marker of identity is not, however, confined to ethnic identities. It can also function as an important marker of other forms of identity such as social rank or membership of particular groups within a society. As already noted, Latin could function as a globalizing force, enabling communication beyond the locality and opening up a means of transmitting other aspects of culture. It could also act as a marker of social rank, signalling that a group or individual had access to the language, and along with it, supra-local contacts and access to goods and services which may have seemed prestigious because of their non-local origins. However, it was not the only language which fulfilled this function. In parts of southern Italy, including Puglia, Greek continued to act as a high-status *lingua franca* until well into the Roman empire.[77] Its use signalled contact with the wider Greek world and claims to parity – either by individuals or states – with Greek *poleis*. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the identities of Puglian communities and their ruling elites in the transitional period from independence to Roman rule is that the uptake of Latin as a written epigraphic language seems to have been relatively slow outside the areas of colonial settlement. Instead, the preferred elite language for representations of state identities remained Greek for some considerable period. This can be interpreted in a number of ways. It suggests that in the third century, Rome was not necessarily the most important factor in the world-view of the Messapic states, but rather that they continued to look to the Greek world and to present themselves as part of a Greek cultural *koine*. This may have changed with the imposition of more direct Roman government in the second century, but it is worth noting that Greek coin inscriptions continue in some areas until the period of the Social war. It may also, by extension, indicate that as the presence of Rome loomed larger, the importance of established local symbols of identity increased.

It seems, therefore, that various markers of ethnic identity become more prominent in Puglia during the period immediately after the Roman conquest of the region. This includes not just the Messapic language, but also various epigraphic forms associated with it. The

[76] For example, the diplomatic contacts between Thurii and Brundisium (*IG* XIV. 672)

[77] Kaimio 1979; Lomas 1993b: 174-80.

close association between Messapic funerary inscriptions and a particularly characteristic form of elite burial points to an increased concern amongst the elites of the region to commemorate themselves and establish their family identity in a distinctively regional manner. The complexity of the culture of the region is, however, demonstrated by the mixture of Greek and Messapic features in some of the longer inscriptions and their display contexts, and by the use of Greek cultural artefacts, such as coinage, as markers of local state identities. Cultural and linguistic identities are not a matter of polarized Greek versus Messapic or Roman versus Messapic, but a mixture of different elements, most of which seem to be selected to reinforce or even reinvent local identities.

The increased prominence of features such as the public display of local linguistic identity at this time should perhaps not be surprising. Romans had a tendency to view other Italian peoples as regional or ethnic groupings and in many cases the Roman state preferred to deal with conquered peoples collectively rather than as individual states. Alliances seem to have been made collectively with the Apulians and Sallentini.[78] Surviving fragments of the *Fasti Triumphales Capitolini* also refer to the Sallentini as a collective group.[79] This introduction of a set of assumptions about a more coherent regional identity than may have been apparent to the local population may, paradoxically, have prompted the active development of a more defined sense of local identity. At the same time, contact with the new and dominant power of Rome, particularly after the Hannibalic war, when Roman power was being exercised very directly and oppressively in the region, may have caused symbols of local identity such as language to assume a greater degree of importance than was previously the case. Recent regional studies of Italy have queried whether regional ethnic identities (as opposed to identities based on individual statehood) existed in any clearly defined and expressed sense before the Roman conquest or whether they were at least in part the product of Roman rule and interactions with Roman and other cultures.[80] Paradoxically, this model therefore places the process of conscious ethnogenesis in the period in which many languages of Italy were giving way (at least as formal written languages) to Latin, and raises some interesting questions about the role of language as a marker of ethnic identity. Language – and particularly the written language which appears in inscriptions – seems to be of relatively little importance in the pre-Roman period, but to function as a powerful element of identity, and possibly an indication of the emergence of a new or stronger regional identity, in the aftermath of Roman conquest.

---

[78] Livy 8.25.3, *Per.* 15.

[79] *Insc. Ital.* 13.1.

[80] *Cf.*, in particular, Bradley 1997; Dench 1993: 203-17.

Bibliography

Adams, J. N. 2003. *Bilingualism and the Latin language*. New York.

Bagnasco Gianni, G. 2000. *L'etrusco dalla A alla 8: l'acquisizione della scrittura da parte degli Etruschi*. Milan.

Barker, G. and Rasmussen, T. 2000. *The Etruscans*. Oxford.

Benelli, E. 2001. 'The Romanization of Italy through the epigraphic record', in S. Keay and N. Terrenato (eds), *Italy and the west: comparative issues in Romanization*: 7-16. Oxford.

Benelli, E. 1994. *Le iscrizioni bilingui etrusco-latine*. Florence.

Bradley, G. J. 1997. 'Iguvies, Umbrians, and Romans: ethnic identity in central Italy', in T. J. Cornell and K. Lomas (eds), *Gender and ethnicity in ancient Italy*: 53-68. London.

Bradley, G. J. 2000. *Ancient Umbria: state, culture, and identity in central Italy from the Iron Age to the Augustan era*. Oxford.

Burgers, G.-J. L. M. 1998. *Constructing Messapian landscapes: settlement dynamics, social organization, and culture contact in the margins of Graeco-Roman Italy*. Amsterdam.

Boersma, J. S. and Yntema, D. 1987. *Valesio: storia di un insediamento apulo dall'Età del Ferro all'epoca tardoromana*. Fasano.

Crawford, M. H. 2011. *Imagines Italicae*. London.

D'Andria, F. 1988. *Messapi e Peuceti*, in *Italia omnium terrarum alumna*. Milan.

D'Andria, F. 1990. *Archeologia dei Messapi*. Bari.

D'Andria, F. and Dall'Aglio, A. 2003. *Klaohi Zis. Il culto di Zeus a Ugento*. Cavallino.

De Simone, C. and Marchesini, S. 2002. *Monumenta Linguae Messapicae*. Wiesbaden.

De Simone, C. 1988. 'Iscrizioni messapiche della Grotta della Poesia', *ASNP* 18.2: 325-415.

Dench, E. 1995. *From barbarians to new men: Greek, Roman, and modern perceptions of peoples from the central Apennines*. Oxford.

Dorian, N. C. 1999. 'Linguistic and ethnographic fieldwork', in J. Fishman (ed.) *Handbook of language and ethnic identity*: 25-41. Oxford.

Giardino, L. 1994. 'Per una definizione delle trasformazioni urbanistiche di un centro antico attraverso lo studio delle necropoli: il caso di Lupiae', *Studi di Antichità* 7: 137-203.

Grelle, F. 1981. 'Canosa: Le istituzioni, la città', in A. Giardina and A. Schiavone (eds), *Società romana e produzione schiavistica I. L'Italia: insediamenti e forme economiche*: 181-225. Bari.

Hall, J. M. 2002. *Hellenicity: between ethnicity and culture*. Chicago.

Harrison, T. 2002. 'General Introduction', in T. Harrison (ed.), *Greeks and Barbarians*: 1-16. Edinburgh.

Häussler, R. 2002. 'Writing Latin – from resistance to assimilation: language, culture, and society in N. Italy and S. Gaul', in A. Cooley (ed.) *Becoming Roman, writing Latin. Literacy and epigraphy in the Roman West* (JRA supplement 48): 61-75. Portsmouth, RI.

Herring, E. 2000. ''To see ourselves as others see us!'. The construction of native identities in southern Italy', in E. Herring and K. Lomas (eds) *Literacy and state societies in the Ancient Mediterranean*: 45-78. London.

Herring, E. 2007. 'Identity crises in south-east Italy in the fourth century BC: Greek and native perceptions of the threat to their cultural identities', in R. Roth and J. Keller (eds), *Roman by integration: dimensions of group identity in material culture and text* (*JRA* supp. 66): 11-25. Portsmouth, RI.

Herring, E. 2009. 'Diomedes and Daunia. A Greek origin story for a south Italian place', *ARP* 11: 81-94.

Hingley, R. 2005. *Globalizing Roman culture: unity, diversity, and empire*. London.

Hoffman, J. B. 1991. *An introduction to bilingualism*. London and New York.

Jenkins, R. 1997. *Rethinking ethnicity. Arguments and explorations*. London.

Jones, S. 1997. *The archaeology of ethnicity*. London.

Kaimio, J. 1975. 'The ousting of Etruscan by Latin in Etruria', in P. Bruun (ed.) *Studies in the Romanization of Etruria*: 85-245. Rome and Helsinki.

Kaimio, J. 1979. *The Romans and the Greek language*. Helsinki.

Lamboley, J.-L. 1996. *Recherches sur les Messapiens. IVe-IIe siècle avant J.C.* (*Bibliothèque des Écoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome* 292). Rome.

Lejeune, M. 1991. 'Sur la transliteration du Messapien', *Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli, Dipartimento di Studi del mondo classico e del Mediterraneo antico, Sezione linguistica* 13: 211-31.

Lomas, K. forthcoming. 'Hidden writing: epitaphs within tombs in early Italy', in M.-L. Haack (ed.), *L'écriture et l'espace de la mort*. Paris and Rome.

Lomas, K. 1993a. 'The city in south-east Italy. Ancient topography and the evolution of urban settlement, 600-300 BC', *ARP* 4: 63-77.

Lomas, K. 1993b. *Rome and the western Greeks, 350 BC-AD 200: conquest and acculturation in southern Italy*. London.

Lomas, K. 2000. 'Cities, states and ethnic identity in south-east Italy', in E. Herring and K. Lomas (eds) *The emergence of state identities in Italy in the first millennium BC*: 79-90. London.

Lomas, K. 2007. 'Ethnicity and statehood in northern Italy: the ancient Veneti', in G. Bradley, E. Isayev, and C. Riva (eds) *Ancient Italy: regions without boundaries*: 21-44. Exeter.

Lombardo, M. 1991. 'I Messapi: Aspetti della problematica storica', in *I Messapi. Atti del 30º Convegno di Studi sulla Magna Grecia*: 35-110. Taranto.

Lombardo, M. 1992. *I Messapi e la Messapia nelle fonti letterarie greche e latine*. Galantina.

Lombardo, M. 1994. 'Tombe, necropoli e riti funerari in 'Messapia': evidenze e problemi', *Studi di Antichità* 7: 25-45.

Marchesini, S. 1999. 'Confini e frontiera nella grecità d'Occidente: la situazione alfabetica, in Confini e frontiera nella grecità d'Occidente', *Atti di 37º Convegno di studi sulla Magna Grecia* : 173-212. Taranto.

Marinetti, A. 1999. 'Venetico 1976-1996. Bilancio e prospettive', in O. Paoletti (ed.) *Protostoria e storia del 'Venetorum Angulus.' Atti del XX Convegno di Studi Etruschi de Italici*: 391-436. Pisa and Rome.

McDonald, M. 1989. '*We are not French!' Language, culture, and identity in Brittany*. London.

Morpurgo Davies, A. M. 2002. 'The Greek notion of dialect', in T. Harrison (ed.), *Greeks and barbarians*: 153-71. Edinburgh.

Pagliara C. 1979. 'Materiali iscritti arcaici del Salento', in *Salento arcaico*: 57-91. Galantina.

Pagliara C. 1987. 'La grotta Poesia di Roca (Melendugno-Lecce). Note preliminari', *ASNP* 17: 267-328.

Parlangèli, O. 1960. *Studi Messapici*: Milan.

Pellegrini, G. B. and Prosdocimi, A. L. 1967. *La lingua Venetica*. 2 vols. Padua.

Prosdocimi, A. L. 1986. 'Messapico no sum', *StEtr* 54: 196-204.

Renfrew, C. 1996. 'Prehistory and the identity of Europe', in P. Graves-Brown, S. Jones, and C. Gamble (eds), *Cultural identity and archaeology: The construction of European communities*: 125-37. London and New York.

Rhodes, P. J. and D. M. Lewis 1997. *The decrees of the Greek states*. Oxford.

Rutter, N. K. 2001. *Historia Nummorum: Italy*. London.

Santoro, C. 1982. *Nuovi Studi Messapici (Epigrafi, Lessico). Volume secondo. Il lessico*. Galatina.

Santoro, C. 1984. *Nuovi Studi Messapici. Primo supplemento. Parte I (le epigrafi). Parte II (il lessico)*. Galatina.

Smith A. D. 1991. *National identity*. London.

Stazio, A. 1991. 'La moneta nell'area messapica', in *I Messapi: atti del trentesimo Convegno di Studi sulla Magna Grecia*: 219-85. Taranto.

Thomason, S. 2001. *Language contact*. Edinburgh.

Volpe, G. 1990. *La Daunia nell'età della romanizzazione: paesaggio agrario, produzione, scambi*. Bari.

Wallace-Hadrill, A. 2008. *Rome's cultural revolution*. Cambridge.

Whitehouse, R. D. 1992. *Underground religion: cult and culture in prehistoric Italy*. London.

Woolf, G. 1996. 'Monumental writing and the expansion of Roman society in the early empire', *JRS* 86: 22-39.

Yntema, D. 1986. 'La ricerca topografica nel territorio Oritano', *ASP* 39: 3-86.

TRADING IDENTITIES?
REGIONALISM AND COMMERCE
IN MID-REPUBLICAN ITALY
(THIRD TO EARLY SECOND CENTURY BC)

ROMAN ROTH

Introduction

Within the debate over regional identities in Republican Italy, the movement of goods has an important part to play. The trade in artefacts and agricultural produce is usually regarded as one of the principal areas by which the increasing influence of Rome across the Italian peninsula is documented. Pottery, the principal evidence for these patterns, has been at the centre of some of the most influential studies of the 'Romanization' of the Republican economy ever since systematic approaches to this material began during the 1950s.[1] It is worthwhile reiterating here that this interest in pottery is not so much based on the importance of ceramic containers as commercial goods *per se*. Rather, by being – more or less – easy to provenance and date, ceramics can give us an idea of the extent and chronology of specific trade routes, as well as (especially in the case of amphorae) of the goods that were transported alongside them. By relating this archaeological picture to the narrative framework of Rome's military and political expansion, scholars have arrived at explanations of socio-economic and, indeed, ethnic dynamics in the wake of specific historical events.

Trade during the mid-Republican period (third to early second century BC) is usually seen to have progressed from a relatively small-scale system based on the exchange of élite goods, to a market-driven network involving most areas affected by Rome's expansion.[2] The late fourth century and first half of the third saw the gradual demise of the old economic model dominated by the cities of Magna Graecia, Sicily, and, to some extent, Etruria (the so-called *koiné* of southern and central Italy which was being destroyed by Rome's conquests in these areas). Rome's dominance only slowly began to manifest itself in western Mediterranean commerce. The pottery produced by the *atelier des petites estampilles* at Rome is usually regarded as the one exception to this rule. This, it is argued, achieved a level of output and degree of standardization, which foreshadowed the developments in craft production during the second century BC, and placed the city of

---

[1] For an overview, see Roth 2007: 40-48.

[2] French and Italian scholars were (and are still) at the forefront of this debate. The most relevant works are the contributions to the second volume of Giardina and Schiavone (1981, especially the papers by Carandini and Morel) and Morel (1981a; 1985; 1990). For the Anglophone reader, Morel (1989) provides a magisterial account of what is only briefly summarized below.

Rome on the map as a political, cultural, and economic capital. At the level of agricultural produce, early Graeco-Italic amphorae provide some evidence for inter-regional trade along the Tyrrhenian coast. Yet again, this tends to be seen as paling in comparison to what was to follow during the second century BC, when vast quantities of wine, olive oil, and grain began to be shipped from Campania and, to some extent, coastal Etruria, to the city of Rome and elsewhere. This latter phenomenon, it is argued, was a direct result of Rome's victory in the Hannibalic War and her subsequent, unrivalled hegemony in Italy and the western Mediterranean as a whole. It kick-started a proto-capitalist economy that was characterized by the aggressive marketing of agricultural produce and craft products from a few, intensively exploited regions, as well as, in turn, by the marginalization of the rest of the peninsula and the demise of regional identities.

This article examines some recent findings that raise serious questions regarding certain aspects of this picture. In particular, I am going to discuss the results of recent work on regional aspects of trade in Republican Italy, which shed new light on the developments of the third and early second century BC. Progress made in this area – and specifically in the field of pottery studies – suggests that the impact of Rome's rise to hegemony in Italy had a much more diverse effect on the economy than has previously been assumed, both in terms of its geographical spread and chronological development: on the one hand, the development of Campania as the dominant producing and exporting region of Italy now seems to have begun during the mid-third century BC, and can thus no longer be portrayed as a direct result of the Hannibalic War. On the other hand, the rise of local pottery productions in Etruria during the third century, as well as their defined patterns of distribution alongside more common, mass-produced wares, paints a surprisingly fragmented picture of trade in Roman Italy. The article concludes that these phenomena call for a new approach towards trade in Republican Italy, as an area in which decidedly local patterns existed alongside wider, inter-regional ones. This has two important implications: first, it provides us with an insight into how trade might have provided local communities in Italy with a means of defining their identities; second, it invites us to re-consider how effectively Rome's political and military hegemony translated into her domination of other spheres, such as trade.

Campanian trade and Roman expansion

It is beyond dispute that Campania had become one of the centres – if not the centre – of the Italian economy by the middle of the second century BC. The fertile plains of this region, coupled with its climate and ready access to the sea, meant that it was in an ideal position to supply the city of Rome, as well as other parts of Italy and the western Mediterranean with agricultural goods.[3] After all, Campania is the region in which Cato positioned his (imaginary) model farm, and where his idealized gentleman farmer might apply Cato's instructions most successfully. Pompeii and the other Vesuvian sites have, furthermore, provided us with an instructive picture of well-to-do towns with productive

---

[3] This is not to mention the food produced for consumption in the region itself, and distributed through a far reaching network of periodic markets (*nundinae*), for which see Jongman (1988: 97-143); Morley (1996: 159-83). For the role of the Campanian economy in general, Frederiksen (1984: 264-37) is still required reading.

hinterlands and close links with Rome.[4] This evidence for the most part belongs to the second half of the first century AD, and thus to a later period than that with which I am concerned here. However, both the wealth of the earlier houses dating to the second century BC, such as the House of the Faun, and the apparent growth of the town starting in the late third century BC point to a considerable affluence of Pompeii (and, one may carefully assume, other sites in the region).[5] It is not too far fetched to postulate that this affluence largely originated in the agricultural resources of the *ager campanus*, mobilized within the expanding framework of the Roman economy and of the demands of a growing urban population.[6]

The bulk of our evidence for the prominence of the Campanian economy during the second century BC, however, consists of archaeological remains of trade. The major coastal sites of Tyrrhenian Italy are awash with *Campana A*, a type of black-gloss pottery that certainly originated in the Bay of Naples and that, owing to its distinctive orange fabric and specific repertoire of shapes, is easily recognizable even to non-specialists.[7] In addition, large assemblages of these wares have been found in shipwrecks off the western coast of Italy.[8] Traded as part of mixed cargoes made up of amphorae filled with oil and wine, as well as – we must presume – perishable types of produce such as grain, *Campana A* thus provides us with a material that allows us to plot some of the major trade routes of Republican Italy.[9] However, the key issue at stake is the date of this trade. While there is little doubt that Campania did not become the veritable powerhouse of the Roman economy until the second century BC, it now seems to be increasingly unlikely that this was the result of a sudden economic boom brought about by the aggressive exploitation of Campania following the Hannibalic War. By contrast, the increase in Campanian trade – and thus in the role of Campanian traders – seems to have taken place over a considerable period of time.

The most important impulse for this chronological revision – which, as we shall see, carries serious implications for the history of Republican Italy – comes from two developments in the study of southern Italian pottery. This research is still very much in progress. However, the potential significance of some of its preliminary results to my present subject – of how trade can be related to the expansion of mid-Republican Rome – makes it worthwhile summarizing them here briefly. The first concerns the date of *Campana A*. J.-P. Morel now accepts that the upper chronological limit of the production of this

---

[4] Jongman 1988.

[5] Nappo (1993) discusses the growth of Pompeii during the last quarter of the third century BC, with a focus on non-élite housing. The luxury of elite life in Pompeii during the Hellenistic period is discussed by Zanker (1998).

[6] In addition, one should assume that the owners of some of the wealthier houses would have been involved as *negotiatores* in the eastern Mediterranean; on this subject, see my conclusions.

[7] Lamboglia 1952: 140; for the location of production, see Morel (1998a: 11-12), as well as my note 8 below.

[8] On some of the problems associated with comparing Republican pottery assemblages from shipwrecks with those from coastal sites, see Morel 1998b.

[9] Morel 1981b: 92; Peña 2007: 35-37.

material should be raised to the beginning of, or to just before, the Hannibalic War, while other scholars have argued that it might go back even further.[10] This comes as a result of recent advances in the typological study and compositional analysis of these ceramics.[11]

Second, parallel methodological advances have also been made in the study of Graeco-Italic amphorae.[12] This typologically broad class of transport vessels (for wine) had its roots in the trading networks of southern Italy and Sicily at around the middle of the fourth century BC. Certainly by the middle of the third century – and thus some fifty years earlier than is usually assumed – it had evolved into a container type that is found along the west coast and may be regarded as the predecessor of the Dressel IA amphora. This, in turn, was to become emblematic of the Tyrrhenian wine trade from the middle of the second century BC.[13]

Preliminary as they may be, these developments may hold some important lessons in store for historians of Roman trade. First of all, the growth of the Campanian economy may well have been related to patterns of intensification (and the increasing demand for food) resulting from the rise of Rome. However, these should not, perhaps, be thought of in terms of a direct cause-and-effect relationship, as is often assumed. Contrary to the *communis opinio*, the second-century boom of trade in Campanian goods was not the sudden result of cataclysmic events such as the Hannibalic War, let alone an imposition on Campania by the Romans who had finally got the better of its rebellious inhabitants.[14] Quite to the contrary, what we can see during the second century BC is the result of a long-term economic growth that had begun some time before, the principal initiators and benefactors of which had been and were the Campanians themselves.[15]

Second, the potential significance of re-dating those two important types of pottery once again exposes the dearth of reliably dated contexts for the Republican period in Italy, which J.-P. Morel noted more than four decades ago.[16] Much has certainly improved since then, which is to a great extent the result of Morel's own pioneering work in the field.

---

[10] Morel 1998b: 519. Ferrandes (2006: 127, note 41) proposes an earlier date. This would be in agreement with Olcese (2004) whose work on Graeco-Italic amphorae supports an early development of the Campanian economy. *Cf.* Morel 1989: 501: 'Campanian Type A … is indicative of the changes which took place in certain Italian communities in about the year 200.'

[11] For an overview, see the contributions to Frontini and Grassi (1998). M. McCallum and T. Peña are currently preparing a compositional study of *Campana A* wares from Pompeii, which will illucidate these issues further.

[12] Olcese 2004; Vandermersch 2001; for a low date of Graeco-Italic amphorae, *cf.* Morel 1989: 486-87.

[13] Morel 1989: 486-87, 496-98.

[14] Some of the Campanians – like the Greek areas of the south in general – had defected from Rome during the Hannibalic war. In general, see Frederiksen 1984: 238-63; Lomas 1993: 59-76, with Livy 23.1-24.20).

[15] The epigraphy of stamped amphora handles may hold important clues as to the identities of producers and traders. However, the evidence is by no means straightforward since there is a certain ambiguity as to whose ethnicity – producer, trader, or consumer – affected the use of Latin or Greek in such an inscription. For an incisive account of this debate, see Ferrandes 2006: 123-27.

[16] Morel 1963: 57-58.

However, we still find ourselves in a situation in which archaeological materials are frequently dated on the basis of literary evidence – itself scarce for the period in question – that is not or not necessarily relevant to their specific context.[17] Third, this should make us wary of making our evidence fit into rigid models of the Roman economy – as exemplified by the notion of a sudden boom in trade – the bare bones of which are a few dates provided by a lacunose literary tradition and a handful of archaeological sites (primarily colonies).[18]

Further work on the archaeological materials and their contexts may provide the only way out of this *impasse*: we can hope that such research will shed more light on the chronological development of Campanian trade, and give us a more nuanced picture of how this related to the politics of Rome's expansion. But even at this stage it should be clear that this relationship may have been more complex than has been widely believed. This finds a parallel in other Italian regions, to one of which I shall presently turn.

Mixed bags of sherds: a look to Etruria

The situation in Etruria is comparable to its Campanian counterpart with regard to the degree of complexity that has only just begun to be revealed. Again, recent advances in ceramic studies will form the basis of my discussion.

In my introduction I provided a brief synopsis of what has for many years been the standard view of trade in the Etrusco-Latial area during the third and early second century BC. Two salient features of this account – or, rather, historical model – are worth reiterating in more detail here. First, there is the supposed decline in craft production everywhere outside Rome. The city is regarded as the new economic centre of the peninsula, and the home of the *atelier des petites estampilles*, the only mass-produced and widely traded type of pottery before the second-century boom.[19]

Second, just as the Campanian economy is supposed to have grown explosively following the Hannibalic War, certain areas of Etruria – such as the *Ager Cosanus* but also the inland territories of cities such as Arretium and Volaterrae – were equally subjected to intensive agricultural exploitation.[20] One of the most important forms of evidence cited for this is the type of black-gloss pottery known as *Campana B*.[21] This is, generally speaking, characterized by a fine, hard fabric of beige colour and black, sometimes translucent gloss.[22] For a long time, it had been assumed that, with some exceptions (see below), *Campana B* was the product of one place located somewhere in Etruria, from

---

[17] The foundation of the colony at Puteoli (194 BC; Livy 32.29.3-5; 34.42.6; 34.45.1) provides a case in point. While the importance of this settlement as a commercial hub was undoubtedly great, one might want to question whether its foundation reflected a momentous change in the economic structures of Roman Italy, as is sometimes argued; *cf.*, for example, Frederiksen 1984: 319-35; Morel 1989: 506.

[18] On this methodological point, see my review of Scott 2008 (Roth 2008).

[19] Morel 1969; 1989: 480, 484-87; see also Cornell 1989: 411; 1995: 388-90

[20] For a critique of such approaches to agriculture in Republican Italy, see Terrenato 1998; 2001.

[21] Morel 1989: 501-02.

[22] Lamboglia 1952: 140.

where it was distributed widely across the region and beyond, by land or by river. This was regarded as yet another reflection of the type of socio-economic structures that suddenly emerged in Italy following Rome's victory in the Hannibalic War: the élite-controlled, intensive exploitation of defined areas, and aggressive marketing of their products, which caused the demise of traditional, local economies.[23]

As in the case of Campanian ceramics, recent advances in the study of Etruscan black-gloss wares suggest that this picture – and with it, the underlying socio-economic model – may have to be redressed. These developments concern both the pottery of the third century, especially the so-called *atelier des petites estampilles*, and the phenomenon of *Campana B* and its mysterious provenance. Once again, it should be stressed that J.-P. Morel has himself been one of the main protagonists of new work in this field of enquiry. At least insofar as *Campana B* is concerned, Morel has made a considerable contribution to new, primarily compositional studies that may lead to the questioning of some key elements of a socio-economic model, of which he has himself been a leading proponent.[24]

When Morel published the study in which he first identified the group of the *atelier des petites estampilles* as a coherent class of black-gloss pottery, he postulated that these vessels were produced by one or very few workshops located at or in the immediate vicinity of Rome.[25] Based on the ever-increasing number of vessels found across Italy and the western Mediterranean, Morel placed their heyday in the period before the First Punic War, and their demise not later than the middle of the third century BC. This, he argued, reflected the rise of Rome to an economic metropolis and hub of Mediterranean trade, in the wake of her expansion and consolidation of her conquests in Italy. As he and others also pointed out, the distribution of vessels attributed to the *atelier des petites estampilles* in western Mediterranean sites outside Italy – notably among which are Carthage and other Punic settlements – may not only reflect Rome's long-standing involvement with Carthage but even be a direct result of the renewal of Romano-Carthaginian treaty in 279/8 BC.[26] The supposed disappearance of the *atelier des petites estampilles* at around the time of the First Punic War is, then, portrayed as signalling the end of this short-lived yet – for Rome – prosperous phase, during which she had for the first time extended her military supremacy to the economic sphere.

However, it has become increasingly clear that the history of the *atelier des petites estampilles* is considerably less straightforward than the historical model presupposes. While Morel had already recognised a degree of variability among the vessels he examined – such

---

[23] It has normally been assumed that, in contrast to *Campana A*, *Campana B* was less exclusively transported by sea (*e.g.*, Morel 1985; 1989: 500-02).

[24] Morel 1998a.

[25] Morel 1969; *cf.* 1998a: 16. The principal (but by no means the only) shape in which these wares were made is the bowl Lamboglia 27 (with various sub-types), decorated with a great variety of the eponymous stamps. Most attempts to detect chronological patterns within the vast corpus of stamps – none of which is repeated on more than at most a handful of vessels – have not come to any satisfactory conclusions, though *cf.* Stanco 2009.

[26] Melucco Vaccaro 1970: 502-04. For the Carthaginian treaties, see Pol. 3 25.1-6; *cf.* Livy 9.43.26. On the problems surrounding the tradition of the Carthaginian treaties, see Cornell 1989: 575 and Scullard 1989: 532-35.

as the colour of the fabrics, as well as the stamps – it soon became evident that there was more than one place in which this pottery was produced.[27] More recently, E. A. Stanco's study of stylistic diversity among the wares of the *atelier des petites estampilles* from sites in and around Rome – namely Caere, Capena, Falerii, Lucus Feroniae, Signia, and Tarquinia – has confirmed the existence of *ateliers* in each of these places.[28] Moreover, Stanco's work calls for at least some of these productions to be down-dated considerably, in one case (Lucus Feroniae) to as late as 211/10 BC, if not even later.[29] He suggests that the productions of these different workshops share up to five stylistic phases (although each place of production retained its distinctive repertoire of stamps and shapes).[30] Broadly speaking, these phases are characterized by an increasing move away from the imitation of Attic/Magna Graecian models popular during the fourth century BC, to a distinctly Etrusco-Latial repertoire of shapes and stamps.[31]

Despite certain methodological weaknesses,[32] Stanco's work makes two essential contributions: first, it clearly disproves the status of the *atelier des petites estampilles* as an exclusively Roman production, and the distribution of its products as indicative of the overriding commercial importance of Rome.[33] Second, the fact that these productions continued until the end of the third century BC defies the notion of economic stagnation after the First Punic War. As we shall now see, it also provides a degree of continuity between these black-gloss wares and the pottery commonly known as *Campana B*, which is usually dated to the second century BC.

[27] Melucco Vaccaro 1970 first postulated the existence of a production at Caere, based on the finds from the sanctuary at Pyrgi.

[28] Stanco 2004; Stanco 2009.

[29] There is among archaeologists a tendency to put too much faith in the dates given by the literary sources for the destruction of towns in Roman Italy. For a compelling critique, see Terrenato's comments in Keay *et al.* 2004: 234-35.

[30] Stanco (pers. comm.) suggests that the different productions can, furthermore, be distinguished by minute stylistic details such as the interior profile of the base. This might form an interesting point of departure for future studies concerning the (ethnic) identities of the potters in different centres, following Gosselain's 1998 ethno-archaeological work on the significance of shaping techniques as a marker of group identity.

[31] Stanco 2009; accepted by Ferrandes 2006: 135-58.

[32] I have already mentioned Stanco's reliance on destruction horizons that are only dated on the basis of (sometimes weak) literary evidence (see my preceding note). A more serious problem is his reliance on subjective notions of archaeological style as found, for example, in the stamps. His notion that certain stylistic features can be labelled unequivocally as 'Magna-Graecian' or 'Roman' goes hand in glove with this. However, recent work has demonstrated that a far more complex relationship exists between material styles and cultural identities, than such cultural labelling might allow for; see, for example, Gosselain 1998; Roth 2007: 65-76; Woolf 1998: 169-205. At any rate, it is impossible to measure the extent of 'Romanization' or 'Hellenization' (if one wishes to use the term) of an area by the presence, absence, or frequency of stylistic markers.

[33] But he still considers the later phases (phase 3 onwards) as a product of Romanization by virtue of stylistic influence. While accepting that there were workshops producing *petites estampilles* outside Rome, A. R. Scott 2008: 26 attributes the majority of fragments from Cosa to the Roman branch. However, it would seem difficult to support such a claim without compositional analysis.

While the origin and distribution patterns of *Campana A* have usually been viewed as relatively unproblematic, this has not been the case with *Campana B*, the other, mass-produced black-gloss pottery that supposedly appeared as part of the second-century economic boom in Italy. When Lamboglia first identified this class of pottery, he considered it as a homogeneous production of unknown origin somewhere in Etruria.[34] In addition, Lamboglia identified a number of local productions of the second century BC. These were primarily located in northern Etruria (*e.g.*, at Volaterrae and Arretium) and shared certain characteristics with Lamboglia's *Campana B* – but were by no means identical with it.[35] Many of these important local productions of northern and central Etruria were subsequently studied in detail,[36] while *Campana B* remained an evasive category. Increasingly, archaeologists working in central Italy were identifying classes of black-gloss pottery that broadly shared the formal repertoire and technical characteristics of Lamboglia's *Campana B*. These came to be known as *B-oïdes*, and were thought to be regional imitations of the real thing. With the aid of archaeometry, it has now emerged that *Campana B* is most probably a phantom: a heterogeneous group of stylistically similar, regional productions including the *B-oïdes*.[37]

Thus, it seems to be the case that several regions of central Italy – from northern Campania in the south-west, to Etruria in the north-west, and the Adriatic coast in the north-east – produced quality black-gloss wares that were frequently exported to other regions. These ceramics are, generally speaking, characterized by light-coloured fabrics, covering black slip and a core repertoire of shapes (supplemented by regional varieties in most cases). In addition, it now seems that this group of ceramic productions, for which F. Cibecchini and J. Principal have recently proposed the useful term *Cerchia della Campana B*, did not suddenly emerge from nowhere at the beginning of the second century BC.[38] On the contrary, many of the regional varieties of this *Cerchia* emerged from earlier ceramic traditions, as is particularly well shown by the examples of northern Etruria (especially Volterra)[39] and northern Campania (pottery known as *Calena antica*). And while some of the branches do not seem to have survived much beyond the end of the second century, others (notably the Arretine one) continued well into the second half of the first century BC.[40]

These new insights into the old problem of *Campana B* may have important implications for our understanding of trade and local identities. On the one hand, we can probably conclude that the 'branches' of the *Cerchia della Campana B* developed in geographical areas that produced surpluses in agricultural produce for export. This may

[34] Lamboglia 1952: 140, 200-06.

[35] Lamboglia 1952: 204-06.

[36] *E.g.*, Balland 1969; Morel 1963; Pasquinucci 1972.

[37] Once again, Morel 1998a was the first to raise this issue in his contribution to a symposium on archaeometrical approaches to black-gloss wares.

[38] Cibecchini and Principal 2004, broadly following Morel 1998a.

[39] But *cf.* Pasquinucci *et al.* 1998 who advise caution with regard to distinguishing among different north Etruscan productions.

[40] Morel 1963; Schindler 1967.

well point to the intensification of commercial networks (largely land-based)[41], which came about as an indirect result of Rome's hegemony over Italy. On the other hand, the considerable, chronological and geographical diversity within the *Cerchia della Campana B* makes it difficult to support any model according to which the commercial flows of Roman Italy followed the narrative of Rome's military and political expansion. As in the case of Campania, we are dealing here with a situation in which economic resources may have been gradually redeployed within this changing political framework. But to argue that the economy of central Italy was transformed beyond recognition and, more to the point, that a centralized commercial network at once replaced the old regional ones, would amount to misrepresenting the evidence.

However, the picture of growing inter-regional trade and continuing, local traditions is even more complex than this. On the one hand, most known sites in third- and early second-century central Italy seem to have obtained mass-produced black-gloss wares from an outside source, be it one of the *ateliers des petites estampilles* or, later, *Campana A* or one or more branches of the *Cerchia della Campana B*. On the other hand, many of these areas also produced their own black-gloss wares or, at any rate, procured locally made pottery from nearby sources. Even in cities such as Volterra, which were probably home to branches of the *Cerchia della Campana B*, we usually find such locally produced black-gloss wares.[42] These classes of pottery tended not to move outside the regions in which they were produced. However, they seem to have enjoyed great popularity among local consumers and, by virtue of this local and intra-regional distribution, give us an important insight into some of the commercial patterns at these levels.[43] As has been shown elsewhere, local consumers were thus able to make informed choices as to what types of pottery – and, one may assume, other types of craft products and agricultural produce – they would procure for what specific purpose, and from where:[44] whether from inter-regional networks (where greater costs and irregularities of supply might be an issue), or from their local suppliers (where cost and supply may be unproblematic but the status of the goods might be lower).

Similarly to what we saw earlier for Campania, therefore, the transition from the third to the second century BC was much less of a sea-change in Etruria than tends to be assumed. Although these are still early days in the study of Republican pottery, it has already emerged that the economic dominance of the city of Rome during much of the third century has been exaggerated. Conversely, the economic vibrancy and commercial importance of the other regions – prior to their second-century boom – have been underplayed. Just like Campania, other regions within easy reach of the *urbs* began to be considerably involved in Italian and, indeed, the western Mediterranean trade during the second half of the third century BC, if not before. Potentially cataclysmic events, such as both Punic Wars, do not seem to have made too big a dent into their fortunes (as had previously been claimed for the *atelier des petites estampilles*), by suddenly diverting or even closing down commercial routes. We

---

[41] See note 13 above.

[42] Di Giuseppe 2005; Roth 2007.

[43] Roth 2006: 135-39; 2007.

[44] Roth 2007, chapters 3-5 *passim*.

should be especially careful not to exaggerate the changes that followed Rome's victory in the Hannibalic War: that the scale of trade in the western Mediterranean (and elsewhere) increased substantially during the second century is beyond doubt. However, this development did not represent a historical rupture or, indeed, signal the imposition of a centralized economy as a result of a specific event. On the contrary, we are dealing here with the intensification of commercial patterns. These had been evolving for many decades and were, at the same time, *both* broadly similar for different regions – and, arguably, 'typical' of Roman Italy – *and* locally specific.

Discussion

The remainder of this article looks at how the diverse trading patterns revealed by the ceramic evidence might be successfully integrated into a debate over regional identities in Roman Italy. First, I shall assess the significance of the patterns I have discussed so far to our broader understanding of the economic history of Italy during the mid-Republican period, with a particular emphasis on the third century BC. Second, I shall discuss why these findings no longer allow us to postulate a direct, causal relationship betweeen the evolution of those networks of trade and the major events in Rome's military and political expansion across the peninsula. As an alternative, I shall suggest that involvement in commerce at different levels provided the members of regional societies with an important area in which they could express their identities.

Out of the darkness: the third century BC

The third century BC is one of the more obscure periods in the historiography of Roman Italy, if not the Graeco-Roman world as a whole. Livy's narrative breaks off at the end of his first decade, following his description of the events of the year 293 BC, to resume again only with the premath of the Hannibalic War in 222 BC. Polybius' account proper begins with the onset of the First Punic War (264 BC) and provides us with an outline of Roman history for the remainder of the century. However, he is primarily interested in discussing the major military events of the period, which, in his view, progressively built up to his main subject, *viz.* Rome's conflict with and conquest of the Greek East. Only fragments remain – at best – of the works of the other Hellenistic historiographers on whose accounts Polybius and Livy based their work. Some gaps in the narrative are, as ever, filled by the fragmentary survivals of the early Roman historiographers (including the Elder Cato's *Origines*) and more 'literary' works such as the *Annals* of Ennius, as well as by much later writers, such as Servius and Florus, who every now and then mention tantalising details of the *histoire événementielle* of mid-Republican history, more or less in passing.[45]

---

[45] In addition, several of Plutarch's *Lives* – written on the basis of earlier Greek and Roman sources during the second century BC – shed some light on the history of this century. A particularly significant case in point is his *Life* of Pyrrhus, the ruler of Epirus and first (serious) foreign invader of Italy (from 280-275 BC), to whom historiography – both ancient and modern – has attached the role of a catalyst in Rome's acquisition of her Italian empire.

To sum up: when it comes to the central years of the third century BC we are faced with the bare bones of a historiographical tradition.[46] Even more so than for other periods of ancient history, this largely survives through considerably later accounts and, what is more, almost exclusively concerns itself with the role played by specific events and their main protagonists in charting Rome's path towards empire. One ancient historian has even gone as far as describing this time period as a dark age: *'oscuro perché poco noto, ma anche oscuro di fatto, **nel senso di un progressivo declino generale***'.[47] Thus, much of the third century is viewed as a time during which the foundations of Rome's hegemony were laid – but which, at the same time, also marked the final demise of the time-honoured traditions of other Italian regions. It was a century riddled with wars, invasions, and empire-building. Only during the next century, following the final showdown with the Carthaginians led by Hannibal, was Rome able to reap the fruits of her empire, by plunging Italy into a proto-capitalist bonanza of cheap labour, secure trade routes, and open markets.

As I pointed out in my introduction, archaeologists of the Italian economy have often interpreted their evidence within the same historiographical framework: the third century is seen as a century of depression, marked by the decline in ancient centres of craft production and (with one significant exception) low-level commerce. Change occurred only subsequently – and suddenly – with the boom of central Italian agriculture after the Hannibalic War, and with the ensuing high volume of trade. The evidence discussed in this article makes such a position increasingly untenable. Throughout the third century, commercial activity appears to have gradually grown in Campania and Etruria, the areas that were to become the powerhouses of the Italian economy during the second century BC. Rather than with an unexpected economic boom, therefore, we seem to be dealing with the intensification of long-term developments. In addition, these new results no longer support the notion that the city of Rome was exceptional in its involvement in craft production and commerce during the third century. Of course, the steady growth of the city's population was one of the main factors driving the intensification of agriculture and commerce across Italy. However, there is little to support the idea that this intensification was a source of economic decline in the regions, let alone that such decline should be documented by the (thinly documented) plot of battles and treaties.[48]

As an alternative, I argue that we should approach the dynamics of Italian commerce during the third and early second century BC from the point of view of regional identities. I contend that trade – and the economy in general – is an area in which Rome's regional allies can be seen to have benefited from Rome's hegemony from an early date. Moreover, this should not be understood purely in terms of material profit but be extended to the sphere of social agency, in which involvement in trade (at different levels) provided

---

[46] Curti, Dench, and Patterson 1996 have called for a timely re-assessment of the third century , which they have rightly singled out as a formative and culturally dynamic period in the history of Roman Italy; see also the comments by Isayev 2007.

[47] Musti 1997: 351 (emphasis mine).

[48] Although I entirely agree with their chronological re-assessment of the ceramic evidence, both Stanco 2004, Stanco (in press) and Ferrandes 2006 seem to propose interpretative approaches that still follow the historiographical tradition to the letter.

people with the scope to define and express group identities. For this type of approach to be successful, however, we need to both divest the study of trade in Roman Italy of the rigid framework imposed on it by the historical narrative, and move away from focusing exclusively on large-scale, inter-regional commerce as the only form of trade that supposedly mattered.

Trade and regional identities: formulating an approach

In a paper published more than two decades ago, R. E. Mitchell used the case of the Pyrrhic War (280-275 BC) to illustrate how a relatively obscure event has become an important *terminus* in the historiography of Roman Italy.[49] Modern scholars, he argued, had taken the lead from their ancient colleagues in attributing to an individual event sweeping, irreversible changes in all spheres of cultural life, be it the demise of the Greek *koiné* of the south, the introduction of silver coinage at Rome or the rise of the *atelier des petites estampilles* at Rome, to name but three instances. We have seen that a similar, if not even greater importance is usually attached to the Hannibalic War, and there are plenty of other examples which document that such reasoning constitutes a common historical practice.[50] It would be unwise to deny the impact of such major events on other areas of life. However, we have also seen that the archaeological evidence does not necessarily concur with the historiographical plot. What could be an alternative way to proceed?

In both of the examples which I have discussed here – Campania and Etruria – the economic developments of the second century BC had their origin in commercial dynamics that can be traced back to the third century BC. And while these dynamics may ultimately relate to Rome's tightening military grip on Italy, they – paradoxically, it might seem – signify an increasing importance of certain regions within Italian commerce. There can no longer be any suggestion that the city of Rome became the economic capital of Italy, at the cost of the regions. Quite the contrary, we have seen that local craft production and commerce seem to have increased during the period in question. Therefore, Rome's hegemony seems to have encouraged commercial activity at different levels of regional societies. While élite landowners may have been the main beneficiaries of inter-regional commerce – as documented by Graeco-Italic amphorae, *Campana A* and certain wares of the *Cerchia della Campana B* – we seriously need to consider that an increase in commercial activity and, possibly, prosperity was also taking place at the lower levels of society.

It is notoriously difficult to quantify such economic benefits with any degree of precision, as M. Finley's 'balance sheet of empire' has famously demonstrated for the case of Classical Athens.[51] This difficulty arises especially at the lower level of regional societies, for which, as I have argued, ceramic evidence supports an increasing degree of commercial activity. However, as Finley did for Athens, we may assume that both the demands of the urban Roman market and the relative political stability resulting from

---

[49] Mitchell 1985.

[50] For further discussion and references, see Roth 2007: 10-17.

[51] Finley 1978.

Rome's hegemony had a beneficial effect on the economic climate of her sphere of influence as a whole. In particular, we should consider that Rome's hegemony had a curbing effect on disruptive factors such as piracy and brigandage. More concretely, we may cautiously assume that the improved infrastructure had a stimulating effect on the economy at all levels: roads that had originally been constructed as means of enhancing military control subsequently became commercial arteries. We tend to think of the roads of Roman Italy as a means by which regional communities were marginalized.[52] This might indeed be the impression one might get from focusing exclusively on the main roads, such as the Via Appia, the Via Flaminia, or the Via Cassia, to mention but three examples. However, we should take into account the possibility that the construction of these main highways had a boosting effect on connectivity in general, linking up pre-existing, local, and regional road networks that had previously been isolated in many cases. The same goes for another type of inland communications: as seen in the Tiber valley, riverine transport through formerly fragmented territories became a significant factor of commerce.[53] Finally, trade by sea was not limited to the large-scale inter-regional trade that is envisaged by most historians of the Roman economy. Small coastal settlements like that near the modern village of Castiglioncello (south of Livorno) seem to have flourished thanks to their involvement in *cabotage*, not to mention their role in providing inland territories (in this case the *ager Volaterranus*) with goods transported by sea.[54]

The drift of my argument is that we should view the commercial patterns that are documented by the ceramic evidence for third- and early second-century Italy in terms of an overall intensification of connectivity. In fact, I suggest that what we see happening here provides an instance of the dynamics of Mediterranean life as discussed by P. Horden and N. Purcell in *The Corrupting Sea*.[55] The rise of Rome to hegemony in Italy – which was a long-drawn out process beginning during the later fourth and lasting well into the second century BC – on the whole put communications across the Italian peninsula into a new perspective. However, it did not fundamentally alter their structuring principles. Trade by sea along the Tyrrhenian coast had been an important mode of communications for many centuries. It was the volume of trade and level of organization that increased. Similarly, communications by land, long underestimated by scholars, were not a Roman invention.[56] But the Roman road system facilitated an existing mode of transport and increased its overall volume. At the same time, by linking up smaller, local, and regional road networks with one another, as well as of utilizing inland waterways as part of these networks, the road system also contributed to a greater degree of capillarization. The chief effect of this was that even those who lived on the periphery, at least indirectly participated – as producers and consumers alike – in the commercial networks of Rome's Italian empire, while persisting in modes of behaviour that were perfectly in tune with the historical experiences of their own communities.

---

[52] Laurence 1999; Potter 1979.

[53] Patterson 2004.

[54] Gambogi and Palladino 1999, especially Cibecchini 1999: 38-44.

[55] Horden and Purcell 2000.

[56] One could cite the roads of Etruria, carved deep into the soft tuff of the bedrock.

The ceramic evidence that forms the subject of this article supports this model. Throughout the third century BC, we see an overall increase in the volume of pottery traded at different levels. The pottery produced in a few regions is moved widely across Italy, by land and sea. Other workshops exclusively produce for local consumption. There are significant changes, chiefly the gradual transformation of parts of Campania and central Italy into the economic powerhouses of Roman Italy. But, as we have seen, it is impossible to link these developments causally with specific historical events. Nor can they be viewed as impositions of the Roman state, or as forms of Romanization that were deliberately implemented at the cost of regional cultures. The dynamics of Italian trade were clearly changing during the third and second century BC but these changes took place within existing mechanisms of connectivity. The basic unit of these was the region or, indeed, the micro-region: it is here that we should look for the primary agents of change.

Conclusions: regional identities and trade

Change of scene: a cautionary tale

Some of the most illuminating material regarding the economic side of regional identities in Roman Italy comes, paradoxically, from the eastern Mediterranean. Since the third century BC, Italian traders had been present in the economic centres of the Greek world. Among the Greeks, they were known as *Rhomaioi*, as an ample corpus of inscriptions attests.[57] Yet it is unlikely that, in their majority, they would have referred to themselves as Romans, and certain that they would not have done so back in Italy and before the settlement following the Social War (90/89 BC). On the contrary, the *Rhomaioi* were for the most part citizens of Rome's allied states in Italy, especially from the cities of central and southern Italy. In many cases, archaeological remains still document how these towns were architecturally embellished with the proceeds from trade, and thus became obvious markers of the strengthened regional identities in Republican Italy.[58] The scope of such commercial enterprises had vastly increased as a result of Rome's growing political and military involvement in the Greek East; and it is well documented that a specific event such as the declaration of Delos as a free port (167 BC) could serve as a particularly powerful incitement for the migration of Italian *negotiatores* to the Aegean. Yet this was by no means the only cause for Italian trade interests in the eastern Mediterranean, but rather a catalyst within a long-term trend the roots of which reached back a century and, perhaps, more.[59]

Just as the phenomenon of Italian traders in the Aegean cannot be explained with reference to one specific historical event in isolation, the complex identity of this group also jars with the straightforward cause-and-effect types of historical explanation, which I have questioned here. It is indisputable that the success of the *Rhomaioi* and the steady growth in their numbers must clearly be regarded within the context of Rome's military

---

[57] For an overview, see Gabba 1989: 223-25; criticized by Mouritsen 1998: 72.

[58] The same has been argued for the system by which Rome's allies participated in her military campaigns; see Pfeilschifter 2007.

[59] Gabba 1989: 224 argues for allied involvement in the eastern Mediterranean as early as the third century BC.

and political domination of the East. Yet one might rightly wonder why the economic exploitation of that wealthy imperial asset was not left to Roman citizens; and why 'Roman' trade in the eastern Mediterranean was in fact the domain of those who had been Rome's subjects for many generations. A straightforward 'logic of empire' does not appear to be at work in the economic sphere in this important case. But we only know that this is the case owing to the survival of much relevant evidence.[60] Were it not for this, one might wonder what scholars would have to say about the regional identities of traders in the eastern Mediterranean.

Thus, the case of the *Rhomaioi* should serve as a cautionary tale concerning the significance of specific historical events in explaining cultural patterns that are primarily documented through archaeology. In particular, we should not automatically expect that historical events which arguably happened through the agency of the Roman élite subsequently resulted in the clear-cut 'Romanization' of other areas of cultural interaction. Put differently, we should not assume that the military and political initiative of Roman aristocrats was necessarily mirrored in other spheres, such as the economy. When applied to the Republican period, terms such as 'Roman Italy' or the 'Roman economy' are useful labels for complex networks sustained by diverse patterns of agency. However, this terminology should not be misused to define the ethnic identity of such agents or their activities, since their existence cannot, as a rule, be attributed to specific historical events through mono-causal reasoning.

Trade, identities, and the nature of Roman Italy

This article has merely scratched the surface of a much bigger issue that is at stake here: to define how Roman Italy functioned as a cultural space. The mid-Republican period comprises the formative years of one of the most successful empires in human history. Although military domination, in some cases even oppression and the sheer abuse of power go some way to explain this success (as recently argued by Mattingly),[61] they cannot account for the whole story. What I have tried to show in this article is that, by looking at the example of trade, we can identify a symbiosis of widespread cultural patterns and great regional diversity. The archaeological evidence which I have surveyed here suggests that trade in Roman Italy emerged from historically grown, multi-layered and regionalized patterns of connectivity, combined with Rome's overwhelming military superiority. For this reason, the narrative of the Roman conquest of Italy does not by itself provide us with a satisfactory course of events against which to plot the archaeological evidence. Trade was as much a regional affair as it had to be of some concern to the centre, if only to ensure sufficient food supply to the capital. As an essentially – and ostentatiously[62] – non-political affair, it also provided the regions with an important form

---

[60] Some scholars have, in fact, tried to de-emphasize the role of Rome's allies and stressed the personal involvement of Roman citizens. This is not convincing, at least not before the last quarter of the second century BC when the involvement of the *equites* in the eastern trade (and their rivalry with the Italian *negotiatores*) becomes more marked; on this conflict of interests, see now Keller 2007.

[61] Mattingly 2006.

[62] The *lex Claudia de nave senatorum* (218 BC), for instance, (at least notionally) limited the commercial involvement of the senatorial aristocracy; see also Keller 2007: 44-48.

of participation in wider Italian affairs, and with a source of identity in relation to a system in which they were politically disempowered.

We have to bear in mind that the importance to define and express one's identity – in this case, one's regional identity – increases with the amount of contact one has with others. During the mid-Republican period, myriad cultural networks were intensifying to bring the Italian regions into closer contact with each other. Rome's hegemony was rapidly transforming the élite-based *koiné* of 'old' Italy into a cultural 'connective tissue' that stretched to the most parochial regions of the peninsula. Perhaps not so paradoxically, the participation in wider networks – often experienced, as in our examples, through the movement of goods – made regional identities in Republican Italy at many levels more important than they had been before.

Bibliography

Balland, P. 1969. *Céramique étrusco-campanienne à vernis noir. Fouilles de l'École Française à Bolsena (Poggio Moscini) III. 1* (*Mélanges de l'École Française de Rome* supplement 6). Paris.

Carandini, A. 1981. 'Sviluppo e crisi delle manifatture rurali e urbane', in A. Giardina and A. Schiavone (eds), *Società romana e produzione schiavistica. 1. L'Italia: insediamenti e forme economiche*: 249-60. Rome.

Cibecchini, F. 1999. 'Economia e società', in P. Gambogi and S. Palladino (eds), *Castiglioncello. La necropoli ritrovata. Cento anni di scavi e scoperte*: 38-49. Florence.

Cibecchini, F. and Principal J. 2004. 'Per chi suona la Campana B?', in E. De Sena and H. Dessales (eds), *Metodi e approcci archeologici: l'industria e il commercio nell'Italia antica/Archaeological methods and approaches: industry and commerce in ancient Italy*: 159-72. Oxford.

Cornell, T. J. 1989. 'The conquest of Italy', in *Cambridge Ancient History* (2nd ed.) Vol. VII.2: 351-419

Cornell, T. J. 1995. *The beginnings of Rome. Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars, c. 1000-264 BC*. London.

Curti, E., Dench, E., and Patterson, J. 1996. 'The archaeology of central and southern Roman Italy: recent trends and approaches', *JRA* 86: 170-89.

Di Giuseppe, H. 2005. 'Un confronto tra l'Etruria settentrionale e meriodionale dal punto di vista della ceramica a vernice nera', *PBSR* 73: 31-83.

Ferrandes, A. F. 2006. 'Produzioni stampigliate e figurate in area etrusco laziale tra fine IV e III secolo a.C. Nuove riflessioni alla luce di vecchi contesti', *ArchCl* 57 (n.s. 7): 117-174.

Finley, M. I. 1978. 'The Athenian Empire: a balance sheet', in P. D. A. Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker (eds), *Imperialism in the ancient world*: 103-26. Cambridge.

Frederiksen, M. with Purcell, N. 1984. *Campania*. London.

Gabba, E. 1989. 'Rome and Italy in the second century BC', in *Cambridge Ancient History* (2nd ed.) Vol. VIII: 197-243.

Gosselain, O. P. 1998. 'Social and technical identity in a clay crystal ball', in M. T. Stark (ed.), *The Archaeology of Social Boundaries*: 78-106. Washington D.C.

Horden, P. and Purcell, N. 2000. *The corrupting sea. A study of mediterranean history*. Oxford.

Isayev, E. 2007. 'Why Italy?', in G. Bradley, E. Isayev, and C. Riva (eds), *Ancient Italy. Regions without boundaries*: 1-20. Exeter.

Jongman, W. 1988. *The economy and society of Pompeii*. Amsterdam.

Keay, S. J., Millett, M., Poppy, S., Robinson, J., Taylor J., and Terrenato N. 2004. 'New approaches to Roman urbanism in the Tiber valley', in H. Patterson (ed.), *Bridging the Tiber. Approaches to regional archaeology in the Middle Tiber Valley*: 223-36. London.

Keller, J. 2007. 'Rome and her Italian allies: conflicting interest and disintegration', in R. E. Roth and J. Keller (eds), *Roman by integration: dimensions of group identity in material culture and text* (*Journal of Roman Archaeology* supplement 66): 43-58. Portsmouth, RI.

Lamboglia, N. 1952. 'Per una classificazione preliminare della ceramica campana', *Atti del I Congresso Internazionale di Studi Liguri (1950)*: 139-206. Bordighera.

Laurence, R. 1999. *The roads of Roman Italy*. London.

Lomas, K. 1993. *Rome and the western Greeks, 350 BC-AD 200*. London.

Mattingly, D. J. 2006. *An imperial possession: Britain in the Roman Empire*. Harmondsworth.

Melucco Vaccaro, A. 1970. 'Le ceramiche etrusche a vernice nera e ceramiche ellenistiche varie', in G. Colonna (ed.), *Pyrgi. Scavi nel santuario etrusco (1959-1967)*: 468-504. Rome.

Mitchell, R. E. 1985. 'The historical and historiographical prominence of the Pyrrhic War', in J. W. Eadie and J. Ober (eds), *The craft of the ancient historian. Essays in honour of chester G. Starr*: 303-30. New York.

Morel, J.-P. 1963. 'Notes sur la céramique étrusco-campanienne. Vases à vernis noir de Sardaigne et d'Arezzo', *MÉFRA* 75: 7-58.

Morel, J.-P. 1969. 'L'atelier des petites estampilles', *MÉFRA* 81: 59-117.

Morel, J.-P. 1981a. *Céramique campanienne: les formes*. Rome.

Morel, J.-P. 1981b. *La produzione della ceramica campana: aspetti economici e sociali*, in A. Giardina and A. Schiavone (eds), *Società romana e produzione schiavistica. 2. Merci, mercati e scambi nel mediterraneo*: 81-97. Rome.

Morel, J.-P. 1985. 'La ceramica e le altre merci d'accompagno nel commercio da e per Roma in età repubblicana', in R. Bussi and V. Vandelli (eds), *Misurare la terra: centuriazione e colonie nel mondo romano. Città, agricoltura, commercio: materiali da Roma e dal suburbio*: 172-79. Modena.

Morel, J.-P. 1989. 'The transformation of Italy, 300-133 BC. The evidence of archaeology', in *Cambridge Ancient History* (2nd ed.) Vol. VIII: 477-516.

Morel, J.-P. 1990. 'La produzione artigianale e il commercio trasmarino', in A. Momigliano and A. Schiavone (eds), *Storia di Roma. I. La repubblica imperiale*: 397-412. Turin.

Morel, J.-P. 1998a. 'L'étude des céramiques à vernis noir, entre archéologie et archéometrie', in P. Frontini and M. T. Grassi (eds), *Indagini archeometriche relative alla ceramica a vernice nera: nuovi dati sulla provenienza e la diffusione, Milano 22-23 novembre 1996*: 9-22. Como.

Morel, J.-P. 1998b. 'Le commerce à l'époque hellenistique et romaine et les enseignements des épaves', in G. Volpe (ed.), *Archeologia subacquea. Come opera l'archeologo. Storie dalle acque*: 485-530. Florence.

Morley, N. 1996. *Metropolis and hinterland. The city of Rome and the Italian economy, 200 BC-AD 200*. Cambridge.

Mouritsen, H. 1998. *Italian unification. A study in ancient history and modern historiography.* London.

Musti, D. 1997. *Magna Grecia. Il quadro storico.* Rome.

Nappo, S. 1993. 'Pompei: la casa Regio I , ins. 20, 11. 4 nelle sue fasi. Considerazioni e problemi', in *Ercolano 1788-1988. 250 anni di ricerca archeologica*: 667-76. Rome.

Olcese, G. 2004 'Anfore Greco-italiche antiche: alcune osservazioni sull'origine e sulla circolazione alla luce di recenti ricerche archeologiche e archeometriche', in E. De Sena and H. Dessales (eds), *Metodi e approcci archeologici: l'industria e il commercio nell'Italia antica/Archaeological methods and approaches: industry and commerce in ancient Italy*: 173-92. Oxford.

Pasquinucci, P. M. 1972 'La ceramica a vernice nera del Museo Guarnacci a Volterra', *MÉFRA* 84: 269-498.

Pasquinucci, P., Alessi, D., Bianchini, S., Capelli, C., Cibecchini, F., Cherubini, L., Del Rio, A., Menchelli, S., Spinesi, P., and Vallebona, M. 1998 'Ceramica a vernice nera dall'Etruria settentrionale costiera. Primo contributo alla caratterizzazione delle produzioni locali e delle importazioni', in P. Frontini and M. T. Grassi (eds), *Indagini archeometriche relative alla ceramica a vernice nera: nuovi dati sulla provenienza e la diffusione, Milano 22-23 novembre 1996*: 101-18. Como.

Patterson, H. (ed.) 2004. *Bridging the Tiber. Approaches to regional archaeology in the Middle Tiber Valley.* London.

Peña, T. J. 2007. *Roman pottery in the archaeological record.* Cambridge.

Pfeilschifter, R. 2007. 'The allies in the Republican army and the Romanization of Italy', in R. E. Roth and J. Keller (eds), *Roman by integration: dimensions of group identity in material culture and text* (*Journal of Roman Archaeology* supplement 66): 27-42. Portsmouth, RI.

Potter, T. 1979. *The changing landscape of South Etruria.* London.

Roth, R. E. 2006. 'Black-gloss wares from the acropolis of Capena (La Civitucola, Provincia di Roma)', *PBSR* 74: 119-62.

Roth, R. E. 2007. *Styling Romanization: pottery and society in central Italy*. Cambridge.

Roth, R. E. 2008. 'Review of 'A. R. Scott 2008, *Cosa: The black-glaze pottery 2* (Ann Arbor)'', *BMCR* 2008.06.17.

Scott, A. R. 2008. *Cosa: The black-glaze pottery 2*. Ann Arbor.

Scullard, J. J. 1989. 'Carthage and Rome', in *Cambridge Ancient History* (2nd ed.) Vol. VII.2: 486-569.

Schindler, M. 1967. *Die 'Schwarze Sigillata' vom Magdalensberg*. Klagenfurt.

Stanco, E. A. 2004. 'La ceramica a vernice nera della stipe di *Lucus Feroniae*, analisi preliminare', *Bullettino della Commissione Archeologica di Roma* 105: 29-46.

Stanco, E. A. 2009. 'La seriazione cronologica della ceramica a vernice nera etrusco laziale nell'ambito dell III sec. a.c.', in V. Jolivet and G. Volpe (eds), *Surburbium II. Il suburbium di Roma dalla fine dell età monarchica alla nascita del sistema delle ville*. Rome.

Terrenato, N. 1998. '*Tam firmum municipium.* The Romanization of Volaterrae and its cultural implications', *JRS* 88: 94-114.

Terrenato, N. 2001. 'The auditorium site and the origins of the villa', *JRA* 14: 5-32.

Vandermersch, C. 2001. 'Au source du vin romain, dans le *Latium* e la *Campania* à l'époque médio-republicaine', *Ostraka* 10: 157-206.

Woolf, G. 1998. *Becoming Roman. The origins of provincial civilisation in Gaul*. Cambridge.

Zanker, P. 1998. *Pompeii. Public and private life*. Cambridge, MA.

ENCOUNTERING CARTHAGE: MID-REPUBLICAN ROME AND MEDITERRANEAN CULTURE[*]

ANDREW ERSKINE

International culture and the Western Mediterranean

Sometime in the first half of the second century BC a man who was apparently a slave working for a company of salters based in Sardinia set up a dedication to express his gratitude for an unspecified cure; the god, he says 'had heard his voice and healed him'. The island was at that time under Roman rule after several centuries as a Carthaginian possession; it had been acquired by the Romans in questionable circumstances in the early 230s shortly after the end of the Second Punic War. Today it is not the cure that impresses so much as the multi-cultural character of the dedication. It is presented in three languages, Latin, Greek, and Punic, in that order, so the god appears in three different forms, the Roman Aesculapius, the Greek Asklepios, and the Phoenician Eshmun, each with the epithet Merre, the significance of which is not clear and may refer to some local deity.[1] It is hard to determine the ethnic identity of the dedicant. The Latin version comes first, a reflection perhaps of the Roman ascendency on the island but it is short, fairly general, and betrays a lack of confidence in the language. The dedicant bears a Greek name, Kleon, although in the context of slavery this is not to be taken as a marker of Greekness. It is, however, the final Punic text which is fullest, which might suggest that the dedicant is a Punic speaker; it is this alone that gives the date, the reason for the dedication, and the weight and material of the altar that is being dedicated. Significantly

[1] All three versions are reproduced with bibliography in Adams 2003: 209-13 who discusses it as an example of a trilingual text; it also appears in *ILLRP* 41, although here the Punic is only given in Latin translation, and *ILS* 1874 where the Punic is omitted altogether apart from a note that it is *'aliquanto verbosior'*. For convenience, therefore, I give the trilingual text here together with Adams' rendering of the Punic:

Cleon salari(us) soc(iorum) s(ervus) Aescolapio Merre donum dedit lubens merito merente

Ἀσκληπιῶι Μήρρη ἀνάθεμα βωμὸν ἔστησε Κλέων ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν ἁλῶν κατὰ πρόσταγμα

l'dn l'šmn m'rḥ mzbḥ nḥšt mšql lṭrm m't 100'š ndr'klyn šḥsgm'š bmmlht šm['

q]l' rpy' bšt spṭm ḥmlkt w'bd'šmn bn ḥmlk

To the lord šmn m'rḥ: the altar of bronze, in weight a hundred 100 pounds, which Cleon (slave) of ḥsgm, who is over the salt mines (?), vowed; he heard his voice (and) healed him, in the year of the suffetes ḥmlkt and 'bd'šmn, son of ḥmlk.

too the phrase, 'he heard his voice' is common in Punic votive texts. Nonetheless we must allow for the possibility that the fuller Punic text reflects the character of the cult rather than the ethnicity or language of the dedicant.[2]

In this multi-lingual, multi-cultural concoction it is possible to see, in miniature, the complexity of the western Mediterranean with its three overlapping international cultures, Greek, Roman, and Punic. It is all the more striking because this is in Sardinia, a part of the Mediterranean so often stigmatized as backward and out of touch.[3] Success in the western Mediterranean might depend on the ability to master all three, as Elizabeth Fentress has noted in the case of the Numidian king Masinissa: 'Rather than opt for a single cultural alliance, ... Masinissa exploited all his cultures to the hilt, dressing and fighting like a Roman, speaking like a Carthaginian, and sending his sons to Greece like a Hellenistic monarch'.[4] As this suggests, the culture used at any one time may be context-dependent.[5]

Studies of Roman cultural identity in the mid-Republic, that is to say the third and second centuries BC, have tended to focus on Rome's response to the Greeks and things Greek with particular reference to the Greeks of the East. It is the Roman encounter with Hellenism, for instance, that is the subject of Erich Gruen's important 1992 study, *Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome*, yet the concentration on Hellenism alone in the development of Roman national identity can mislead.[6] Emma Dench in her recent book, *Romulus' asylum: Roman identities from the age of Alexander to the age of Hadrian,* has redressed the balance somewhat by arguing persuasively for the need to examine the role of Italy in Rome's developing identity.[7] Undoubtedly the pervasiveness of Greek culture makes it important but we need to be careful not to overemphasize the Greek element in mid-Republican Rome. Until Rome strikes east it is very much a city of the western Mediterranean and is perceived as such by Greeks. That, for instance, is why, when Lampsakos in the Troad wishes to make diplomatic advances to Rome in the 190s, it first approaches the western Greek city of Massalia to act as an intermediary and

---

[2] Adams 2003: 209-13; Palmer 1997: 40-41; and Dyson and Rowland 2007: 140-41. For the phrase 'he heard his voice', often with 'and blessed him', Bénichou-Safar 2004: 2; Schmitz 1995: 566 n.37; it is still found in later neo-Punic dedications under the Roman empire, *cf.* the numerous examples in Jongeling and Kerr 2005: 35-54, including the votive stele on 35-36 which includes the name in Latin, cited by Rives 1995: 154. For Sardinia from the beginnings of Phoenician settlement, Tronchetti 1995; Rowland 2001; and Bartoloni 2009, with van Dommelen 1998 on the persistence and vitality of Punic culture into the Roman empire. For the identification of Eshmun with Asklepios, Bonnet, and Xella 1995: 327-28.

[3] *Cf.* Rawson 1985: 22 with n.19 who notes this text and also possible Stoic connections with the island.

[4] Fentress 2006: 10. For the cultural mix of late Hellenistic North Africa, see Cordovana 2007: 37-48.

[5] *Cf.* Wallace-Hadrill 1998, on Romans going Greek, and now 2008.

[6] Gruen 1992; *cf.* for instance, Ferrary 1988; Rawson 1989; Gruen 1990b; Wallace-Hadrill 1998; though Gruen has subsequently done much to explore the various interactions between peoples of the Mediterranean, note in particular Gruen 2006 and 2011, both of which examine Rome's interplay with the Carthaginians.

[7] Dench 2005.

introduce its ambassadors to the Senate.[8] Similarly Polybius very clearly divides the Mediterranean of the late third century into two halves and Rome is firmly in the western half, eliciting anxiety on the Greek mainland about impending 'clouds from the west'.[9] When the Sicilian Greek historian, Timaios of Tauromenion, synchronises the foundation dates of Rome and Carthage to 814/13 BC, he is bringing together the two dominant states of the western Mediterranean.[10] It is in this western context that Rome is understood and it is in this context that Greek, Punic, and Roman culture come together. Minor as the Third Punic War might have been in comparison with its more lengthy predecessors, the destruction of Carthage in 146 BC could be said to have made its impact far greater, eliminating the political head of one third of that triad.

Yet, in this respect, somewhat paradoxically in the light of Rome's geographical location, the western Mediterranean does not seem to get the same kind of attention as the east from scholars. It receives attention because that is where Rome's wars against Carthage are fought but after that scholarly interests move quickly onto the creation of Roman provinces in Sicily and Spain. Whereas in the east, it is Rome's response to the Greeks and their culture that is explored, in the west the tendency is the reverse. Scholars are more likely to ask how those western cultures and peoples are affected by Rome and how they respond to Rome, in other words questions of 'Romanization', 'acculturation', 'assimilation', 'creolization' or whatever the preferred term may be. My own work has been largely on Rome's interaction with the Greek East; in this paper I want to take some steps towards a consideration of the Roman response to the two leading cultures of the west, Punic and Greek. My focus, however, is primarily on Punic culture, as the common culture of the Phoenician and Carthaginian settlements of the west is usually termed after the rise of Carthaginian influence in the region from the sixth century BC onwards. In effect, therefore, this primarily applies to North Africa, western Sicily, Sardinia, and the coast of Spain.[11]

The Roman response to Greek culture has been variously interpreted by those looking at Rome's relationship with the east. The Romans are often said to have been ambivalent about things Greek: they are both seduced by them and threatened at the same time; or they are positive about Greeks of the past and negative about those of the present; or they treat Greek practices as appropriate in some contexts but not in others.[12] In another form that ambivalence is personified and transformed into two groups, the Philhellenes, often centred on the Scipio family, and the traditionalists suspicious of new-fangled ways, whose standard-bearer is the elder Cato. Thus Scipio Africanus wears Greek dress in the

---

[8] *I.Lamp.* 4 (*SIG*³ 591), on which Bickermann 1932; Schmitt 1964: 289-95; Ferrary 1988: 133-41; Erskine 2001: 169-72.

[9] Division of the Mediterranean: Pol. 1.3.3-6; 'Clouds from the west': 5.104.10, 9.37.10. For further discussion, Erskine 2013.

[10] Dion. Hal., *Ant. Rom.* 1.74.1 (*FGrH* 566 F60); Gruen 1992: 37; Feeney 2007: 92-95.

[11] For the influence of Carthage in the western Mediterranean, see Whittaker 1978; Huss 1985: 57-74; Lancel 1995: esp. 78-109; more briefly Scullard 1989a: 502-06, 1989b: 17-21; for its early development, Aubet 2001, esp. 212-56. For the use of the term 'Punic' see cautionary comments of Aubet 2001: 12-13 and Prag 2006. For Phoenician settlement in Spain, Schubart 1995.

[12] Astin 1978: 157-81; Rawson 1989; Wallace-Hadrill 1998.

gymnasium of Syracuse and Scipio Aemilianus gathers together like-minded Romans and Greek intellectuals such as Panaetius and Polybius in his 'Scipionic Circle'. Meanwhile Cato addresses the Athenian assembly in Latin and warns of the dangers of Greek doctors.[13] Or again, we may see with Erich Gruen no ambivalence or inconsistency but rather varied posturing driven by political requirements, 'the subordination of Hellenism to national goals'.[14] However we interpret this Roman reaction (and I prefer some form of ambivalence) it is important to examine how Rome responds to other Mediterranean cultures to see if it is different or the same. That could affect how we should understand their response to Hellenism.

A problem to be faced, however, is a paucity of evidence. There are several reasons for this. Greek sources give us a comparatively full picture of Greco-Roman relations, a picture in which not surprisingly Greeks feature prominently. In contrast there is no Carthaginian picture to place alongside this. A second reason is the destruction of Carthage in 146 BC. Consequently, by the time that we have extensive Latin evidence, the mid-first century BC onwards, Carthage is receding into the past, a myth rather than a memory for Cicero's contemporaries; from the point of view of the early twenty-first century it would have the same immediacy as the Ottoman or Austro-Hungarian empire. In approaching mid-Republican Rome it is necessary to imagine Rome before the Social War and even before the fall of Carthage, in other words at a time when victories over Hellenistic kings were still something relatively new.

Punic Rome?

If we look closely at mid-Republican Rome, the tripartite culture of the Sardinian dedication examined at the beginning of this paper is more prevalent than first impressions might initially imply. The three elements, Roman, Greek, and Punic, may not come together as directly in Rome itself but they can be seen to bounce off each other in ways that are suggestive.

For Romans the boundaries between what was Carthaginian and what was Punic, or even what was Phoenician, could be rather hazy; indeed this is a haziness that runs also through modern scholarship.[15] Although *Carthaginiensis* stood for 'Carthaginian', terms such as *Poenus* and *Punicus* could equally be used. It has been argued by George Frederic Franko that the latter terms were broader and ethnic in character in same way that *Graecus* was, whereas *Carthaginiensis* was a very specifically civic designation in the manner of *Atheniensis*. Certainly *Poenus* and *Punicus* do seem to have been broader in meaning but there is scope for caution in seeing them as an ethnic designation that would have been readily accepted by the people themselves; they were, as Jonathan Prag has

---

[13] For a long time the orthodoxy, *cf.* Scullard 1980: 361-63; see also more recently and in a more nuanced form, Ferrary 1988: 527-39 (on which Gruen 1990a: 329). Scipio in Greek dress, Livy 29.19.11-12; Val. Max. 3.6.1; Plut., *Cato Mai.* 3.7; for the Scipionic Circle, *OCD*[3], *ad loc*.; Cato in Athens, Plut., *Cato Mai.* 12; and Greek doctors, Plut., *Cato Mai.* 23; Pliny, *NH* 29.14.

[14] Gruen 1992 with quote from p. 270.

[15] Aubet 2001: 12-13; Prag 2006. How Punic-speaking people described themselves when not identifying themselves by their city is not easy to determine; there is some evidence that they called themselves 'Canaanites', Aug. *Exp. ad Rom.* 13, Lemche 1991: 56-58.

recently argued, terms that in the Republican period were almost exclusively used by outsiders rather than by those designated as Punic. Moreover, *Poenus* and *Punicus* would be more likely to have negative connotations than *Carthaginiensis*, but this was something that depended on context; thus *fides punica* was decidedly negative but *malum punicum* (pomegranate) was neutral. This terminology meant that in Rome what was Punic tended to be wrapped up with what was Carthaginian and vice-versa; it reflects, however, an outsider's perspective rather than a Carthaginian one.[16]

Carthage and the Punic world hardly compete with Greece as an exporter of intellectual culture. Grain, fish sauce, figs, and wild bees are more likely to be found among their exports than drama, philosophy, or literature.[17] Nonetheless, one of the more significant Carthaginian cultural influences in Rome comes in the form of a translation into Latin of a major work on farming, written in Punic and attributed to a Carthaginian called Mago. The work came to be widely-known in the Roman world; it is treated as a standard and familiar farming manual by Cicero in the mid first century BC and is later cited by Varro and Columella in their agricultural writings and by Pliny the Elder in his encyclopaedic *Natural History*.[18] It is Pliny who tells us something of the circumstances of its translation (18.22-3):

> To give instructions for agriculture was very highly esteemed also among foreigners, since even kings such as Hiero, Attalus Philometor, and Archelaus wrote on the subject as well as generals such as Xenophon and the Carthaginian Mago. Indeed our senate bestowed such great honour on Mago after the capture of Carthage that, when it handed over the city's libraries to the minor kings of Africa, it passed a resolution that in the case of this man alone (*unius eius*) his twenty-eight volumes should be translated into Latin, even though Marcus Cato had already composed his handbook, and that the task should be given to those expert in the Punic language (*periti Punicae*), something at which Decimus Silanus, a man of very distinguished family, was better than anybody.

The role of the Senate in authorising the translation is mentioned also by Columella, albeit more briefly: the twenty-eight books were 'translated into the Latin language by senatorial decree (*ex senatus consulto*)'.[19] We might, nonetheless, have reservations over some of the details in Pliny's account. The story of the saving of this one work for Rome does not

---

[16] Franko 1994; Prag 2006. For *Poeni* as descendants of *Phoenices*, Cic., *Scaur.* 42, inheriting their penchant for treachery. An early use of *Poenicus* of the Carthaginians would come in the title of Naevius' third-century poem, *Bellum Poenicum*, if indeed that title originates with the poet; *Carmen belli Poenici* has also been suggested, *cf.* Rowell 1957: 427-28. On *fides punica*, see Gruen 2011: 115-40; for *malum punicum* and similar phrases, see n.40 below.

[17] *Cf.* Palmer 1997: 31-52; see further below.

[18] For the surviving fragments, Speranza 1974: 75-119; remarked upon by Cicero, *De or.* 1.249 (dialogue set in 91 BC and passage voiced by M. Antonius); Mago praised by Columella, *Rust.* 1.1.13 as *'rusticationis parens'*, *cf.* the similarly effusive remarks of Varro, *Rust.* 1.1.10; on Mago and the translations into Latin and Greek, Heurgon 1976; Martin 1971: 37-52; Rawson 1985: 135-36; Greene and Kehoe 1995; Devillers and Krings 1996; Palmer 1997: 46-47.

[19] Columella, *Rust.* 1.1.13.

really make much sense. Are we to suppose that before the libraries were given away special instructions came from Rome that Mago's farming manual should be sought out and saved? Or did Scipio spot it whilst rooting through the collections looking for interesting reading material? And would libraries have been saved from the general devastation?[20] It might be that the fall of Carthage provided a good context to set the translation of this work. Nonetheless there are two telling aspects to the story. First, this was no casual decision by a single man to embark upon a translation, a man who happened to know a good deal about Punic literature. Rather it was a group decision by the assembly of the Roman elite, the Senate, revealing both the importance of land in their eyes and their awareness of the qualities of Carthaginian agricultural practice, and more particularly their awareness of Mago's farming guide. This may have been the only book in Punic to get an officially authorized translation but we might doubt that it was the only one to make its way to Rome.[21] Secondly, we learn from this story that there were people among the Roman nobility of the second century who could be considered to have sufficient knowledge of Punic to translate a specialist work on farming or at least sufficient to oversee its translation. A glance at any of the surviving Roman agricultural guides shows what a very technical area this could be. It is a sign of the influence of Mago's manual that it would subsequently also appear in a variety of Greek versions.[22]

As a model for Roman literature Mago's farming opus was an exception. Roman literature was far more likely to borrow from Greek models, as, for example, in the case of Livius Andronicus' translation of the *Odyssey* or Plautus and Terence's re-workings of Athenian New Comedy.[23] Even so, Roman literature of the middle Republic does survive rather poorly in comparison with that of the first century BC. Yet the third element of the triad, whether Punic or Phoenician, is not totally absent from our record. Fabius Pictor at the turn of the third century writes his history of Rome in Greek but notes in it that the alphabet, although brought to Italy by the Arcadian Evander, was originally taught to the Greeks by the Phoenicians. In this way he locates himself and Roman intellectual life in both traditions, even as he writes of a war between Rome and a Phoenician colony.[24]

---

[20] On libraries in Carthage, note Krings 1991 and 1995: 37-38; Baurain 1992; Lancel 1995: 358-59.

[21] Greek may more usually have been the language of choice for Carthaginian writers, as Baurain 1992 argues, but there is evidence that literature in Punic did exist, Huss 1985: 504-06, notwithstanding the scepticism of Krings 1995. Sallust (*Iug.* 17.7), for example, cited certain *libri punici* of king Hiempsal; Morstein-Marx 2001: 195-97 is surely right to reject suggestions that these were written in Greek. For later *libri punici*, see Solin. 32.2, Amm. Marc. 22.15.8 (both concerning Iuba), Aug., *Ep.* 17.2, with Jongeling and Kerr 2005: 2-6 on the survival of Punic. Note too D.L. 4.67 who says that the Carthaginian philosopher Kleitomachos, when in Carthage, taught philosophy in his own language, τῇ ἰδίᾳ φωνῇ.

[22] Varro, *Rust.* 1.1.10 notes revised Greek translations by Cassius Dionysius (on date see n.56 below) and by a certain Diophanes from Bithynia (the latter's dedication to Deiotaros dates it to the mid first century BC).

[23] Livius Andronicus: Goldberg 1993; *cf.* Gruen 1992: 230-35; Roman comedy: Hunter 1985: 1-23; Konstan 1983; Gruen 1990b: 124-57.

[24] Peter, *HRR*, F1; in this Pictor gives 'double cultural authority to the Latin language' as Gruen 2006: 301 nicely puts it.

There is also Publius Terentius Afer, better known as Terence. He wrote comedies based on Greek models but was said to have been born in Carthage and to have come to Rome as a slave. Some have questioned his Carthaginian birth, which is reported at the beginning of Suetonius' life of Terence, although his cognomen 'Afer' does imply an African background of some kind. [25] Nonetheless, whether true or not, the story of his African origins again suggests that the Punic/Greek/Latin combination made sense to people.

The interplay between these three elements comes out strikingly in a comedy by Plautus, entitled the *Poenulus*, first performed in the early second century. It is often translated as *The little Carthaginian*, though Franko's *The little Punic* probably captures the ethnic character of the title better if less elegantly.[26] In common with most of these comedies the model is Greek, although in this case nothing is known about the original Greek play apart from its title, *Karchedonios* or *The Carthaginian*; the introduction of the diminutive '*Poenulus*' for the Roman audience is perhaps revealing.[27] As so often the setting is Greece and the plot concerns a young man in love, a cunning slave, a pimp, and some kidnapped girls up for sale. In this case, however, the kidnapped girls are Carthaginian and their father Hanno has been searching the Mediterranean for them, brothel by brothel. The Carthaginian theme is signalled in the prologue with some negative stereotyping; thus, for example, there is reference to deceit: Hanno 'knows all languages but, although knowing, hides his knowledge; *Poenus* he clearly is' (*et is omnis linguas scit, sed dissimulat sciens se scire: Poenus plane est*, lines 112-13). But it is not until line 930 that the Carthaginian character of the play itself finally emerges and then it does so abruptly and dramatically.

Hanno comes on stage for the first time and speaks in Punic, not just a few words but ten lines uninterrupted; two versions of this Punic speech survive, both presented phonetically in the manuscripts. More has probably been written on these lines than on the rest of the play.[28] That they bear a relation to real Punic seems clear but what that relation is and how the lines would have been interpreted by the audience is less certain. Plautus could have written gibberish but he did not. This implies that the audience, although they may not have understood what was being said, would have recognized the language. Some perhaps would have understood it, or at least the gist of it; a few years later we know there were Romans who could sit down with 28 volumes of a Carthaginian farming manual and make sense of them. Ten lines, however, take some time to deliver on stage and this suggests that Plautus may have been playing with the Punic language for comic effect in ways no longer evident to us now. Certainly this is what he goes on to do. Hanno, the Carthaginian speaker of these lines, pretends that he knows no Latin so when interrogated by the leading man's cunning

---

[25] Suet., *Vit. Ter.* 1, citing Fenestella; for discussion of the use of Afer here, see in particular Frank 1933; *cf.* Noy 2000: 251, 253; Segal 2001: 222. It has been suggested that his Carthaginian background is a deduction from his cognomen, Afer, citing the example of the orator Cn. Domitius Afer (*RE* 14), from Nemausus in Gaul, *cf.* Barsby 1999: 1 with n.1, but the naming practices of the early imperial period will have little value for understanding those of the second century BC.

[26] Franko 1996: 428.

[27] Franko 1996: 427-29, *cf.* 1994: 155; on the title see also Lopez Gregoris 2001.

[28] Plaut., *Poen.* 930-49, on which for instance Sznycer 1967; Gratwick 1971 (who summarises some of the more bizarre interpretations in the notes to pp. 26-27); Maurach 1975; and most recently Babic 2003 and Faller 2004. Baier 2004 offers a range of recent scholarship on the *Poenulus* as a whole.

slave Milphio he speaks in Punic which is repeatedly mistranslated by Milphio in absurd ways. The translation and therefore also the humour relies in part on the similarity between Punic sounds and Latin words. Thus Milphio tells his master that Hanno says he is importing African mice for the games to be held by the aediles, the latter a noticeable Roman intrusion into the Greek setting.[29] The humour requires no knowledge of Punic on the part of the Roman audience but it would have been all the more effective if that audience were at least familiar with the sound of the language.

Our perception of Romano-Carthaginian relations is heavily shaped by the Carthaginian wars; this is inevitable given the extensive treatments that survive in Polybius and Livy. The Romans and Carthaginians come to be seen as hardened enemies, constantly at war with each other. This perception is reinforced by the very negative image of the Carthaginians that became part of Roman tradition following the sacking of the city in 146 and which served, in part at least, as a justification for the elimination of their rival.[30] Against this background it is easy to overlook the less well-documented and sometimes more peaceful ways in which these two western Mediterranean cities interacted. Indeed too much stress on late Republican material can obscure the complexity of Rome's relationship with Carthage in earlier times when the latter still existed as an independent Punic city, a reality not a mythical bogeyman.

Rome's relationship with Carthage began long before the Punic Wars. Polybius in the third book of his history quotes a series of treaties that regulated relations between the two cities, the earliest supposedly dating to the first year of the Republic in the late sixth century, the second perhaps to the mid fourth century. These are expressions of friendship rather than hostility in which trade plays an important part.[31] As with all such documents there are stipulations and restrictions, but there are also opportunities. The second treaty, for instance, may debar Romans from trading in Sardinia but it also reads: 'In the region of Sicily subject to the Carthaginians and at Carthage [a Roman] may do and sell whatever is permitted to a citizen. A Carthaginian may do likewise in Rome'.[32]

Evidence for Carthaginians doing likewise is sketchy although R. E. A. Palmer in a short but valuable book, *Rome and Carthage at peace*, has collected much of this rather scattered material to produce a plausible picture of a Carthaginian presence at Rome before the First Punic War, largely commercial and underpinned by the various Romano-Carthaginian treaties. Merchants from Carthage and elsewhere in the Punic world came to Rome as to other Mediterranean cities to trade; there is evidence, sometimes slight, for trade in slaves, animals, and foodstuffs, such as grain, fish products, and figs.[33] Livy reports

---

[29] Plaut., *Poen*. 1010-13, *cf.* Maurach 1975, *ad loc.,* Faller 2004: 191-96 and for a more historical perspective, Lancel 1995: 405-06.

[30] Franko 1994: 154; Isaac 2004: 328 associates an especially negative tone with Livy and the Augustan age; *cf.* also Starks 1999 for late Republican literature.

[31] Pol. 3.21-26; for the dates, Walbank 1957: 339-40, 345-46; Cornell 1995: 210-14; 'arising out of friendship', Whittaker 1978: 87-88; for their importance as trading agreements, see also Palmer 1997: 15-30; Serrati 2006; their role in Roman as well as Carthaginian trade should not be underestimated.

[32] Pol. 3.24.12.

[33] Palmer 1997: 25-29 for slaves, 31-52 for foodstuffs and animals; for the importance of agricultural production for the Carthaginians see the brief review of Bondi 1995, 278-81 and Lancel

a substantial quantity of grain coming to Rome from Carthage at the time of Rome's war with Antiochos around 191 and there are indications that the Romans may have solicited grain from the Carthaginians as early as the fifth century.[34] Not long before the Third Punic War Cato famously produced Carthaginian figs in the Senate to demonstrate both the proximity and prosperity of Carthage; whether from Carthage or from Cato's own garden as some suggest, they symbolized Carthage to Cato's audience, a consequence surely of their presence on the Roman market, perhaps more often dried than fresh.[35] There may also have been neighbourhoods (*vici*) associated with or inhabited by those from Carthage and North Africa; Palmer makes a strong case for the *Vicus Africus* and *Vicus Sobrius* falling into this category.[36] War naturally put a temporary halt to such activity but the post-war settlement required a regular Carthaginian attendance in Rome. After both the first and second wars Carthaginian embassies had to come to Rome annually to bring the latest instalment of the war indemnity; after the second war the Carthaginians owed the Romans 10,000 talents to be paid off in annual instalments over fifty years and the Romans explicitly refused to allow the Carthaginians to pay off the debt in a lump sum.[37]

Romans, then, may well have had personal experience of Carthaginians which they could draw on when watching Plautus' *Poenulus*. When Hanno is mis-represented by his mis-interpreter as a merchant, that is a characterization that makes sense to the audience even if the commodities he is supposedly trading, mice, nuts, and lard, do not and are not meant to. One product which Carthaginians do appear to have traded is fish sauce, salty, strong-smelling, and a cooking staple. Among the centres of production was Gades and that part of the Spanish coast which was held by the Carthaginians until the Second Punic War; there is also evidence for production in North Africa itself.[38] This may lie behind the insult directed at Hanno later in the play that he is *hallex viri*, *hallex* being the residue left after the making of fish sauce. Such was its allure that Cato thought it was a suitable substance for the feeding of slave workers on the farm.[39] At this point, therefore, the Carthaginian and his

---

1995: 269-88. On the role of merchants and trade in connecting the various parts of the central Mediterranean and beyond, Quinn 2009: 264-65, Fentress 2013.

[34] Livy 36.4, *cf.* Livy 30.16.11 when Scipio demands half a million measures of wheat and 300,000 of barley as part of the peace. On North Africa's capacity to produce grain on a large-scale for export in this period, Shaw 2003: 105-06. Rome may have been supplied with grain from Carthaginian territory in Sicily as early as 492 BC, *cf.* Meiggs 1973: 18; Steinby 2007: 40-41.

[35] Plut., *Cato Mai* 27; Pliny, *NH* 15.74; Meijer 1984.

[36] Palmer 1997: esp. 73-103; *cf.* Lott 2004: 11-12, 22.

[37] First war: Pol. 1.62.9-63.3; second: 15.18; the indemnity delivered by Carthaginians to Rome, Livy 32.2.

[38] Trakadas 2005 (with qualifications by Wilson 2006: 528) reviews the archaeological evidence for the western Mediterranean, noting that in the region of Gades production appears to cease at the end of the Second Punic War for reasons that are unclear, though are presumably connected in some way with the beginnings of Roman rule, *cf.* also Curtis 1991 and 2005, Étienne and Mayet 2002; for the export of Spanish fish products to the Greek world in the fifth century BC, Zimmerman Munn 2003, on the Punic Amphora Building at Corinth in particular. Wilson 2006, 534 suggests that production became increasingly industrialized in the Roman period.

[39] Plaut., *Poen*. 1310; Cato, *Agr*. 58; Corcoran 1963: 205; Palmer 1997: 37-39.

product become one. Perhaps it is too fanciful to think that an audience would make this connection but it is also important not to underestimate Roman familiarity with things Carthaginian, even if it is only those aspects that make their way to Rome. In the roughly contemporary *De agricultura* of Cato there are repeated reference to *mala punica* (pomegranates), then advice to use *punicana coagmenta* (punic joints) to make a wooden disk for pressing olives, and also a recipe for *puls punica*, a kind of porridge-like broth.[40] If this were Varro or Columella in their agricultural handbooks, such terminology might be taken as evidence for the use and influence of Mago's own manual, but Cato's work was said to have preceded the translation of the latter. Cato's terminology here surely reflects general usage at Rome.

Reactions and interpretations

In all this we see a Rome which is very much of the western Mediterranean, participating in the cultural exchange that took place between the communities that lay around its edge. This exchange occurred in part through trade but there were also others who moved readily between places and peoples, notably mercenaries. Sicily in particular was a meeting place of cultures, armies and mercenaries. In the late fourth century, Etruscans are fighting in Sicily for both the Carthaginians and for the Greek tyrant Agathokles.[41] In the 280s Campanians who had formerly been in the service of Agathokles gained notoriety as the Mamertines when they took over Messana and then made overtures to both the Carthaginians and the Romans.[42] Gauls are found in everybody's service; in the First Punic War they fight for the Carthaginians in Sicily before changing their allegiance to the Romans.[43] Mercenaries such as these would not only have brought knowledge of

---

[40] *Mala punica*: Cato, *Agr*. 7, 51, 126, 127, 133; *punicana coagmenta*: *Agr*. 18; *puls punica*: *Agr*. 85; *cf.* also *lanterna punica*, Plaut., *Aulul*. 566. Also note other 'punic' items in Roman use: the *plostellum poenicum* of Varro, *Rust*. 1.52, some kind of small cart for threshing said to be used in Spain; *cera punica* (punic wax), Pliny, *NH* 21.83-84, 30.70; *alia punica* (punic garlic), Columella, *Rust*. 11.3, also known as *ulpicum* (on which Mezzabotta 2000) – Hanno in the *Poenulus* (1314) is said to stink of *alia* and *ulpicum*. The woodwork theme in *punicana coagmenta* would appear to continue in *fenestrae punicanae* (Varro, *Rust*. 3.7.3, where they are a feature of *columbaria*) and *lectuli punicani* (Cic., *Mur*. 75-76, Val. Max. 7.5.1, wooden couches rather too thriftily used by Q. Aelius Tubero; for woodenness, Sen., *Ep*. 95.72).

[41] Etruscans: Diod. 19.106.2 (for Carthage); Diod. 20.11.1, 20.64.2 (for Agathokles, fighting alongside Greeks, Samnites, and Celts); the picture of early Etruscan-Carthage relations presented in scattered literary sources such as Hdt. 1.166-67 and Arist., *Pol*. 3.9, 1280a is increasingly being filled out from archaeological material, *cf.* Macintosh Turfa 1977, Pallottino 1991: 81-85 and on the Etruscan-Phoenician bilingual texts from Pyrgi, Cornell 1995: 212-13 and Bonfante and Bonfante 2002: 65-68. The complexity of Mediterranean cultural interchange is well-illustrated by a fourth century BC sarcophagus, made of Parian marble, of Carthaginian design, found in Tarquinia and decorated with Etruscan painting, briefly noted with illustration, Crouzet 2004 with further discussion in Fentress 2013.

[42] Pol. 1.7-12; Walbank 1957: 52-53; Lomas 2006: 112-14. The Mamertines themselves may have been more ethnically mixed than Polybius' simple designation of them as 'Campanians' suggests, see Zambon 2008: esp. 45-54.

[43] Pol. 1.77.4-5, on whom see Walbank 1957: 143; on Gauls as mercenaries, Williams 2001: 90-93.

customs, skills, language, and weaponry with them, they would also have learnt the practices of those they mixed with, thus acting as a means of cultural transmission. Mercenaries who served with the Carthaginians, for example, would have returned home or moved on to their next assignment with some basic Punic, the one language that the polyglot Carthaginian army had a share in, albeit imperfect.[44] In this context of exchange it is interesting to note that the Romans wielded a sword known as the Spanish sword, the *gladius hispaniensis*. When and how they acquired it is not known; Polybius' explanation that they adopted it during the Second Punic War appears to be contradicted by his own narrative. Modern explanations involve Romans seeing Spanish mercenaries on the Carthaginian side using it during the First Punic War and being duly impressed.[45] Perhaps they did but it is all part of the movement of goods and ideas around the western Mediterranean. Punic culture, whether that meant ways of speaking, eating, farming, or fighting, together with Greek culture, was part of that world, and it was one to which the Romans belonged.

If we were looking at this material in the same manner in which we look at Rome's relation with Greek world, a very similar range of interpretations would be possible. The second century BC is where we at least do have some Roman literary sources so I will focus on that. To parallel the Philhellenes we might, for example, see here Philo-Carthaginians or Punicophiles, prominent among whom could have been P. Scipio Nasica, opponent of war with Carthage, and the noble Punic-speaking Decimus Silanus, translator of Mago.[46] On the other hand, there would also be those hostile to Carthage, led by Cato, repeatedly threatening destruction and holding Carthaginian figs up for inspection in the Senate.[47] Alternatively, we might see the use of Carthage in political posturing and Roman factionalism; the translation of Mago, for instance, has been interpreted as a deliberate snub to the recently published farming manual of the recently deceased Cato.[48] Or we might prefer to stress ambivalence. On the one hand, there is the consumption of Carthaginian products and familiarity with Carthaginian ways, on the other hand, there are memories of the war with Hannibal and negative Carthaginian stereotypes replete with the ubiquitous *fides punica*.[49] So deep did this unease go that it has been suggested that behind

[44] Pol. 1.80.5-6, though compare 1.67.3-9.

[45] Pol. Frag. 179, Pol. 6.23, on which Walbank 1957: 704 who notes that the Spanish sword was already used by the Romans prior to the Second Punic War. For the Romans' propensity to borrow the military practices of others, Pol. 6.25, though as a Greek he tends to stress their borrowings from the Greeks.

[46] For Scipio's arguments against war, Astin 1967: 276-80; for Silanus see above.

[47] Astin 1978: 126-29. It is possible to that Cato's famous remarks about fish sauce (*tarichos*) costing more than a ploughman are to be understood as anti-Carthaginian, Pol. 31.25.5 and 5a, Palmer 1997: 44-45.

[48] Heurgon 1976: 447; Devillers and Krings 1996 with Krings 1991: 653, rejected by Shaw 2003: 105 with n.42 who argues that after the acquisition of Carthaginian territory in North Africa, Rome needed to know how to farm it.

[49] For the ways in which negative images of Carthaginians may have had roots in earlier depictions of Phoenicians, Isaac 2004: 324-35; Dench 1995: 72-73 also points to the influence of Greek ideas of the Persians.

the wily slave of Plautine comedy lay the spectre of the devious Hannibal.[50] Ambivalence is there too in the *Poenulus;* the Carthaginians are presented sympathetically, yet at the same time it is also taken for granted that Carthaginians in general are cunning and deceitful, a stereotype to which Hanno conforms.[51] Even Cato himself who was all for the destruction of Carthage could advise the adoption of Carthaginian practices and cook up a good Punic porridge. Just as in his relation to the Greek world, Cato seems to display a split personality; there it was disdain for many things Greek but a familiarity with Greek literature.[52]

While Rome's response to Carthage may have been shaped in part by a succession of wars, there were other communities that could be classed as Punic whose relationship with Rome was more positive. Notable among these was the Spanish coastal city of Gades, which went over to the Romans during the Second Punic War and was in consequence rewarded. In the first century BC it would achieve municipal status and go on to provide Rome with its first foreign-born consul, L. Cornelius Balbus, in 40 BC.[53] Cities such as Gades, or in Africa Utica, may have complicated the Roman image of Punic peoples and their culture still further, reinforcing the ambivalence noted above, allowing it to continue into the Late Republic beyond the fall of Carthage. Melkart may have become syncretized with Hercules in Gades but the Punic character of his worship persisted.[54] Gades also introduces another element into the Punic contribution to Roman life, the *Gaditanae*, dancing girls well-known in imperial Rome whose history can be traced back at least as far as the second century BC and whose style of dancing may have been Phoenician in origin.[55]

Punic culture, of course, does not cease with Carthage as the example of Gades testifies, but it has lost the political force that enabled it to travel so readily. Thus, probably early in the first century BC, Mago's farming manual is translated into Greek by Cassius Dionysius of Utica, a man who combines all three elements, Latin *nomen*, Greek *cognomen*, and a Punic city in North Africa, but it is primarily through the Latin and Greek elements that he projects his identity, further asserted by his decision to dedicate his Greek work to a Roman praetor.[56] In this post-Carthage era it is Roman and Greek culture that are now dominant.

This paper is not attempting to argue that Carthaginian and Punic cultural influence was ever equal to Greek in Rome. It was clearly less significant than Greek, even when

---

[50] Leigh 2004: 24-56.

[51] Syed 2005; Franko 1996 probably goes further in emphasizing the negative aspects but he too sees elements that would win the sympathy of the audience.

[52] Crouzet 2006.

[53] Gades and Second Punic War: Livy 28.37, 32.2; status and perception of in late Republic: Cic. *Balb. passim* (on which see Prag 2006: 12-13 with n.51); Dio 41.24.1. Balbus' consulship: Pliny, *NH* 7.136; Dio 48.32.2.

[54] Fear 2005 who also notes other Punic survivals in the region.

[55] Fear 1991.

[56] Rawson 1985: 135 with n.22; the praetor is P. Sextilius, perhaps *praetor* in Africa in 88, *MRR* II.41. White 1970: 18 suggests that Dionysius made the Greek translation before the Senate's Latin one (and would therefore be first half of the second century BC or earlier) but offers no evidence.

the destruction of Carthage is taken into account. Not only were there many Greek cities in Italy, which thus gave Greek culture a presence that Punic did not have, but Greek was also the *lingua franca* of the eastern Mediterranean. Even the Carthaginians had to acknowledge the force of it, both commercially and culturally.[57] A small number of Carthaginian amphorae, for example, have been found with the names of Punic merchants in Greek characters.[58] Furthermore, Carthaginians, such as Herillos and Kleitomachos (otherwise known by the more Carthaginian name of Hasdrubal) in the third and second century BC respectively, went to Athens to study philosophy. Kleitomachos, at least, stayed there, although in part this was forced upon him by the destruction of his home city, for which he composed a *consolatio*.[59] Doctors too, whether working in a Punic or Roman environment, often chose to express themselves in Greek, the language of medicine, hence the number of bilingual and even trilingual inscriptions that combine Greek with text in Punic or Latin or both languages.[60]

If cultural influence is measured in terms of literature and the arts, then Punic culture at Rome will fare very badly; Spanish dancing girls may have found a receptive audience there but they are not going to compete with Homer in a literary record that is itself very much a part of the Greek contribution. Punic influence, however, may have been more mundane and less intellectually exciting than Greek, but it should not be underestimated for that reason. The Greeks brought the arts to rustic Latium, but what Carthage had to offer was more food and more farming.

Bibliography

Adams, J. N. 2003. *Bilingualism and the Latin language*. Cambridge.

Astin, A. 1967. *Scipio Aemilianus*. Oxford.

Astin, A. 1978. *Cato the censor*. Oxford.

Aubet, M. E. 2001. *The Phoenicians and the West: politics, colonies, and trade*. 2nd ed. Cambridge. (originally published as *Tiro y las colonias fenicias de occidente*, 1st ed. Barcelona, 1987).

Babic, M. 2003. 'Fremdsprachliches in Plautus' *Poenulus*', in R. Oniga (ed.), *Il plurilinguismo nella traduzione letteraria latina*: 17-30. Rome.

Baier, T. (ed.) 2004. *Studien zu Plautus'* Poenulus. Tübingen.

Barsby, J. 1999. *Terence:* Eunuchus. Cambridge.

Bartoloni, P. 2009. *I Fenici e i Cartaginesi in Sardegna*. Sassari.

Baurain, C. 1992. 'La place des littératures grecque et punique dans les bibliothèques de Carthage', *AntCl* 61: 158-77.

---

[57] Nonetheless more work needs to be done on Greek engagement with Punic culture. Just as with Persia in the east, conflict may have distracted from the degree of engagement there was, *cf.* Miller 1997 on Athenians and Persians.

[58] Thuillier 1982; Lancel 1995: 275-76.

[59] Herillos: D.L. 7.165-66 (sometimes said to be from Kalchedon rather than Carthage, but see Lipinksi 2004: 175 n.177 and p. 256); Kleitomachos: D.L. 4.67 with Ferrary 1988: 425-33.

[60] Examples in Adams 2003: 216-17, including several from North Africa.

Bénichou-Safar, H. 2004. *Le tophet de Salammbô à Carthage: essai de reconstitution.* Rome.

Bickermann, E. 1932. 'Rom und Lampsakos', *Philologos* 87: 277-99.

Bondi, S. F. 1995. 'Le commerce, les échanges, l'économie', in V. Krings (ed.), *La civilization phénicienne et punique. Manuel de recherché*: 268-81. Leiden.

Bonfante, G. and Bonfante, L. 2002. *The Etruscan language: an introduction.* Manchester.

Bonnet, C. and Xella, P. 1995. 'La religion', in V. Krings (ed.), *La civilization phénicienne et punique. Manuel de recherché*: 316-33. Leiden.

Corcoran, T. H. 1963. 'Roman fish sauces', *CJ* 58: 204-10.

Cordovana, O. D. 2007. *Segni e immagini del potere tra antico e tardoantico: I Severi e la provincia Africa Proconsularis*. Catania.

Cornell, T. J. 1995. *The beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c. 1000 to 264 BC).* London.

Crouzet, S. 2004. 'Les sarcophages du prêtre de Tarquinia et Carthage, témoignage des relations entre Carthage et l'Étrurie au IVe siècle', *AIAC News* 39-40: 15.

Crouzet, S. 2006. 'De la bouillie punique à la destruction de Carthage: Caton, Carthage et l'hellénisme', in *L'Hellénisation en Méditerranée occidentale au temps des guerres puniques (260-180 av. J.-C.)* (=*Pallas* 70): 147-62. Toulouse.

Curtis, R. I. 1991. 'Salt-fish products around the Strait of Gibraltar', *JRA* 4: 299-305.

Curtis, R. I. 2005. 'Sources for the production and trade of Greek and Roman processed fish', in T. Bekker-Nielsen (ed.), *Ancient fishing and fish-processing in the Black Sea region* (Black Sea Studies 2): 31-46. Aarhus.
(http://www.pontos.dk/publications/books/bss-2-files/BSS2_03_curtis.pdf)

Dench, E. 1995. *From barbarians to new men: Greek, Roman, and modern perceptions of peoples from the central Apennines.* Oxford.

Dench, E. 2005. *Romulus' Asylum: Roman identities from the age of Alexander to the age of Hadrian*. Oxford.

Devillers, O. and Krings, V. 1996. 'Autour de l'agronome Magon', *L'Africa Romana* 11.1 (Atti dell' XI convegno di studio, Cartagine, 15-18 dicembre): 489-516. Cartagine.

Dyson, S. L. and Rowland, R. J. 2007. *Archaeology and history in Sardinia from the Stone Age to the Middle Ages: shepherds, sailors, and conquerors*. Philadelphia.

Erskine, A. 2001. *Troy between Greece and Rome: Local tradition and imperial power.* Oxford.

Erskine, A. 2013. 'The view from the East', in J. Prag and J. Crawley Quinn (eds), *The Hellenistic West: rethinking the ancient Mediterranean*: Chapter 1, pp. 14-34. Cambridge.

Étienne, R and Mayet, F. 2002. *Salaisons et sauces de poisson hispaniques.* Paris.

Faller, S. 2004. 'Punisches in *Poenulus*', in T. Baier (ed.), *Studien zu Plautus' Poenulus*: 163-202. Tübingen.

Fear, A. T. 1991. 'The dancing girls of Cadiz', *GaR* 38: 75-79.

Fear, A. T. 2005 'A journey to the end of the world', in J. Elsner and I. Rutherford (eds), *Pilgramage in Graeco-Roman and early Christian antiquity*: 319-32. Oxford.

Feeney, D. 2007. *Caesar's calendar: ancient time and the beginnings of history* (Sather Classical Lectures 65). Berkeley.

Fentress, E. 2006. 'Romanizing the Berbers', *PastPres* 190: 3-33.

Fentress, E. 2013. 'Strangers in the city: elite communication in the Hellenistic central Mediterranean', in J. Prag and J. Crawley Quinn (eds), *The Hellenistic West: rethinking the ancient Mediterranean*: Chapter 6, pp. 157-78. Cambridge

Ferrary, J.-L. 1988. *Philhellénisme et impérialisme. Aspects idéologiques de la conquête romaine du monde hellénistique, de la seconde guerre de Macédoine à la guerre contre Mithridate* (*BEFAR* 271). Rome.

Frank, T. 1933. 'On Suetonius' life of Terence', *AJP* 54: 269-73.

Franko, G. F. 1994. 'The use of Poenus and Carthaginiensis in early Latin literature', *CP* 89: 153-58.

Franko, G. F. 1996. 'The characterization of Hanno in Plautus' *Poenulus*', *AJP* 117: 425-52.

Goldberg, S. 1993. 'Saturnian epic: Livius and Naevius', in A. J. Boyle (ed.), *Roman Epic*: 19-36. London.

Gratwick, A. S. 1971. 'Hanno's Punic speech in the *Poenulus* of Plautus', *Hermes* 99: 25-45.

Greene, J. A. and Kehoe, D. P. 1995. 'Mago the Carthaginian', in M. H. Fantar and M. Ghaki (eds), *Actes du IIIe Congrès international des études phéniciennes et puniques* II: 110-17. Tunis.

Gruen, E. 1990a. Review of Ferrary, *Philhellénisme* in *CP* 85: 324-9.

Gruen, E. 1990b. *Studies in Greek culture and Roman policy*. Berkeley.

Gruen, E. 1992. *Culture and national identity in Republican Rome*. Ithaca.

Gruen, E. 2006. 'Greeks and non-Greeks', in G. R. Bugh (ed.), *The Cambridge companion to the Hellenistic world*: 295-314. Cambridge.

Gruen, E. 2011. *Rethinking the other in antiquity*. Princeton.

Heurgon, J. 1976. 'L'agronome carthaginois et ses traducteurs en grec et en latin', *CRAI*: 441-56.

Hunter, R. L. 1985. *The new comedy of Greece and Rome*. Cambridge.

Huss, W. 1985. *Geschichte der Karthager*. Munich.

Isaac, B. 2004. *The invention of racism in classical antiquity*. Princeton.

Jongeling, K. and Kerr, R. M. 2005. *Late Punic epigraphy: an introduction to the study of Neo-Punic and Latino-Punic inscriptions*. Tübingen.

Konstan, D. 1983. *Roman comedy*. Ithaca.

Krings, V. 1991. 'Les lettres grecques à Carthage', in C. Baurain, C. Bonnet, and V. Krings (eds), *Phoinikeia Grammata. Lire et écrire en Méditerranée*: 649-68. Namur.

Krings, V. 1995. 'La littérature phénicienne et punique', in V. Krings (ed.), *La civilization phénicienne et punique. Manuel de recherché*: 31-38. Leiden.

Lancel, S. 1995. *Carthage: a history* (first published in French as *Carthage*, Paris 1992). Oxford.

Leigh, M. 2004. *Comedy and the rise of Rome*. Oxford.

Lemche, N. P. 1991. *The Canaanites and their land*. Sheffield.

Lipinski, E. 2004. *Itineraria Phoenicia* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 127). Leuven.

Lomas, K. 2006. 'Tyrants and the *polis*: migration, identity, and urban development in Sicily', in S. Lewis (ed.), *Ancient tyranny*: 95-118. Edinburgh.

Lopez Gregoris, R. 2001. '*Poenulus* de Plauto: significado de un título', in C. Moussy (ed.), *De lingua Latina nouae quaestiones: actes du Xe colloque international de linguistique latine, Paris-Sèvres, 19-23 avril 1999*: 829-46. Louvain.

Lott, J. B. 2004. *The neighbourhoods of Augustan Rome*. Cambridge.

Macintosh Turfa, J. 1977. 'Evidence for Etruscan-Punic relations', *AJA* 81: 368-74.

Martin, R. 1971. *Recherches sur les agronomes latins et leurs conceptions économiques et sociales*. Paris.

Maurach, G. 1975. *Plauti Poenulus*. Heidelberg.

Meiggs, R. 1973. *Roman Ostia* (2nd ed.). Oxford.

Meijer, F. J. 1984, 'Cato's African Figs', *Mnemosyne* 3: 117-24.

Mezzabotta, M. R. 2000. 'What was Ulpicum?', *CQ* 50: 230-37.

Miller, M. C. 1997. *Athens and Persia in the fifth century BC: a study in cultural reciprocity*. Cambridge.

Morstein-Marx, R. 2001. 'The myth of Numidian origins in Sallust's African excursus (Iugurtha 17.7-18.12)', *AJP* 122: 179-200.

Noy, D. 2000. *Foreigners at Rome: citizens and strangers*. London.

Pallottino, M. 1991. *A history of earliest Italy*. London.

Palmer, R. E. A. 1997. *Rome and Carthage at peace*. Stuttgart.

Prag, J. 2006. 'Poenus plane est – but who were the 'Punickes'?' *PBSR* 74: 1-37.

Quinn, J. C. 2009. 'North Africa', in A. Erskine (ed.), *A companion to Ancient History:* 260-72. Chichester.

Rawson, E. 1985. *Intellectual life in the late Roman Republic*. London.

Rawson, E. 1989. 'Roman tradition and the Greek world', *CAH*[2] 8: *Rome and the Mediterranean*: 422-76. Cambridge.

Rives, J. B. 1995. *Religion and authority in Roman Carthage*. Oxford.

Rowell, H. T. 1957. Review of S. Mariotti, *Il Bellum Poenicum e l'arte di Nevio* in *AJP* 78: 420-27.

Rowland, R. J. 2001. *The periphery in the center. Sardinia in the ancient and medieval worlds* (BAR International Series 970). Oxford.

Schmitt, H. H. 1964. *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte Antiochos des Grossen und seiner Zeit*. Wiesbaden.

Schmitz, P. C. 1995. 'The Phoenician text from the Etruscan sanctuary at Pyrgi', *JAOS* 115: 559- 75.

Schubart, H. 1995. 'Péninsule ibérique', in V. Krings (ed.), *La civilization phénicienne et punique. Manuel de recherché*: 743-61. Leiden.

Scullard, H. H. 1980. *A history of the Roman world 753 to 146 BC* (4th ed.). London.

Scullard, H. H. 1989a. 'Carthage and Rome', *CAH*[2] 7.2: *The rise of Rome to 220 BC:* 486-569. Cambridge.

Scullard, H. H. 1989b. 'The Carthaginians in Spain', *CAH*[2] 8: *Rome and the Mediterranean:* 17-43. Cambridge.

Segal, E. 2001. *The death of comedy*. Boston, MA.

Serrati, J. 2006. 'Neptune's altars: The treaties between Rome and Carthage (509-226 BC)', *CQ* 56: 113-34.

Shaw, B. D. 2003. 'A peculiar island: Maghrib and Mediterranean', *MHR* 18: 93-125.

Speranza, F. 1974. *Scriptorum Romanorum de re rustica reliquiae* I. Messina.

Starks, J. H. 1999. '*Fides Aeneia*: The Transference of Punic Stereotypes in the *Aeneid*', *CP* 94: 255-83.

Steinby, C. 2007. *The Roman Republican navy from the sixth century to 167 BC* (Commentationes Humanorum Litterarum 123). Helsinki.

Syed, Y. 2005. 'Romans and others', in S. Harrison (ed.), *A companion to Latin literature*: 360-71. Oxford.

Sznycer, M. 1967. *Les passages puniques en transcription latine dans le* Poenulus *de Plaute*. Paris.

Thuillier, J.-P. 1982. 'Timbres amphoriques puniques écrits en lettres grecques', in *Actes du colloque sur la céramique antique, Carthage, 23-24 June, 1980:* 15-22. Carthage.

Trakadas, A. 2005. 'The archaeological evidence for fish processing in the Western Mediterranean', in T. Bekker-Nielsen (ed.), *Ancient fishing and fish-processing in the Black Sea region* (Black Sea Studies 2): 47-82. Aarhus. (http://www.pontos.dk/publications/books/bss-2-files/BSS2_04_trakadas.pdf).

Tronchetti, C. 1995. 'Sardaigne', in V. Krings (ed.), *La civilization phénicienne et punique. Manuel de recherché*: 712-42. Leiden.

Van Dommelen, P. 1998. 'Punic persistence: colonialism and cultural identities in Roman Sardinia', in R. Laurence and J. Berry (eds), *Cultural identity in the Roman Empire*: 25-48. London.

Walbank, F. W. 1957. *A historical commentary on Polybius*. I. *Books 1-6*. Oxford.

Wallace-Hadrill, A. 1998. 'To be Roman, go Greek', in M. Austin *et al.* (eds), *Modus operandi: essays in honour of Geoffrey Rickman* (*BICS* Supplement 71): 79-91. London.

Wallace-Hadrill, A. 2008. *Rome's cultural revolution*. Cambridge.

White, K. D. 1970. *Roman farming*. London.

Whittaker, C. R. 1978. 'Carthaginian imperialism in the fifth and fourth centuries', in P. Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker (eds), *Imperialism in the ancient world*: 59-90. Cambridge.

Williams, J. H. C. 2001. *Beyond the Rubicon: Romans and Gauls in Republican Italy*. Oxford.

Wilson, A. I. 2006. 'Fishy business: Roman exploitation of marine resources', *JRA* 19: 528-37.

Zambon, E. 2008. *Tradition and innovation: Sicily between Hellenism and Rome*. Stuttgart.

Zimmerman Munn, M. L. 2003. 'Corinthian trade with the Punic west in the Classical period', C. K. Williams and N. Bookidis (eds), *Corinth* XX: *The centenary, 1896-1996*: 195-217. Princeton.

ROMAN BATHHOUSES ON CRETE
AS INDICATORS OF CULTURAL TRANSITION:
THE DYNAMICS OF ROMAN INFLUENCE

AMANDA KELLY

Processing Romanization

The grafting of Roman mores onto local identities is a complex issue and gaps in the archaeological record ultimately result in misleading and biased deductions. The wide variety of models for Roman integration underscores gradations of responsiveness and exposes subtle undulations of Romanization throughout the Empire whereby Roman presence can resonate with almost unconscious societal change, establishing patterns of minimal influence.[1] The term 'Romanization' is favoured in the present discussion, despite its fall from grace, on the basis that, despite the fluidity of merging cultures, there are certain common indicators which transcend regional variables. The complete disregard of such a classification system would be detrimental to scholarship, while causing a futile upheaval, as the defunct term would inevitably be replaced by newer, equally-biased and misleading, classifications. This has already happened, as the term Romanization has become so controversial and intricate in its definition that it is often avoided in favour of more generic processes such as acculturation, reconfiguration, negotiation, globalization, and even Creolization.[2] These substitute labels do not fully express the dynamics involved, as they do not recognize that the impetus which induces these societal and cultural changes is common throughout, and that this common influence is undeniably contact (regardless of how variable the degree of reactivity) with the Roman Empire. In an attempt to interrupt such repetitive cycles, classifications will be regarded as dynamic qualifications, sensitive and receptive to the evolving concepts which they embrace. The term Romanization can be applied to such fluid and evolving processes once it allows for variations, contingent on location, topography, geology, pre-Roman cultural history, and vacillating levels of Roman receptivity (among a whole range of interconnected specifics). These processes are manifest at different times in diverse ways, but are all commonly rooted in the growth of the Roman Empire.

Classifications must recognize common themes within varying local conditions and it is only with great regard for these diverse factors that the term Romanization can be applied. Therefore, even when confronted with such sensitive variables, certain activities are clearly symptomatic of a cultural watershed. This is adequately expressed by Clarke when he states

---

[1] Grahame 1998.

[2] Alcock 2000: 225; Whittaker 2009; Hingley 2005 (globalization); Webster 2001: 209-225 (Creolization).

that '*to engage in the bathing ritual meant to be Roman*'.[3] Consequently, this study revolves around the premise that aqueducts and bathhouses are strong indicators of Romanization.

It is precisely the *public* and *heated* nature of Roman bathing that sets it apart. DeLaine states that the Roman baths were one of the essential elements of civilized life, one which could be used as a symbol of the Romanization of conquered barbarians.[4] Her implicit allusion to Tacitus' *Agricola*[5] indicates that the statement was aimed specifically at the Britons as barbaric, although the correlation between public bathing and Romanization is witnessed throughout the Empire. Tacitus' famous description of the process (that has since been coined as Romanization) significantly includes frequenting the baths as one of the lures which ensnared the Britons in their reportedly blind conversion to Roman culture. Zajac concludes that 'building baths and the adoption of Roman bathing habits by conquered peoples was an important part of the Empire's mechanism of Romanization'.[6]

The architecture of change; the earliest Romanizing architecture at Knossos

Evidence for pre-Roman public bathing on Crete is, at best, scanty. The potential for *gymnasia* at the large baths at Gortyna constitutes the only case, at least at present, for any continuum from Hellenistic to Roman within secular bathing contexts in Crete.[7] Farrington was faced with a similar conundrum concerning the origin of the Lycian baths, since none of the Hellenistic baths of the Greek world provided any major clues for their derivation.[8] Lycia yielded little evidence for pre-Roman bathing, that of Kolophon being the only example, while only one inscription in Lycia refers to a Hellenistic bath.[9] Farrington also observed that the imperial bath buildings of Lycia remained unadulterated by any influences from neighbouring areas in south-west Asia Minor and that their method of construction was set firmly within the Hellenistic traditions of the local area.[10]

---

[3] Clarke 1998: 129.

[4] DeLaine 1988: 11.

[5] Tac., *Agr.* 21.207.

[6] Zajac 1999: 101.

[7] La Rosa 1990: 431. The sites at Lebena and Lissos, on the south coast of Crete, are Asclepieia and, as such, ritual bathing would have constituted an important preliminary rite at these sites, as attested at other Asclepieia, notably at the sanctuary at Piraeus (Dillon 1997: 158; Melfi 2007a: 526; 2007b). While ritual bathing was strongly associated with the cult of Asclepius, it also featured at sanctuaries dedicated to Artemis (Morizot 1994: 201-16). The connection between Aphaia and Diktynna, as outlined by Kirsten, is significant in this context as they represent local assimilations of Artemis (1980: 261). Worship has been attested since the ninth century BC at the Diktynnaion Sanctuary in western Crete but clear evidence addressing the deity Artemis Diktynna only emerges in the Classical period. The continuity of cult from earlier periods at these three centres and their association with bathing in the Roman period promotes them as potentially good candidates for yielding evidence for pre-Roman bathing.

[8] Farrington 1995: 43.

[9] Holland 1944: 169; Farrington 1987: 54-55.

[10] Farrington 1995: 137.

Farrington viewed the sudden architectural horizon in Lycia as the adoption of a developed sub-colonial architectural type. The type appeared as, and remained, a simplified version of a prototype which emerged in the second and first centuries BC in Campania.[11] The argument for wholesale introduction is supported by the fact that the plan remains more or less static throughout the period of bath building in Lycia, which survived into the sixth century AD, allowing for only minor modifications catering for local bathing preferences. Waelkens observed, however, that in Lycia the circular room, which featured in Italian baths, was abandoned – perhaps as a response to simpler bathing procedures.[12] The model has a degree of relevance for the small baths of Crete in view of the negligible Hellenistic evidence for public baths on the island and some common attributes shared by the baths of Crete and Lycia.[13]

That certain mandatory architectural types would have been introduced by an initial small influx of elite Roman settlers early in the life of the colony at Knossos is quite plausible, as this demographic shift would have required the architectural institutions, and their associated portable accoutrements, pertaining to intrinsically-Roman daily rituals.[14] Lolos maintains that a suite of hydraulic features (including substantial aqueduct-supplied baths and elaborate fountains) constituted architectural prerequisites for any respectable city of the Empire, particularly a colony. Similarly, Nielsen observes that baths were among the first buildings erected in the colonies and conquered towns.[15]

The operation of a first-century AD bathhouse at Knossos is highly likely as the construction of a bathhouse would serve as a prerequisite for any level of demographic movement from Capua, especially given the *delectationes* associated with that particular Italian region.[16] Livy attributes the Carthaginian army's enjoyment of hot baths and other luxurious aspects of Campanian culture during the winter of 215 BC as one of the factors

---

[11] Farrington 1995: 137.

[12] Waelkens 1989: 87.

[13] Kelly 2006b: 244-45.

[14] A Roman colony, the *Colonia Iulia Nobilis Cnosos,* was established at Knossos *c.* 36 BC and 27 BC. It remained the sole colony of the joint province of Crete and Cyrenaica until the time of Hadrian (Paton 1994: 142). Dio informs us that the colony was the result of Octavian's promise of Capuan territory to his troops in Sicily in 36 BC, in an attempt to subdue their mutinous overtones at this climacteric time; consequently, Octavian granted an aqueduct and land at Knossos to Capua to compensate for the Capuan land he gave to his soldiers (Dio 49.14.5; Strabo, *Geog.* 10.4.9). Therefore, not only was Knossos colonized but it also lost land to Capua, and Dio reveals that the Capuans still retained these holdings during his lifetime in the late second and early third century AD. Whether or not Dio's account represents an accurate portrayal of events, the epigraphic record promotes close links between Knossos and Capua.

[15] Lolos 1997: 302; Nielsen 1990: 1.

[16] The Romanization of Crete was probably only marginally due to immigration from Italy, notably with the establishment of the *Colonia Iulia Nobilis Cnosos*. A small demographic influx would be expected for any colonial settlement, and the Capuan territory at Knossos may have been a relatively small holding, although it is difficult to estimate the number of Romans settled at Knossos. The colonies founded in the early second century BC at Liternum and Volturnum were settled with only 300 Roman colonists according to Livy (34.5).

behind Hannibal's defeat, and one which was said to have had a demoralizing effect on his army.[17] The Campanian connection, outlined in the onomastic record, is also attested architecturally elsewhere on the island, notably at Eleutherna in west central Crete where the first-century AD foundations of two town-houses in Sector I are closely comparable with the urban villas of Campania[18] and possibly in the plan of the extra-urban villa at Makryialos on the south-east coast.[19] Any Italianate influence evident in residential design on Crete demonstrates a deliberate Roman stamp on the landscape and potentially signals an early foundation.

It has been argued, however, that at Knossos the limited nature of first-century AD architectural evidence seems to reflect a contained presence rather than an overall change in the nature of civic society. Sweetman conjectures that the archaeological evidence from Knossos indicates that the layout and function of specific space remained unchanged from the first century BC until the first century AD.[20] Certainly, lavish town-houses, such as the Villa Dionysus and the Corinthian House, and even more modest residences, represented by the House of the Diamond Frescoes, do not appear before the end of the first century AD. This architectural delay seems to complement a noted conservatism in the artistic profile, as observed by Sanders who did not record any major changes in stone sculpture until the late first century AD.[21]

There remains a disparity between the architectural and ceramic evidence, as the first wave of Italian *sigillata* imports at Knossos dates to the late Augustan period.[22] The associated deposits are dated through diagnostic forms, notably of Conspectus forms 18 and 22 – forms also attested in deposits in Eleutherna Sector II.[23] The small yields of Augustan material at Knossos reported by Forster and Eiring must be offset against the fact that few Augustan contexts have been excavated and Eiring reports that only one Augustan (presumably mid-Augustan, *i.e.*, 15-1 BC, as opposed to Late Augustan, *i.e.*, AD 1-15) destruction deposit has been excavated.[24] Given the dearth of excavated Augustan material at Knossos, the question of whether we have gleaned a realistic impression of the earliest Romanizing, or Roman-related, activity at Knossos is highly questionable. The overall corpus of Italian Sigillata at Knossos in 1992 amounted to 3% of all finewares in the Late Augustan period, rising to 29% in the Tiberian period, peaking in the Claudian period, when it registers at 43%, and drops to 7% in the Hadrianic era.[25] Italian *sigillata* clearly became a standard import at Knossos during the first century

---

[17] Livy 23.18. The inspiration behind the hypocaustal heating system was traditionally attributed to the natural *fumaroles* and hot springs of the Campi Flegrei, and the invention was popularly attributed to one Sergius Orata *c.* 100 BC by Pliny the Elder (*NH* 9.168; Fagan 1996: 56-66).

[18] Themelis 2009: 64, 69; Baldwin Bowsky 2009: 210.

[19] Altamore 2004: 262.

[20] Sweetman 2007: 68.

[21] Sanders 1982: 47-51.

[22] Eiring 2004: 71.

[23] Personal observation. *Cf.* also Eiring 2004: 71.

[24] Eiring 2004: 71. For deposit A1 in the Southwest House,see Sackett *et al*. 1992: 178-83; Forster 2009.

[25] Sackett *et al.* 1992: 153.

AD.[26] The presence of the first century AD imported fine-wares is naturally not an indication of any demographic influx and may merely represent a generic demand for Italian table-wares by the local community, but their presence in association with certain architectural contexts would suggest that the Romanizing horizon at Knossos could be earlier than so far envisaged.

Nonetheless, the majority of Roman architectural structures at Knossos have been dated to the second century AD, but, as this is also an island-wide phenomenon, this does not reflect a direct colonial footprint but rather relates to its subsequent influence resonating throughout the island as a whole. The earliest public Romanizing architectural types at Knossos have been dated overwhelmingly to the second century AD, and include at least one bathhouse, an impressive aqueduct, and a civic basilica. A second- or third-century AD date has been attributed to the civic basilica while the Roman aqueduct tract associated with the North House excavations is dated by both Hadrianic and Severan deposits.[27] The theatre is impossible to date precisely due to its negligible surface remains, surviving as no more than a bend in the road. The only excavated private Roman bathsuite at Knossos has been dated to the late second and early third century AD but, as I argue here, there is much potential for earlier establishments.

Despite this much-touted second-century AD architectural horizon at Knossos, some evidence suggests that Roman architectural types were first introduced earlier than previously estimated, and, perhaps significantly, they are associated with water. Any evidence for Roman architecture at Knossos in the first century AD would present a solid indication of societal change at a relatively early stage in the life of the colony. The earliest mosaic at Knossos, the Apollinarius Mosaic, is generally dated to the late first century AD or early second century AD, although Ramsden assigns it squarely to the first century AD.[28] The discovery of the mosaic was made in the northern district of the city during operations to divert a stream. Unfortunately the context was not recorded beyond a vague reference to a Roman house context.[29] The Apollinaris Mosaic has been attributed a bathhouse context, purely on the basis of its aquatic motif, *in lieu* of any supplementary architectural evidence.[30] The association relies entirely on the aquatic symbolism of the mosaic which depicts Poseidon holding his trident, riding on two harnessed *hippocampi*, surrounded by panels containing a series of *hippocampi* and dolphins, which in turn is bordered by a tendril motif with waterbirds entwined in its foliage.[31]

[26] Forster 2009: 228.

[27] Basilica: Sanders 1982: 68; aqueduct: Sackett *et al*. 1992: 47, pls 3, 4, and 40a.

[28] Hood and Smyth 1981: 41, no. 91; Sanders 1982: 53; Sweetman 1999: 82-88; Ramsden 1971: 229-31.

[29] Cited in Forster 2009: 11.

[30] Sweetman 2003: 527.

[31] The bath identification is still questionable as, while the correlation between aquatic imagery and bathhouses is strong elsewhere, aquatic imagery does not necessarily verify the activity of bathing. For example, at Kastelli Kissamou, tritons and sea-griffins are set around the *impluvium* of a private house (Markoulaki 1999: 199, fig. 27) and, although it may be significant that the context is associated with a water feature, the context is not associated with bathing *per se*.

The mosaic bears an inscription attributing its execution to Apollinaris, ΑΠΟΛΛΙΝΑΡΙΣ ΕΠΟΙΕΙ, who is thought to represent an Italian immigrant due to the frequency of the onomasticon in Campanian inscriptions.[32] The popularity of the name in Campania led Donderer to suggest that the appellation was originally Latin and only subsequently Hellenized.[33] Moreover, the wider epigraphic corpus reveals close links between Knossos and Campania through its frequent use of the *agnomen* Campanus.[34] If, however, the Apollinaris Mosaic was executed by an itinerant craftsman from Campania, the work was clearly commissioned by a wealthy Romanized *dominus,* whereby the mosaic itself serves as an indicator of Roman tastes and a degree of wealth while the use of Greek denotes a private context (although the mosaic was clearly accessible for viewing through invitation).

A further discovery at Knossos also suggests the existence of a first-century AD bathhouse in the city. Architectural modifications to the Room of the Polychrome Paintings in the early second century AD incorporated displaced circular *pilae* (elements commonly found in Roman hypocausts) set on a new floor while other *pilae* and terracotta pipes were positioned on top of the walls.[35] The presence of these reused bathhouse elements in early second-century AD renovations would intimate that, prior to this, a bathhouse existed in the vicinity. Their reuse provides a *terminus ante quem* in the early second century AD for the foundation and functional life of an associated bath.

Similarly, spacer pins discovered in the excavations of the Unexplored Mansion may also represent a dismantled bathing installation.[36] The deposition of one of these spacer pins, manufactured in local clay, in a secondary context dating to the late second century AD, is again indicative of the existence of an earlier bathhouse,[37] albeit the sequence here also allows for a second century AD construction date. The local production of this constructional element is reflective of the level of acceptance of the overall type and the wholesale adoption of this specific type of hypocaustal system.

---

[32] It is interesting that Nielsen attributes the initial spread of Roman baths in the west to the influence of *negotiatores* (1999: 35).

[33] Donderer 1989: 55.

[34] Baldwin Bowsky 2004: 117-18, fn. 23; Rigsby 1976: 324; Ducrey 1969: 846-52; *IC* IV 295; *CIL* X.1433. In the broader Roman world colonial administrative systems, including legal procedures and offices, emulated the model set by Rome, thereby implementing the Latin language, names and formulas, irrespective of the language spoken in that area (Yegül 2000: 134). At Knossos, in line with widespread colonial practices, all the official inscriptions dating to the first century AD are in Latin, while all private inscriptions are in Greek (Sanders 1982: 15). Baldwin Bowsky asserts that the dominance of Latin in administrative spheres, traceable from the very earliest stage of the colony, did not exclude reasonable levels of integration, as is clearly manifest in the linguistic developments in the onomastic record pertaining to first-generation Romanized Cretans (Baldwin Bowsky 1995a: 50; 2004: 141). On expanding her investigation to include private and religious spheres, a diglottic character emerged demonstrating that while Knossos adhered to the colonial administrative model, Greek survived as the spoken language of the general populace, as expressed in religious and funerary contexts. Baldwin Bowsky notes that elsewhere on Crete the use of Latin did not feature as prevalently, as at Lyttos where Greek was used exclusively in inscriptions relating to the highest stratum of society (2006: 415).

[35] *ARepLond 1*978-1982: 93-94, fig. 27.

[36] For the application of spacer pins see Kelly 2006b: 240, fig. 1.

[37] Sackett *et al.* 1992: 246, no. R3, 3a, pl. 217.
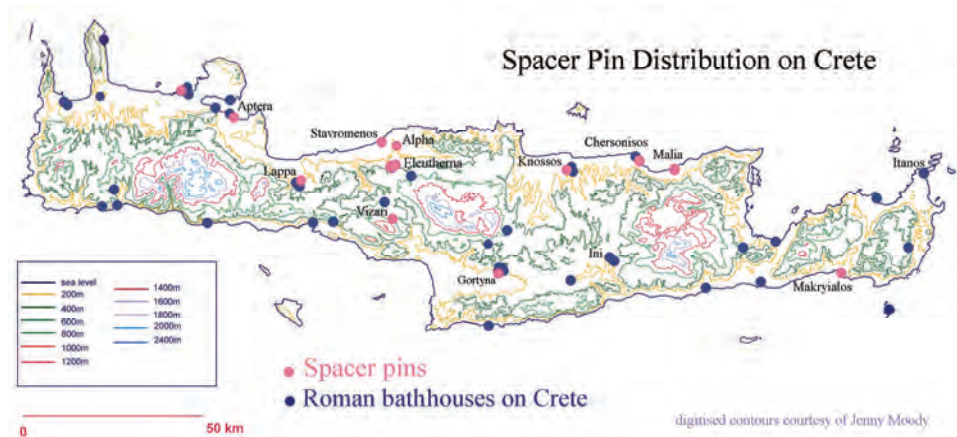
Figure 1 Distribution map of bathhouses incorporating spacer pin heating systems on Crete

The heating system incorporating clay spacer pins quickly became the favoured model on the island (Figure 1); however, the economic considerations presented by Farrington and Coulton, whereby hypocaustal systems incorporating the clay spacer pin were reflective of cost alone, is not applicable to Crete.[38] Its use was not a choice solely driven by financial restrictions, despite both the relatively small dimensions of the majority of the bathing installations on the island and the fact that the amphora-production industry facilitated the mass production of spacer pins throughout the island, thereby providing an established production-line onto which they effectively piggy-backed.[39] The economic model does not explain their application in the substantial Megali Porta Baths, which Sanders estimates covered a vast area of 3,600m² and the Praetorium Baths, measuring over 1,000m², at Gortyna, the capital of the joint province of Crete and Cyrenaica,[40] nor does it consider the more elaborate heating devices in associated complexes; notably those at Gortyna and Eleutherna (as mentioned below).

The emergence of the bath as a new monument type in Crete would have been charged with a resonance which would change the course of everyday life on both an ablutional and cultural level. As there was nothing comparable to the secular bathhouses within the pre-Roman Cretan landscape, their imprint over the Hellenistic palimpsest heralded the dawn of a new era. Their potentially wholescale introduction thereby served to advertize and promote the pleasures synonymous with Roman life, while the kudos derived from such architectural expression would have visibly heightened the status of the associated city, and its residential elites, not only on a local level, but also across Empire.[41]

[38] Farrington 1990: 66-67.

[39] Kelly 2006b: 245-46.

[40] Sanders 1982: 15 and 158 (Megali Porta baths); Di Vita 2000: xlviii (Praetorium baths).

[41] Lolos 1997: 302.

Aspirations of liberalitas

The lure of privileged Roman rank is played out in the private Cretan sphere, as is visibly attested, through a mosaic in the private bathhouse at Knossos, known as the Athlete Mosaic, which adorned the room north of a plunge-bath. The mosaic demarcates the entrance to a bathsuite which seems to represent Krencker's parallel-row type, albeit the building is only partially excavated.[42] Sweetman interpreted the motif as an agonistic motif or *gymnasium* scene which would be appropriate for its architectural setting.[43]

The popularity of athletic competitions is also attested elsewhere on the island, specifically at Gortyna, where a group of honorary inscriptions for athletes, concerning Diogenes, a *pankratiast* and *periodonikes*, dating to *c.* AD 100-150, was discovered in the baths.[44] The findspot is significant, given that the so-called Praetorium Baths were thought to have originally functioned as a bath-gymnasium.[45]

Wardle, the excavator of the bathsuite at Knossos, reports two figures in the mosaic, and suggests that they were possibly engaged in a boxing match.[46] The names of the figure(s) are inscribed overhead … ΚΛΟϹ ϹΑΤΟΡΝΙΛΟϹ.[47] Wardle also notes that the name Satorninos (an alternative spelling) with the epithet *Cres Gortynios*, a Cretan from Gortyna, features among the records of Olympic victors for the year AD 209.[48] Consequently, Wardle assigns a date for the construction and destruction of the house between AD 190 and AD 220. Wardle suggests that the complex (constituting a town-house with its own private bath-suite), belonged to a patron of the Olympic competitor.[49] Problematically enough, Chaniotis clarifies that the Satorninos referred to in the victor lists was not a boxer, but the winner of the *stadion*.[50] Nevertheless, Wardle's hypothesis, regardless of the true identity of the athlete (and, by association, the date of the complex), demonstrates that the presence of agonistic or athletic motifs in bathhouses is as potentially representative of the people who used, or indeed funded, these installations, as reflective of any activity conducted within them.

Wardle's proposal would comply with the social dynamics relating to *munificentia*, *liberalitas* and the display of the privilege of *honestiores*. Aspirations of *liberalitas* encouraged elites to represent themselves in certain idealized styles and to identify iconographically and architecturally with specific Roman institutions. As Dixon states: 'Their identity, as aspiring, prosperous *libertini*, or as established regional elites, was moulded into a Roman format and conveyed in public form through a media espousing these new values and symbols'.[51]

---

[42] Krencker *et al*. 1929.

[43] Sweetman 2001: 250.

[44] *SEG* 2001: 1137-40.

[45] La Rosa 1990: 431.

[46] Wardle 2000.

[47] *ARepLond* 1995-1996: 41, fig. 25.

[48] Wardle 2000; Paton 2000: 179.

[49] Wardle 2000.

[50] *SEG* 2003: 188; *Olympionikai* 170 no. 906.

[51] Dixon 2008: 66, 58-59, fn, 7.

The trappings of private patronage within a private setting seem to be more soundly played out in the epigraphic record pertaining to *spectacula*.[52] *Spectacula*, by nature, were ephemeral, in contrast to both their associated public inscriptions and private decoration; media which captured the moment, effectively creating a freeze-frame whereby the sponsor could be perpetually acknowledged. The means of immortalizing and advertizing your sponsorship of an athletic or gladiatorial event was a common concern for ambitious Romans. In Petronius' *Satyricon*, Trimalchio, the master of kitsch and bad taste, describes the funerary monument that he is designing for himself – the sculptural ensemble includes a statue of himself accompanied by his little dog at his feet.[53] It is only in the accompanying design that Trimalchio departs from regular Roman convention, whereby he insists that all of the matches of the gladiator Petraites are represented too. The jibe here is that images such as these were to remind the viewer of the individual's munificence in sponsoring the games but Trimalchio merely likes the games – he does not fund them - and, consequently, makes a serious social *faux-pas* in depicting them on his tomb.

Sanders' statement, that in Crete 'apart from statue dedications, the largest group of civic inscriptions concerns the games', reveals an intense interest in competitive physical display.[54] Sanders did not, however, differentiate between the Roman adoption of the Greek athletic contests and gladiatorial games and *venationes*.[55] As we might expect, at the capital, Gortyna, there is clear evidence relating to the individuals who animated the institution of the games. Epigraphic evidence found at Aghios Titos presents us with a public and permanent display of *munificentia*, its corresponding recognition and civic appreciation. Flavius Volumnius Sabinus, who held office for two years in Gortyna, put on special imperial games, of unprecedented length, in the form of a theatrical hunt, a *venatio*, in the middle of the third century.[56] This ephemeral display was immortalized through the honorary public inscription, thus ensuring Volumnius' high status (as *Archiereus*, or high priest, of the provincial council).

---

[52] Satorninos was not the only celebrated athlete from Crete and an inscription from Rhodes also mentions a Cretan pentathlete who was honoured under Augustus (*IG* XII.i.77). At Gortyna the victories of the boxer Polos (as the abbreviation puk would indicate), are recorded in full in an inscription surviving on a fragmentary sarcophagus (*IC* IV 375; see Chaniotis 2004: 87, fn. 53). The details outlined on Polos' tomb suggests that he was an athlete of high repute; with three victories at Ephesus, one at Tralles, one at Laodicea, one at Aphrodisias, and four at Gortyna. The inscription indicates that Polos was a competitor on an Aegean circuit which effectively ties Gortyna within a network linking the west coast of Asia Minor (Sanders 1982: 15).

[53] Petr., *Sat.* 71.

[54] Sanders 1982: 15.

[55] For gladiatorial evidence on Crete see Kelly 2011: 77-94.

[56] Di Vita 2004: 470; *IC* IV 305. An escalating cycle (of increasing audience expectation and responding extravagance of display) developed, whereby sponsors attempted to surpass their predecessors. Comparatives, superlatives, and unparalleled expense are characteristic of many honorary inscriptions relating to the games. Consequently, Sanders notes that Volumnius' games were of such a scale that they required 'special imperial permission' (1982: 15). Certainly, overspending on gladiators seems to be the main criticism of the games among Roman writers. Dio criticized Commodus for spending all of the money that he extorted from the senators on wild beasts and gladiators (Dio 73.16.3).

Romanization reflected in bathhouse distributions and densities

In 1988 DeLaine expressed her bewilderment at the neglect of Roman bath studies in general[57] while the underestimation of bathing in Roman Crete is attested by its cameo appearance in Nielsen's extensive volumes on the baths of the Roman world *Thermae et Balnea*; *The architecture and cultural history of Roman public baths*.

> In Africa, the small province consisting of Creta and Cyrenaica is well represented with respect to the latter region, with 7 baths, while Creta does not have sufficiently preserved examples.[58]

Fieldwork, conducted as part of my doctoral thesis, confirmed a minimum of 52 examples of Roman baths on Crete constructed between the first and fourth centuries AD (Figure 2).[59] Studies published in 1999 attributed only 35 baths (dating from the second to the fourth century AD) to Macedonia and Achaea combined.[60] Conversely, earlier assessments conducted by Alcock cited 24 baths in Athens alone, with a further 17 associated with villas throughout Achaea.[61] Since then the situation for Roman Greece has not greatly improved, despite notable scholarship targeting specific structures throughout the empire (as exemplified by DeLaine in her in-depth study of the Baths of Caracalla published in 1997), as surveys of baths and bathing in Greece during the imperial period remain largely unexplored subjects.[62]

The dearth of baths attested by archaeological exploration stands in stark contrast to the picture portrayed by the ancient sources which are steeped in anecdotes relating to bathing. Yegül contends that 'despite its rhetorical tone, the declaration by the sophist Aelius Aristides (a second-century poet and political thinker) that his home town Smyrna, one of the largest Roman ports of the Aegean, "had so many baths that you would be at a loss to know where to bathe", is typical and probably true (Ael. Arist., 15.232)'.[63] Lucian too, who journeyed in Ionia, Greece, Italy, and Gaul, remarked that in the second century AD bath construction was commonplace and they feature as architectural frameworks throughout his works.[64] The high concentrations of bathhouses on Crete should prompt reassessments of counts elsewhere, since the distribution patterns demonstrate more effective Roman influence in the interior and more rural sectors, of the island than previously appreciated.[65]

[57] DeLaine 1988: 11.

[58] Nielsen 1990: 96.

[59] Kelly 2004; 2006b: 239, fig. 5.

[60] Farrington 1999: 61.

[61] Alcock 1993: 68, 125.

[62] Farrington 1999: 57. Farrington's article 'The introduction and spread of Roman bathing in Greece' is somewhat misleading in its use of the modern term 'Greece', as it actually refers to the provinces of Achaea and Macedonia and, therefore, does not include Crete.

[63] Yegül 2010: 3.

[64] Lucian, *Hippias* 4; Thomas 2007: 221-29.

[65] Kelly 2004: 270.
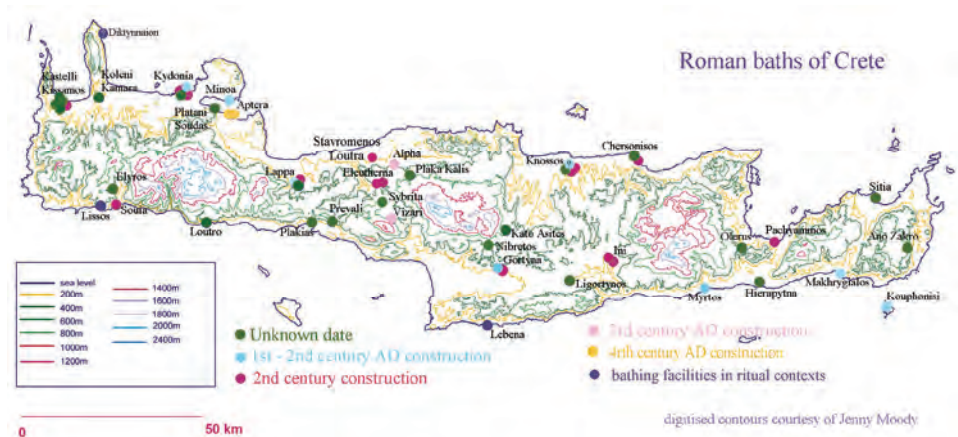
Figure 2 Bathhouse distribution on Crete

Of the 52 bathhouses reported in the Cretan countryside, eight examples are potentially Trajanic, or earlier, foundations;[66] while further Trajanic foundations may be eclipsed at a variety of later bathhouses due to their continued use. These relatively early foundations are situated at Gortyna, Knossos, Khania, Lappa, Kouphonisi, Minoa, Makriyalos, and Myrtos where they seem to be strategically placed to make the highest impact on the rest of the Cretan population and landscape.[67]

In the past, a two-tiered model of Roman receptivity has been applied to '*city versus countryside*' dynamics on an island-wide scale. The situation is particularly complex, as

---

[66] see Kelly 2004: 232-33.

[67] La Rosa states that at Gortyna the first *praetorium* suffered a serious destruction in the second half of the first century AD and subsequently the central section was transformed into public baths before the time of Trajan (1990: 431). The potentially early bath site at Knossos is that of the dismantled bathhouse evident in the early second century AD renovations of the the Room of the Polychrome Paintings, as cited above. Markoulaki dates a bath with three hypocausts in Khania to the first century AD on the basis of architectural phasing which indicates that the bath was destroyed when a stoa, which cut it, was constructed in the second century AD (1990: 440; 1991-1993: 206). The bathsuite in the villa at Myrtos was initially thought to date to the Late Antonine period (*ADelt* 29b², 1973-1974: 908); however, the brick-faced mortared rubble and mosaic evidence intimated an earlier construction phase attributable to the late first or early second century AD (Livadiotti Rocco 2004: 743, 745-46, figs 3a, b, and 8; Sweetman 1999: 116, no. 58, pls 88-92). Papadakis claimed that the villa at Makriyalos was Hellenistic-Roman in date, although elsewhere he also stated that the ceramic evidence covers the period from the first to the third century AD (1986: 230). Raab conjectures that the villa at Minoa was 'Early Roman' in date although its use, like all the sites mentioned here, continued into the late second century AD and thereafter (2001: 113). The presence of Hellenistic pottery and a Doric capital attest the longevity of the site while a Trajanic coin might pinpoint the establishment of the villa (Raab 2001: 113-14). At Kouphonisi the chronology was loosely based on the ceramic record, although the stratigraphic record was not discussed in detail in the reports; whereby the pottery from area B consisted of domestic ware and amphorae dating from first to the third century AD (Papadakis 1986: 230). At Lappa the construction of the bath under the Church of Aghios Nikolaos has been dated between the first and second century AD on the basis of its brick dimensions (Livadiotti Rocco 2004: 743, fig. 4).

demonstrated by Baldwin Bowsky who initially derived an overall pattern of backwater provincialism from the onomastic evidence only to revise her initial findings in a subsequent article.[68] Clearly, the archaeological evidence promoting a more pervasive form of Romanization is growing exponentially and theories have to be modified accordingly and at the same rate. The initial model presented coastal and urban areas as progressive and Roman-receptive, and interior and rural areas as regions which displayed, in their onomasticon at least, a mixture of conservatism and progressivism. Recent reassessments allow for a more protean concept of Romanization which was inclusive and permeated throughout the island, most recently demonstrated in the findings at Eleutherna Sector I.[69]

An excursus on Sardinia is useful for the present study as it represents another island where a competing model of Roman influence has been applied. Tronchetti envisaged a conservative rustic community in Roman Sardinia which generally upheld inherited traditions, while new designs were approached with a degree of trepidation.[70] In essence, Tronchetti presented a model of backwater provincialism, as outlined by Baldwin Bowsky.[71] Rowland supported this model for the Early Roman period in Sardinia, which allowed for a 'negotiated syncretism of the two cultures'.[72] A more dramatic upheaval was reported in the large coastal cities which were occupied by the majority of the Roman elite whereby these urban landscapes were modified according to Roman customs and were furnished with edifices that were typically Roman, yet even in these cases the Semitic substratum could not be completely eclipsed.[73]

Dyson also claimed that in Sardinia sites were mainly focused on the coast, where they either developed from Punic foundations and therefore represent urban continuity, or represent new Roman centres, founded to serve administrative and economic needs.[74] He does not, however, refer to Rowland's dense distribution map of bathhouses when claiming coastal preference in Roman times. Rowland's distribution map, presenting 57 bathing establishments, many of which are located in the interior of the island, indicates that baths constituted the most common Roman remains throughout Sardinia; a spread which challenges models of conservatism in the rural landscape.[75] The model clearly needs revision if we combine this distribution with results from each survey conducted subsequently in Sardinia, which have considerably increased the number of Roman sites, in many survey areas by 600%.[76] Dyson's ascribing the prevalence of bath structures to the Nuragic tradition of spring cults, as much as to any Roman civic improvements, does not serve to eclipse the strength of Romanizing influence as the bathhouse distributions still

---

[68] Baldwin Bowsky 1995b: 280.

[69] Themelis 2009.

[70] Tronchetti 1987: 246.

[71] Baldwin Bowsky 1995b: 280.

[72] Rowland 2001: 96.

[73] Tronchetti 1987: 246.

[74] Dyson 2000: 191.

[75] Rowland 2001; 1981: fig. 3.

[76] Rowland 2001: 105.

reflect a facet of Romanization which only serves to highlight the resilience of aspects of pre-Roman culture which are embraced by, and ultimately embodied in, the Romanized landscape of the rural hinterlands.[77]

Importantly for this study, the profusion of bathhouses in Sardinia demonstrates that Crete is not unique in its abundance of baths.[78] Such bathhouse densities are not atypical and are reflective of general trends in diverse areas of the Empire. Moreover, as many baths in Sardinia represent villas, furnished with private bathsuites, their presence conflicts with Dyson's observations that substantial remains of villas in the interiors are rare and that most of the villas on the island are coastal or located near cities and therefore constitute *villae maritimae*, or *suburbanae*.[79] The explosion of villa sites throughout the rural interior of Sardinia illustrates the extent of the dispersal of Roman architecture throughout the interior of the island by the second century AD.[80]

Romanization: bathing facilities in extra urban villas on Crete

The development of the typical villa/farmstead in the countryside surrounding major towns has long been accepted as one of the defining characteristics of Romanization. Percival noted that modern definitions of the villa nearly all include a reference to Romanization.[81] Throughout the Roman Empire early residences did not constitute regular residences but represented a purposeful presence. Smith regarded these lavish early abodes as imported features owing nothing to indigenous society in terms of design and construction.[82] He disregarded the importance of whether those who lived in these early villas were native to the province or incomers as inconsequential to their houses, which must have been attained through imperial channels. Downs regarded a city-country interdependence as one of the processes of urbanism which ensures a thoroughly integrated province in the Roman economy.[83] Roman cities and towns generated satellite systems of Romanized rural centres in their hinterlands by design, as is evident in the landscape around Cosa. The villa is a testimony to the success of the Roman model which not only created urban structures but also transformed rural life.[84]

Surprisingly, extra-urban villa sites on Crete have largely been ignored. There are at least four substantial private extra-urban villas in the published record of Crete, three of which fall within the hinterland of Hierapytna. Beyond these there are a myriad of sites which have villa potential and a litany of epigraphic and field survey evidence which would support a

---

[77] Dyson 1992: 488.

[78] Kelly 2004: 136, figs 5-6; 2004-2005: fig. 11.

[79] Rowland 2001: 183-87; Dyson 1992: 488.

[80] Rowland 2001: 105.

[81] Percival 1976: 14. Percival notably omitted mainland Greece and Crete from his 1976 study, lacunae repeated by Smith in his exhaustive account of Roman villas.

[82] Smith 1997: 278.

[83] Downs 2000: 208.

[84] Dyson 2000: 192.

Cretan landscape peppered with such establishments.[85] Examples for such potential abodes were provided by Baldwin Bowsky who envisaged numerous establishments in the Knossian region[86] while, more specifically, Taramelli interpreted architectural remains at Zaros as representative of the summer residence of the provincial governor of Gortyna.[87]

(a) A model for Knossos

Baldwin Bowsky's interesting argument that the Campanian landowners recorded in the Knossian area were the proprietors of luxury villas located along the borders of the urban area is archaeologically faint at present and the model is challenged by the fact that luxury villas have yet to be secured architecturally as *penumbra* sites around Knossos.[88] Her case, however, gains ground, through her reference to Doukelis' report of land divisions around Knossos that adhere to a *limitatio* corresponding to the norms of Roman centuriation (as deduced from his personal observations, aerial photographs, and maps of the Geographical Service of the Greek Army).[89] Moreover, epigraphic evidence verifies the existence of at least one such residence; that of the *duumvir* Plotius Plebeius who was a descendant of one of the first colonists to be settled by the imperial procurator in Crete; P. Messius Campanus.[90] The boundary dispute of AD 84 reveals that Plotius Plebius was a citizen of the colony who owned land adjacent to that of the Capuan territory, in that the inscription records the erection of boundary stones demarcating the Capuan territory from that of the colony at Knossos.

(b) A model for Hierapytna

If the satellite model is archaeologically faint for Knossos, it is prominently attested at Hierapytna by the presence of at least three satellite villas in the hinterland (*i.e.*, at Myrtos, Makriyalos, and Pachyammos). Their presence establishes this *polis* as a wealthy power in the Early Roman period; a power which played a significant role in promoting Roman administration in the wider rural area.

The distribution of these outlying foundations indicate the extent of the territory of Hierapytna, which has been compared to the combined area of the modern *eparchies* of Sitia and Ierapetra (*i.e.*, *c*.1,050km²); an expanse which would establish Hieraptyna's control over the isthmus and, consequently, commercial trade to the east of the island.[91] The locations of the villas underscores an interest in commercial regulations while their private bathsuites, water supplies, and sumptuous décor establishes them as Romanizing role models for the surrounding populace. It can be posited that the purpose of these villas

---

[85] As demonstrated by Hayden 2004a: 199-204.

[86] Baldwin Bowsky 2002: 81, fn. 18, 82, fn. 21; 2004: 116.

[87] Taramelli 1902: 102. Unfortunately, the villa has not been relocated since Taramelli's observations (Sanders 1976: 134; 1982: 22, 155).

[88] Baldwin Bowsky 2002: 81-82.

[89] Baldwin Bowsky 2002: 81, fn. 18, 82.

[90] Baldwin Bowsky 2004: 116; 2002: 81, fn. 18, 82, fn. 21; Rigsby 1976: 324; Ducrey 1969: 846-852.

[91] Bennet 1990: 202.

within the Roman Cretan landscape was to secure Roman administration at key points in the hinterlands of the major cities.

In the territory of Hierapytna three evident establishments have been cited at Myrtos, Makriyalos and Pachyammos. All three are fitted with bathsuites, two with semi-circular plunge-baths, one with a shallow circular cistern or settling tank, and at least one of these is supplied by a purpose-built aqueduct; that at Pachyammos. There is also some evidence for a private-aqueduct supply at Makriyalos and a strong conjectural case can also be proposed for the villa at Myrtos, fitted as it was with a substantial bathsuite and a circular cistern.

The villa at Makriyalos, lying on an elevated spur overlooking the sea 21km to the east of Hierapytna, was perhaps too highly praised by Harrison, who was so impressed on viewing the villa that he claimed it to be virtually without parallel in size and sophistication in the eastern provinces.[92] Harrison's praise of the villa, although undeniably over-enthusiastic (especially in light of the sumptuous residences of Zeugma and Antioch to name but a few), suitably portrays the relatively elevated status and character of these residences. On a Cretan scale, private bathsuites could be quite expansive, as demonstrated at Makryialos, where the plan of the excavated remains measuring *c*. 35m x 70m, almost twice that of Pachyammos, while the substantial *tepidarium* in the private bathsuite at Myrtos measures 5m x 22m.[93]

The complex at Makriyalos is comprised of 37 rooms including courtyards and an expansive bathsuite, all adorned with mosaics and marble veneer[94] (Figure 3). The plan of the villa, with its large, and potentially central atrium, resembles the grand peristyle villas of Campania.[95] A partial plan of the bathsuite is included in the overall plan of the villa published in 1979.[96] Only certain rooms pertaining to the bathsuite were illustrated, *i.e.*, areas Ψ, Ο, Ζ, Ω, Π, Θ, Ι, Η, Τ, and Λ (room Ρ is also probably part of the bathsuite). The remaining bath block to the south east has never been represented on a published plan despite the fact that the area has been the subject of a publication.[97] In 1983 Papadakis recorded terracotta pipes and open channels carrying water from cisterns to the complex and its associated gardens.[98]

Another partially excavated bathsuite lies 15km to the west of Hieraptyna at Myrtos. The excavated area is representative of a large Roman villa, as indicated by the scale of the

[92] Harrison 199: 272.

[93] *ARepLond* 1973-1974: 39; Sweetman 1999: 115.

[94] Papadakis 1983: 59.

[95] See McKay 1975: 109, fig. 40, 111, fig. 41, 115-16.

[96] Papadakis 1979: 408, fig. 2.

[97] Papadakis 1980: 524-25.

[98] Papadakis 1983: 59.
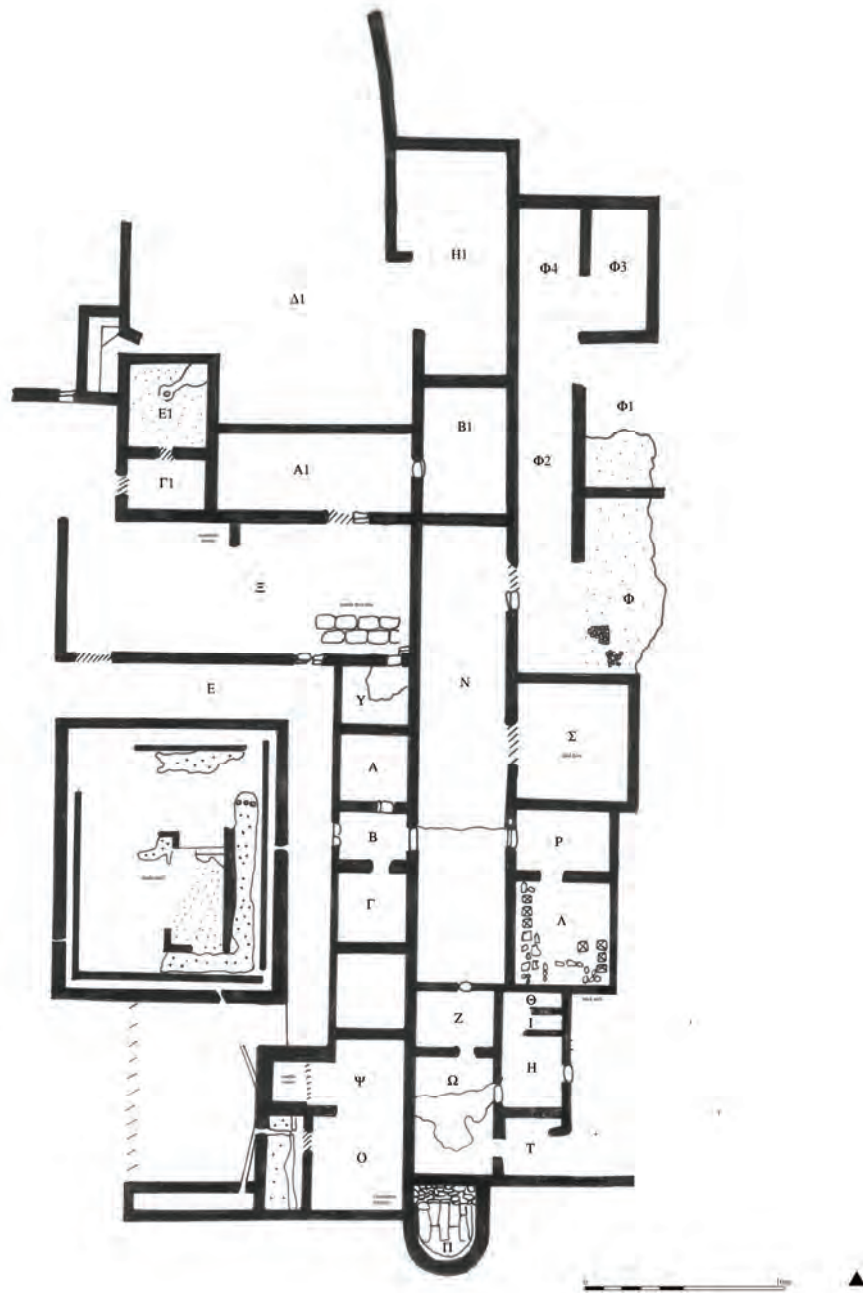
Figure 3 Plan of the villa at Markyrialos (after Papadakis 1979, 408, fig. 2)

Plate 1 Myrtos: circular cistern (photographer facing north)

Plate 2 Myrtos: road-cut exposing hypocaustal brick (photographer facing north-east)

tepidarium measuring 5m x 22m.[99] Adjacent to the bathsuite, the entire depth of a brick-faced circular cistern was exposed by the modern road-cut (Plate 1). The construction incorporates exterior radial buttresses similar to those used at the massive barrel-vaulted cistern complexes at Kastelliana and Aptera (Plate 2). The cistern can be dated to the earliest phase of the bath, on the basis of the distinctive thickness of its brick,[100] in relation to the thinner brick of the exposed hypocaustal area which represents a later phase. Its early date indicates that the cistern was an integral component to the original design of the villa. The expanse of the tepidarium and the presence of a circular cistern or settling tank serve as prerequisites for an aqueduct supply for the bathsuite.

Another circular cistern discovered at the urban Villa Dionysus at Knossos was located in an elevated position to the south-west of the *domus* (Plate 3).[101] A large pipe, apparently tapping the public aqueduct, filled the tank from the west. The pipe was neatly plastered into a small fluted marble column-drum which had been hollowed out to function as a stop-cock. A lead pipe extended from this to enter the tank just above its floor level.[102] The system would have supplied the *domus* and probably fed the lead pipes enclosed in stone-built channels below the surface of the peristyle. The presence of the stop-cock and the association of circular cisterns with aqueduct supply lines suggests that these tanks act as some form of regulatory device. All water-consuming facilities must have had a mechanism which allowed them to be shut off, although the example in the tank serving the Villa Dionysus at Knossos is the only example of a Roman stop-cock on Crete.[103]

In light of the discovery of this cistern, associated with a stop-cock, at the Villa Dionysus, it could be inferred that comparable cisterns at Myrtos and Minoa (and perhaps another in the Apostolaki Plot at Kastelli Kissamou) also regulated water intake for these complexes from aqueduct supply lines.[104] At Minoa, in western Crete, a similar brick-faced circular cistern must have functioned as a composite part of the aqueduct water supply and it could be postulated that a stop-cock device, similar to that discovered in the Villa Dionysus, regulated the water flow (Plate 4). It could equally be proposed that future excavations would reveal a bathsuite within the Villa Dionysus which would also accord with the villa's comparable opulence of décor, location, and size.[105]

---

[99] *ARepLond* 1973-1974: 39; Sweetman 1999: 115.

[100] Livadiotti Rocco 2004: 743, fig. 3a, b.

[101] Sara Paton *pers. comm.*

[102] *ARepLond* 1999-2000: 134.

[103] Stop-cocks are found in North Africa, at Volubilis and Djemila, where stop-cocks are recorded regulating the water for private housing associated with tanks located along the main water supply system (Wilson 2001: 93).

[104] Tzedakis 1979: 394, fig. 2, pl. 202a. In the Apostolaki Plot at Kastelli Kissamou another circular cistern is again associated with a bathsuite where it occupies the north east section of the complex. Unlike the other brick-faced cisterns, this example is constructed of uncut stone and measures 4.2m-4.3m in diameter, standing to a height of 1.14m above ground level, although its floor level was never established (Tzedakis 1979: 394, fig. 2, pl. 202a).

[105] At the Roman complex at Minoa, in western Crete, the water entering the complex was allowed to settle in a large sunken circular cistern constructed of brick-faced mortared rubble. This cistern has an overall depth of 1.08m, measuring 0.20m from its inner lip down to a brick ledge from where it

Plate 3 Knossos: circular cistern associated with the Villa Dionysus
(photograph courtesy of Sara Paton)

Moreover, the shallowness of the cistern above the Villa Dionysus might suggest that the water could be solar heated in the summer months[106] and this consideration may explain the shallow depth of this particular group of circular cisterns on Crete. The cisterns would therefore regulate water flow into the complexes while also potentially facilitating solar heated supplies.[107] Despite the fact that we know that Seneca, in his old age, indulged in a warm bath supplied by water from a tank warmed by the sun,[108] solar-heated provisions are relatively rare. Moreover, various other elements present in several Cretan baths point to a sophistication in heating systems, including a device named the *testudines alveolorum* which feature in two of the *praefurnia* servicing *caldarium* 13 in the Praetorium Baths, a brick fire-chamber for supporting a furnace-boiler in the Small Bath at Eleutherna Sector I (personal observation Bath (the feature is also visible in Themelis' plan, 2002, 110, fig. 138, area 60)) and a possible second such chamber in the private bath at Makriyalos in area K1

dropped a further 0.88m to its base. Its measurements are closely comparable to those of the cistern at Myrtos suggesting a common blueprint for the design on the island. The cistern at Minoa was drained by a terracotta pipeline facilitated by an opening of 0.5m on its west side (Andreadaki-Vlazaki 1983: 368, pls 162a and b). The pipeline was composed of 0.19m long pipes each with a diameter of 0.06m and a wall thickness of 0.01m (Theofanidis 1950-1951: 9).

[106] Paton 2000: 30.

[107] Theofanidis' interpretation of the two incisions along the rim of the cistern at Minoa as evidence for a domed roof seems unfeasible (1950-1951: 9), although the interior rim could have facilitated a temporary cover, which could be applied when necessary.

[108] Sen., *Epist.* 83

Plate 4 Minoa: circular cistern (photographer facing east)

(personal observation).[109] A second-storey hypocaust in a private bathsuite at Eleutherna also constitutes a rare feature across Empire.[110]

A further Roman structure is located at Pachyammos, located on the north coast, 13km north of Hierapytna. The complex was originally excavated by Boyd in 1903 and was referred to as a villa by both Sanders and Baldwin Bowsky.[111] The complex has not been properly examined since 1903 and, significantly, it was not mentioned in Haggis' more recent survey of the area.[112] The villa identification remains unconfirmed but Sanders believed that the plan of the overall structure represented the basement of a villa and interpreted its neat symmetry as reflective of domestic storage facilities.[113] My identification of a bathsuite and a private aqueduct at the archaeologically low-profile foundations at Pachyammos (through a reassessment of Hasting's plan and personal observations in the field) serves to elevate the status of this complex from a farmhouse to the rank of elite agricultural residence, constituting a working estate as a counterpart to the two luxury villas in the satellite zone of Hieraptyna (Figure 4).

[109] Di Vita 2000, li (Praetorium baths); Kelly 2006b, 236, fn. 36 (Eleutherna, Makryalos). Similar features are also found in the Large North Baths at Timgad (Yegül 1992: 369, fig. 463; 2010: 91-92).

[110] Themelis 1994-1996: 269, 268 for plan, pl. 11; 2002: 80. There is an unusual double-storeyed hypocaust in the Barbara Thermae in Trier (Krencker et al. 1929: 245, fig. 363).

[111] Boyd 1904-1905: 14, Sanders 1982: 17 and 141; Baldwin Bowsky 1994: 9, n.12. Pendlebury classified it as a Greco-Roman building (1939: 364).

[112] Boyd 1904-1905: 14, fig. 5; Haggis 1996a: 373-432, fig. 23, see also 422, fn. 128.

[113] Sanders 1982: 140, fig. 50.
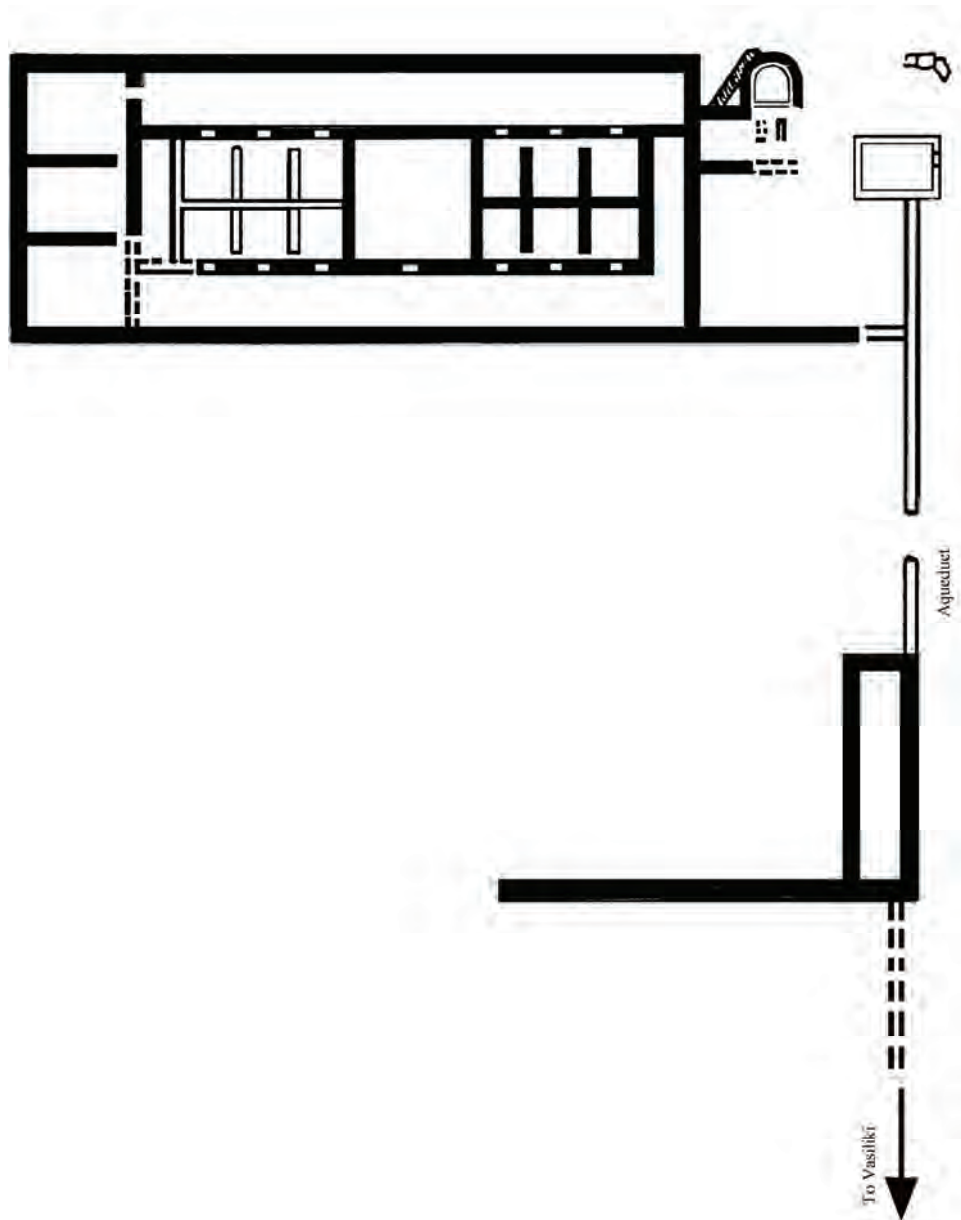
Figure 4 Hastings' plan of the Roman site at Pachyammos (after Boyd 1904-5, 14, fig. 5).

Excavations of the complex in 1903 revealed a large rectangular building measuring 17m x 42.4m. In Boyd's original plan of the complex, as drawn by Hastings, a semi-circular feature to the north-east of the complex is visible.[114] There seems little doubt that this feature represents a semi-circular plunge-bath, identical to other Cretan examples

[114] Boyd 1904-1905: fig. 5.

evident in the baths at Stavromenos Chamalevri, Kato Asites, and Makriyalos.[115] In Hastings' plan the step into the bath is intact and the characteristic ridge along the curved wall is also evident.[116] Perhaps most revealing is the fact that Hastings labels the feature as a cistern, which also corresponds with its proximity to the aqueduct's terminus. Curiously, Sanders omitted these details when he republished the plan in 1982, omissions which effectively obscured the identification of this feature.[117] A barrel-vaulted compartment, faced internally with brick over a mortared-rubble core, was visible adjacent to the area of the pool in 2002.[118] The bricks had been blackened by fire and an air-duct was evident in the lateral wall. Its form and location, corresponding with Hastings' plan, secure its identification as the *praefurnium* of a bathsuite.

The original plan, drawn by Hastings in 1903, depicts a water supply system comprizing an aqueduct and settling-, or regulation-, tanks leading to the east side of the structure. It is probable that the aqueduct tapped the water from the nearby Xa Gorge as the aqueduct could not be traced in the field further south of the line of latitude marking the entrance to the gorge while locals recalled seeing its trajectory turning east towards the gorge, when it was exposed during road repairs in the area.[119] The springs near the chapel of Aghia Anna at the head of the Xa Gorge subsequently supplied the leat of a Venetian mill which still clings to the sheer south cliff-face at the mouth of the gorge.[120]

The identification of these hydraulic features elevates the stature of the site and it could be argued that the structure at Pachyammos (which could be classified as an agricultural villa, in line with Marangou's model),[121] and possibly the storage facility at Tholos, were constructed and designed to facilitate the monitoring of port traffic and the supervision of the transportation and storage of agricultural produce by a Roman (or Romanized) magistrate.[122] The notable disparity between the plans of the establishments at Pachyammos,

---

[115] Andreadaki-Vlazaki 1991: 431, fig. 14; Sanders 1982: 70, fig. 13; Papadakis 1979: 408, fig. 2; Gerola 1908, II: 245, fig. 296.

[116] See Hastings' plan, of the Roman site at Pachyammos, after Boyd 1904-1905: 14, fig. 5.

[117] Sanders 1982: 140, fig. 50.

[118] Personal observation.

[119] Personal observation.

[120] Personal observation; Rackham and Moody 1996: 181. A 0.20m-wide channel was also recorded by both Seager (1906-1907: 115) and Soles (1973: 240) near a tomb at Vasiliki and traced 500m further south crossing the main stream running to the north coast on a bridge (*Ergon* 1972: 118; Zois 1992: 280). The springs at Episkopi, 4km from the Roman complex, were suggested as the water source for the Roman complex (Seager 1906-1907: 115); however, aqueduct construction in Crete generally adheres to pragmatic considerations and it is likely that the nearby water source in the Xa Gorge sufficed for the needs of the complex.

[121] Marangou 1999: 270.

[122] The barrel-vaulted structure at Tholos in the Bay of Mirabello in eastern Crete may represent a granary, as was initially proposed by Haggis (1996a and b); however, it is inconceivable that this small bay accommodated the large grain carriers described by Lucian (*Navigium* vi.5-10), as argued by Haggis (1996b: 203-07). Whether grain carriers of such size ever existed is questionable and it is likely that the Isis acted as a literary *topos* to provide an illusion of realism (Houston 1987: 446). Lucian's claim that the vessels drew crowds at Athens, prompted Casson's comparisons with the

Makryialos, and Myrtos could be attributed to agricultural concerns at the former site.[123] The Roman structure at Pachyammos was strategically placed for the regulation of traffic along a major routeway running south across the isthmus towards Hierapytna, thereby effectively securing both coasts for the *polis*.

There is one other possible example of a satellite villa in the Hierapytnian *xora* in the area at Oleros midway between Hierapytna and Pachyammos where a private villa has been reported by Baldwin Bowsky; a sighting which seems to stem from Boyd's mention of a villa in the Istron Valley (1904-1905: 13-14) and Sanders' description of a small structure at the foot of a hill which he identifies as a bathhouse (1982: 138). He reported an apsidal room, with a diameter of 5m, lined with *opus signinum* and an adjacent room, measuring 9m² with a wall, belonging to a third compartment, extending west.[124] Hayden originally contended that this structure should lie somewhere in the area of OL3, north of the Meseleri village at the base of the Schinavria ridge near a *kalderim*, where her survey located a rock-cut building foundation but no apsidal room.[125] In 2004, however, Hayden reported the foundations of a brick-faced structure running for 20m and incorporating a vaulted roof in area PR1 within the Meselori Valley (2004: 274) which may very likely constitute Boyd's villa site. Confirming its location in the field would secure administrative control over the artery of the Meseleroi Valley leading towards Priniatikos Pyrgos and the Gulf of Mirabello.

The presence of lavish bathsuites in early private Cretan villas seems to represent an integral element in Roman packaging. These sites could be classified as gateway sites, by virtue of the fact that they enable the filtering of foreign influence throughout a tiered system of sites within their broader hinterlands.[126] The outward impetus generated by these foci may have been harnessed to a descending hierarchical scale resonating through their hinterland.[127] The relative comfort of the private residences in Crete is notable within the

biggest of the British East Indiamen which came into use at the beginning of the 19th century (1994: 124). The port at Tholos undoubtedly had importance within a regional framework as it was the main port to the isthmus and thus was monitored and facilitated by a wealthy strategically-founded agricultural villa (equipped with a bath-suite and aqueduct). Altamore classifies the building as a cistern (2004, 266-67) and it clearly conforms with the more monumental examples found on the island in terms of its plan and mode of construction (particularly the large L-shaped cistern at Aptera and the vaulted complexes at Chersonisos and Kastelliana).

[123] Altamore 2004: 261.

[124] Baldwin Bowsky 1994: 9, n.12; Sanders 1982: 138.

[125] Hayden 2004a: 213, 216-17, fn. 27. Hayden's mention of a mosaic seems to be reliant on Sanders' reference to *opus signinum*. Some floors of *opus signinum* are mosaics but not all, so the application of the term does not presuppose the presence of a mosaic. Lancaster defines *opus signinum* as a mixture (of mortar and crushed terracotta) used mainly for waterproofing cisterns and elements exposed to the weather and as a setting bed for stone revetment (2008: 261).

[126] Comber 2001: 87.

[127] This social hierarchy, or Roman receptivity, is well illustrated on the Akrotiri peninsula in western Crete where, west of the Roman complex at Minoa, a single-family residence, associated with its own private burial ground catering for multiple interments, was identified by Raab (2001: 141, figs 65-66, site LT3). As a property of some importance, it is relevant that the complex was devoid of materials that typify deliberately Roman construction elsewhere on the island (such as

landscape but, despite their thermal indulgences, they were not merely luxury villas. They also constituted architectural role-models for the aspiring elite, and were strategically placed and economically engaged. Their seemingly detached placement is an allusion borne of architectural survival and an underestimation of the traffic they controlled; they lay embedded within an administrative network that reached far beyond the Cretan shoreline.

The placement of the villas at the crosshairs of routeways and coastal ports at an early phase of the island's development under Rome underscores their economic, administrative, and ambassadorial roles. That this administration is routed in agricultural produce, notably wine, is strongly supported by the correlation of the southern villas with a range of amphora workshops.[128] Amphora production sites have been located in a chain along the south-east coast stretching from Arvi, Keratokambos, Tsoutsouros, to Dermatos.[129] Marangou noted the proximity of agricultural villas on Crete (cited at Kissamos, Chersonisos, and Dermatos) to sites of agricultural exploitation, specifically vineyards.[130] This model is also supported by Sanders' claims that Roman farms were spaced at 1-3km intervals skirting the edge of the Lasithi plains.[131]

In the case of Hieraptyna, the villas constituted satellite sites radiating out from the administrative centre; the villa at Myrtos lies 15km to the west, that at Makriyalos is located 21km to the east, while the establishment at Pachyammos lies 13km to the north. The strategic placement at Pachyammos ensured the control over the breath of the isthmus and the major routeway running north-south at this juncture.[132] The Makriyalos villa

stone- or brick-faced mortared rubble *etc.*), as characterised by the nearby Roman complex at Minoa (Raab 2001: 141). Therefore, the juxtaposition of this homestead (LT3) with that of the Roman complex at Minoa demonstrates that, even within a tight coastal catchment area, there can be a notable range within society whereby some relatively wealthy locals adhered to local traditions, while others were pro-actively Roman.

[128] Marangou 1999: 274, fig. 2.

[129] Empereur *et al.* 1991: 510-11.

[130] Marangou 1999: 270.

[131] Sanders 1982: 19; Watrous 1982: 24, 39, 53, 55; Hayden 2004a: 206. Crete held a leading position in the wine trade for the first three centuries of Empire with Cretan amphorae representing more than a third of Aegean and Eastern imports in Ostia in the 2nd century AD (Marangou 1999, 271, 278). Already, in the mid-1st century AD Cretan wines became available to Pompeii and Herculaneum in Campania, as is attested by the amphorae shipped there bearing the insignia of Lyttos and Aptera (Marangou-Lerat 1995, 131-134; Chaniotis 1988, 75; De Caro 1992-1993, 307-312; Baldwin Bowsky 1995a, 50 and 57). Cretan amphorae also dominated the imported Roman amphora group at Marina el-Alamein, the port west of Alexandria (Tomber 1996, 48), while the presence of a Cretan wine amphora at Mons Claudianus, although its significance has been notably exaggerated, still demonstrates the dovetailing of traded commodities along well-worn trade-routes (Tomber 1996, 45). Capua's share of territory at Knossos proved to be extremely lucrative, amassing an income of 1,200,000 *sestertii per annum* (Velleius Paterculus II 81, 2), which may have been generated in part through viticulture. This level of production and exportation could not be paralleled again until the Venetian period when, in the 16th century, Cretan wine enjoyed an excellent reputation, when the production of only one type of Cretan wine (among a range of vintages), known as malmsey, reached 100,000 tons, half of which was exported (Hayden 2004a, 269).

[132] Seager 1904-1905: 207.

extended this control throughout the landmass, and its southern coastline, to the east while it also served as an interim post between Hierapytna and the islet of Kouphonisi. Their presence in the landscape is testimony to the success of Hierapytna within the province. Their strategic locations, potentially early foundations, and overtly Roman fixtures were purposely designed with a Romanizing elite in mind.

The indigenous Cretan elite: a bathing establishment at Ini

In the case of Crete, an inscription discovered at Ini laying out separate bathing hours for the sexes provides a window into the nature of Romanization on the island.[133] Four *kosmoi* are mentioned in the inscription in relation to the supervision of the functioning and maintenance of a bathhouse, which is referred to as a *balaneion* in the text.[134] Ducrey and van Effenterre published an in-depth analysis of the inscription, noting that duties are assigned to the following *kosmoi*: Karanos son of Somenos, Dinokles son of Agesippos, Hieronymos son of Apollonios, Pratomenios son of Exakestas (the secretary), and the treasurers (Sokles son of Pratomedes and Philinos son of Dinokles).[135] The name of the *protokosmos* heads the list, according to the usual formula, and adhering to this format, the secretary of the *kosmoi* group is named last.

Ducrey and van Effenterre cross-referenced names occurring in the Ini inscription with those featuring in the epigraphical records of other major centres on the island.[136] The name Pratomenes appears in inscriptions from Chersonisos, Lato, and Hyrtakina,[137] the name of Exakestas occurs at Knossos,[138] while the name Sokles is evident at Olous.[139] Somenos appears at both Pyloros[140] and Arkades where it is also associated with the patronym Karanos.[141] Ducrey and van Effenterre posited that the common patronym suggests that both inscriptions are referring to the same family and, consequently, that the *kosmos*, Dinokles, was the father of one of the stewards, Philinos Dinokleos.[142] Moreover, they also suggested that the *protokosmos*, Pratomenios, was the uncle of the other steward, Sokles Pratomedous,

---

[133] Herakleion Museum no. 346; *SEG* XXVI.1044; Ducrey and van Effenterre 1973: 281.

[134] Sanders 1982: 12-13.

[135] Ducrey and van Effenterre 1973. It is clear that the *kosmoi* supervized the upkeep and functioning of the baths but those who actually performed the associated menial tasks, such as cleaning the baths, is unknown. The discovery of a set of three iron-hinged manacles, which had been cut open, in a cavity in the face of the wall of the public bath at Knossos may be significant in this regard (*ARepLond* 1993-1994: 75-76). Trajan characterized the task of cleaning the baths as tantamount to punishment, akin to cleaning the sewers, probably due to the fact that most *hypocaust* cavities are only one meter high (Fagan 1999: 188; Pliny, *Epist.* 10.32 2).

[136] Ducrey and van Effenterre 1973.

[137] *IC* I vii 15, I xvi 33, *IC* II xv 8a.

[138] *IC* I viii 40.

[139] *IC* I xii 44.

[140] *IC* I xxv 2.

[141] *IC* I v 36.

[142] Ducrey and van Effenterre 1973: 285, no. 1, 286-87.

provided that Pratomenios and Pratomedes are, as the patronym suggests, two brothers, presumably from one of the elite families on Crete.[143] The same observations can be applied to the inscription from Aphrati where one of the *ergepistatai*, Kallicrates son of Aristokles, could be the son of the Aristokles Apollonida, also mentioned in the list of *kosmoi*.[144]

The homonymic evidence conforms well with Aristotle's observations that the Cretan *kosmoi* were chosen from certain clans and privileged hereditary groups.[145] Willetts suggested that although this kind of closed oligarchy was to some extent modified, at least in certain cities, it is likely that the Cretan cities were governed under aristocratic regimes until the island passed under the control of the Roman imperialists.[146] The onomastics in the inscription at Ini indicates that the integrity of the preceding system survived under Roman rule; a continuum which seems to contradict Strabo's claim that few of the famous *nomina* of the Cretans survived as they lived according to the *diatagmata* or decrees of the Romans.[147]

The inscription attests that the traditional elite Cretan families of the Hellenistic period were reinstated as mediators in the Roman period thereby endorsing a fluid transfer of overall power. As such, the Ini inscription demonstrates the manner in which Roman culture merged with the indigenous Cretan traditions, with evidence that, at least in some cases, the traditional local elite acted as mediators and defenders of the habits of Rome; the magistrates who superintended the baths were all Cretan, *i.e.*, none of their names are Roman or Romanised. The inscription demonstrates that in Crete the traditionally elite families were promoted as the instigators and mediators of Roman order and activity on behalf of the indigenous population, a dynamic attested throughout provincial administration.[148]

Yet Downs argues that if the indigenous elite welcomed, and even mediated on behalf of, a Roman presence, it does not automatically guarantee that the remainder of the population, who had relatively less to gain, responded in kind.[149] The inscription at Ini is testimony to the broader population's acceptance of this Roman constitution by virtue of the fact that it constitutes a bath timetable outlining the schedule for male and female bathing thereby illustrating the public nature of the bathing therein. The bath, despite being referred to as a *balaneion* in its associated inscription, is clearly a public facility as can be deduced by the need for such a timetable and by the fact that the structure is supervised and maintained by the *kosmoi*.[150] Such broad participation in bathing refutes

---

[143] Ducrey and van Effenterre 1973: 286-87.

[144] *IC* I v 5.

[145] Arist., *Politics* II vii 5-6 .

[146] Willetts 1969: 156..

[147] Strabo, *Geog.* 10.4.22; Woolf 1994: 122-23

[148] Whittaker 2009: 196-97.

[149] Downs 2000: 207.

[150] Ducrey and van Effenterre 1973: 287, n.13. *The* term is thought to correspond to the Latin *balneum* (Staccioli 1955: 391-401), general definitions of which often generate false images of flimsy dilapidated structures with no clear symmetry whose associated communities only aspire to transform these paltry installations into *thermae*; however, the confusion in dealing with precise terminologies is exemplified by Dio who refers to the baths of Agrippa and of Titus as both *thermae* and a *balaneion* respectively (54.29.4; 66.25.1).

claims, commonly argued, that discord arose between the 'upwardly mobile' indigenous elite and the remainder of the native population elsewhere in the Empire.[151]

The inscription from Ini outlines the separate bathing hours for the sexes indicating that women would bathe from (such) an hour to (such) an hour while the men from (such) an hour.[152] The specific figures are not cut in the stone and were presumably painted on to allow for changes to the prescriptions according to the season.[153] As the Ini inscription distinguishes between male and female bathing times, the inscription has been attributed to the Late Antonine period, possibly to the reign of Marcus Aurelius, when measures for the segregation of bathing were reportedly reinforced, thereby highlighting Crete's adherence to imperial policies.[154] The segregation of the sexes could be achieved in two ways: through the use of a timetable, as at Ini, or through the use of alternative establishments.

The fixing of a timetable for the opening hours of a public building is a regular occurrence in Roman society, as attested by the regulations of the library of Pantainos in Athens which reveal that the library was open from the first hour until the sixth.[155] The regulation of a public bath, however, differs appreciably from that of a public library as the baths' opening hours were correlated with the availability of running water which could be regulated with the use of a stop-cock.[156]

The Ini inscription suggests a model for the workings of the bath whereby the presence of such a timetable implies that there was no need for the architecture to demonstrate distinct areas for men and women. It was usual for women to bathe first, probably in the morning or in the early afternoon, while men entered the same rooms later after they had been vacated. A similar inscription pertaining to a small bathhouse at Vipascum in Portugal bears testimony to this sequence in outlining the bathing times for men and women.[157] The fact that the Ini inscription allows for a degree of change in the hours assigned for the bathers even makes it feasible for the baths to open overnight.

Ducrey and van Effenterre demonstrate convincingly that the Ini inscription establishes that the local governing elite continued in their traditional role as *kosmoi*

---

[151] See Hingley 2005: 42-43.

[152] Ducrey and van Effenterre 1973: 281.

[153] Nielsen refers to the inscription at Ini as a graffito (1990, 135, n. 4). This is misleading as the main body of text survived as an inscription and only the hours were painted.

[154] Ducrey and van Effenterre 1973: 281, 284. The practice of mixed bathing was reportedly prohibited by the emperors Hadrian (Scriptores Historiae Augustae 18.10), Marcus Aurelius (Scriptores Historiae Augustae 23.8; Dio LXIX viii 2) and Severus Alexander (Scriptores Historiae Augustae 24.2; Bowen Ward 1992: 142; Wikander 2000: 572; Yegül 2010: 33); but caution should be taken in transposing such sources into architectural chronologies. Even claims that the practice was largely restricted to courtesans and condemned by respectable citizens is a point of heated debate. During the reign of Caracalla the mixing of the sexes was supposedly re-introduced due to popular demand, and the baths, which were usually only used during the daytime, were open all night but any such liberties were apparently short-lived since women were forbidden access to the *thermae* by the Council of Laodicea in AD 320, although the reimposition of such a prohibition by John Chrysostom at the end of the 4th century AD suggests a lapse in adherence to these regulations.

[155] Ducrey and van Effenterre 1973: 287.

[156] Wilson 2001: 93.

[157] *CIL* II.5.181; Yegül 2010: 33-34; Laurence *et al.* 2011: 204.

during the Roman period, yet it also demonstrates that their spheres of concern widened to embrace monuments emblematic of the Empire including baths and aqueducts (1973). If the administrators are of old Cretan stock, their role now pertains to a thoroughly Roman institution. A review of the traditional tasks associated with the Cretan *kosmoi* is informative with regard to the tasks attributable to the magistrates at Ini. An inscription from Arkades concerning the reconstruction of the sanctuary of Artemis at Aphrati (*IC* I v 5) is instructive in this regard as its format is identical to that of the inscription from Ini. The inscription from Aphrati mentions *ergepistatai* (Thomas 2007: 242) in its list of *kosmoi* and it is likely that they had a similar function as the treasurers of the Ini inscription; by inference, it seems that the expertise of the magistrates at Ini was not only financial, but very probably practical. They were accountable for the city's expenses and also responsible for the supervision of the public works. It is not known why they have a distinct title in the sanctuary inscription. The role of these two magistrates is clear, adhering closely to the function of an *aedile*, governing the management of the surveillance of baths, fountains, roads, markets, *etc.*; tasks which were usually attributed to the group of *kosmoi* called *eunomia* in other sites in Crete, notably Lato.[158]

At Ini, Ducrey and van Effenterre believed that this supervisory role incorporated the care of the aqueduct and proposed that the original text in the *hiatus* at line 3 (where the inscription is unfortunately illegible) would have outlined this [τὸ ὑδραγώγιον τὸ ποτεχό]με[ν]ον.[159] It is possible on the basis of the broad sense of the verb ἐπιμελέσομαι, in line 2, that it could be assigned to the overall supervision and expenses of the bathing installation, including the upkeep of the aqueduct. Consequently, it has been suggested that the inscription may commemorate the construction of the entire bathhouse complex including its aqueduct.[160] Moreover, the finite verb ἐπιμελήθη appears in Greek inscriptions of the Roman period, occurring twice at Kourion to describe the action of a proconsul of Cyprus regarding construction which was either initiated or authorized and financed by the emperor.[161]

The social significance of the Ini inscription secures it as one of the most enlightening discoveries regarding Roman bathing practices on Crete. The sources are, by their nature, generally restricted to male-dominated activities such as participation in local civic life (in the Panhellenion, in the Roman auxilia and state);[162] however, the Ini inscription sheds light on the general participation of women in a daily activity.[163] The Ini text indicates that Crete was very much in rhythm with general Roman trends and adhered to imperial

---

[158] Hayden 2004a: 228.

[159] Ducrey and van Effenterre 1973: 287, n.113.

[160] Ducrey and van Effenterre 1973: 287.

[161] Baldwin Bowsky 2001: 269.

[162] Derks and Roymans 2009: 8.

[163] Baldwin Bowsky's work targets disproportionate representation in the scriptive record (1994: 26) and she addresses the common inclusion of women, admittedly those connected with high-class families, in prosopographical studies of Crete whereby those featuring in the Cretan inscriptions often display dual ethnicity judging from the Greek personal names that persist in the onomasticon (Baldwin Bowsky 2000: 66; 2006: 415).

regulations. The inscription, its findspot and associated architecture touches upon a broad range of Romanizing issues. The ambiguity of cultural identity manifested by Cretans with Cretan names administering the Roman institution of public bathing serves to illuminate the nature of Roman intervention in Cretan affairs. The buildings, to which the inscription refers, follow recognizably Roman architectural types. The edifices are notable in the landscape, being constructed predominantly of red brick, while the aqueduct approaching the bathhouse is dramatically elevated on an arcade. We are presented with a textual, administrative, and architectural testimony which illustrates the Roman method of permeating Cretan spheres of government which reveals that Crete was in harmony with the trends of Rome whereby almost the entire civic population (both male and female) partook on a daily basis in one of the most definitive Roman pursuits, that of bathing.[164]

Conclusion

If the first century of Roman rule in Crete (*c.* 36 BC-AD 64) is marked by a noted conservatism, as is argued from an analysis of the ceramics and burial traditions at Knossos, this was followed by a Roman infiltration mediated by the local elites; an influence that initially emanated from Campania via the colony at Knossos, the capital at Gortyna, and other Cretan centres of influence.[165]

The rise of the villa in Roman Crete is representative of the nature of Roman mediation whereby the elite embraced Roman culture and promoted this affiliation throughout the wider populace. Romanization may have been initially spurred on by the wealthy elite who had much to gain but was clearly also palatable to the indigenous masses who benefited from the salubrious nature of Roman urbanity, as the public nature of the Ini inscription attests. That this format was successful is also complemented architecturally in the second century AD when both baths and aqueducts were widespread, synchronizing with a burst of construction throughout this century characteristic of Roman rule. Clusters of bathhouses appear at centres from the second century AD onwards, notably at Gortyna, Khania, Lappa, Eleutherna, Knossos and Kastelli Kissamou, while also appearing as isolated constructions throughout the Cretan landscape (see Figure 2).

The distributions of aqueducts and bathhouses on Crete display a slight predilection for the coast over the inland pre-Roman sites; however, to say that the Romans ignored the interior of the island, as has been previously implied, is unfounded. There was a significant number of flourishing inland Cretan cities; these include Ini, Lyttos, Gortyna, Lappa, Elyros, Eleutherna, Sybritos, and Axos with others of less renown at Plora, Vizari, Kato Asites, Ligortynos, and Oleros. Public bathing establishments in coastal locations are represented by Kastelli Kissamou, Khania, Aptera, Chersonisos, Lebena, Stavromenos Chamalevri, Knossos, Sitia, Kouphonisi, Hierapytna, Plakias, Loutro, Souia, and Lissos. If location alone is considered, as opposed to quantity, there is not such a huge disparity between the number of sites with public bathhouses in the interior of the island and those located coastally; however, the coastal sites incorporate a multiplicity of bathhouses and if baths, rather than

---

[164] Ducrey and van Effenterre 1973: 290.

[165] Hayes 1983: 97-169; *ARepLond* 1987-1988: 88-104; Sackett *et al*. 1992: 147.

cities, are counted, then the statistics lean favourably towards coastal sitings. It can be concluded that while the island demonstrates a high degree of Romanization percolating into the interior, there is still a slight majority of wealthy and developed Romanized centres along the coast.[166]

It was perhaps only in the second century AD that the architectural components of the island truly reflected its active and integral role in the Roman Empire. It is perhaps only at this stage that a broader influence becomes apparent, notably from Lycia and south-west Asia Minor and, to a lesser extent, central North Africa, demonstrated by the preference for the spacer pin heating system associated with small baths in these regions.[167] If many Cretan baths are relatively small in scale, their size is merely reflective of their associated population size (and, generally speaking, bath designs were highly sensitive to societal idiosyncrasies); by the same token, if the city expanded, so too did its baths, in both scale and number (as evidenced in the provincial capital at Gortyna).

The architecture emblematic of Roman influence throughout the Empire at its height was generally a hybrid of varying influences: indigenous and exotic, traditional and unconventional. Cretan bathhouses too present a balance in their design, blending local materials and building traditions with Roman architectural standards and templates, giving rise to a regional island style which, although undeniably Cretan in flavour, was overarchingly and distinctly Roman.

---

[166] Moreover, if *opus caementicium* is identified in the cores taken from the harbour at Chersonisos by *The Roman Maritime Concrete Study* (ROMACONS), the harbour, its city, and Crete will be drawn into Roman economic trading spheres on an unforeseen level, linking it directly with the pozzolana factories operating from Rome to the Bay of Naples (the most famous near Pozzuoli, ancient Puteoli) (Brandon, *et. al.* see webpage). The fact that the *castellum* of the Chersonisos aqueduct is the largest cistern on the island (with a capacity of *century* 7,018m³ – Mandalaki 1999: 263) affirms the immense potential of the 14km-long aqueduct leading towards the port city (Oikonomaki 1986: 52). Mandalaki notes that parallels for the massive dimensions of the cisterns at Chersonisos could only be found outside Crete, in Italy, and North Africa (1999: 263).

[167] Kelly 2006b: 252.

Bibliography

Alcock, S. 1993. *Graecia capta*: *the landscapes of Roman Greece*. Cambridge.

Alcock, S. E. 2000. 'Heroic myths: but not for our times', in E. Fentress (ed.) *Romanization and the city*: *creation, transformations, and failures*. Proceedings of a conference held at the American Academy in Rome to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the excavations at Cosa, 14-16 May, 1998 (JRA Supplementary Series 38): 22-26. Portsmouth, RI.

Altamore, G. 2004. 'Ville e edifici-laboratorio sui litorali cretesi: architettura, paesaggio e attività produttive', In *Creta Romana e Protobizantina II, Atti del Congresso Internazionale* (Iraklion, 23-30 settembre 2000): 257-68.

Andreadaki-Vlazaki, M. 1983. 'Μαράθι Στέρνων Κυδωνίας' *ADelt* 38b²: 368.

Andreadaki-Vlazaki, M. 1991. 'Σταυρωμένος Χαμαλευρίου' *ADelt* 46b²: 429-31.

Baldwin Bowsky, M. 2009. 'Downstairs, upstairs: Tonnius and other Romans at Eleutherna, Sector I', in P.G. Themelis (ed.) *Ancient Eleutherna Sector I*. Volume I: 198-223. Athens.

Baldwin Bowsky, M. W. 2006. 'Roman patronage, Greek identity: how Lyttos finally won the war against Knossos', *Πεπραγμένα τού Θ' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου*: 407-19. Herakleion.

Baldwin Bowsky, M. W. 2004. 'Of two tongues: acculturation at Roman Knossos', in G. Salmeri, A. Raggi and A. Baroni (eds) *Colonie Romane nel Mondo Greco*: 95-150. Rome.

Baldwin Bowsky, M. W. 2002. 'Colonia Iulia Nobilis Cnosus (Creta)' Πρακτικά ΙΑ´ Διεθνούς Συνεδρίου Κλασσικών Σπουδών (Καβάλα 24-30 Αυγούστου 1999): 75-89. Athens.

Baldwin Bowsky, M. W. 2001. 'A Temple of Hermes at Sybritos: on the Road from Gortyn to the Diktynnaion (Crete)' *ASAtene* 79: 263-76.

Baldwin Bowsky, M. W. 1995a 'Roman Crete: no provincial backwater' '*Πεπραγμένα τού Z' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου* A1: 41-67. Khania.

Baldwin Bowsky, M. W. 1995b. 'Eight inscriptions from Roman Crete' *ZPE* 108: 263-80.

Baldwin Bowsky, M. W. 1994. 'Cretan connections: the transformation of Hierapytna' *Cretan Studies* 4: 1-44.

Bennet, J. 1990. 'Knossos in context: comparative perspectives on the linear B administration of LMII-III Crete' *AJA* 94: 193-211.

Bowen Ward, R. 1992. 'Women in Roman Baths' *HTR* 85, No. 2 (April): 125-47.

Brandon, C., Hohlfelder, R. L., Oleson, J. P. and Stern, C. *The Roman maritime concrete study (ROMACONS): research at the Roman harbour of Chersonisos in Crete, 2001 and 2007*.
http://web.uvic.ca/~jpoleson/New%20Material/Chersonissos%202007/Chersonissos%202001-7%20Web.htm (website last accessed July 2013).

Casson, L. 1994. *Ships and seamanship in the ancient times*. London.

Chaniotis, A. 1988 *Vinum Creticum excellens*: *zum Weinhandel Kretas*. Münstersche Beiträge zur antiken Handelsgeschichte 7.1: 62-89.

Chaniotis, A. 1999. 'Milking the mountains', in A. Chaniotis (ed.) *From Minoan farmers to Roman traders*: *sidelights on the economy of ancient Crete*: 181- 220. Stuttgart.

Chaniotis, A. 2004. 'From communal spirit to individuality: the epigraphic habit in Hellenistic and Roman Crete', *Creta Romana e Protobizantina. Atti del congresso internazionale. Iraklion 23-30 settembre 2000*: 75-87. Padua.

Clarke, J. R. 1998. *Looking at lovemaking. Constructions of sexuality in Roman art*, *100 BC-AD 250*. Berkeley.

Comber, M. 2001. 'Trade and communication networks in early historic Ireland' *Journal of Irish Archaeology* 10: 73-92.

De Caro, S. 1992-1993. 'Vino di Cnosso dei Campani: un nuovo documento epigrafico per la storia del Vino Cretese in Età Romana' *ASAtene* 70-71: 307-12.

DeLaine, J. 1988. 'Recent research on Roman baths' *JRA* 1: 11-32.

DeLaine, J. 1997. *The baths of Caracalla. A study in the design, construction and economics of large-scale building projects in imperial Rome* (JRA Supplementary Series 25). Portsmouth, RI.

Derks, T. and Roymans, N. (eds) 2009. *Ethnic constructs in antiquity: the role of power and tradition* (*Amsterdam Archaeological Studies* 13). Amsterdam.

Dillon, M. 1997. *Pilgrims and pilgrimage in ancient Greece*. London.

Di Vita, A. 2000. 'Prefazione – Il Pretorio fra il I Secolo a.c. e l' VIII d.c.', in A. Di Vita (ed.) *Gortina V.1*: Lo Scavo del Pretorio (1989-1995)* (*Monografie della Scuola Archeologica Italiana di Atene e della Missioni Italiane in Oriente XII*): i-lxxiv. Padua.

Di Vita, A. 2004. 'Gortina. Archeologia e storia di una città antic' *Creta Romana e Protobizantina. Atti del congresso internazionale*. Iraklion 23-30 settembre 2000: 459-76. Padua.

Dixon, S. 2008. 'Gracious patrons and vulgar success stories in Roman public media', in S. Bell and I. Lyse Hansen (eds), *Role models in the Roman world: identity and assimilation (Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome. Supplementary Volume 7*): 57-68. Ann Arbor.

Donderer, M. 1989. *Die mosiazisten der antike und ihre wirtschaftliche und sociziale stellung*: *eine quellenstudie*. Erlangen.

Downs, M. E. 2000. 'Re-figuring colonial categories on southern Spain's frontier', in E. Fentress (ed.) *Romanization and the city*: *creation*, *transformations*, *and failures*. Proceedings of a conference held at the American Academy in Rome to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the excavations at Cosa, 14-16 May, 1998 (JRA Supplementary Series 38): 197-210. Portsmouth, RI.

Ducrey, P. 1969. 'Trois nouvelles inscriptions Crétoises' *BCH* 93: 841-52.

Ducrey, P. and van Effenterre, H. 1973. 'Un règlement d'époque Romaine sur les bains d'Arcadès' *KrChr* 25: 281-90.

Dyson, S.L. 1992. 'Roman Sardinia and Roman Britain', in R. H. Tykot and T. K. Andrews (eds) *Sardinia in the Mediterranean: a footprint in the sea. Studies in Sardinian archaeology presented to Miriam S. Balmuth* (Monographs in Mediterranean Archaeology 3): 484-92. Sheffield.

Dyson, S. L. 2000. 'The limited nature of Roman urbanism in Sardinia', in E. Fentress (ed.) *Romanization and the city: creation, transformations, and failures.* Proceedings of a conference held at the American Academy in Rome to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the excavations at Cosa, 14-16 May, 1998 (JRA Supplementary Series 38): 189-96. Portsmouth, RI.

Eiring, J. 2004. 'The earliest Italian sigillata at Knossos', in J. Poblome, J. Talloen, P. Brulet and M. Waelkens (eds), *Early Italian sigillata. The chronological framework and trade patterns*. Babesch Supplement Series 10: 71-72. Leuven.

Empereur, J., Kritsas, C., and Marangou, A. 1991. 'Recherches sur les amphores crétoises II: Les centres de fabrication d'amphores en Crète centrale' *BCH* 115: 481-523.

Fagan, G. G. 1999. *Bathing in public in the Roman world*. Ann Arbor.

Fagan, G. G. 1996. 'Sergius Orata: inventor of the hypocaust?' *Phoenix* 50, 1: 56-66.

Farrington, A. 1987. 'Imperial bath buildings in south-west Asia Minor', in S. Macready and F. H. Thompson (eds) *Roman architecture in the Greek world* (Occasional papers (new series) 10. The Society of Antiquaries of London): 50-59. London.

Farrington, A. 1995. *The Roman baths of Lycia: an architectural study* (The British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara. Monograph 20). London.

Farrington, A. 1999. 'The introduction and spread of Roman bathing in Greece', in J. DeLaine and D. E. Johnston (eds) *Roman baths and bathing, first international conference part 2* (JRA Supplementary Series 37): 57-66. Portsmouth, RI.

Forster, G. 2009. *Roman Knossos: the pottery in context. A presentation of ceramic evidence provided by the Knossos 2000 Project (1993-95).* unpublished PhD dissertation. University of Birmingham.

Gerola, G. 1908. *Monumenti Veneti dell' Isola di Creta II*. Venice.

Grahame, M. 1998. 'Rome without Romanization: cultural change in the pre-desert of Tripolitania (first-third centuries AD)' *OJA* 17.1: 93-111.

Haggis, D. 1996a. 'Archaeological survey at Kavousi, Crete: preliminary report' *Hesperia* 65: 373-432.

Haggis, D. 1996b. 'The port of Tholos in eastern Crete and the role of a Roman horreum along the Egyptian 'Corn Route'' *OJA* 15.2: 183-209.

Harrison, G. W. M. 1993. *The Romans and Crete.* Amsterdam.

Hayden, B. J. 2004a *Reports on the Vrokastro area, eastern Crete volume 2: the settlement history of the Vrokastro area and related studies* (University of Pennsylvania. Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology Series). Philadelphia.

Hayden, B. J. 2004b. 'The Roman period in the Vrokastro area, Eastern Crete', in *Creta Romana e Protobizantina II, Atti del Congresso Internazionale* (Iraklion, 23-30 settembre 2000): 269-80.

Hingley, R. 2005. *Globalizing roman culture: unity, diversity, and empire*. New York.

Holland, L. B. 1944. 'Colophon' *Hesperia* 8: 91-171.

Hood, M. S. F. and Smyth, D. 1981. *Archaeological survey of the Knossos area* (BSA Suppl. no. 14). London.

Houston, G. W. 1987. 'Lucian's *Navigium* and the dimensions of the *Isis*' *AJP* 108, 444-50.

Kelly, A. 2011. 'Occide, verbera, ure! *"Kill him, flog him, burn him alive!"* (Seneca *Epistles* 7); The popularity, extent, and duration of Roman *Spectacula* on Crete.' *The 10th International Congress of Cretan Studies* 1-6th October 2006. Vol. 5A. Chania: 77-94.

Kelly, A. 2006a. 'The impact of constructing aqueducts on the settlement patterns of Roman Crete' *Cura Aquarum in Ephesus. The 12th international conference on the history of water management and hydraulic engineering in the Mediterranean region. Ephesus. October 2-10, 2004*. Volume II: 303-10. Leuven.

Kelly, A. 2006b. 'The Roman baths of Mylopotamos: a distribution study' *International Conference for Mylopotamos, Rethymno. October 2003*: 239-52. Rethymno.

Kelly, A. 2004-2005. 'In search of a Roman bath-house in the Malia area' *BCH* 128-29 (2.1): 607-27.

Kelly, A. 2004. *The Roman aqueducts and bathhouses of Crete*. Unpublished PhD thesis. Trinity College Dublin.

Kirsten, E. 1980. 'New light on Artemis Dictynna' *Πεπραγμένα τού Δ' Διεθνούς Κρητολογικού Συνεδρίου* Α' (1): 261-70.

Krencker, D., Krüger, E., Lehmann, H., and Wachtler, H. 1929. *Die trierer Kaiserthermen*. Augsburg.

Lancaster, L. 2008. 'Roman engineering and construction', in J. P. Oleson (ed.), *Oxford handbook of engineering and technology in the Classical world*: 256-84. Cambridge.

La Rosa, V. 1990. 'Gortyna' *ADelt* 45b²: 431.

Laurence, R., Esmonde-Cleary, S., and Sears, G. 2011. *The city in the Roman West, c. 250 BC-c.AD 250.* Cambridge University Press.

Livadiotti Rocco, M. 2004. 'Criteri di Datazione delle Murature di Età Romana a Gortina: Confronti con Altre Aree di Creta. Atti del congresso internazionale.' *Iraklion 23-30 settembre 2000*: 739-49.

Lolos, Y. A. 1997. 'The Hadrianic aqueduct of Corinth' *Hesperia* 66: 271-314.

Mandalaki, S. 1999. 'Χερσόνησος' *KE* 7: 244-63.

Marangou, A. 1999. 'Wine in the Cretan economy', in A. Chaniotis (ed.), *From Minoan farmers to Roman traders*: *sidelights on the economy of ancient Crete*: 269-78. Stuttgart.

Marangou-Lerat, A. 1995. *Le vin et les amphores de Crète*: *de l'Époque Classique à l'Époque Impériale* (*EtCret* 30). Paris.

Markoulaki, S. 1999. 'Κισάμος' *KE* 7: 183-213.

Markoulaki, S. 1991-1993. 'Πόλη Χανίων. Ανασκαφή Οικοπέδου Γκαρά'. *KE* 4: 206-07.

Markoulaki, S. 1990. 'Χανιά' *ADelt* 45b²: 435-40.

McKay, A. G. 1975. *Houses, villas, and palaces in the Roman world*. London.

Melfi, M. 2007a. *I santuari di Asclepio in Grecia.* I. Rome. Erma di Bretschneider.

Melfi, M. 2007b. *Il santuario di Asclepio a Lebena. Monografie della Scuola archeologica di Atene e delle missioni italiane in Oriente XIX.* Athens.

Morizot, Y. 1994. 'Artémis l'eau et la vie humaine', in R. Ginouvés, A.-M. Guimier-Sorbets, J. Jouanna, and L. Villard (eds), *L'eau, la santé et la maladie dans le monde Grec* (*BCH* Supplément XXVIII): 201-61. Paris.

Nielsen, I. 1990. *Thermae et Balnea. The architecture and cultural history of Roman public baths*. Aarhus.

Nielsen, I. 1999. 'Early provincial baths and their relations to early Italic baths', in J. DeLaine and D. E. Johnston (eds), *Roman baths and bathing. First international conference part 2* (JRA Supplementary Series 37): 35-43. Portsmouth, RI.

Oikonomaki, N. E. 1986. 'Το Υδραγωγείο της Χερσόνισου' *Λυκτος* 2: 50-98.

Papadakis, N. P. 1986. 'Κουφονήσι Σητείας' *ADelt* 41: 228-31.

Papadakis, N. P. 1983. *Sitia, fatherland of Myson and Kornaros*. Sitia.

Papadakis, N. P. 1980. 'Μακρύ Γιαλός' *ADelt* 35b²: 524-25.

Papadakis, N. P. 1979. 'Μακρύ Γιαλός Σητείας' *ADelt* 34b²: 406-09.

Paton, S. 1994. 'Roman Knossos and the Colonia Julia Nobilis Cnossos', in D. Evely, H. Hughes-Brock, and N. Momigliano (eds), *Knossos*: *a labyrinth of history. Papers in honour of Sinclair Hood*: 141-55. Oxford.

Pendlebury, J. D. S. 1939. *The archaeology of Crete*: *an introduction*. London.

Percival, J. 1976. *The Roman villa: an historical introduction*. London.

Raab, H. A. 2001. *Rural settlement in Hellenistic and Roman Crete*: *the Akrotiri Peninsula*. (BAR International Series 984). Oxford.

Rackham, O. and Moody, J. 1996. *The making of the Cretan landscape.* Manchester.

Ramsden, S. E. 1971. *Roman mosaics in Greece*: *the mainland and the Ionian islands*. PhD dissertation. Institute of Archaeology, London.

Rigsby, K. J. 1976. 'Cnossos and Capua' *TAPA* 106: 313-30.

Rowland, R. J., Jr. 1981. *I Ritrovamenti Romani in Sardegna*. Rome.

Rowland, R. J., Jr. 2001. *The periphery in the centre. Sardinia in the ancient and medieval worlds* (BAR International Series 970). Oxford.

Sackett, L. H., Branigan, K., Callaghan, P. J., Catling, H. W., and E. A., Coldstream, J. N., Higgins, R. A., Popham, M. R., Price, J., Price, M. J., Waywell, G. B., and others.

1992. *From Greek city to Roman colony: excavations at the unexplored Mansion II* (British School at Athens Supplementary Volume 21). London.

Sanders, I. F. 1982. *Roman Crete. An archaeological survey and gazetteer of late Hellenistic, Roman, and early Byzantine Crete*. Warminster.

Seager, R. B. 1906-1907. 'Excavations at Vasiliki, Crete, in 1906' *Transactions of the Department of Archaeology, Free Museum of Science and Art* II: 111-32. Philadelphia.

Smith, J. T. 1997. *Roman villas. A study in social structure*. London.

Soles, J. S. 1973. *The Gournia house tombs: a study of the architecture, chronology, and use of the built rectangular tombs of Crete*. PhD dissertation. University of Pennsylvania, University Microfilms. Ann Arbor.

Staccioli, R. A. 1955. *Tracce di Terme 'Pompeiane' a Roma, Amor di Roma*. Rome.

Sweetman, R. J. 2007. 'Roman Knossos: the nature of a globalized city' *AJA* 111: 61-81.

Sweetman, R. J. 2003. 'The Roman mosaics of the Knossos Valley' *BSA* 98: 517-47.

Sweetman, R. J. 2001. 'Roman mosaics in Crete: workshops or itinerant craftspeople', in D. Paunier and C. Schmidt (eds), *La mosaïque Gréco Romaine VII. Actes du VIIIeme colloque international pour L'Étude de la Mosaïque Antique et Mèdiévale*. Volume I: 249-60. Lausanne.

Sweetman, R. J. 1999. *The mosaics of Roman and early Christian Crete*. Ph.D. dissertation. University of Nottingham.

Taramelli, A. 1902. 'Cretan expedition. Gortyna' *AJA* 6: 101-65.

Themelis, P. G. (ed.) 2009. *Ancient Eleutherna Sector I*. Volume I. Athens.

Themelis, P. G. 1994-1996. 'Ελεύθερνα' *ΚΕ* 5: 267-83.

Theofanidis, B. Δ. 1950-1951. ''Ανασκαφαὶ Μινώας-Κυδωνίας-Κρήτης' *ArchEph*: 1-13.

Thomas, E. 2007. *Monumentality and the Roman Empire. Architecture in the Antonine age*. Oxford.

Tomber, R. S. 1996. 'Provisioning the desert: pottery supply to Mons Claudianus', in D. M. Bailey (ed.), *Archaeological research in Roman Egypt: The proceedings of the 17th Classical colloquium of the Department of Greek and Roman Antiquities, British Museum held on 1-4 December 1993* (JRA Supplementary Series 19): 39-49. Ann Arbor.

Tronchetti, C. 1987. 'The cities of Roman Sardinia', in M. S. Balmuth and R. J. Jr, Rowland (eds), *Studies in Sardinian Archaeology*: 237-81. Ann Arbor.

Tzedakis, Y. 1979. 'Νομός Χανίων' *ADelt* 34b²: 390-401.

Waelkens, M. 1989. 'The Greek Renaissance in the Roman Empire', in S. Walker and A. Cameron (eds), *The Greek Renaissance in the Roman Empire. Papers from the tenth British Museum Classical colloquium* (Bulletin Supplement 55. University of London. Institute of Classical Studies): 77-88. London.

Wardle, K. 2000. 'Knossos 2000' http://artsweb.bham.ac.uk/aha/kaw/Knossos/athletes.htm (website last accessed in July 2013).

Watrous, L. V. 1982. *Lasithi: a history of settlement on a highland plain in Crete* (*Hesperia* Supplement 18). Princeton.

Webster, J. 2001. 'Creolizing the Roman provinces' *AJA* 105: 209-25.

Whittaker, D. 2009. 'Ethnic discourses on the frontiers of Roman Africa', in T. Derks and N. Roymans (eds), *Ethnic constructs in antiquity: the role of power and tradition. Amsterdam Archaeological Studies* 13: 189-206. Amsterdam.

Wikander, Ö. (ed.) 2000. *Handbook of Ancient Water Technology*. Leiden.

Wilson, A. I. 2001. 'Urban water storage, distribution, and usage in Roman North Africa', in A. O. Koloski-Ostrow (ed.), *Water use and hydraulics in the Roman city* (Archaeological Institute of America. Colloquia and Conference Papers 3): 83-96. Boston.

Woolf, G. 1994. 'Becoming Roman, staying Greek' *PCPS* 40: 116-43.

Yegül, F. K. 2000. 'Memory, metaphor, and meaning in the cities of Asia Minor', in E. Fentress (ed.), *Romanization and the city*: *creation*, *transformations*, *and failures. Proceedings of a conference held at the American Academy in Rome to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the excavations at Cosa*, *14-16 May*, *1998* (JRA Supplementary Series 38): 133-53. Portsmouth, RI.

Yegül, F. K. 2010. *Bathing in the Roman world.* Cambridge.

Yegül, F. K. 1992. *Baths and bathing in Classical antiquity*. Cambridge.

Zajac, N. 1999. 'The *Thermae*: a policy of public health or personal legitimation?', in J. DeLaine and D. E. Johnston (eds), *Roman baths and bathing*. First international conference part 2 (JRA Supplementary Series 37): 99-105. Portsmouth, RI.

THE 'ROMANIZATION' OF PETRA[1]

MATTHEW PEACOCK

In early autumn 114 AD, eight years after the Roman annexation, an honorific inscription to the Emperor Trajan was unveiled in Petra. The inscription was displayed upon an arch in the commercial heart of Petra, and to build that arch a section of an existing colonnade was removed. Behind the arch, a new staircase, by far the widest and perhaps grandest in Petra, led up through new and old shops to a square, the so-called 'Upper Market'. This square had to be cut out of the side of the hill: material from the partially-demolished colonnade was used in the construction of the retaining wall for the new public space built above and behind it.[2] The whole project is reminiscent of Trajan's Market in Rome itself, built by that emperor's architect, Apollodorus of Damascus.

In Petra, some of the stone dug out to create the 'Upper Market' appears to have been used on other new construction projects of early second century date, such as the *bouleuterion-theatron* installed in the so-called 'Great Temple'. Across the street from the arch, the Roman period saw the addition of a Nymphaeum to the spectacular water-features of the city. Travelling west along the redeveloped Colonnaded Street, one passes, particularly on one's left hand side, other structures built or significantly altered under Roman auspices, such as the 'Great Temple', until one reaches, at the top of this ancient ceremonial way, the greatest temple of Petra, the Qasr el-Bint. Its main altar was re-clad in marble in the Roman period. A second altar was added, along with a monumental *exedra* on the west side of the temple's *temenos*, probably intended to display statues of emperors and members of the imperial family.[3] Meanwhile, up on the el-Katute ridge, behind these buildings, not long before or after the Roman annexation of Petra, a wealthy man decorated one of the rooms in his Hellenistic-inspired mansion in something very similar to the 'Fourth Pompeian Style' (in Pompeii, that would mean late first century AD). He also laid in a

---

[1] My thanks to Dr. Ted Kaiser for commenting on a draft of this article.

[2] Kanellopoulos 2002: 295-308, *contra* Parr 2007: 293-95: the reuse of material from the colonnade elsewhere in this complex of buildings (Kanellopoulos 2002: 297ff.) is strong evidence for it being one big job, even though the only solid evidence for dating the paving is the pair of coins of Rabbel II found in its substructure. In a subsequent article, Kanellopoulos demonstrates convincingly that the basic unit of measurement used in the construction of the 'Upper Market' staircase is the Roman foot: Kanellopoulos 2003: 151.

[3] Augé, Renel, Borel, and March 2002: 309-13. Inscriptions in honour of Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus have been found from the *exedra*, one of the very few dateable examples of public works from the second half of the second century AD.
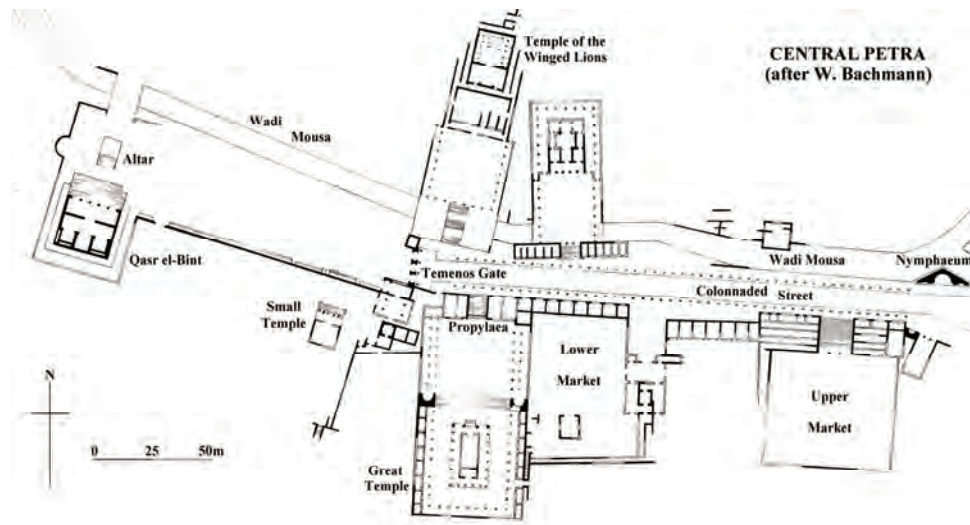
heated bath-house,[4] a demonstration of conspicuous wealth in an area where water was precious and firewood in short supply.

This paper will explore some of the areas in which an association with Rome clearly had an impact on Nabataea – and *vice versa* – to see what Romanization might have meant in a place so far away from Rome and as apparently unique as Petra. Unfortunately, it is rarely possible in Petra to say for certain whether changes were made on the orders of the Romans or by enthusiastic locals. It is not unlikely though that major public works required at least the permission of the Roman administration, following similar systems to those Pliny described for Bithynia-Pontus.[5] Major transformations to urban centres in the immediate aftermath of Roman annexation were common in Roman Palestine, Syria, and Arabia and many other parts of the Roman world. On the other hand, Roman influences, direct and indirect, on the fabric, fortunes, and *fellahin* of Petra did not begin with the annexation of Nabataea in AD 106. Decisions taken by distant Romans had been impacting on Nabataean life for over 150 years.[6] Romanization is of course a complex process compressed into a simplistic term which has evolved over a century; from the bare choice between acceptance and resistance, later deconstructed into post-colonialist ideas of fusion culture, was then modified to account for different levels of interaction with

---

[4] This is the house known as EZ IV: see Kolb and Keller 2002: 279-93; also Kolb 2007: 167ff.

[5] Book 10 of Pliny's *Letters* contains versions of letters written in the same years as the Roman annexation of Nabataea.

[6] It should not of course be forgotten that the Nabataeans brought a little of their own culture to Italy, as is shown by the altar, *baetyls*, and inscribed dedications to Dushara found at Puteoli. There are two dateable inscriptions from this location, the first from Year Eight of Malichus I (53/52 BC), and the second, commemorating the restoration of the Nabataean temple, from Year Fourteen of king Aretas IV (5/6 AD).

Rome depending on factors such as military necessity, race, or class.[7] Yet it still remains in essence a term implying confrontation and ethnic separation.

1. Petra between East and West

By the end of the fourth century BC, growing international trade energized by the Hellenistic economy transformed the Nabataeans from nomadic herdsmen into a nation with international connections. The exact origin, or origins of the Nabataeans, whether they were indigenous to Petra, and how their ethnicity evolved due to immigration before and after the Roman annexation, are all controversial topics that cannot yet be decided with any certainty. For instance, a study of Nabataean personal names has shown that there were very strong regional differences and thus perhaps strong local ethnic identities across the area of Roman Arabia[8]. The city of Petra was nurtured in the wilderness by the Nabataeans' supreme talent for making the most of a few springs (the nearest is 3.5km from the city) and less than 10cm of precipitation a year across the 140 square kilometres of land which drain into the Petra basin. The Nabataeans are rightly famous for the elaborate cisterns and high-pressure water pipes which they engineered not only to manage water in the dry season, but also to control the violent floods which carved out canyons such as the famous Siq, which is 330m deep in places.

Petra is a dispersed site approximately 11 km in diameter. It is built into a natural basin surrounded by rocky heights and cliffs, into which many of its most famous monuments are cut. The Khazneh for instance, familiar from *Sinbad and the Eye of the Tiger* (1977) and other, lesser films, can be shown to date from the early first century BC or first century AD, because very similar structures at Medain Saleh in Saudi Arabia have dated inscriptions from this period. It was part of the rapid urbanization and Hellenization of Petra in these two centuries, typified by the emergence of urban identity unified by new public buildings. The main theatre in Petra, for instance, was constructed in the first century AD, and used for both secular and religious purposes. This urban centralization was maintained after the Roman annexation in 106 AD: the Romans kept the theatre in good repair, extended it and added marble statues to the already rich ornamentation of the *skene*.

Petra between 106 AD and the 363 AD earthquake is still an under-discussed subject, in spite of Bowersock's landmark *Roman Arabia*,[9] the many excellent contributions by Graf and others and the important article by Fiema,[10] compared with the Nabataean period or the Byzantine. Millar said that Petra in the Roman period 'seems to have lived on as a smallish provincial town like any other, with little development and hence very little trace of the

---

[7] The concept of Romanization was invented and first discussed by Francis Haverfield in 1906. For recent discussions, see, *e.g.*, Webster 2001; Woolf 1997; Hingley (2005) argues against the view which Potter (1999: 152) described as 'a discourse of domination.'

[8] Negev 1991. *Cf.* Graf 2004: 146: the 'Nabataean' Aramaic script also shows significant regional differences.

[9] Bowersock 1983.

[10] Fiema 2003: 38-58.

usual building inscriptions'.[11] In Taylor's excellent recent book on Petra,[12] Chapter Four on the transition from independent state to province is entitled *Days of glory, days of dust.*

Nabataea and its economy, and Petra in particular, did not go into decline in the second century AD, though there were problems in the third and fourth centuries. What does seem to have happened is that, after an initial burst of investment,[13] the city had to rely more on its own resources. This is not at all unlike, for instance, Wroxeter (Viroconium) in Roman Britain, where there was a real attempt in the first half of the second century AD (probably under Hadrian) to develop the city's baths and other civic institutions. Towards the end of the second century, this level of investment could not be sustained, as central government and military resources were diverted to the Danube and elsewhere, and Wroxeter's civic buildings went into noticeable decline. Petra too could not afford to rely on handouts from the central government, and it seems, for the most part, not to have needed to.[14] It had well-developed agriculture, viticulture, and industry before the annexation and after it. Cirencester (Corinium), with its vibrant wool-trade, a well-chosen location for Romaniz-ation, is a better western parallel for Petra than Wroxeter[15].

Petra seems to have done well enough until the later third century. A few Nabataeans (or Jews from Nabataea) joined the enemy in the Bar Kochba rebellion,[16] but the province as a whole stayed loyal and contributed troops to suppress the Jews. Arabia did not

[11] Millar 1993: 421.

[12] Taylor 2002.

[13] Whilst significant investment in Petra can be ascribed to the reign of Trajan, none can be ascribed to Hadrian – it is not even certain that he visited the city on which he bestowed the title *Hadriane* during his eastern tour of 130 AD. The main focus of this emperor's reign in Arabia appears to have been road-building, for instance the road from Gerasa via Adra'a to Bostra, century 120 AD.

[14] Bostra perhaps had a similar history under Rome and it may have been given the title *Nova Traiana* by Trajan. See Isaac 1992: 349ff. Bostra had potentially a much larger garrison than Petra (*i.e.*, a full legionary fortress) and a temple for Roma and Augustus but the town does not seem to have expanded very much in the Roman period. However, it is true that much of the archaeology in the north part of the city, closest to the Roman camp, has been lost. There are colonnaded streets here that seem to date to the Severan period, and, two things that are lacking from Petra, an amphitheatre and public baths. Most of the building inscriptions from the town date to the second half of the third century AD or later and are connected with the strengthening of the defences of north-east Arabia at this time. Isaac argued that the local population and the military did not mix to any great extent in Bostra. This was on the basis, firstly, that unlike at, say, Gerasa no municipal magistrates or *bouleutai* seem to have served in the army, nor do officers appear to have performed civic functions. Latin grave inscriptions are mainly confined to the military and female relatives of soldiers do not seem to have local names (though this evidence should not be pushed very far). Such evidence as survives seems to indicate that few civilians or local officials in Bostra possessed the *tria nomina*, apart from a small number of *bouleutai*. Many civilians and very few soldiers bear Semitic names. It is possible that this pattern would be found at Petra as well, had we comparable levels of evidence.

[15] Admittedly, both of these towns were founded on largely virgin sites, but Corinium did inherit the advantages of the nearby Iron Age *oppidum*.

[16] Such as Soumaios, the writer of P. Yadin 52. Babatha, compiler of a papyrus archive to which I will refer several times in this article, herself died in the company of a group of rebels, hiding out in the caves near Ein Gedi. See also Graf 2007: 179.

support the rebellions of Avidius Cassius or Pescennius Niger, and in the third century the governor P. Aelius Severianus Maximus staunchly supported Septimius Severus, as did *Legio III Cyrenaica*, which was rewarded with the title *Severiana*. The Leja and Jebel Druz were confiscated from disloyal Syria and added to Arabia. There is no indication of how Petra was treated during the Palmyrene occupation of the Near East (269-272). Petra was given responsibility for south Palestine during the reorganization by Diocletian. However, the resources of the East and of the Empire were stretched very thin by this point. In 313 AD, Christianity was proclaimed the official religion of the empire. In 330 AD Constantine transferred the capital of the Roman Empire to Byzantium. Christian martyrs from Arabia and in particular Petra are known from the persecution of Diocletian. Eusebius later described Petra as being filled with pagans – but also refers to the existence of fourth century churches.[17]

The inhabitants of Roman Arabia had long since learned the benefits of keeping their noses clean, however, and Petra survived its vicissitudes without serious calamity until the earthquake of May 19, 363 AD[18], even though the danger to Roman Arabia from the East increased considerably in the third century. Many new military installations and roads were constructed in the Tetrarchic Period. The first known war against the Saracens occurred in 290 and pressure from these tribes increased thereafter. Other tribes across the border were now forming powerful confederations[19] – a problem not just limited to Arabia, of course. From the first century until long after the 363 AD earthquake, no Parthian or Persian troops reached Arabia.

Perhaps precisely because it was relatively untroubled, there are hardly any references to Roman Petra in historiography. But dateable epigraphy from the Roman period is also

---

[17] The mid-fourth century Bishop Asterius of Petra is known for switching sides in the Arian controversy. He was restored as Bishop of Petra by Julian the Apostate in 362, one year before the earthquake.

[18] *Cf.* Parr 2007: it is difficult to ascribe particular structures or structural developments to just before or just after the annexation, and the same is true of the earthquake of 363 AD. The mid-fourth century, rather ramshackle shops, that encroached on the Colonnaded Street could be pre- or post-earthquake. These structures contain plenty of coins from 363-400, but very few later ones. The inner town wall in the north part of the city was built after the earthquake, showing at the same time retrenchment and the capability to carry on.

[19] *Cf.* Isaac 1992: 72-73: Safaitic graffiti, written by various pastoralist tribes moving between the Hauran and the desert, mention the Romans regularly, and a few mention even describe skirmishes and cross-border raids. The graffiti are not easy to date but are presumably from the first three or four centuries AD. The phenomenon of tribal coalitions can be observed at least as early as *c.*166 AD, in the famous bilingual Greek and Nabataean inscription from Rawwafa, about 225km south-south-east of Aqaba. See Bowersock 1994; Millar 1993: 140 and Graf 1978. The Nabataean section reads: 'For the well-being of the rulers of the whole world [.. Marcus] Aurelius and Lucius Aurelius Verus, Conquerors of Armenia, this is the temple which the confederation of the Thamudeni built, the leaders of their confederation, in order that it might be [established] by their hand and worship conducted [for them forever]. Through the encouragement of Antistius Adventus the governor [who..] and made peace among them.' Of course, the Nabataean state itself was a much earlier example of the same phenomenon. Millar noted that the inscription does not prove that Rawwafa was within Arabia province.

rare; Romanization in the East in the second century AD and later is difficult to distinguish from re-Hellenization; high-value coinage from any period is rare in Petra, from the Roman period above all;[20] phases of artefact evolution in the second and third centuries AD are not particularly well-defined; intact burials are extremely rare; more could certainly be done to unite scattered references to such Roman small finds as managed to outlast flash floods, scouring winds, and treasure-hunting.

By the time of its annexation,[21] the kingdom stretched from the fertile fields of the Hauran, now in Syria, down through Moab, Edom, and the Hisma Desert to the Gulf of Aqaba. In the West it included the Wadi Araba, Negev Desert, and much of the Sinai peninsula. In the South, Nabataean control reached at least as far as Medain Saleh in the Hedjaz. In the East the Nabataeans had some sort of presence in the Wadi Sirhan. Long before the annexation of Nabataea in 106 AD, this significant kingdom was, technically, a client state of Rome. However, its distance from the major centres of the Roman empire[22] gave its people a certain autonomy, and its neutrality was often more useful than its subjection would have been.

In the Hellenistic Period, the Nabataeans did very well out of their neutral position between the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires, as intermediaries for trade that could not be conducted directly (Rhodes earned a similar living). The Euphrates river was always the main route for trade and other traffic between Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean. A rather circuitous second route connected Sura (possibly the ancient Thapsacus[23]) on the Middle Euphrates to Tyre, via Palmyra and Damascus: the Nabataeans controlled Damascus in the early first century BC and probably again in the 40's AD,[24] until they were deprived of the city and the traffic through it by Rome. A Roman road was being pushed north-east along this ancient corridor by 75 AD, built during the reign of one of the most profit-orientated Emperors, Vespasian.

Petra still had the much longer caravan trail from Babylon, Seleucia, or Charax to Jawf, Ma'an, and Petra, and in the west, the roads to Gaza[25] and via the Sinai and Eilat to Memphis[26]. The heavy use of the former road ended in the third century, though it is not clear why. A diminished Mediterranean (or Roman) market for luxury goods in the troubled

---

[20] Indeed, a substantial amount of the early second century Roman coinage in Arabia is just restamped Nabataean coins.

[21] For a full, narrative history of Petra and Nabataea, see Negev 1977; Bowersock 1983; Lindner 1989; Taylor 2002.

[22] Petra is *c*. 650km from Antioch, *c*.540km from Alexandria and *c*. 2420km away from Rome (making it *c*. 500km further from Rome than the Antonine Wall in Britain).

[23] Brennan 2008.

[24] 2 *Corinthians* 11:32; Bowersock 1983: 68. *Cf. Galatians* 1:17 on the *ethnarch* of King Aretas IV in Damascus. On the Nabataeans and Damascus, see Bowersock 1983: 23-27; Sullivan 1990: 72-75.

[25] The road is mentioned by Pliny, *NH* 6.144. Merchants travelling from Pelusium to Petra on a daily basis are attested in *P. Karanis* 466: they may have used part or all of this road, to avoid crossing the Sinai. For the Petra-Gaza road in the Roman period, see Cohen 1982: 240-47.

[26] Strabo, *Geog.* 14.4.2; Pliny *NH* 6.145 refers to merchants of Petra travelling to Forat and Charax. *Cf.* Lindner 1989: 110.

third century may have had a negative impact on Petra. However, a new road and easier road across the Negev was built by Diocletian, associated with increasing urbanization in that area, population growth making settlement of the Negev worthwhile, and perhaps changes in settlement patterns across the whole of Roman Arabia.[27] The last group of new *unguentaria* produced in Petra was found in the context of coins of Septimius Severus, Caracalla, and Alexander Severus in the Temple of the Winged Lions. After that, as far as the 363 earthquake, the perfume and incense industry recycled its bottles[28].

It is probably due to the fierce independence of the Nabataeans that the wars between the Ptolemies and Seleucids were played out in Coele-Syria on the coast, rather than directly across the desert. Seleucus used a desert route when he returned to Babylon to establish his kingdom there, bypassing Antigonus in Syria.[29] This, in turn, may have led to Antigonus' attack on the Nabataeans in 311, the point at which they first appear for certain in the historical record. And so, just possibly, without the co-operation of the Nabataeans, therefore, there would have been no Seleucid dynasty and empire in the first place. Ptolemy must have been on good terms with them, perhaps inheriting an old Egyptian or Persian connection, or perhaps simply thanks to his own generous nature[30].

It is also very likely that Ptolemy later sent reinforcements to Seleucus through Nabataea. Arrian, *Indica* 43.4-5 is a digression which appears to be based on a radically different source from the surrounding narrative. This may be a third century source, on the basis that it apparently does not know anything about the sea route around the Arabian peninsula. It may even be Ptolemy himself. Arrian says that Ptolemy sent reinforcements to Seleucus through the desert by camel. Travelling at night because of the heat, they took just eight days to make the journey from Egypt to Babylon: significantly less time than it took Demetrius the Besieger to reach Babylon from Tripolis. Given, then, that it was possible – though very dangerous, due to the nomads of the area, not to mention the Nabataeans – to travel between Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean or *vice versa* through the Petra area, it is perhaps odd that this route does not seem to have been used militarily again in the Classical Period. The Seleucids and Ptolemies, and for that matter the Roman Empire and the Parthians, had good financial reasons to trade with each other, even if they did not admit it.[31]

---

[27] Taylor 2002: 195, 199. The Negev was also benefiting from increasing Christian pilgrimage by this time. On Nabataean trade in general, see in particular Young 2001: 90-135.

[28] Fiema 2003: 48ff.

[29] Diod. 19.90f. is less than specific on the route that Seleucus took. The first named place which the author mentions is Carae, which is usually taken to be Carrhae, right up near the Armenian border. But Diodorus does not say that this was the first place that Seleucus reached. He could have taken the route via Palmyra (see Grainger 1990: 74-75) but in 312 BC Ptolemy was on the point of withdrawing from Palestine altogether. He possessed Gaza, Tyre, and Sidon and a little of the surrounding country, but not much more, and Antigonus' son Demetrius not only controlled Tripolis but was able to march right down to Azotus *before* negotiating with Ptolemy. It seems likely that Seleucus would have had to keep quite a long way to the south of Antigonus' front line in Phoenicia, and therefore that he may have gone through Nabataea.

[30] *cf.* Diod. 19.86, where the governor of Tyre and Seleucus are examples of Ptolemy's generous nature.

[31] Over and above all the trade which was mediated by Palmyra, note Juv., *Sat.* 11.126 from the first third of the second century AD, referring to ivory being handled at Petra. If this is not a mistake,

It is unclear to what extent the Romans were interested militarily in the eastern border of their new province. There are six satellite military installations around Petra, in addition to those of Petra itself, and anything up to 100 towers, most of which have been identified as Roman,[32] but most of which cannot be dated at all precisely[33]. Some may have been (at times) fortified houses. For instance, there is one approximately nine kilometres north-north-east of Petra. Pottery suggests occupation from the second century AD onwards. However, overall there seems to have been a concentration of military outposts, inherited by and built by the Romans, protecting a strategic zone between Petra and Ma'an, where the traditional caravan routes came out of the desert and intersected with the old King's Highway, now the *Via Nova Traiana.* The Romans do seem to have had a military outpost well to the east of Petra, at Jawf in the Wadi Sirhan, by the third century AD,[34] but this may have been as much to do with the copper mines there[35] as border defence against major incursions. Nevertheless, there is no good reason to deny that the *Via Nova Traiana*, the Arabian equivalent of the Fosse Way, was built for defensive reasons, to allow Roman forces to be kept in concentrations but to move quickly to trouble-spots. That it would help develop trade and, like Hadrian's Wall, channel customs revenue, was probably of secondary, but not minor importance.

Petra clearly needed long-distance caravan trade, even if many modern accounts print standard maps showing the connections between Petra and Babylonia but then proceed to ignore them. Transport by land was more expensive and took longer than transport by sea.[36] The discovery in the Late Hellenistic Period of the monsoon winds would have had a serious impact on trade with India, but the spice harvests of Arabia did not coincide with these winds. Yet Strabo[37] reported that bandits in the Leja were attacking traders coming up from Arabia Felix. In spite of competition from sea-borne transport of incense, and whatever the Romans may have been doing to increase the profits of Egypt, caravan-loads were still worth sending via Petra.[38] We do not know, for instance, how customs duties on

then it is possible that this was Indian ivory, transported either by sea to Aqaba or by land across Asia. Graf 1994: 175 notes the elephant-headed capitals of Indian style from the Lower Temenos of the Great Temple.

[32] See Kennedy 2004: ch. 17.

[33] For instance, there is the observation point on the conical rock overlooking the 'suburb' of Shammasa, 3km north of Petra: this undateable and precipitous outpost seems to be defensive, guarding said suburb and its wineries. See Lindner and Gunsam 2002: 225-42.

[34] *cf.* Speidel 1987: 211-21; Bauzou 1996: 23-35; Bowersock 1983: 118f.

[35] On copper mining at Fenan, which seems to have been significant during the Edomite period, to have tailed off under the independent Nabataeans but to have been revitalized by the Romans, see de Vries 1992, 503-42. Anything up to 200,000 tons of copper-smelting slag can be found there: see Pigott 1996: 147ff. Mampsis seems to have been the main centre of this traffic.

[36] Fiema 2003: 39 refers to Pliny *NH* 6.101-104 (frankincense from Cane in south Arabia could reach Alexandria in approximately 54 days by ship) and compares this with Strabo, *Geog.* 16.4.4 and Pliny, *NH* 12.64 (the overland journey from the frankincense-producing countries to 'Aqaba or Gaza took at least 70 days).

[37] Strabo, *Geog.* 16.2.20

[38] Strabo, *Geog.* 16.4.4. Note also *Periplus Maris Erythraei* 19 (mid-first century AD).

the land route from the Yemen to Gaza compared with the charges levied in Egypt, or how labour charges in the perfume industry compared between Alexandria and Petra,[39] or the relative likelihoods of a bandit attack on land against a shipwreck (or pirate attack) on the sea. Pliny noted the existence of a second (spring) harvest of incense, obviously introduced to meet demand, but at a time when sailing was particularly risky.[40] All the signs point towards industrialization and an increasingly sedentary lifestyle in Nabataea, especially from the first century AD, in response to Hellenistic and even more so Roman demands for luxury goods. From 106 AD, the Romans, if they had not come to Nabataea to take over its commerce and industry, would nevertheless quickly have realized that they had also taken over the responsibility of the Nabataean kings to protect traders.[41]

2. The Roman annexation

The reason why Trajan, son of a former governor of Syria, annexed Petra in the same year as his second invasion of Dacia has been much discussed and the extremely small amount of relevant evidence has been much lamented. Such evidence as there is,[42] including the *Arabia Adquisita* coins, even though they were only issued after the completion of the *Via Nova Traiana*, seems to indicate a largely peaceful process (certainly one that could not compare to the Roman exploits in Dacia). Trajan never took the title Arabicus, unless it originally stood in one of the lacunae on the Petra arch. It seems unlikely that the annexation had nothing to do with Parthia, or with the forthcoming invasion of Parthia, even if, in the event, Arabia was never highly militarized. It might have been partly an attempt to cut the links through the desert between the Jews of Judaea, the Jews of Nabataea (many of whom were refugees from Vespasian's Jewish War, as we can see from the Babatha papyri) and the Jews of Babylonia (a connection which led to the major revolt at the end of Trajan's reign), it might have been partly aimed at preventing a Parthian counter-attack through the desert or protecting that route for Roman use (though as far as we can tell from the limited

---

[39] *Unguentaria* were mass-produced in Petra between the first and at least the early third century AD.

[40] Pliny, *NH* 12.32.58-60

[41] There is undated evidence of a Roman desert patrol protecting the security of caravans in the Hejaz (outside of the province, strictly). The members of the *Ala Dromedarium* are recorded in graffiti well south of Hegra, probably dating to the late second or early third century AD.

[42] There are no contemporary accounts of the annexation: Dio 68.14.5 says κατὰ δὲ τὸν τοῦτον χρόνον καὶ Πάλμας τὴν Συρίας ἄρχων τὴν Ἀραβίαν τὴν πρὸς τῇ Πέτρᾳ ἐχειρώσατο καὶ Ῥωμαίων ὑπήκοον ἐποιήσατο ('About the same time, Palma, the governor of Syria subdued the part of Arabia around Petra and made it subject to the Romans.'). Palma was given *ornamenta triumphalia*, a statue in the *Forum Augustum* (*ILS* 1023) and a second consulship for 109. Ammianus Marcellinus' later version (14.8.13) is: *Hanc provinciae imposito nomine, rectoreque adtributo, obtemperare legibus nostris Traianus compulit imperator* ('It was given the name of a province, assigned a governor, and compelled to obey our laws by the emperor Trajan'). Neither discusses the reasons for the annexation. There is a military diploma dated to 24 September 105, which appears to record forces moving from Egypt to Judaea in preparation for the annexation: *Cohorts I Hispanorum and I Thebaeorum* (*RMD* I: 9 – see Kennedy 2004: 39). *Cf.* also Festus 14.3, Eutropius 8.3, Jerome *ad Euseb. Chron.* 2.220.

sources for that war, the desert route was not used by either side), or it might have been a fund-raising exercise, but if it was, it was not for the short term, as is shown by the massive investment in Petra and by the building of the *Via Nova Traiana*. There is perhaps one more possibility: it has been argued that destruction layers in some of the houses in the ez-Zantur area of Petra were due to violence at the time of the annexation. However, the excavators of that area have also suggested that the destruction was caused by an earthquake, otherwise unknown.[43] The possibility must exist that the annexation was made in response to or to take advantage of a crisis in Petra, perhaps violence connected with the death of the last king Rabbel II[44], or perhaps a natural disaster at around the same time.

The new province incorporated all of the former Nabataean kingdom, right down into the Hedjaz. Some of the Decapolis cities were hived off and incorporated in the new province: Adraha, Dium, Gerasa, and Philadelphia (Amman). The Romans extended the existing road network of the southern Decapolis, most notably in the form of the *Via Nova Traiana*, which ran the length of the province, from Bostra – a city that had developed very rapidly in the first century AD – down to Aqaba. It did not, as is shown on some maps, bypass Petra. Rather, the earliest dated milestones (111 AD) refer to the Petra section of the road, and the latest (114 AD) to the Bostra section.[45] Milestone evidence also seems to show that the road was kept in good order through to the fourth century. However, many more minor roads were also developed. It may well be due as much to improved communications as anything else that Gerasa, Bostra, and other towns and villages in the Decapolis, Hauran, and Negev grew significantly or were even re-occupied. The economics of supplying the Roman military presumably also played a part, and to some extent this process had been happening even before 106, as the Nabataeans invested more in settled agriculture. By 106 AD, Bostra may have had a population similar to that of Petra (*c.*30,000). Under Roman rule it was a seat of provincial government and the base for *Legio III Cyrenaica* (Ptolemy *Geog.* 5.17 – the camp has been found, together with many military inscriptions).[46] It became the centre for an agonistic province-wide festival,

---

[43] See Kolb and Keller 2002: 286. The ash layer associated with the early second century destruction phase is apparently very thin. See also Stucky, Gerber, Kolb, and Schmid 1994: 271-92. There is a little evidence of damage elsewhere in Petra in a similar chronological context – the theatre seems to have needed repairs in about 114 AD. House 1 on ez-Zantur was not reconstructed after its destruction in the early second century, until the early fourth century. The other houses, apparently, were repaired and inhabited continuously until the 363 AD earthquake and beyond.

[44] Real or alleged internal instability was not an uncommon reason or justification for Roman intervention: *cf.* Tac., *Hist.* 4.73-4.

[45] *E.g.*, *CIL* III.14176 2-3: Trajan 'redacta in formam provinciae Arabia viam novam a finibus Syriae usque ad mare Rubrum aperuit et stravit per C. Claudium Severum leg. Aug. pr. pr.' ('having reduced Arabia to the status of a province, he opened and paved a new road from the borders of Syria to the Red Sea, by the agency of C. Claudius Severus, praetorian imperial legate').

[46] See Starcky 1966: 919f.; Fiema 2003: 43ff. argues that the inscription *CIS* 28 of AD 93, referring to 'our lord Rabbel who is in Bostra', need not imply that Bostra had become the capital of independent Nabataea – it might just refer to a royal residence there, and that the badly damaged inscription from 108/9 AD, said to prove that there was an 'Era of Bostra', actually just gives the Arabian provincial era. The notion that provinces had fixed capital cities may be incorrect: see Millar 1993: 94-95.

the *Actia Dusaria*, that commemorated both the chief deity Dushara and the Battle of Actium. It was begun by the Emperor Philip, possibly at the same time as he made Bostra a metropolis. But Petra was Trajan's metropolis, and under that emperor there was only one per province and it referred to the most important urban centre in that province.[47] Petra later received the honorific title Hadriana, probably during the emperor's visit to the Middle East in 130/131 and it was granted *colonia* status by Elagabalus. The honorific title *metrocolonia* is attested for Petra in third century epigraphy and in the sixth century papyri. The title seems to refer to the most important colony in the area: other examples in the Near East are Palmyra and perhaps Emesa.[48]

3. Roman influences on the buildings of Petra

Dating the structures of Petra can be an art as much as a science, due to the paucity of building inscriptions. The local sandstone is unsuitable for epigraphy. Limestone and marble were also used but only survive in small quantities, the local limekilns having presumably accounted for much of this material. Dedications and other information may have been painted onto stuccoed or plastered surfaces (as they were for the tombs), again with a very poor rate of survival. Coins seem to survive poorly in this environment, and detritus can travel long distances due to flood and wind, not to mention souvenir-hunting. It seems that the first free-standing buildings of Petra were of rough but solid stone construction, laid onto the *wadi* gravel; sandstone ashlar construction seems to begin in the early first century BC, at around the same time as the creation of the first securely dateable rock-cut monument in Petra, Triclinium 21.[49] The town probably grew from a relatively small area on the banks of the Wadi Musa and the slopes of ez-Zantur. There was probably always some portion of tented settlement as well. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholarship tended to assign much of the urbanization of Petra to the Roman period. This was followed by a period in which many of the important structures, at least in their earliest phases, were dated to the independent period. More recently still, the Romans' contribution to Petra is receiving new attention.[50] Current research tends to date the initial phases of the Colonnaded Street, the Qasr el-Bint with its Temenos Gate, the Temple of the Winged Lions and the Theatre to the later first century BC or first century AD. What happened after that is much more controversial.

The original Colonnaded Street, the main street through the centre of Petra, must be later than the walling beneath the street's south portico, which is associated with approximately two dozen coins from the reign of Aretas II (*c.*100-96/92 BC) and a few sherds of early Nabataean fine ware. Work done by the American Centre for Oriental Research in 1997 in the eastern part of the street, in the vicinity of Trajan's arch and the stairway up to the so-called Upper Market, has shown that the stairway is of the same date as the pavement of the

---

[47] Bowersock 1983: 79-80.

[48] *Cf.* Millar 1993: 418.

[49] Parr 2007: 283-84: Triclinium 21 dates to the first year of Obodas I (96 or 92 BC).

[50] Fiema 2003: 47: 'A massive 'town dump' located in the *el-Katute* area, which contains predominantly first-century AD ceramics, would indicate considerable clearance and activities in the city during the early provincial period.'

street.[51] A coin of Rabbel II (dated to 76-101) was found beneath the limestone paving of the latest street. This remodelling of the city's main artery could have taken place under the last king, but it is more plausible to assume it took place after the annexation, as with very similar streets in Philadelphia, Gerasa, and Bostra. The street, on the route of an ancient ceremonial road, leads up to the Temenos Gate at the entrance to the Qasr el-Bint. The Gate in its present form is built on top of the Street, making it probably Roman-period structure, though its precise date remains unclear. The Street and the Gate were buried by the earthquake of 363; a few rough and short-lived shops were built on top of the street (see above) but neither street nor gate were properly cleared, and by late antiquity, this once magnificent boulevard was reduced to a humble track through the ruins.

Up behind the Street and the 'Upper Market', House II on ez-Zantur and the houses on the lower slopes of the el-Katute have coins of Aretas IV in levels giving *termini post quem* for their construction. There is no pottery of the early 'naturalistic' floral style in the el-Katute houses (a type of pottery dating to the last years BC and the first few years AD) but there is some in the levels under House II on ez-Zantur. Although some parts of ez-Zantur and el-Katute were abandoned during the Roman period and although there does not seem to have been any significant new construction in third-century Petra, most of these areas were inhabited continuously throughout. House EZ4 on ez-Zantur, for instance, a richly decorated mansion, was inhabited continuously from before the Roman period until the 363 earthquake. But right throughout this period and beyond, private houses in Petra generally do not contain any Graeco-Roman room types[52] or arrangements.

Coming back down to the Colonnaded Street, the next major area that requires discussion is the so-called 'Lower Market',[53] a flat terrace measuring 65x85m, more than 6m above the level of the Street, cut out of the cliff.[54] Since 1998 it has been generally accepted that this space was in fact a *paradeisos*,[55] featuring a grand formal pool, 2.5m deep, with an island pavilion at its centre, and probably a formal garden as well. It appears that the pool and its environs were originally the work of Aretas IV,[56] perhaps replacing an

---

[51] Fiema 1998: 490-516

[52] Exceptions include EZ I (burned down in the early second century, the Graeco-Roman touches appear to date to the fourth-century rebuilding) EZ IV (referred to at the beginning of this chapter) and the 'Governor's Palace' on Tell ej-Judeideh. Overall, private buildings from Petra typically have flat clay roofs and small, dark, traditionally Middle-Eastern bedrooms.

[53] The name was the creation of von Bachmann in 1921. See Kanellopoulos and Akasheh 2001: 5-7.

[54] See Bedal 2004: 41. It is estimated that up to 33,280 cubic metres of rock would have had to have been removed to construct the terrace.

[55] Although there is no clear or direct link between Persian and Mesopotamian gardens and the Petra complex, Bedal 2004: 152-53 makes an interesting comparison with the palace of Hyrcanus at Tyrus in Transjordan. One of its most famous features was a giant artificial lake with a palace at its centre that could be reached only by boat.

[56] It has however been calculated that the units of measurement in the construction of this complex were Roman: see Chrysanthos 2003: 149-57. The pavilion, for instance, is 46 Roman *pedes* long and 36 *pedes* wide: its doorway is 16 *pedes* wide with 10 *pedes* of wall on either side. This if nothing else would suggest Roman-Herodian inspiration, but there are also the ornamental palace pools of Jericho, Masada, Herodium, and Caesarea Maritima – themselves partly based on Roman

older palace structure,[57] and that the Roman administration maintained it, and indeed made it more accessible to the public by building a bridge out to the island. Water-losses by evaporation must have been considerable, but could clearly be supported,[58] and indeed if the pool really was for swimming, as its excavators suggest, this may have made up for the fact that, as far as we know, there were no Roman (or indeed Hellenistic) public baths in Petra. Modern publications sometimes refer to the presence of baths, but that is purely on the basis of a structure so labelled by von Bachmann's expedition in the 1920s. The building they believed to be a set of baths does not have any mains water and may actually have been part of a first century BC private house. The expense of transporting enough fuel to Petra to heat a large *caldarium* would have been horrendous.

The pool was out of use and poorly maintained at some point in the later Roman period and early Byzantine, as can be seen by a thick build-up of silt in the pool at this time. It does not appear that anything was done about this before the 363 AD earthquake, which shattered the pavilion building and the bridge. The pool may have had connections with al-Uzza, goddess of fertility, and therefore could perhaps have suffered from neglect in the Christian period (the Christians had their own baptismal pools elsewhere). But in its heyday, the Roman administration, by means of the new bridge, seems to have opened up a previously exclusive space to a wider audience and more civic use. The same is true of the next structure along, which was clearly associated with the pool complex from the first – the 'Great Temple'.

Whether Nabataea had a Hellenistic constitution in the late Nabataean period, with a council and assembly of the people, is unknown, but Ptolemy lists it as a *polis*.[59] The first evidence for there being a *boule* in Petra is *P. Yadin* 12 (first half of 124 AD).[60] Chief city magistrates called *strategoi* are known from the early third century AD in Petra. The Babatha papyri[61] demonstrate that the provincial governor held assizes there periodically, and that Roman law was in operation, preventing Babatha from acting as guardian for her son Jesus (though making it possible for her to own land in her own right). At around the time of the annexation, a semi-circular theatre or *cavea* was built within the structure referred to for the last one hundred years as the 'Great Temple'. The stylobate at the front of the 'Temple' was walled in, creating a screen wall for the back of the stage of the

---

prototypes like Sperlonga – and the lost palace of Alexandria – to consider as the inspiration for the Garden Pool Complex of Petra. It is amusing to speculate on whether the 'Maritime Theatre' of Hadrian's villa at Tivoli might have been inspired by eastern pools and island pavilions.

[57] Bedal 2004: 73-74: the mortar joining the bridge piers to the base of the pool contains sherds of early second-century pottery.

[58] Bedal 2004: 101ff. describes the ornamental waterfalls of Petra, which like the pool would have refreshed the body and mind in such an environment. The largest was channelled through an artificial niche, twenty metres high, next to the Palace Tomb.

[59] Ptol., *Geog.* 5.17.5

[60] The first extant reference to the *boule* of Bostra dates to 138 AD *cf.* n.8.

[61] For a full account of Babatha's entanglements with the law, see Taylor 2002: ch.8; see also Goodman 1991: 169-75. For the effect of the new Roman law on Babatha's position, see Cotton 1993: 94-108.

theatre. Although it was clearly designed to function as a theatre,[62] it could also have been the meeting-place for the *boule*, which, it is clear from the Babatha papyri, had widespread responsibilities for the south half of the Roman province.[63] Seating for about 600 people would suit the typical size of a *boule* in an eastern city under the Roman Empire, and a fragmentary Latin inscription from the site includes the title TR POT.

The stairway up from the Colonnaded Street to the lower temenos of the 'Great Temple' seems to have been part of the major rebuilding work on that Street (see above). The 'Temple' itself seems to date to the mid- to late-first century BC, on the basis of McKenzie's analysis of its floral decoration and limestone capitals plus small finds and stratigraphy,[64] and to be of the same era as the Qasr el-Bint and Khazneh. Its columns, inside and out, had beautiful floral capitals with a certain Corinthian inspiration: typically Nabataean, but plastered and stuccoed and painted with a two-tone Hellenistic scheme. A statue base of Aretas IV is supported by a wall adjoining the temenos of the temple, apparently the last trace of a display of royal statues. But there is no indication that this tableau was harmed by the Romans or the locals in any way after annexation.

It has been questioned whether the 'Great Temple' was actually a temple at all.[65] No altar has been found on the site, and it has been pointed out that the complex as a whole, and several aspects of the building, such as its double interior colonnades, are very different from typical Nabataean sanctuaries.[66] It could even be that the Roman phase of this complex is the *Aphrodeision* mentioned in the Babatha papyri: *P. Yadin* 12 (first half of 124 AD) refers to the minutes of the *boule* of Petra being displayed in the *Aphrodeision*.[67] Alternatively, a representation of Tyche with turretted crown (as protectress of a city or nation) has been found in the vicinity of the Great Temple. And it seems that, at the same time as the building of the theatre, a small room identified as a

---

[62] Schluntz 1999: 54 refers to the six finely-carved limestone heads found on the site, which appear to be representations of actors' masks. The building had to be radically changed so as to provide the proper stage entrances and theatrical paraphernalia, see Schluntz 1999: 54, n.45.

[63] See Bowersock 1983: ch. 6 for discussion of the impact of Roman annexation on the day-to-day administration of Nabataea. Note also Oleson 1995: he theorises, based on Roman works at the Hawara bath-house, that the new régime controlled the distribution of water more formally, if not more tightly, than the kings had done. However, that seems to be a big argument to base on one stop-cock.

[64] Basile 2002: 331-45, esp. 343 for the dating. McKenzie 1990 is indispensable.

[65] The name comes from W. von Bachmann's 1921 plan. For the case that the 'Great Temple' was in fact a secular building all along, and for the rediscovery of the building and site by Brown University, start with Schluntz 1999.

[66] Tholbecq 2007: 133-35.

[67] A fragmentary inscription on a reused block found in 1992 in the Byzantine church in Petra, that refuge of displaced epigraphy, refers to one Aurelius Themos and his sponsorship of a building (unknown) in honour of σεβασμιω [τατης 'Αφρο]δειτης. Perhaps the inscription originally came from the *Aphrodeision* of Petra, and the adjective is the superlative form of the Greek equivalent of *augustus*. See Fiema 2003: 46f. It is not necessarily the case that because a building was referred to as an *Aphrodeision* in the Roman period, it was *only* known as an *Aphrodeision* in that period or only from that period.

chapel was permanently sealed off.[68] Further evidence in favour of the 'Great Temple' having had the role its modern name suggests was cited by Basile.[69] Apart from the religious and mythological scenes depicted on carved panels from the building, there are niches and other religious carvings in the building's Lower Temenos, and a small, presumably portable *baetyl*.

The idea that the Romans or Rabbel II converted a temple to secular use is highly unlikely, but it is not impossible that the building had some religious significance before and after its theatrical supplementation, even if it bears no resemblance to the Syrian 'theatre-temple'. Roman senate-houses were also temples, and many theatres featured prominent altars to Dionysus or closely-associated temples (the theatre at Pergamum, for instance). Also, whilst Schluntz's proposition that the building started out as a space for royal audiences and banquets, the characteristically Nabataean *triclinium* (such as that of Obodas, referred to below) had a clear religious dimension.[70]

Petra of course has a large theatre, with a capacity of several thousand, built by Aretas IV, probably inspired by Herod's Roman theatre at Caesarea Maritima[71] and kept in good repair during the Roman period. It may be that the 'Great Temple' was converted, either as an experiment in democracy or in emulation of other theatrical building conversions, for instance at Epidauros in Greece, by Rabbel II. However, it is clear that the Romans found a practical use for this space. Also, the probably administrative use of the 'Great Temple' should be seen in the context of the structures adjacent to it, just as the presence of the Pool Complex next door is probably the best proof that the 'Great Temple' was once a royal building.

To the west of the 'Great Temple', between it and the Qasr el-Bint, at the foot of the el-Katute, are the remains of the structure known as the 'Small Temple'.[72] It is on the same alignment as the Qasr el-Bint and the Temple of the Winged Lions, but aligned differently from the 'Great Temple' in the shadow of which it stands. This might have no significance at all for dating, however: it could be that the 'Small Temple' respects the alignment of an earlier structure on the site. Very little dateable ceramic material and no dateable coins in sealed deposits has not made dating the phases of this structure easy, but one of the interior platforms contains within its structure the base of a Nabataean lamp dating from between 1-70 AD.[73] Constructed on a raised platform four metres or more above the level of the courtyard in which it was located, it had steps leading to a portico on its north end (a 'prostyle' building), and is 14.62 metres or *c.*50 Roman feet square. However, these steps do not seem ever to have descended down to the original courtyard

---

[68] Joukowsky 2002: 315-30: 320ff. on the 'chapel'.

[69] Basile 2002: 341ff.

[70] As Schluntz (1999; 2004) admits during her argument that the 'Great Temple', before the theatre was added, was a royal banqueting hall.

[71] Hammond 1973: 51.

[72] Reid 2005.

[73] Reid 2005: 97.

level[74] and may have been largely decorative. Access to the temple would have been through a small side door (or possibly doors).

The aspect of the design of the 'Small Temple' which was most striking to its excavators was the use of different-coloured marble revetments on the interior walls and 'platforms', and in the exterior basins, and in the exterior corner alcove which was added to the building at a later stage and in a slightly ham-fisted way. There are also two marble panels inscribed in Greek:[75] the total number of marble fragments found by 2002 was 6173.[76] The current structure may be a building originally inspired by Roman models, either directly or via a figure like Herod, rather than one originally built by the Romans. Small amounts of decorative marble are not unknown in pre-Roman contexts on pre-Roman buildings in Petra (at the Temple of the Winged Lions, for instance). However, the structure was clearly used by or at least required in certain contexts by the new provincial administration, judging by the Latin dedication (probably to be associated with a statue) to Trajan, dating probably to between 106 and 114 AD.[77] There are other Latin dedications, one to either Severus Alexander or Elagabalus, and another fairly certainly for Severus Alexander, showing signs of *damnatio memoriae* erasures. Therefore, the building was in use until at least 235 AD,[78] and not ignored by the administration of the city or province. There are also several Greek inscriptions, but these are more fragmentary. Nevertheless, one in particular[79] seems further to support the idea that this building was a centre for the imperial cult, since it bears the words AR]ABIA and KTISTHS.

Whilst it cannot be proven who developed the temple to its final appearance (Romans, Nabataeans acting on their own initiative after the fashion of the amazingly competitive provincials mentioned in the Bithynian *Letters* of Pliny the Younger, Nabataeans obeying orders) nevertheless given the expense of transporting the marble and the location of the building, it was clearly meant to be a conspicuous symbol of the wealth, power, and the reach of the Romans (and of the connections of the people of Petra, come to that). Yet, at the same time, it could be said to be tastefully and tactfully small from a Roman point of view, especially if it was intended as a contrast with the much bigger 'Great Temple' nearby, possibly the seat of Petra's new local democracy. The elevation of the building might have been meant to echo the raised platforms at the heart of some of the High Places of worship in Petra, just as the three marble-clad couches within the building, perhaps intended to bear statues of the Capitoline Triad, seem to echo the typically-Nabataean *triclinium*.

---

[74] Reid 2005: 88: the lowest level of the steps appears to be 2.95m (*c.*10 Roman feet) above the courtyard, and many of the other measurements of the building correspond closely with standard Roman measurements.

[75] Reid 2005: 103.

[76] Reid 2005: 140. 44 marble samples were tested by isotopic analysis, and the results suggested that the marble came mostly from west Anatolia, the Balkans and the Cyclades.

[77] Reid 2005: 125.

[78] It is possible that the 'Small Temple' was destroyed deliberately – owing to the wide spread of the destruction debris – perhaps by iconoclastic Christians.

[79] Reid 2005: 133.

4. Other aspects of Romanization in Petra and Arabia Petraea

After the annexation, the Nabataean language was replaced for official purposes by Greek,[80] though it endured in graffiti into the fourth century AD, at least in peripheral areas such as the Sinai and Hedjaz. It may have been an ancestor of the script used in early Arabic papyri – though Nabataean has several cognate Late Aramaic scripts. A rock-cut tomb at the Qasr el-Bint in Medain Saleh has a Nabataean inscription dated to AD 267, indicating not only that the Nabataean language was still being used in the later Roman period, but also that the necropolis of Medain Saleh, or Hegra, was too. Another Nabataean inscription from this area dates to AD 356.[81] The name of the people, however, fairly rapidly disappears from our very limited evidence.[82] Graf points out that the auxiliary units drawn from the former Nabataean army – the *cohortes Ulpiae Petraeorum* – are not named for Nabataea,[83] but also in another place that locals do seem to have been recruited for local service. There is a Greek inscription from Hebran honouring one Aurelius Antonius Sabinus, a veteran soldier, perhaps a local, who had become the *patron* of a local tribe (215/6 AD).[84]

Just as the official language was replaced, so too was the coinage-system, though the constant references in the Babatha papyri to *denarii* do not appear to be supported by the finds. This same source tells us that in 127 AD the governor Florentinus, later to be buried in Petra, ordered a census to be taken of all of the residents of the province and their property for taxation purposes. It appears that he had to rely on military officials to help him with this task: certainly, it was to a cavalry prefect that Babatha rendered her accounts.

Our earliest written source relating to the annexation is *P. Mich.* 466, a letter from Julius Apollinarius, soldier of *Legio III Cyrenaica*,[85] to his father in Egypt (they were presumably both Egyptians or from a family that had long since settled in Egypt). Dated to 30th Phamenoth in the 10th year of Trajan (26 March 107 AD), the letter describes Apollinarius' efforts to get out of endless stone cutting by becoming a military secretary

---

[80] The papyri in the Babatha archive show the central bureaucracy sending out papers in Greek, with Roman and Macedonian dates, but the locals still instinctively doing business in Aramaic with Semitic calendars. See Cotton 1993: 102. Millar (1993: 427) remarks that there is no evidence to suggest there was ever a Nabataean literature.

[81] Politis 2007: 187-88.

[82] On the nature of Nabataean, *cf.* Millar 1993: 394. On the name of the people, see Knauf 1989: 56-57. There is a Greek inscription from Namara seemingly written by 'Mushammar.. a Nabataean'; a pretty much undateable Safaitic inscription written by a Nabataean and a Palmyrene-Aramaic inscription from Palmyra (132 AD) in which a cavalryman describes himself as a Nabataean of the Rawah tribe. *cf.* Millar 1993: 427 n.52 for references.

[83] Graf 1994: 173.

[84] Graf 1994. For the Sabinus inscription, see Le Bas and Waddington 1870: no. 2287.

[85] *P. Mich.* 466 does not mention Apollinarius' unit: we know its identity from other papyri. *P. Mich.* 571 shows that Apollinarius belonged to that legion before 107 and *P. Mich.* 562 that he was still in it in 119. At some point, III *Cyrenaica* briefly returned to Egypt, but it seems that by *c.*123 AD it had returned to Arabia, whilst the other annexation legion, VI *Ferrata*, transferred to Judaea. III *Cyrenaica* fought in Trajan's Parthian War, Hadrian's first Jewish War, Caracalla's Parthian War (*IGLS* 13.9396 – tombstone from Bostra, 215 AD) and probably for Septimius Severus and Valerian as well. A detachment was stationed at Dura-Europus in the early 200s AD.

(*librariov*), the impossibility of getting any leave at present, and, in an addendum, perhaps the most interesting part of the papyrus, a sauce-making firm with which Apollinarius seems to have some sort of business connection, in the manner of similar activities attested in the slightly-earlier Vindolanda Tablets.[86]

The Roman army could be a huge driving force for Romanization, such as by spreading the Latin language and the citizenship, reshaping the local economy for military supply or to find peacetime jobs for the soldiers, intermarriage with the locals, administration of justice, and simply by its sheer ubiquity.[87] In Roman Britain soldiers, retired soldiers, and their relatives may have amounted to 10% of the total population. The ratio for Arabia cannot even be guessed at, but the single legion and auxiliary forces in the second and third centuries probably totalled around 10,000 men, while the populations of both Petra and Bostra probably both exceeded 30,000.[88] Unfortunately, few documents pertaining to the Roman Army in Arabia have survived, either *diplomata* or building inscriptions, particularly in the south, and it is not at all easy to gauge the impact of the army on the province. The fragments of military equipment that are so common in the archaeological record of many other parts of the Roman world seem very thin on the ground, especially in the immediate vicinity of Petra.

Nevertheless, there is some evidence to show the presence if not always the impact of the army.[89] On 6 May 124 AD, Babatha's second husband Judah borrowed 60 *denarii* from a Roman centurion, Magonius Valens. It is not very likely, however, that there was a sinister motive in the correction from 40 to 60 that is clearly present on the papyrus. Roman centurions often played a major part in the civilian administration of a provincial town, as we can see not least from St. Matthew's Gospel.[90] More broadly, there is also enough evidence to show that the Third Legion was deployed far and wide in *vexillatio* units, especially in the second century AD. An auxiliary *Ala Dromedariorum* is attested by, for instance, graffiti in Greek, Latin, and Nabataean on a rock face between Medain Saleh and Al-Ula.[91] It seems, like many military units in the second century AD, to have been guarding a road station. Later this regiment can be found north of Bostra. Indeed, from the Severan period onwards many new army bases were built, especially in the north-east of the province.[92] By the time of the *Notitia Dignitatum*, Petra no longer had a garrison: excepting the main base at Bostra, the troops had moved to the eastern frontier.

[86] On the use of *garum* sauce in Petra, see Studer 1994: 191-96.

[87] This is the standard modern view: however, for a critique of it, see Pollard 2000. He points out that our evidence for Roman soldiers working on civilian building projects is very limited, but also admits the wider roles of military architects, referring for instance (p. 245) to the inscriptions from Adraha near Bostra, where various specialists from the army had at least a consultancy role in the fortification of a villa.

[88] The estimate of Petra's settled population at *c*.30,000 is from Browning 1989: 33. However, we know from Strabo, *Geog.* 16.4.21 that the city attracted large numbers of foreign visitors.

[89] Kennedy 2004: Part B.

[90] *Matthew* 8; *cf. Luke* 7.

[91] Speidel 1977: 687-730.

[92] For instance, at Qasr el-Hallabat, an inscription of about 212 records the construction of a *castellum novum* by soldiers of four auxiliary cohorts.

The concept of Romanization has been studied in connection with the Roman fort at Hawara, which was built during the earliest phase of the annexation.[93] Hawara was a flourishing community already, based on passing trade on the old King's Highway and agriculture based on typically efficient water conservation. To the Nabataean stone-built courtyard houses and tents, the Romans added a substantial fort plus, possibly, a bath-house and a military shrine to Jupiter Ammon (an altar to that god has been found). The fort was occupied more or less continuously through to the first half of the fourth century, and then abandoned. The Romans reused many pieces of sculpted Nabataean stonework, such as column bases, and although we cannot be sure that they 'quarried' them by making the most of their ownership of former royal property and demolishing it, this seems the likeliest explanation. It may well be the case that Romanization in Petra, protected by its fame, antiquity, and beauty, was much less aggressive than Romanization in a little town all alone in the desert.[94] The soldiers stationed at Hawara put up Latin inscriptions (and indeed, some Greek ones) but there is no indication that the local population learned any Latin (just as there does not seem to be any at Petra – Greek, on the other hand, was widely adopted) or indeed adopted the epigraphic habit. The soldiers ate, as Romans soldiers tended to do, a lot of pork, but very few pork bones have been found outside the fort. Whether this can be linked with well-known avoidance of the meat in Judaism and Islam is a matter of speculation, however.

A wide range of Semitic and Arabian gods were worshipped across Nabataea and Arabia Petraea, many having a strong local identity. The success of Nabataea was due to the success with which its kings managed cultural fusion and freedom, and that might reasonably be said of Arabia Petraea too. The national god Dushara continued to be worshipped widely after the annexation, on the basis of coins from the reigns of Pius, Aurelius, and Elagabalus bearing his name and symbols or, in the last case, actual depictions of the god.[95] He was often identified with Dionysius and Zeus – and for that matter, other Near Eastern sky gods, but this had been the case long before the Romans came anywhere near Petra. The *Actia Dusaria* inaugurated by the Romans at Bostra continued up until the beginning of the Christian period. In the fourth century, according to Epiphanius of Salamis, the people of Petra were singing hymns to a virgin goddess in Arabic, and to her son Dushares (*Panarion* 51.22.11): the same rites were also performed at Elusa. This could be a Nabataean version of Christianity or it could just be a Christian observer misunderstanding the worship of Dushara and Allat. The Temple of the Winged Lions, unlike some of the other principal buildings of Petra, had been kept in good repair but otherwise basically unaltered at the time of its destruction by the 363 AD earthquake.

The small, free-standing house below the Urn Tomb[96] seems to have been built in the mid-first century AD. It is built on the foundations of a smaller structure from the previous century. It has a cistern and a work room with an oil press, and living areas on a

---

[93] *Cf.* Graf 1993: 262-63; Oleson 2004: 353-59. Hawara was an important node on the old Nabataean road, probably founded by Aretas III, and also on the Roman *Via,* recorded on the Peutinger Table.

[94] Or indeed, than in less-famous Bostra, which seems to have been much more heavily redeveloped.

[95] Bowersock 1983: 31-33.

[96] Kolb 2007: 153f.

higher level. Without any structural or indeed stylistic changes, the house was continuously inhabited until the 363 AD earthquake.[97] Similarly, Nabataean pottery continued to be the main locally-produced ware in Petra up to at least the sixth century.[98] Indeed, it seems that painted Nabataean wares from across the whole of the area of the Roman province come from one or at the most two 'factories' near Petra, particularly the az-Zurraba site. New painted ware designs continued to be released up until the end of the third century AD, and again after the 363 AD earthquake.

The Nabataean city at Oboda, across the Wadi Arabah from Petra, grew up around a shrine to King Obodas, who was posthumously deified. In 268 AD, the temple was re-dedicated to Zeus-Oboda, whose help was invoked in a Greek inscription by a man with a traditional Nabataean name, Ouaelos or Wailos of Petra, on behalf of one Eirenaios, for the building of a Roman military tower in 293/4 (Year 188 of the provincial era).[99] Evidence of pagan religious activity at the site continues into the fourth century AD. There is, for instance, a Nabataean graffito from that century, invoking Oboda and Dushara, incised probably not many years before the building of the first church on the site. Millar tentatively suggested that this was a survival not only of a popular cult, but also of a trace of Nabataean independent mindedness.[100] In Petra, the rock-cut *triclinium* of Obodas, probably constructed during the reign of Aretas IV, seems to have gone out of use in the second century AD.[101] But the number of ceramic finds from that structure is very small and other *triclinia* continued to be used for traditional Nabataean banquets into at least the third century; rock-cut tombs continued to be used (or re-used, for instance in the case of that of the governor Florentinus)[102] for an even longer period. The High Places also continued to be used for worship, perhaps even for Christian worship.

Tholbecq has recently written of how, in the Hauran, Roman architectural influences swept away a lot of local styles by the third century AD, and how this sort of change is not nearly as evident in the south part of the province.[103] She cites, for instance, the sanctuary at Khirbet edh-Daridh, which was destroyed during the second half of the first century AD. A coin of 152/3 AD, found in a foundation trench, gives a *terminus post quem* for the construction of a new, larger temple, decorated with sculpted elements very similar to the stuccos of the Qasr el-Bint. On the tops of the architraves of the facades, busts alternate with *nikes*, a local version of the Doric frieze. Banqueting halls were provided for worshippers, another very traditional feature. Tholbecq tentatively suggests that this might have been a 'cultural and religious reaction after the annexation'. It might equally just be Nabataean religious life going on unaffected by the annexation and indeed

---

[97] Parts of it were rebuilt and inhabited until the next big earthquake, in 419 AD.

[98] 'Amr 2004: 237-45.

[99] *Cf.* Millar 1993: 421; Negev 1986: 59-60 for the text.

[100] Millar (1993: 421) also draws attention to *FGrH* 675 F. Twenty-four, from the (probably) fourth century AD *Arabica* of Ouranios, referring to this cult still being active.

[101] Nehmé 2002: 243-56.

[102] The tomb may have originally been constructed in the late first century BC or early first century AD: see Freyburger 1997: 1-8.

[103] Tholbecq 2007: 136-37.

helped by the prosperity of the Roman province during the second century at least. However, it is ironic perhaps that the temple's design seems to be similar to certain Egyptian temples – including some built by Augustus.[104]

All traces of the royal family disappeared at annexation, including the heir of Rabbel II mentioned in the Babatha papyri. Apart from anything else, this must have had ramifications for Nabataean religious practice. Normal Roman policy was to bring local elites into their governmental system to some degree, but we have no evidence that this happened in Petra. There is no firm evidence that the Roman takeover was violent – unless you count the extensive physical changes made to some Nabataean sites. Nabataean names continue to be very common in the Greek and Aramaic epigraphy until the arrival of Islam and beyond, throughout the area of Trajan's province. Nabataean-style pottery continues to be produced after the annexation into at least the fourth century.[105]

5. Conclusions

It is relatively easy to identify signs of Romanization, or lack thereof, in monumental architecture, law, and politics, in the heavier but probably more practical late-period Nabataean pottery, even in religion (which is a topic I have not covered in as much detail as I might, for reasons of space[106]) or, at least, major religious buildings where traditional deities were worshipped in a more-or-less syncretized way: in other words, in the centre and wealthiest parts of a city. Out in the hinterland, the suburbs if you will, of Petra, it may well have been the case that industrial production was stepped up to meet the demands of urbanization, a successful economy and maybe even of the Roman army. There is certainly no sign that it was scaled back and indeed many marginal areas of the former Nabataea, across the Negev and east of Bostra, were brought into cultivation during the second and third centuries AD.

The conventional view has been that the Nabataean culture died out by the second century AD, in the face of Hellenization or Romanization. However, it is rather more difficult to pin down exactly what that culture was – certain gods were worshipped but in a constantly evolving and re-syncretizing religion, a language was used that was probably giving way to Greek long before the Romans arrived (and which at any rate was essentially a dialect of Aramaic). Rock-cut structures continued to be built and a distinctive pottery continued to be made. On the other hand, the Romans collected the taxes and administered justice. Isolating Nabataean ethnicity is not easy either, because there is little likelihood that this nation was ethnically homogeneous at any time: 'Nabataean' names have strong regional differences within Nabataea and are part of the broader Semitic prosopography anyway.

Babatha's Jewish family had been living in Nabataea for over thirty years by the time of the legal cases described in her papyri. In spite of being an immigrant, her father Simon

---

[104] Tholbecq 2007: 119.

[105] For instance, the fourth-century Nabataean pottery found in the house on the site of the Urn Tomb: Zeitler 1990: 255-61.

[106] As well as Healey 2001, there is a Ph.D. thesis by Peter Alpass of Durham University on this subject (completed in 2011).

had had no trouble purchasing land in 99 AD (except that he may have had to outbid a Nabataean *strategos* called Archelaus), and indeed the papyri refers to another Jew making such a purchase forty years before that. Babatha does not refer to herself as a Nabataean but she probably would have had as much right to call herself such as many of the inhabitants of Arabia Petraea. In fact, the ethnic designation 'Nabataean' is found in only a handful of documents, none of them in the Nabataean dialect of Aramaic, and none of them from Petra. There is every reason to suppose that immigration into and emigration from the former Nabataea continued under Roman auspices. This land and its most famous city retains, from our perspective, that same mysteriousness under the Romans that makes its independent period intriguing. However, some basic and limited diagnostics appear to show that a distinct local way of life continued to be lived in and around Petra well into the Roman period,[107] in the shadow of some remodelled monumental buildings, of the Roman army and of the vicissitudes of the Roman empire.

Bibliography

'Amr, K., 2004. 'Beyond the Roman annexation: the continuity of the Nabataean pottery tradition', *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan* 8: 237-45.

Augé, C., Renel, F., Borel, L., and March. C. 2002. 'New excavations in the Qasr el-Bint area at Petra', *ADAJ* 46: 309-13.

Basile, J.J. 2002. 'Recently-discovered relief sculptures from the Great Temple at Petra, Jordan', *ADAJ* 46: 331-45.

Bauzou, T. 1996. 'La Pretensio de Bostra à Dumata (el-Jowf)', *Syria* 73: 23-35.

Bedal, L.-A. 2004. *The Petra pool-complex.* Piscataway, NJ.

Bowersock, G. W. 1983. *Roman Arabia.* Cambridge, MA.

Bowersock, G. W. 1994. 'The Greek-Nabataean bilingual inscription at Ruwwafa, Saudi Arabia', in G. W. Bowersock, *Studies on the Eastern Roman Empire*: 203-12. Goldbach.

Brennan, S. 2008. 'Chronological pointers in Xenophon's Anabasis', *BICS* 51: 51-61.

Browning, I. 1989. *Petra.* London.

Cohen, R. 1982. 'New light on the date of the Petra-Gaza road', *Biblical Archaeologist* 45: 240-47.

Cotton, H. 1993. 'The guardianship of Jesus Son of Babatha: Roman and local law in the province of Arabia', *JRS* 83: 94-108.

Fiema, Z. T. 1998. 'The 1997 Roman street in Petra Project – a preliminary report', *ADAJ* 42: 490-516.

Fiema, Z. T. 2003 'Roman Petra (AD 106-363): A neglected subject', *ZDPV* 119.1: 38-58.

Freyburger, K. S. 1997. 'Zur Datierung des Grabmals des Sextus Florentinus in Petra', *Damaszener Mitteilungen* 5: 1-8.

---

[107] See Graf 2004 for the pitfalls. See also Politis 2007.

Goodman, M. 1991. 'Babatha's story', *JRS* 81: 169-75.

Graf, D. F. 1978. 'The Saracens and the defence of the Arabian frontier', *BASOR* 229: 1-26.

Graf, D. F. 1993. 'The Via Nova Traiana between Petra and 'Aqaba', *Syria* 70: 262-63.

Graf, D. F. 1994. 'The Nabataean army and the cohortes Ulpiae Petraeorum', in E. Dabrowa (ed.), *The Roman and Byzantine army in the East*: 265-311. Krakow.

Graf, D. F. 2004. 'Nabataean identity and ethnicity: the epigraphic perspective', *SHAJ* 8: 145-54.

Graf, D. F. 2007. 'Nabataeans under Roman rule (After AD 106)', in K. D. Politis (ed.), *The world of the Nabataeans*: 173-86. Wiesbaden.

Grainger, J. D. 1990. *Seleukos Nikator: constructing a Hellenistic kingdom*. London.

Hammond, P. 1973. *The Nabataeans: their history, culture, and archaeology*. Gothenburg.

Haverfield, F. 1906. 'The Romanization of Roman Britain'. *Proceedings of the British Academy 1905-1906*: 185-217.

Healey, J. F. 2001. *The religion of the Nabataeans: a conspectus*. Leiden.

Hingley, R. 2005. *Globalizing Roman culture: unity, diversity, and empire*. London.

Isaac, B. 1992. *Limits of Empire*. Oxford.

Joukowsky, M. S. 2002. 'The Brown University 2001 Petra Great Temple excavations offer more surprises', *ADAJ* 46: 315-30.

Kanellopoulos, C. 2002. 'The monumental entrance to the Upper Market and the Trajanic inscription at Petra: the architectural context', *ADAJ* 46: 295-308.

Kanellopoulos, C. 2003. 'The layout of the garden and pool complex in Petra: A metrological analysis', *ADAJ* 47: 149-57.

Kanellopoulos, C. and Akasheh, T. S. 2001. 'The Petra map', *BASOR* 324: 5-7.

Kennedy, D. L. 2004. *The Roman army in Jordan*. London.

Knauf, E. A. 1989. 'Nabataean origins', in M. M. Ibrahim (ed.), *Arabian studies in honour of Mahmoud Ghul. Symposium at Yarmouk University. December 8-11, 1984*: 56-61. Wiesbaden.

Kolb, B. 2007. 'Nabataean dwellings: domestic architecture and interior decoration', in K. D. Politis (ed.), *The world of the Nabataeans*: 145-72. Wiesbaden.

Kolb, B. and Keller, D. 2002. 'Swiss-Liechtenstein excavation at Az-Zantur, Petra: the twelfth season', *ADAJ* 46: 279-93.

Le Bas, P. and Waddington, W. H. 1870. *Inscriptions grecques et latines recueillies en Asie Mineure*. Paris.

Lindner, M. 1989. *Petra und das Königreich die Nabatäer*. Munich.

Lindner, M. and Gunsam, E. 2002. 'A fortified suburb of ancient Petra: Shammasa', *ADAJ* 46: 225-42.

Markoe, G. 2003. *Petra rediscovered*. London.

McKenzie, J. 1990. *The architecture of Petra*. Oxford.

Millar, F. 1993. *The Roman Near East 31 BC-AD 337.* Cambridge, MA.

Negev, A. 1977. 'The Nabataeans and the Provincia Arabia', *ANRW* II.8: 520-686.

Negev, A. 1991. *Personal names in the Nabataean realm* (*Qedem* 32). Jerusalem.

Nehmé, L. 2002. 'La Chapelle d'Obodas à Petra: rapport préliminaire sur la campagne 2001', *ADAJ* 46: 243-56.

Oleson, J. P. 1995. 'The origins and design of Nabataean water-supply systems', in *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan* 5: 707-19.

Oleson, J. P. 2004. 'Romanization' at Hawara (al-Humayma)? The character of 'Roman' culture at a desert fortress', *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan* 8: 353-59.

Parr, P. J. 2007. 'The urban development of Petra', in K. D. Politis (ed.), *The world of the Nabataeans*: 273-300. Wiesbaden.

Pigott, V. C. 1996. 'Near Eastern archaeometallurgy', in J. S. Cooper and G. M. Schwartz (eds), *The study of the ancient Near East in the 21st century*: 139-76. Winona Lake, IN.

Politis, K. D. 2007. 'Nabataean cultural continuity into the Byzantine period', in K. D. Politis (ed.), *The world of the Nabataeans*: 187-201. Wiesbaden.

Potter, D. S. 1999. *Literary texts and the Roman historian*. London.

Reid, S. K. 2005. *The small temple: a Roman imperial cult building in Petra, Jordan.* Piscataway, NJ.

Pollard, N. 2000. *Soldiers, cities, and civilians in Roman Syria*. Ann Arbor.

Schluntz, E. L. 1999. *From royal to public assembly space: the transformation of the 'Great Temple' complex at Petra, Jordan*. Ann Arbor.

Speidel, M. P. 1977. 'The Roman army in Arabia', *ANRW* II.8: 687-730.

Speidel, M. P. 1987. 'The Roman road to Dumatha (Jawf in Saudi Arabia) and the frontier strategy of the Praetensione Colligare', *Historia* 36: 211-21.

Starcky, J. 1966. 'Pétra et la Nabatène', *Supplement au Dictionnaire de la Bible* VII: 886-1017.

Stucky, R. A., Gerber, Y., Kolb, B., and Schmid, S. G. 1994. 'Swiss Liechtenstein excavations at ez-Zantur in Petra 1993: the fifth campaign', *ADAJ* 38: 271-92.

Studer, J. 1994. 'Roman fish sauce in Petra, Jordan', in W. van Neer (ed.), *Fish exploitation in the past. Proceedings of the 7th meeting of the ICAZ fish remains working group*: 191-96. Tervuren.

Sullivan, R. D. 1990. *Near Eastern royalty and Rome.* Toronto.

Taylor, J. 2002. *Petra and the lost kingdom of the Nabataeans*. Cambridge, MA.

Tholbecq, L. 2007. 'Nabataean monumental architecture', in K. D. Politis (ed.), *The world of the Nabataeans*: 133-35. Wiesbaden.

de Vries, B. 1992. 'Archaeology in Jordan', *AJA* 96: 503-42.

Webster, J. 2001. 'Creolizing the Roman provinces', *AJA* 105: 209-25.

Woolf, G. 1997. 'Beyond Romans and natives', *WorldArch* 28: 339-50.

Young, G. K. 2001. *Rome's eastern trade: international commerce and imperial policy, 31 BC-AD 305*. London.

Zeitler, J. P. 1990. 'Excavations in Petra 1989-90', *Syria* 70: 255-61.

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN LEBANESE TEMPLES[1]

KEVIN BUTCHER

In recent years the study of identity in the Roman Near East has become something of a hot topic, with wide ranging debates focusing on the question of whether the culture was essentially Hellenized or whether the Hellenized element disguised a more profound, native identity.[2] This seems to be part of a wider discourse about 'Romanization' versus native resistance and often entails detailed discussions about forms and styles in material culture and the origins of these. The introduction of new forms and styles has been seen as either an important cultural break with the past or as a comparatively unimportant decorative addition to an otherwise unbroken native cultural tradition. Although there have been some interesting and nuanced debates that seek to move beyond simple oppositions of Greek and native,[3] some discussions of material culture continue to display a tendency to adhere to somewhat unreflective, opposed ideals when describing changes and continuities, equating form and style *with* identity (and identity with 'culture'). Indeed, the Near East is a place where processes like 'Romanization' and 'Hellenization' – which have been deconstructed elsewhere – continue to enjoy robust health.[4] In our eagerness to demonstrate that the Roman empire impacted either greatly or very little on communities in Syria we forget that traditions may be revived or invented, that appropriations of forms and symbols may change their meaning or old meanings persist despite a change of forms or symbols, and that our descriptions of them as 'native' or 'Greek' are pretty thin characterizations of objects and processes that may not concur with ancient experiences of them.[5] It has also been observed that the recent scholarly interest in identity in the Roman world has not examined power relationships and the mechanics of

---

[2] Millar 1993; Kennedy 1998; Ball 2000.

[3] Kaizer 2002: 24-27.

[4] See, for example, Richardson 2002.

[5] Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Cohen 1989.

legitimation to the same degree.[6] One wonders how much our reliance on descriptions of form and style (be they considered 'Greek', 'Roman', 'traditional', or 'native') has obscured our view of these power relationships, which may have been more localized in space and time than our somewhat timeless descriptive categories seem to allow. We are surely obliged to explain the evident changes that took place in the Near East during the period of its incorporation into the power structure we call the Roman empire, and the apparent continuities visible there, not by appeal to the agency of forms and styles but in terms of concrete social relations and actions.

Veneer versus essence

The religious sanctuaries of Roman Syria are prominent reminders of past communities, and it is hardly surprising that they have been drawn into the debates about Near Eastern identities. It can be concluded from literature and iconography that Syrians were proud of their deities and cults, which were considered to be of great antiquity, with a number of the more prominent ones having taken root abroad as well.[7] The Syrian sanctuaries and their public monumentality undoubtedly assisted in the constitution and reproduction of communal identity; they were, after all, important social spaces.[8] These sanctuaries were 'Hellenized' in Roman times in that they were given monumental structures which in style and, to greater or lesser degree, in form, match our expectations about 'Graeco-Roman' styles and forms. There, however, it seems that scholarly agreement stops. For some, these observations about style and form would seem to confirm the cultural dominance of Greek values, even in the sphere of religion. The temples represent some kind of break with whatever religious identities had existed before. Generally, this equation of Greek form and style with Greek culture and identity has gone unchallenged: the culture of Rome, either directly or through native alignments with it, is the agent responsible for the temples. How, then, to rescue 'native' identities? The counter argument downplays the significance of overall appearance in favour of more detailed analyzes. Domination creates resistance, and so deviations from Graeco-Roman forms are examined in detail to see if their origins can be located in earlier traditions of the region. These deviant forms are then placed in opposition to the 'Graeco-Roman' ones (features characterized as 'Persian' or 'Assyrian', being equally deviant, are normally cited as evidence for the 'native' as well). Origins, or perceived origins, are believed to explain the meaning of these features in contemporary society.

Both sides of this argument have a point, but often seem to be indulging in a simplistic form of culture history. The outward 'Graeco-Roman' appearance becomes a signifier of Greekness, to be overcome by the metaphor of a veneer: a surface whose outward forms conceal the true identity, or essence, of a thing.[9] For those who see in the sanctuaries of

---

[6] Huskinson 2000: 18; Mattingly 2006: 6-7; Pitts 2007: 709.

[7] Swain 1996; Elsner 1997.

[8] Steinsapir 2005.

[9] Explicit in Ball 2000, especially chapter 7, 'Imperial veneer'. Ball's study, apparently taking its cue from the final section of Millar's work (1993), is very much occupied with constructs of 'east' and 'west', and part of its aim is to reclaim the 'west' for the 'east'. See also Sartre 1991: 491 and 496. Outward 'Classical' appearances are often contrasted with inner 'native' forms: Gawlikowski 1989; Freyburger 1997; Stucky 2005: 189.

Roman Syria acculturation to 'Graeco-Roman' forms, there is a mysterious passivity and historical amnesia,[10] and a failure among indigenous communities to assert an identity through form and style; for those who hold to the notion of a veneer, surface appearance becomes something of minor importance, and the underlying presence of traditional forms becomes (to borrow a neat phrase from Tonio Hölscher) 'significant *in spite of* its temporary domination by Greek styles'.[11] The terminology used seems to imply that these buildings exhibit some kind of cultural schizophrenia: a native shrine shrouded by a foreign and alien screen, a conflict between imperial import and authentic tradition. Thus, while many case studies demonstrate that the Syrian examples deviate from any concept of 'perfectly Greek temples',[12] 'native' identity is often defined *only* by its difference from forms and styles labeled 'Greek'. Yet there need not be any logical link between 'Graeco-Roman' style and 'Graeco-Roman' identity. Rather than being a Weberian ideal type designed to help us think more clearly about the social processes involved, we grant the epithet 'Greek' or 'Graeco-Roman' to a temple in Syria only because we see it as an individual element in some grander nexus of forms and styles that we have designated as 'Greek' or 'Graeco-Roman'; such labels tell us nothing specific about its formal and stylistic references and nothing about the agencies that resulted in the choices being made. Furthermore, where identities are concerned, surface appearances *cannot* be dismissed; but it seems unnecessary to argue that native or local identities have to be located exclusively in non-Graeco-Roman forms. We do not have to see every 'Graeco-Roman' style temple or altar located on an artificial raised platform as a 'Semitic High Place' in Classical drag, or to claim that any freestanding column is 'really' a *baetyl*, in order to champion the persistence of indigenous identities. The Graeco-Roman forms can also be viewed as an expression of native or local identities and the vigour of ancient tradition, rather than a hiatus in that tradition, or something supplanting the old identities.

In this chapter I will be concentrating on sanctuaries in the coastal regions of Syria, mainly in Lebanon, with some references to sites in the Bekaa and Antilebanon and further north (Figure 1). These zones are amongst those considered to have been most thoroughly 'Hellenized' and their sanctuaries and temples are typically described in the literature as 'classical'.[13] As we will see, even in the coastal regions one does not have to search far to find evidence for pre-Roman cult buildings continuing in use, and while continuity of use is not absolute proof of continuity of cult (and therefore of the retention of some form of identity from earlier times), it is suggestive. Nevertheless the validity of the 'veneer' approach, which posits that it is necessary to locate the vigour of 'native' traditions in the survival of old buildings and traditional forms and that the Graeco-Roman element represents a break with tradition, needs challenging. That is what I will attempt here.

---

[10] Kennedy 1999: 102 (who does not endorse the view).

[11] Hölscher 2004: 6.

[12] *E.g.*, Gawlikowski 1989; Will 1995; Freyberger 1997; Ball 2000; Butcher 2003; see also Millar 1993: 310.

[13] Gawlikowski 1987; Millar 1993: 274; Kennedy 1999: 102.
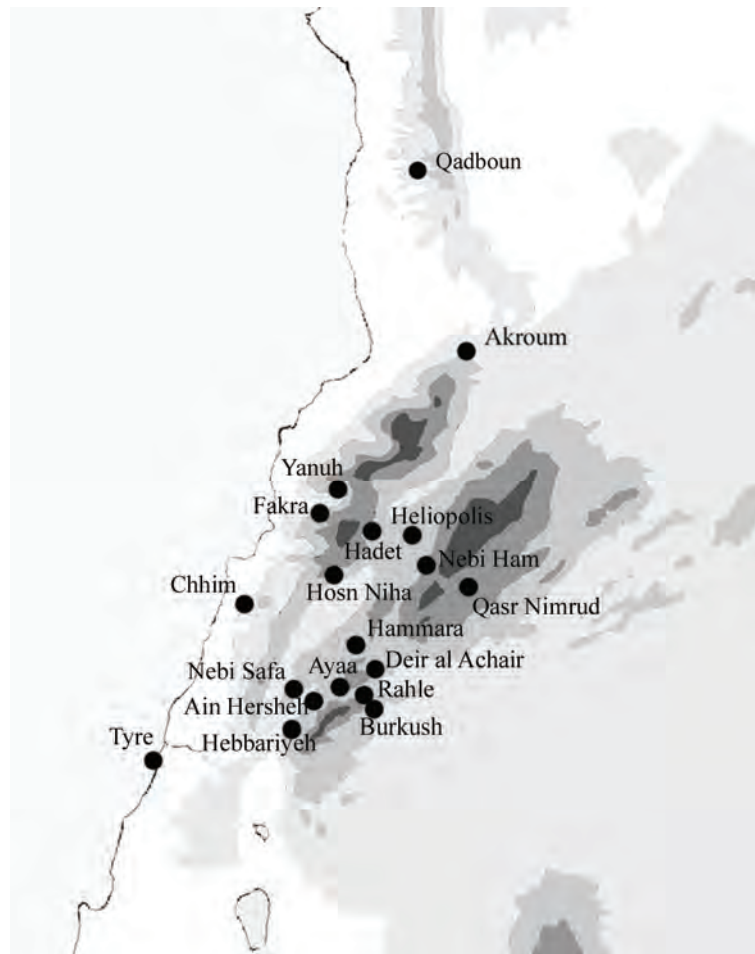
Figure 1. Map showing the sites mentioned in the text.

Tradition versus innovation

How do we evaluate the survival of old, pre-Roman buildings in sanctuaries or the construction of new, classical style buildings? The appearance of 'Greek' or 'Graeco-Roman' forms and styles for monumental religious architecture looks innovative, and it is easy for us to equate their emergence with a general change or transformation of culture and the dissolution of traditional identities. But we cannot be certain that that is how the builders saw them. Investment in sanctuaries using current styles and forms could be seen as respect for the antiquity (and therefore direct continuity) of a cult, not a cultural hiatus and historical amnesia. Where we see change or transition they might have seen a continuum, and where we see the introduction of universal or 'international' styles[14] they might have seen quite specific local or regional references: the imitation of, or

[14] Segal 1997: 1-4.
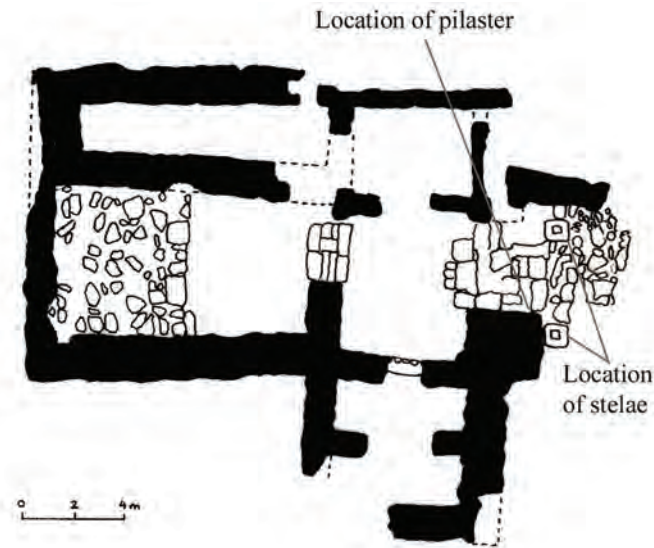
Figure 2. Plan of Qadboun. After Bounni 1997 (simplified). North at the top.

improvement on, another building in the region; *e.g.*, a sanctuary with which they felt themselves to be in competition. Expression in Greek style is not necessarily the same as becoming Greek instead of native (as if choosing one identity meant discarding the other), just as the survival of old buildings in sanctuaries is not necessarily evidence of the vigour of ancient traditions. Lack of change may imply that the cult was unable to attract sufficient respect from wealthy donors and that it was comparatively weak. Updating or revaluing sanctuaries with buildings in styles deemed venerable by the elites speaks of vigour and continuity.[15] What follows are a few examples to support this line of argument.

One of the most remarkable claims for continuity from pre-Roman times concerns Qadboun, a site north of Lebanon, in the mountains near Masyaf. Given that to date only a preliminary notice has appeared,[16] one should be wary of pressing this evidence too far, but the excavators report that, apart from a rectangular *naos*-like structure built of roughly-dressed masonry, the site also possessed a larger, more irregular sanctuary (Figure 2) whose plan, if not construction, they believe dates to the ninth century BC, and which has parallels in various Bronze and early Iron Age sanctuaries. It is built of roughly-cut stones of irregular sizes. At the entrance to this complex is a paved area flanked by sockets that appear to have held *stelae*, one of which, a basalt relief of the ninth century BC depicting a Baal, the excavators believe was standing in its place until its burial in late Roman times. Regardless of whether or not this was indeed the case the site also produced 'Graeco-Roman' material. Immediately behind the sockets, either side

---

[15] These styles may have been deemed venerable because they were perceived to demonstrate an alignment with 'Greek' or 'Graeco-Roman' culture in general, but on the other hand they may have been adopted because they were the styles of other religious buildings in the vicinity.

[16] Bounni 1997.

of the entrance, are the remains of stone pilasters in Doric style, attached to the walls of what are thought to be flanking towers of the earlier building. The sanctuary yielded fragments of relief decoration, some of which is typically 'Hellenized' in style, and one of which shows a priest making an offering in what seems to be a traditional pose of Syrian priests of the Roman period.[17] What this seems to suggest is that an older sanctuary might have seen use in Hellenistic and Roman times with only minor changes, and that the past was very much visible, externally, and internally. Yet even if this was the case, one wonders whether its survival was due more to an inability to attract wealthy patrons in Roman times than local 'resistance' and the strength of old traditions.

A case for ritual, but not physical, continuity has been made for the sanctuary of Apollo at Tyre.[18] The evidence suggests that it was wholly a creation of the Roman period, but the excavators see this sanctuary, which never received a 'Graeco-Roman' temple, as evidence for the continuation of an indigenous tradition and draw a contrast with the temples of Lebanon that we will be considering shortly.[19] There is some evidence for some sort of use of the site in pre-Roman times, but it became an identifiable sanctuary with a *temenos* wall only in the first half of the first century AD. In spite of the evidence for several phases of investment, enlargement, and construction, the sanctuary was only in use for about a century and was then abandoned at some point in the second century (in the third century it had been incorporated into the necropolis and a platform for sarcophagi was built over it). While in this case one cannot doubt that interest, and investment, in this sanctuary was strong in the Roman period, whether the lack of a temple really should be taken to signify some 'native' desire for difference is difficult to demonstrate. One could argue that, had the sanctuary continued in use for longer, a temple *might* have been built within the precinct. And while there was no demonstrable continuity of worship on the site from pre-Roman to Roman times, and no profound past to respect or curate, elements of the earliest phase were incorporated into later phases, effectively *establishing* a strong tradition of architectural continuity that, for whatever reason (lack of investment? Links to the fortunes of a single patron or group of patrons?), was cut short. Indeed, the frequent reworking and incremental elaboration of the sanctuary during its short life may be instructive for a more general appreciation of processes of renewal and patronage in the sanctuaries of the region.

The rustic temples at Akroum in northern Lebanon, on a hilltop overlooking the plain of Homs, may represent a more advanced stage of elaboration, in which sanctuaries were given 'Graeco-Roman' temples.[20] These buildings have not been examined in detail and their construction histories and chronology are quite obscure. The best-preserved of the three temples there, dubbed Temple A (Fig. 3), has a colonnaded *pronaos* that was clearly added to the rectangular *naos* after the latter was built (Fig. 4). Though constructed of rectangular stones, they are irregular and only roughly worked; the same can be said for the entablature, columns, and moldings. Was this a stylistic choice? We might be tempted to think that it was so: a failure to absorb 'Graeco-Roman' values completely; or a partial

---

[17] Krumeich 1998.

[18] Bikai, Fulco, and Marchand 1996.

[19] Bikai, Fulco, and Marchand 1996: 84-85.

[20] Taylor 1971: 140-43; Nordiguian 2005, 218-19

Figure 3. Temple A at Akroum, 1995.

Figure 4: Akroum, 1995. Detail of the inside of the pronaos of Temple A, where it buts against the construction of the *naos*.

5. Akroum, 1995. Interior of the *naos* of Temple A, showing the arched entrance to the *adyton*.

attempt to resist them by incorporating the forms but not the styles. We might note the use of an archway within the *naos*, giving access to the *adyton* (Fig. 5), as a highly unusual feature of this building, and add that to the catalogue of potential 'native' forms (particularly if we can locate a pre-classical parallel, or one from outside the Roman empire). Such conclusions are possible, but there are other possibilities. Given that many other Lebanese temples are in an apparently unfinished state, with features partially blocked out or unworked, it seems equally likely that the intention was to dress the stonework properly, but in this case the resources were entirely lacking or the opportunity never arose. Indeed, Temple A would appear to anticipate our next site.

The sanctuary at Chhim, in the hills above Sidon, has recently been the subject of detailed excavations by a joint Lebanese-Polish team (Figures 6-8) and may give us some impression of what Temple A at Akroum might have looked like had more resources been available.[21] The temple as it survives today would appear to be Antonine in date, but it evidently had a complex earlier history which ongoing excavations are gradually revealing. A rectangular *naos* with 'Egyptian' decoration (a winged sun disk over the entrance), probably dating to the first half of the second century AD, seems to predate its Corinthian *pronaos*. Initially this *naos* may have formed a free-standing building of roughly dressed stone, replacing an earlier religious structure that lay on a different alignment. A second-century AD *temenos* wall abuts the *cella* and forms a continuation of its south-west side. When the tetrastyle *pronaos* was added the presence of this *temenos* wall meant that the south-west column had to be engaged with it; a free-standing pillar

---

[21] Waliszewski 2001; 2003.
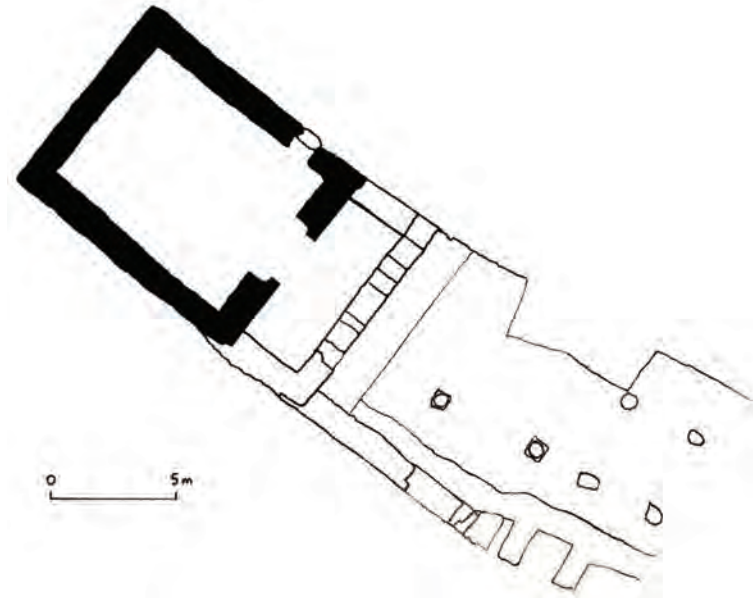
6. Plan of Chhim. After Waliszewski 2003 (simplified). North at the top.

7. Chhim, 1994. The temple, with the *temenos* wall extending in front of it.

8. Chhim, 1994. The Corinthian *pronaos* and the façade of the *naos*, with the monumental entrance in the *temenos* wall in the left foreground. Remnants of the colonnaded way and a later basilica are scattered before the temple. Note that the outermost column of the *pronaos* is engaged to a pillar rather than being circular in section.

with an engaged column was erected to mirror it, presumably for reasons of symmetry, in the north-east corner (Figure 8). Presumably at roughly the same time the facade of the *naos* was neatly dressed, but the rest of the building was left only roughly dressed. A colonnaded way was created in the second century, extending from the temple towards a large tower-like structure of uncertain date immediately to the south-east. Though the dating has yet to be clarified, it seems that an earlier *naos* and (cult?) tower were given a face lift in the later second century with a monumental *temenos* wall and entrance, a porticoed processional way, a Corinthian *pronaos* and a neatly-dressed *naos* entrance employing Egyptian mouldings, a winged sun disk and reliefs (one a bust of Helios and the other a priest). The whole looks piecemeal, the product of fits, starts, and compromises rather than a unified programme. That the whole temple could not be neatly dressed in Greek (and Egyptian) style perhaps speaks of some limitations rather than 'native' resistance to 'Graeco-Roman' values: the resources to completely renovate Chhim's sanctuary with 'worthy' styles were never available.

A site that might be seen as more successful in attracting wealthy patrons was Yanuh (Figures 9-10), high in the Lebanon range above Byblos, not far from the sanctuary at Afqa (the source of the Adonis river). Had it not been for recent careful excavation and survey of this sanctuary we might have supposed that nothing survived of any earlier, pre-monumental phase, but excavation revealed that a large rectangular platform (7.2 x 5.7 m) of the late second century BC, with a stepped approach on one of its long sides, remained in use after the main phase of monumentalisation in the first half of the second
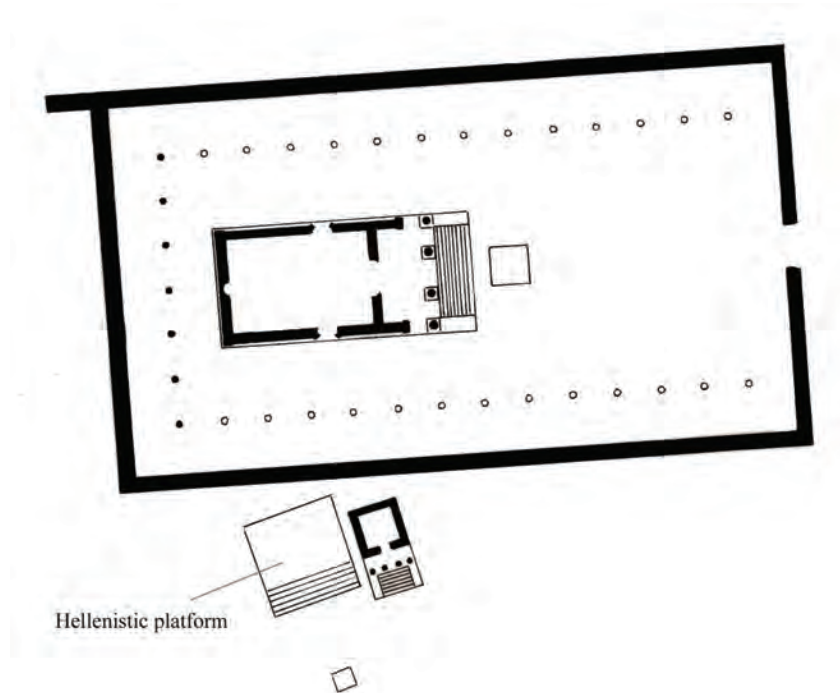
Figure 9. Plan of Yanuh. After Gatier and Nordiguian, 2005 (simplified). North at the top.

Figure 10. Yanuh, 2005. In the left foreground, the remains of the small temple; behind, to the right, the *temenos* wall; to the rear, the large temple on its podium, with lateral side doors in the *naos*.

century AD.[22] The excavators have drawn a tentative parallel with a religious structure of similar appearance found at Tell Dan in the Jordan Valley. An Aramaean inscription bearing a date corresponding to 110/109 BC, found reused in late Roman times, mentions a religious structure and may well relate to this building; the creation of a sanctuary at this date has been plausibly linked to the presence of the Ituraeans who are thought to have occupied the region at this time. This building would seem to have survived the main phase of monumentalization in the first half of the second century AD, when extensive remodelling of the site took place. A small prostyle temple with a tiny, single-roomed *cella*, 2.76m square, was constructed on the same alignment as the Hellenistic platform (facing south-east) and immediately adjacent to the east. To the north of both platform and temple, a rectangular *temenos* containing porticos and a much larger prostyle temple were built, with the whole ensemble facing east. This necessitated a careful levelling operation and resulted in a remarkably symmetrical sanctuary, albeit awkwardly placed with respect to the small temple and platform lying immediately to the south.[23] It seems that both the small temple and the large one in its monumental *temenos* were constructed at more or less the same time, though it is difficult to be certain whether they were part of a single religious complex. Where one might detect continuity in the persistence of the stepped platform and the orientation of the small temple, one might also see tensions in the way the larger temple and its *temenos* are separated from them. At any rate, it would seem that the older platform remained accessible and still in use (a large altar was positioned before it) in the second century AD, strongly hinting at its continued ritual significance. But the massive building program meant that this old feature became very much part of the 'new' ensemble, rather than the other way around.

What these sites seem to teach us is that each had its own unique historical trajectory, from which it could be hazardous to generalize. While some sanctuaries fell into disuse, probably at different times and for a variety of different reasons, others continued to attract worshippers and wealthy individuals who invested in these places, sometimes with such enthusiasm that they changed the overall appearance and experience of the sanctuary completely. But can we do more than simply downplay arguments about 'Hellenization' or 'Romanization' versus native survivals in favour of a close reading of individual construction histories? Rather than viewing the physical transformations as a break with indigenous tradition, to be succeeded by some 'Hellenized' form of worship characterized by 'Greek' temples or, alternately, trying to detect the valiant persistence of indigenous traditions and their concomitant identities ('Syrian', 'Phoenician') hiding behind 'Graeco-Roman' veneers, the individual building histories might be best read as evidence of varying modes of patronage and differing conceptions of the purpose of the architectural process; raising questions about whether in many cases the processes of patronage – of building, renovation, and renewal – were just as important, if not more so, than achieving a 'finished' sanctuary.

---

[22] Gatier and Nordiguian 2005: 11.

[23] Gatier and Nordiguian 2005: 12-13, 22-27.

Form and style versus process

I have already mentioned the 'unfinished' state of many temples and presented a few examples. These unfinished elements extend beyond decorative programmes to basic dressing of the stones. Thus the unfinished state does not look like some kind of decorative scheme of its own, an idiosyncratic native style that can be drawn into the debate about identities. Often the work had been started but apparently abandoned, with guidelines having been cut and the dressing of blocks begun. The unfinished state therefore clearly contains the potential of a fully-realized temple. But was it simply a case of lack of resources that prevented them from being completed? If this should prove to be the case, then so many temples exhibit unfinished elements that this phenomenon demands some broader social or economic explanation, taking into account that while the resources and skills required for erecting the buildings were apparently available, those needed for dressing the stones were not always forthcoming. The problems may not have been simply financial: the skill and knowledge of how to work the stones may have been in limited supply in ways that the skills required to quarry the blocks and to erect the buildings were not. On the other hand, much of what we know about the modes of production of sanctuaries suggests that some of these modes could have been a factor contributing to their unfinished appearance.

The (admittedly meagre) epigraphic evidence from the region points to a variety of modes of financing and construction. Most of the builders were locals; there is no certain evidence for the involvement of the Roman state. In no instances do we have clear evidence for an individual or a group of donors paying for an entire, completed temple or sanctuary, although that is certainly conceivable in the case of more comprehensive renovations like that at Yanuh, and should not be ruled out as a mode. There is epigraphic evidence for communal building by a village (the temples at Nebi Ham and Hammara[24]) or communal building using the financial resources belonging to a deity (*e.g.*, a tower built with the funds of the Great God at Fakra).[25] Many inscriptions refer to individual donations – not of a whole building, but of parts of it. Someone – perhaps the Iamlichos son of Baribaos named on a side door – paid at his own expense for at least a part of the peripteral temple at Qasr Nimrud, in the Antilebanon east of Nebi Ham.[26] At Ain Hersheh in the foothills of Mount Hermon an inscription lying in front of the temple commemorates the erection of a large altar in AD 114/5 to the 'ancestral god' by Alexander, son of Alexander, in fulfilment of a vow, with his wife and for his children.[27] A monumental religious structure at Hadet in the foothills of the Lebanon range, overlooking the Bekaa Valley[28] was erected to Apollo by a certain Marcus Sentius Valens

[24] Nebi Ham: Krencker and Zschietzschmann 1938: 170; Millar 1993: 283; *IGLS* 2986, with modifications in Nordiguian 2005: 96. On the difficulty of recognizing a classical temple among the architectural remains at Hammara, see Nordiguian 2005: 94-99.

[25] Krencker and Zschietzschmann 1938: 53-54; Nordiguian 2005: 157.

[26] Krencker and Zschietzschmann 1938: 180; Millar 1993: 311.

[27] Nordiguian 2005: 114.

[28] *IGLS* 2921.

(probably the descendant of a colonist), in fulfilment of a vow. Sometimes we encounter a combination of these modes.[29]

Whether paid for by elites or funded by common treasuries, most of the rural sanctuaries appear to have been the product of efforts by a variety of individuals or groups – not necessarily concerted or harmonious, or even with any clear final vision in mind. Here, perhaps, lies a key to understanding the 'unfinished' temple, not as a failed or abandoned project, but a living, ongoing one in which many patrons might be expected to contribute. Our expectations imagine that the completed buildings, like those seen in our reconstruction drawings, embody the ultimate intention of their builders, but that vision may have little in common with ancient experiences. We should recognize that every building is a compromise between what was originally envisaged and what is possible given the various contingencies and constraints. Like the 'unfinished' modern houses in certain Mediterranean countries where metal reinforcing rods sprout from their flat roofs in anticipation of additional stories that could, but perhaps never will be, built, the unfinished temples defer the final compromise. Their incompleteness becomes a hyperbolic statement rather than a style: an anticipation of a splendid future, the promise of magnificence without its full and actual realization.

In the context of elite social display the act of building for the deity could have been just as significant, if not more so, than experience of a finished product.[30] It may have been the case that construction sometimes began without any clear conception of what the finished building ought to look like, leading to new developments, and the insertion of new features, as work progressed. Where does this leave the search for a correlation between religious architecture and identities, rooted, as they tend to be, in arguments about form and style? It allows us to consider the appearance of the 'Graeco-Roman' temple not as a rupture with past tradition, but as an element of religious continuity, where augmentation and elaboration of a sanctuary are part of an ongoing process of identification with it by its patrons. Statements and claims were still being made through form and style, but we should consider more carefully the identities of those making them, consider whether the forms and styles might have been much more localized in their references than we usually concede. The influences of the temples at Heliopolis on the forms and styles of neighbouring rural temples in the central Bekaa Valley of Lebanon has long been recognized. Similarly, a group of temples clustered in the southern Bekaa share Ionic elements, in contrast to the Corinthian elements favoured by those sanctuaries apparently influenced by Heliopolis.[31] If the various 'Graeco-Roman' styles and outward forms of the temples (rectangular, symmetrical *naoi* with pitched roofs, colonnaded *pronaoi*) prove to be the result of local influences, we might perhaps envisage the inner, 'native' forms as the product of such influences as well – meaning that those forms conventionally championed as evidence for unbroken continuity

---

[29] On the resources of a deity and a village at Hosn Niha: *IGLS* 2946.

[30] Taylor 2003: 4-5, 212-14.

[31] A group of temples around Mount Hermon – Deir al-Achair, Nebi Safa, Rahle, Burkush, Ayaa, Ain Hersheh, and Hebbariyeh – all employ Ionic pilasters and columns. Krencker and Zschietzschmann 1938: 205-64; Nordiguian 2005: 104-05, 107-23.

of native religious identities and the survival of tradition on a site[32] may sometimes have been new features imposed by the builders, in imitation of specific features found in neighbouring temples. So while those inner forms *could* have been dictated by the requirements of traditional cult, it is surely also possible that cult activities could have been augmented by the introduction of new forms emulating neighbouring ones. The cults were not the mainstay of some timeless, unchanging Orient rooted in the distant past, but dynamic social forces embedded in local communities, with individual histories and contemporary concerns (among them, the attraction of worshippers and benefactors). But to recognize that 'native' forms could be imported intrusions is not to shear them of relevance for native identities. Traditions do not have to be old to communicate a sense of authenticity and connection with the past. In the same spirit, the external appearance of 'Graeco-Roman' temples could also convey a sense of tradition.

We need to move beyond our captivation with the authentic, defined by the perceived origins of forms and styles, when considering the relationship between religious architecture and identity in Roman Syria. This is not to insist that ancient origins be ignored; it is merely to point out that the contemporary needs to be taken seriously. To examine the relationship between religious architecture and identity is to attempt to recover a history of intimate social forces, to explore the relations between the sanctuaries and the communities and individuals who patronized them.[33] The architectural process ought to be taken as an important element in those relations, as much as any forms and styles that resulted. Perhaps, after exploring these expressions of social power, we will still be reduced to arguments about the 'Greek' versus 'native' identities of the cults and their patrons, but I suspect what we will uncover is something infinitely more subtle and complex.

Bibliography

Ball, W. 2000. *Rome in the East. The transformation of an empire.* London and New York.

Bikai, P. M., Fulco, W., and Marchand, J. 1996. *Tyre: the shrine of Apollo.* Amman.

Bounni, A. 1997. 'La permanence des lieux de culte en Syrie: l'example du site de Qadboun', *Topoi* 7.2: 777-89.

Butcher, K. 2003. *Roman Syria and the Near East.* London and Malibu.

Cohen, A. P. 1989. *The symbolic construction of community.* London and New York.

Elsner, J. 1997. 'The origins of the icon: pilgrimage, religion, and visual culture in the Roman East as 'resistance' to the centre', in S. Alcock (ed.), *The early Roman Empire in the East*: 178-99. Oxford.

Freyberger, K. S. 1997. 'La fonction du Hamana et les sanctuaires des cultes indigènes en Syrie et en Palestine', *Topoi* 7.2: 851-71.

---

[32] Typical 'native' features include a raised *adyton* with crypts beneath, and staircases either side of the entrance to the *naos* leading to the roof, but it is hard to find pre-Roman parallels for these features.

[33] Gatier 1997; Kaizer 2002: 157-61.

Gatier, P.-L. 1997. 'Villages et sanctuaires en Antiochène autour de Qalaat Kalota', *Topoi* 7.2: 751-75.

Gatier, P.-L. and Nordiguian, L. 2005. *Yanouh et le Nahr Ibrahim. Nouvelles découvertes archéologiques dans la vallée d'Adonis*. Beirut.

Gawlikowski, M. 1987. 'Some directions and perspectives of research', *Mesopotamia* 22: 11-17.

Gawlikowski, M. 1989. 'Les temples dans la Syrie à l'époque hellénistique et romaine', in J.-M. Dentzer and W. Orthmann (eds), *Archéologie et histoire de la Syrie*, II: 323-46. Saarbrücken.

Hobsbawm, E. and Ranger, T. (eds) 1983. *The invention of tradition*. Cambridge.

Hölscher, T. 2004. *The language of images in Roman art*. Cambridge.

Huskinson, J. (ed.) 2000. *Experiencing Rome. Culture, identity, and power in the Roman Empire*. London and New York.

Kaizer, T. 2002. *The religious life of Palmyra. A study of the social patterns of worship in the Roman period*. Stuttgart.

Kennedy, D. 1998. 'The identity of Roman Gerasa: an archaeological approach', *MeditArch* 11: 39-69.

Kennedy, D. 1999. 'Greek, Roman, and native cultures in the Roman Near East', in J. Humphrey (ed.), *The Roman and Byzantine Near East, volume 2. Some recent archaeological research* (JRA Suppl. 31): 77-106. Portsmouth, RI.

Krencker, D. and Zschietzschmann, W. 1938. *Römische Tempel in Syrien*. Leipzig.

Krumeich, R. 1998. 'Darstellungen syrischer Priester an den kaiserzeitlichen Tempeln von Niha und Chehim im Libanon', *Damaszener Mitteilungen* 10: 171-99.

Mattingly, D. J. 2006. *An imperial possession: Britain in the Roman Empire*. London.

Millar, F. G. B. 1993. *The Roman Near East. 31 BC-AD 337*. Cambridge, MA.

Nordiguian, L. 2005. *Temples de l'époque romaine au Liban*. Beirut.

Pitts, M. 2007. 'The emperor's new clothes? The utility of identity in Roman archaeology', *AJA* 111.4: 693-713.

Richardson, P. 2002. *City and sanctuary. Religion and architecture in the Roman Near East*. London.

Sartre, M. 1991. *L'Orient romain: provinces et sociétés provinciales en Méditerranée orientale d'Auguste aux Sévères*. Paris

Segal, A. 1997. *From function to monument. Urban landscapes of Roman Palestine, Syria, and Provincia Arabia*. Oxford.

Steinsapir, A. I. 2005. *Rural sanctuaries in Roman Syria. The creation of a sacred landscape*. Oxford.

Stucky, R. A. 2005. *Das Eschmun-Heiligtum von Sidon. Architektur und Inschriften*. Basel.

Swain, S. 1996. *Hellenism and empire: language, Classicism, and power in the Greek world, AD 50-250*. Oxford.

Taylor, G. 1971. *The Roman temples of Lebanon*. Beirut.

Taylor, R. 2003. *Roman builders. A study in architectural process*. Cambridge.

Waliszewski, T. 2001. 'Chhîm. Explorations, 2001', *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean* 13: 243-53.

Waliszewski, T. 2003. 'Chhîm. Explorations, 2003', *Polish Archaeology in the Mediterranean* 15: 303-10.

Will, E. 1995. *De l'Euphrate au Rhin. Aspects de l'Hellénisation et de la Romanisation du Proche-Orient*. Beirut.

DISSING THE EGYPTIANS: LEGAL, ETHNIC, AND CULTURAL IDENTITIES IN ROMAN EGYPT

JANE ROWLANDSON

1. Approaches to Greek and Egyptian identities

a) Introduction

Until recently, scholars represented the position of the Egyptians under Roman rule in terms of unambiguous pessimism: Egyptians held a uniquely low legal status among the populations of the Roman empire, because their rulers saw them as unsuited to a civilized urban life, superstitious, lawless, and excessively given to rioting, a view shared by the articulate classes throughout the empire, and detectable even in the papyri from Egypt itself. Reinhold (1980) is the most coherent and succinct example of this view, but it is implicit in many accounts of Roman Egypt, including Lewis (1983). Although specialist scholarship since the 1990s has progressively moved towards more nuanced and sophisticated perceptions of Egyptian identity under Rome (well summed up by Vandorpe 2012), the legacy of the old view persists not only among non-specialists, but also more subtly still in the specialists' underlying assumptions and unconscious implications. This is particularly exemplified by the continued approach to both the material and written evidence from Roman Egypt primarily through opposing 'Greek' and 'Egyptian' elements, implicitly involving a zero sum game – any progress of 'Hellenization' inevitably meant the dilution or rejection of Egyptian identity. But the processes of Hellenization and Romanization (as far as these are useful concepts at all) were immensely more complex than presupposed by this simple 'see-saw' model, and scholars increasingly interpret them as producing manifestations of identity in the provinces of the empire that were fundamentally accretive rather than exclusive.[1]

The problem of unconscious implication can be introduced with Vandorpe's characterisation of ethnic identity in Roman Egypt:

> it is convenient to distinguish between (a) ethnic labelling by government ('I am an Egyptian according to law'), (b) ethnic labelling by the group itself (ethnic self-ascription: 'I consider myself a Greek'), and (c) ethnic labelling of particular cultural and religious features ('She has a Roman hairstyle'). These three types of ethnic label largely overlapped in classical Greece ..., but in the multi-cultural society of Graeco-Roman Egypt discrepancies arose (members of the gymnasium who were 'Egyptians' according to Roman law considered themselves 'Greeks').[2]

[1] *Cf.* Geiger 2002.

[2] Vandorpe 2012: 268.

This tripartite division accords with my own analysis of the papyrus evidence, except that I reserve the term 'ethnic' for the self-ascribed category (b), following the usage of most scholars (as Vandorpe acknowledges); instead, I prefer to label (a) legal identity and (c) cultural identity. More importantly, I shall argue that the category of ethnic self-ascription (b) is completely absent from the Roman period documentary evidence, and that even the apparently ethnic labelling of others is very rare and not strictly ethnic.[3] This underlies my concern that the suggestion in the final parenthesis – that gymnasium members, though legally 'Egyptians', considered themselves 'Greeks' – is easily misinterpreted by anyone less thoroughly conversant with Roman Egypt as implying that their self-ascribed Greekness was opposed to and incompatible with a self-ascribed Egyptian identity. Although combinations of different orders of identity are well understood as mutually compatible (I am simultaneously English, British, and European), our normal understanding of ethnic identity excludes the simultaneous acknowledgement of multiple ethnicities except in explicit combination (as in 'Afro-Caribbean'; I can see a case for reviving the unfashionable label 'Greco-Egyptian').

What is the evidence that the gymnasium members considered themselves to be Greeks? The voluminous papyri, ostraca, and inscriptions contain no explicit statements about how the gymnasials saw their ethnic identity, and the claim is essentially based on our general understanding of gymnasia as a Greek institution, combined with the prevalence of Greek personal names among most male members of that class, at least north of the Thebaid. But inferring ethnicity solely from nomenclature is insecure at best, and Bagnall has demonstrated how even the overwhelmingly Greek nomenclature of the '6475 Hellenic settlers in the Arsinoite nome' (equivalent to the gymnasials elsewhere) showed a strong preference for Greek names which also expressed a connection with Egypt through reference to its divinities or to the former Ptolemaic dynasty.[4] On this basis, and their self-representation in burials, I would guess that, if we could actually interview a selection of second-century AD gymnasials about how they saw their own identity, most would assent to self-descriptions as both Greek and Egyptian, with an increasing number considering themselves Roman as well, but that none of these self-ascriptions would be strictly 'ethnic' by our criteria (as opposed to legal, national, or cultural). To judge by the rarity of ethnic labelling in the documentation, I doubt that the gymnasials and most other inhabitants of Egypt shared our modern preoccupation with ethnicity and identity.

Even more insidious is the widespread assumption that the gymnasials' desire to be seen as 'Greek' arose from their belief in the innate inferiority of 'Egyptians': 'a term which now acquired connotations of administrative, fiscal, *and cultural* inferiority' (my italics).[5] Undeniably the Egyptians were now integrated into the Roman status hierarchy, ranking below Alexandrians in this hierarchy just as all peregrines ranked below Roman citizens, and equites below senators; and fiscal liability was a key marker of their status (see below). But the reference to cultural inferiority is much more nebulous, yet sweeping

---

[3] Thus I depart fundamentally from Alston 1997, despite agreeing with much of his detailed discussion.

[4] Bagnall 1997.

[5] Bowman and Rathbone 1992: 114; *cf.* Vandorpe 2012: 264; Jördens 2012: 249.

in its implication that the Egyptians' inferiority was not merely a matter of rank in the hierarchy of empire, but a condemnation of their entire way of life. This harks back to the old scholarly view of the Egyptians as uncivilized and boorish, based on the stereotyping of Latin (and to a lesser extent Greek) authors, especially the *auctoritas* of Tacitus' damning characterization: 'a province difficult of access, productive of corn revenue, factious and disruptive from superstition and licentiousness, ignorant of laws, and unaware of magistrates'.[6] These influences, I believe, still induce scholars to misinterpret and exaggerate the significance of the handful of papyri which ostensibly provide documentary evidence for cultural or ethnic prejudice against Egyptians.

The ultimate aim of this article is to offer an interpretation of these texts showing that they represent not ethnic antagonism, but social and cultural snobbery within a specific milieu (section 3c). But to contextualize this adequately, and especially to clear away possible misconstructions of how legal, ethnic, and cultural identities interacted in Roman Egypt, I first briefly introduce scholarly approaches to Greek and Egyptian identities (1b) and the legacy of the Ptolemaic period (1c). I then analyze the logic of the Roman civil classification of Egypt (2a), considering why the title 'Hellenes' was limited to three specific groups (2b), and showing that Roman policy was in no way influenced by ethnic prejudice against the Egyptians as unsuited to civil life – if anything, the reverse (2c). Finally I raise the question how far literary stereotyping reflected popular speech (3a), before systematically analyzing papyrological usage of 'Hellen-' and 'Aigypti-' in the Roman period (3b) to demonstrate that these never refer to ethnic identities, except (i) with specific reference to slaves and (ii) in texts such as the *Acta Alexandrinorum* and oracular predictions not classed as strictly 'documentary'. These texts support the argument (3c) that the milieu that produced the few extant disparaging references to Egyptians was not the metropolite gymnasial class, but social climbers from outside this class with links to Alexandria, who picked up from their Alexandrian patrons both a snobbish disparagement of 'Egyptians' and other echoes of the ethnic language emanating from the recurrent episodes of conflict with the Jews in that city.

(b) The Greek and Egyptian backgrounds: less ethnic than cultural versus national identity?

The nature and development of Greek identity, and its relationship to ethnicity, has been the subject of much recent discussion, of which only those items most directly useful to my argument are cited here.[7] Ethnicity is a slippery concept, which since the mid-twentieth century has been used to avoid the unfortunate connotations of 'race' in denoting the identity of groups that are seen by themselves and others as a distinct 'people', but do not necessarily comprise a national state. Writers differ in how exactly they define ethnicity, and particularly its relationship to national and cultural identity, self-awareness, and notions of shared ancestry. While various cultural markers – language, religious practices, dress, customs – may be important components of ethnic identity, it is generally agreed that

---

[6] Tac., *Hist.* 1.11.1: 'provinciam aditu difficilem, annonae fecundam, superstitione et lascivia discordem et mobilem, insciam legum, ignaram magistratuum'.

[7] Hall 1997; 2005; Malkin 2001; Zaccharia 2008.

ethnicity is not simply reducible to these cultural manifestations.[8] Despite the move away from 'essentialist' definitions, with their racist overtones, towards emphasis on the social construction, self-ascription, and fluidity of ethnic categories, the belief (however fictive) in a shared kinship or common origin has been argued to be an essential prerequisite for ethnic as opposed to other forms of identity.[9] Like Hall I take consciousness of common descent as the distinguishing feature of ethnic as opposed to other forms of identity, especially national identity, of which residence in a common land is the central feature.[10] Further, Hall's argument that already by the fifth century BC, 'Hellenic' identity was perceived primarily in cultural rather than ethnic terms is highly relevant to my argument.

Pharaonic Egyptian identity has also prompted some important recent discussions. The unusual strength of the Egyptian state (although conceptually binary – 'the two lands', and liability to break down in the three 'Intermediate' periods) tended to suppress the extent of ethnic diversity it encompassed, particularly in its public records, but there were always minority ethnic groups within it, such as Nubians (the personal name Pekysis means 'the Nubian'), people from the western oases or nomads from the Libyan desert.[11] Monumental art depicted Nubians, Asiatics, and Libyans stereotypically, distinguished from Egyptians in both skin colour and dress and often shown as defeated enemies, although even on the ideological level, more nuanced representations were possible, and the pharaonic Egyptians were not especially xenophobic in their practical dealings with foreigners.[12] The first millennium BC saw both a sequence of foreign rulers – Libyan, Nubian (Kushite), Assyrian (through their vassal Necho I), Persian, and Macedonian – and the increasing settlement of immigrants from the Mediterranean and Near East, including Syrians, Jews, Carians, and Greeks.[13] Thus the Macedonian conquest and consequent influx of immigrants should be seen as a culmination of earlier trends as much as a fundamental turning point.[14]

While language and religion were central to both Egyptian and Greek identities, the importance of place in the construction of the two identities was diametrically opposed. The Greek diaspora never looked to a common homeland, since 'Greece' itself was politically fragmented and geographically diffuse.[15] In contrast, Herodotus rightly

---

[8] For the importance of symbols and ceremonies in forming communal identity, see Elgenius 2011: 13-19.

[9] Hall 2005: 9-17.

[10] *Cf.* A. D. Smith's (2010: 13) discrimination between a nation, 'a named human community residing in a perceived homeland, and having common myths and a shared history, a distinct public culture, and common laws and customs for all members', and an *ethnie*, 'a named human community connected to a homeland, possessing common myths of ancestry, shared memories, one or more elements of shared culture, and a measure of solidarity, at least among the elites'. (Since the root terms *ethnos* and *natio* largely coincide in meaning, any attempt to distinguish national from ethnic identity is likely to be contested: contrast Connor 1978).

[11] Baines 1996.

[12] S. T. Smith 2003: 7, 19-29; O'Connor 2003.

[13] Johnson 1999; Vittmann 2003.

[14] Manning 2003.

[15] Malkin 2001: 14. Contrast the persistent Jewish attachment to their homeland through millennia of dispersal.

perceived Egyptian identity as crucially bound to the land itself and its bounteous river: 'Egypt is all the land watered by the Nile, and Egyptians all the people living below the city of Elephantine who drink from its water'.[16] The Egyptian name for Egypt, Kemet, meant 'the Black Land', referring to its alluvial soil. This meant that, just as one could become Greek by being educated as a Greek and adopting Greek language and customs, immigrants to Egypt could have descendants who, being born and nourished in the flood plain of the Nile, could be readily assimilated into the Egyptian population (Vittmann presents pre-Ptolemaic examples of such assimilation).[17]

A sense of common ancestry or kinship seems relatively unimportant to the Egyptian sense of identity (thus precluding a strictly ethnic identity by Hall's definition). This is partly due to the size of the country and its population, but must mainly be attributable to the strength of national identity created by the coherence of Egypt's geography and state organization. It seems that the pharaonic Egyptians largely escaped the particular challenges (especially dislocation between statehood and geographical origin) which encourage a specifically ethnic, as opposed to national or cultural, identity to develop. But subjection to Persian and then Ptolemaic rule prompted a sequence of major rebellions which, though they cannot accurately be described as 'nationalist' in origin, did invoke 'nationalistic' symbolism and rhetoric (*e.g.*, in the names of the rebel pharaohs). The next section shows how the impact of extensive immigration and rebellion started to crystallize ethnic identities, which were immediately modified and subverted by the opportunities for social mobility.

(c) The Ptolemaic background

In texts of the Ptolemaic period, the terms 'Egyptian' and 'Hellen' and their Demotic Egyptian equivalents are far from common (the various individual ethnics, such as 'Athenian', 'Macedonian', 'Cyrenean' occur much more frequently), and appear mainly as official status designations. Only occasionally does their usage by private individuals clearly have ethnic connotations.[18] For instance, in a petition of 218 BC addressed to the King (but handled by the local strategos), one Herakleides asked 'not to overlook the insult done without reason to me as a Hellene and a stranger by an Egyptian woman'.[19]

The series of major rebellions, beginning with the revolt of the Thebaid which lasted some twenty years from 207-186, seems to have helped to polarize ethnic identities; the rebels are several times designated 'Egyptians', even though as many, or more, Egyptians remained loyal to the Ptolemies and suffered at the hands of the rebels, and the rebellions arguably had more to do with the weakness of central government than either 'Egyptian nationalism' or economic distress.[20] The 160's saw two invasions of Egypt by the Seleucid king Antiochos IV, as well as the revolt of Dionysios alias Petosarapis, described by Diodorus[21] as an influential courtier who, after a failed uprising outside Alexandria,

---

[16] Hdt. 2.18.3; *cf.* 17.1.

[17] Vittmann 2003: 239-41. On becoming Greek, *cf.* Hall 2005: 8.

[18] La'da 2002; Goudriaan 1988, particularly his list of relevant documents, 126-57; *cf.* Veïsse 2007.

[19] P. Enteux. 79.

[20] Goudriaan 1988, Veïsse 2004.

[21] Diod. 31.15a.

withdrew to stir up sedition 'among the Egyptians'. This was the tense atmosphere in which Ptolemaios son of Glaukias, a recluse (*katochos*) living in the Memphite Serapeum, repeatedly complained of suffering violence at the hands of other residents of the sanctuary 'because I am a Hellene', while his younger brother Apollonios wrote 'Apollonios the Macedonian, I am a Macedonian' at the foot of an extract from the prologue of Euripides' *Telephus*, in which the Arcadian king laments his fate as a Greek among the barbarian Mysians.[22] Yet Apollonios seems also have been able to read and write Demotic, and a dream report perhaps in his own hand has been interpreted as expressing the ambivalence of his identity, since 'Peteharenpi' is the Egyptian equivalent of the name 'Apollonios': 'Second dream: a singer sings, 'Apollonios speaks Greek, Peteharenpi speaks Egyptian: the one who knows is this priest.''[23]

Throughout the Ptolemaic period, Greek and Egyptian identities (expressed through formal status, language, nomenclature, and visual culture such as statues) were at once sharply differentiated yet mutually compatible. Just as the Ptolemies were projected in public in the distinct roles of Pharaoh and Basileus, with only muted and subtle allusions from one to the other,[24] so their subjects could shift between Egyptian and Greek identities depending on their careers and life-choices. Already in the third-century census lists, the 'Hellenes', who were exempt from the obol tax (a poll tax) and from dyke *corvée*, included the scribe Petechonsis son of Imouthes and others of clearly Egyptian descent.[25] By the late second century, we can cite numerous instances of people able to operate with equal comfort in both Egyptian and Greek milieux, adopting the name and language appropriate to each context as required. These cases represent all social levels, from a family of military commanders from Edfu commemorated by two parallel series of grave monuments, Greek verse epigrams and Egyptian biographical stelae, to the bilingual farmer and priest from Akoris, Dionysios alias Plenis, son of Kephalas, or the well-known village scribe of Kerkeosiris, Menches (alias Asklepiades), described in one text as a 'native Greek' (*Hellen epichorios*).[26]

Menches' official papers document the progressive chameleon-like mutation of one of his fellow-villagers in consequence of his military promotion. Listed in 119/8 BC as 'Maron alias Nektsaphthis son of Petosiris', the following year he appears as 'Maron son of Dionysios, formerly known as Nektsaphthis son of Petosiris', and a few years later he had become 'Maron son of Dionysios, Macedonian of the catoicic cavalry'![27] Even if we cannot know precisely what this change of name signified, either to Nektsaphthis/Maron himself or

---

[22] UPZ I 7, 8, 15, P.Med. I 15; Thompson 2012: 228-44; TM.arch.119.

[23] P.Bologna dem. 3173 trans. Ray 2006: 196; *cf.* Chauveau 2000: 132, 180-83.

[24] Koenen 1993.

[25] Clarysse and Thompson 2006: 138-57, esp. 144.

[26] P.Tebt. I 164; Yoyotte 1969; Boswinkel and Pestman 1982; Verhoogt 1998. On the phenomenon generally, see Clarysse 1985; 1992. *Cf.* the rebel Dionysios alias Petosiris, and Dioskourides the *dioiketes*, whose sarcophagus bears a lengthy biographical hieroglyphic inscription, although he apparently chose not to use any Egyptian name (Collombert 2000).

[27] References and discussion in P.Tebt. I pp. 546-47, which shows that the original editors of these papyri were alert to the ethnic complexities revealed by the texts.

the contemporaries with whom he came into contact (and we should beware of assuming that it reflected in any simple sense the rejection of Egyptian identity in favour of assimilation with the ruling Hellenic elite), this case is an object-lesson for scholars that neither names nor titles can necessarily be taken at face value as indications of ethnicity. In particular it shows beyond doubt that the class of 'Macedonian' *katoikoi* widely attested in papyri of the late Ptolemaic period (especially from the Arsinoite, Herakleopolite, Oxyrhynchite nomes) were by no means all the genuine descendants of the original group of early Ptolemaic military settlers, but incorporated many soldiers of Egyptian descent who had achieved promotion.[28] Indeed, the Herakleopolite texts actually distinguish between 'ancient catoicic cavalrymen' and those recruited or promoted more recently; and all but two of the 'ancient kleroi' had been reapportioned to new grantees, suggesting that few genuine descendants of the original Greek settler class still remained by the first century BC.[29] From Panopolis in Upper Egypt comes a unique will in Demotic (Egyptian inheritance dispositions were normally made as part of a marriage contract, or through a deed of division), made by the catoicic cavalryman Heti, son of Petephibis and Siepmouthis, leaving his very substantial property among his six sons, daughter, and wife, including his military allotment to the two eldest sons. Heti was apparently so much more comfortable with Egyptian that he chose to have what was basically a Greek will drawn up in that language.[30]

Thus the ethnic background of the *katoikoi* of the late Ptolemaic period was hardly distinguishable from that of their socially less successful neighbours, who remained as farmers, or in the lower ranks of the Ptolemaic military or civil service. While a few may have wanted to deny their Egyptian background in favour of an exclusively Greek identity, neither law nor social pressure required those with Hellenic status to abandon their Egyptian cultural heritage; as we saw, anyone from royalty downwards could be simultaneously Egyptian and Greek. This ambiguous ethnic background and dual cultural identity of the *katoikoi* has special significance for our understanding of Roman policy towards Egypt, because they formed the core of the class of substantial landowners who were fostered as a privileged urban elite and became the lynchpin of Roman control of the province.

2. Status and identity in Roman Egypt

a) 'Egyptian' as a formal status in Roman Egypt

The system of civil statuses which the Romans introduced to Egypt is well attested and uncontroversial in basic outline, despite continued debate over details and, more importantly, what it implies about Roman attitudes to the urban population of the *chora*. At Oxyrhynchus, when declarants in census returns swore that the information they had presented was true, they sometimes added a clause 'and that neither foreigner nor Roman nor Alexandrian nor Egyptian nor freedmen' was living in the property. The same basic categorization occurs in the *Gnomon*, or rulebook, drawn up (originally under Augustus, as

---

[28] Fischer-Bovet forthcoming.a.

[29] BGU XIV with Falivene 2007.

[30] Malinine 1967; *cf.* with caution, Oates 2001. The correct date of the will is 17 April 68 BC. Heti probably also had a Greek name, but we should not expect to find it in an Egyptian document.

its preamble states, with subsequent additions and alterations) to assist the *idios logos*, a Roman equestrian official whose duties encompassed matters concerning status and confiscation.[31] This employs the same tripartite division into Romans, Alexandrians (or *astoi/astai*), and Egyptians, again with freedmen often treated separately because, although as elsewhere in the empire they obtained the civil status that their manumittor held, their status as ex-slaves threw up specific problems which set them apart from the freeborn.

'Romans' of course designated everyone who possessed Roman citizenship, not just ethnic Romans; once Egypt became a province, immigration of Italians and other foreigners virtually ceased, except for soldiers and a few traders. Apart from the serving Roman officials and their assistants, the Roman citizens attested in the papyri were nearly all natives of Alexandria or the *chora* whose ancestors had acquired citizenship through army service or individual grant.[32] Most of the wealthiest families of both Alexandria and the *metropoleis* had already become Roman citizens before Caracalla's universal grant of AD 212. Most scholars regard *astoi/astai* as an umbrella term for citizens of all the *poleis* of Egypt, that is, Naukratis and Ptolemais (and Antinoopolis after AD 130) as well as Alexandria, although virtually all the *astoi* or *astai* who appear in the papyri were in fact Alexandrians. Both terms appear in the *Gnomon* because Alexandria's importance in terms both of citizen numbers and its structural place in Roman government was such that Roman administrators often needed to make specific regulations for its citizens.[33]

Significantly, however, contrary to the habit of modern scholars to refer collectively to Alexandria and the other *poleis* as 'the Greek cities of Egypt', the Roman administration never used the term *Hellen(ikos)* in this way. The *Gnomon* refers to Greek religious rites (§86), and particularly to Greek, as opposed to Roman, wills and codicils (§8, §34). The single occurrence of the substantive 'Hellenes' in the *Gnomon* also concerns testacy: '§18 The deified Vespasian confiscated inheritances left in trust by Greeks to Romans or by Romans to Greeks; however, those acknowledging their trust have received half'. While scholars have disputed which particular group of Hellenes in Egypt is meant here (see 2b, below), this clause like the other two clearly concerns the problems arising when *e.g.*, veterans who had obtained Roman citizenship wanted to inherit from or leave bequests to their friends and relatives, who remained peregrines. 'Greeks' here is thus simply shorthand for anyone who drew up a Greek will (*diatheke*) or otherwise conducted their legal affairs in Greek as opposed to Latin, and is not implicitly contrasted with Egyptians.[34] Most testators who drew up *diathekai* in Roman Egypt were in fact Egyptian by legal status, and even culturally were not necessarily strongly Hellenized; for example Kronion son of Cheos of Tebtunis, *pastophoros* (a minor priest) and tenant farmer.[35]

---

[31] BGU V 1210 (mid second century AD; P.Oxy. XLII 3014 preserves part of a first-century copy).

[32] Jördens 2012: 250-52.

[33] Jördens 2012: 252; *cf.* Bowman and Rathbone 1992: 114-20. For Montevecchi (1985a: 334-35) both were alternative designations for Alexandrians only.

[34] *Cf.* Montevecchi (1985a: 335). For Mélèze-Modrzejewski (1989) these are the 'Hellenes who died without heirs'; see n.73 below.

[35] TM.arch.125; his will is P.Kron. 50. All the family's papers were in Greek, but they could not write Greek. Although it remained possible to insert inheritance provisions into marriage documents

The Roman administration, therefore, completely abandoned the old Ptolemaic division of the population into Greeks and Egyptians; BGU XVI 2577 line 215 (*c*.19 BC) remains the latest known attestation of a Ptolemaic classification, into *katoikoi*, *Hellenes,* and *Aiguptioi*.[36] Now Egyptian legal status embraced everyone in the province who was not a citizen of Rome, Alexandria, Naukratis, Ptolemais, or Antinoopolis (or Jewish: on the ambiguity of Jewish status, not mentioned in the *Gnomon*, see below). As Mélèze-Modrzejewski showed, the phrase 'the laws of the Egyptians' used in reports of legal proceedings referred, not to the indigenous Egyptian legal tradition as opposed to the Greek laws introduced under Ptolemaic rule, but to the whole package of law which the Romans applied to those of Egyptian status; that is, the legal tradition of the *chora* inherited from the Ptolemaic period, which intermingled laws of Egyptian and Greek origin.[37]

Scholars continue to find it paradoxical and surprising that the Roman regime opted to categorize the wealthy and educated elites of the nome capitals (*metropoleis*) – men such as Apollonios the *strategos* from Hermopolis, or the family of Sarapion alias Apollonianus from Oxyrhynchus – not as 'Greeks' along with other elite groups, but as Egyptians along with their humble tenants from the rural villages.[38] Legal status distinctions had major practical consequences: persons of different status either could not legitimately marry or inherit from one another at all, or if marriage was permitted, the children generally took the inferior status (see the *Gnomon* extracts in 2c, below). But it was the poll tax (*laographia*) imposed on everyone of Egyptian status, but not on Alexandrian and Roman citizens, that is assumed to have rankled most with the metropolite elite, as a mark of their humiliation and subjection to the power of Rome. The question whether Alexandrian Jews should pay the poll tax certainly became a hot issue in first-century Alexandria, producing Isidoros the Alexandrian gymnasiarch's sneering and derogatory allusion to the poll-tax paying Egyptians: '[The Jews] are not of the same nature as the Alexandrians, but live rather after the fashion of the Egyptians. Are they not on a level with those that pay the poll tax?'[39]

But it is noteworthy that the evidence provides no indication that the elite of the *chora* either resented paying the poll tax or campaigned to be relieved of it (as the Alexandrians did to have their *boule* restored). The reason is surely that the Romans correctly saw this elite as basically Egyptian both by descent (1c above) and in many aspects of life, including family structure and inheritance practice. The apparently restrictive status rules in practice were no barrier to a progressively growing number of elite metropolite families acquiring Alexandrian and Roman citizenship, or able individuals from the *chora*

following Egyptian practice, whether people chose to do this or write a separate *diatheke* is not perceptibly influenced by ethnic or cultural background (Yiftach 2002).

[36] Fischer-Bovet (forthcoming.b) argues that the fundamental logic of the Ptolemaic and Roman systems of classification remained similar.

[37] Mélèze-Modrzejewski 1988; *cf.* Yiftach-Firanko 2009: 550-52.

[38] TM.arch.19, TM.arch.210; Vandorpe 2012: 264, Jördens 2012: 249.

[39] CPJ II 156c (*Acta Isidori*); see Harker 2008, esp. 212-20 on the Jews' status in relation to Alexandrian citizenship. Jews shared the Alexandrian privilege of being beaten with the flat of a sword rather than flogged like the Egyptians: Philo, *In Flacc.* 78-79; Pearce 2007: 51, 57-58.

participating in the wider cultural life of the empire.[40] The urban elite, along with all other landowners in the *chora*, got an extremely good deal from Roman reform of land taxation,[41] and could take pride in the reduced poll tax and other indications of their privileged place in the new social hierarchy.

In each metropolis a hereditary group paid a reduced rate of poll tax, like the '*metropolitai* rated at twelve drachmas' at Oxyrhynchus (both the reduced and standard poll tax rate varied between nomes). This fiscally privileged metropolite class was evidently created as part of the initial Roman organization of the Egyptian *laographia* and census (or re-organization: there were Ptolemaic precedents), although the paucity of papyri from the Augustan period obscures its early stages.[42] Although later some inhabitants of the *metropoleis* are documented paying full rate poll tax, these must be descendants of migrants from the surrounding villages, and initially the privileged rate was almost certainly designed to demarcate urban from rural residents ('those from the nome' in the earliest texts, later normally *kometai*, 'villagers'). That the family of Tryphon the weaver in early first-century AD Oxyrhynchus paid the reduced rate confirms that the privilege was not initially confined to the urban upper class.[43] As the population of the *metropoleis* expanded, the reduced rate became a marker of privileged status within the town, still being claimed by eligible families in the third century.[44]

Tax privilege did not, however, draw any ethnic or cultural division within the *Aiguptioi* between a 'Hellenized elite' and 'true Egyptians'; the twelve-drachma *metropolitai* of Oxyrhynchus included a *pastophoros* of Sarapis, and a *hieroskopos* of Thoeris, Isis, Sarapis, and associated gods.[45] Moreover even in village temples, a sizeable quota of priests enjoyed complete exemption from poll tax, although the Roman authorities understandably tried to keep the number of those who qualified within strict limits.[46] Following Roman practice, the slaves and freedmen of *metropolitai* also paid the reduced tax rate.

Membership of another hereditary group in the *metropoleis*, 'those from the gymnasium', was regulated in a similar way to the metropolites, with subtle differences that show the different origin and purpose of the two groups. At Oxyrhynchus, while

[40] Such as the scholars Thrasyllus of Mendes, Herakleon of Tilothis (not even a *metropolis* until the second century), the literary astrologer Anoubion of Diospolis, or the international boxer Herminos-Moros of Hermopolis (Pap.Agon. 6 = Chr.Wilck. 156; TM.arch.241).

[41] Monson 2012.

[42] The earliest probable attestation dates from AD 1 (I.Portes 25; *cf.* SB XXIV 15909, AD 6, with Hanson 1997: 420); Bowman and Rathbone 1992: 120. Capponi 2005: 83-96 emphasises continuity from the Ptolemaic period.

[43] Biscottini 1966: 67; TM.arch.249.

[44] The latest known reference to metropolite status alone (not combined with gymnasial status; see below) is SB XXII 15626 (276-82: ed. Stephens 1993), which seems genuinely to be a solely metropolite *epikrisis* application, although much later than all other examples: Yiftach-Firanko 2010: 51-52.

[45] P.Oxy. VII 1028, LXVII 4584; nomenclature in the first family was strongly Egyptian (apart from the *pastophoros* Chaeremon himself), less so in the second.

[46] The quota at Tebtunis was 50, at Soknopaiou Nesos 100 (P.Bad. VI 169, P.Tebt. II 298; SB XVI 12816). Priests did, however, pay an annual fee as well as an entry fee: Monson 2012: 227.

metropolite applications cited the neighbourhood tax-list entries of the boy's father and maternal grandfather to prove their privileged status, the right to gymnasial status was supported with details of direct descent, in both male and female lines, back to the first register of the group compiled in AD 4/5 or the additional registrations made in Nero's reign, in either case referring also to an ancestor's inclusion in the definitive revision of the list made in 72/3.[47] In other nomes, the equivalent groups were constituted and revised at different dates and sometimes went by different names, suggesting that their origin came from local initiatives, though undoubtedly with Roman support and supervision (particularly with the stricter definition of membership from the 70's).[48]

The earlier view of the gymnasial group as a 'super-elite', even more privileged than the *metropolitai*, has given way to the consensus that they were essentially the same class defined through membership of a Greek cultural institution rather than by Roman fiscal privilege.[49] Ruffini's demonstration that the gymnasial class at Oxyrhynchus must have comprised around 4,000 adult males (from a total population estimated at 25,000-30,000 at its peak), confirms that they were more comparable in number to the citizen body than the council of a *polis*.[50] Yet though a broad social spectrum, including artisans and manual workers as well as landowners, the gymnasials were certainly a more select group than the *metropolitai*, both because of the stricter proofs required for admission and the exclusion of freedmen and their descendants, who could attain metropolite but not gymnasial status.[51] Thus, despite a substantial overlap in membership, the two classes remained distinct, requiring different admission procedures and documentation, at least until the very late third century.[52]

Since it was metropolite, not gymnasial, status that conveyed tax privilege, the stricter proofs required for admission to gymnasial status (especially after the restructuring of 72/3) cannot be attributed to Roman fiscal concerns, but are more plausibly connected to the gradual development from the mid-first century AD onwards of the gymnasial offices into a system of civic self-administration.[53] By the early second century, metropolite gymnasials could also be appointed as nome governors, previously the prerogative of Alexandrians.

---

[47] Yiftach-Firanko 2010; Ruffini 2006.

[48] *'Apo gymnasiou'* also at Hermopolis and Lykopolis (P.Oxy.Census); *katoikoi* at Herakleopolis, and *katoikoi* or the '6475 Hellenes' in the Arsinoite: Montevecchi 1975; *cf.* Bowman and Rathbone 1992: 121 who nevertheless assume Roman initiative.

[49] Mélèze-Modrzejewski 1985: 263; van Minnen 2002: 343.

[50] Ruffini 2006, *contra* Bowman and Rathbone 1992: 124. For the total population, see Rathbone 1990, Tacoma 2006: 42-43.

[51] Van Minnen 2002 objects to the term 'elite' for the gymnasial class; it was properly an order (*ordo*). Bussi (2008: 17-19) observes a contrast between the manual occupations of several Lykopolite gymnasials and the much greater wealth of the class at Hermopolis and Oxyrhynchus. But we should not assume that the entire gymnasial class was wealthy even further north; note the wage-earning linen worker among the Arsinoite *katoikoi* (P.Prag. I 18), and the barely literate river fisherman who had qualified as an Alexandrian ephebe (P.Tebt. II 316).

[52] See the paired declarations in P.Oxy. XII 1452. The Oxrhynchite declarations of children, which cluster in the late third century, combine both statuses (Ruffini 2006: 74-5 n. 13).

[53] Contra Ruffini 2006: 85-86. Hagedorn 2007; antedated to Augustus by Bowman and Rathbone 1992: 122.

While it was normal Roman policy to rely on the local ruling class for much provincial government, the Roman administration needed to be satisfied that only persons of suitable background, education, and social standing were appointed to these responsible posts, which (by their criteria) appointment from a strictly hereditary and tightly controlled gymnasial class would achieve. Clearly this suitability included the ability to communicate through the shared international currency of Greek language and culture, but the papyri themselves make no reference to the gymnasials as Greeks (except the specific case of the Arsinoite Hellenes discussed in the next section) although scholars almost without exception express this Roman policy as separating out a 'Greek' elite from the mass of Egyptians.[54]

The prevalence of Egyptian names for women in Hermopolite and Oxyrhynchite gymnasial families, contrasting markedly with their largely Greek male nomenclature, has been attributed to the families' ultimately more Egyptian ancestry in the female line, caused by the original Greek settlers marrying native women, reinforced by the settler families' exposure of infant daughters, necessitating further intermarriage with Egyptians.[55] But, as Bingen noted, the persistent gender difference in gymnasial names reflected not ethnic identity, but the shared perception that Greek names were appropriate for men whose lives revolved around the public civic sphere, whereas it was less important for their wives and sisters who had less contact with public life to adopt a Greek persona.[56] As we saw above (section 1c), the gymnasial class was largely of Egyptian descent in consequence of social changes during the Ptolemaic period, and after the third century BC nomenclature is not a reliable guide to ethnic origin or descent. While it was always popular to name children after a grandparent, names were also chosen to reflect social identification and aspiration, and thus subject to marked changes of fashion. In particular, the metropolite elites of the Roman period developed a strong preference for theophoric names (especially in combination) referring to Greek cults which were also distinctively Egyptian, such as Sarapis or Agathos Daimon (= Egyptian Shaï), and which might also show a particular local attachment, such as Lykophron at Lykopolis.[57]

The gymnasial men's Greek names, therefore, far from dissociating them from their Egyptian roots, seem chosen specifically to emphasize their Egyptian origin and identity. And the greater prevalence of Egyptian names among the gymnasial men from Lykopolis (in P.Oxy.Census) suggests that the late first-century inhabitants of the Thebaid saw no incongruity in members of the gymnasial class being named *e.g.*, Onnophris or Psennesis. Egyptian names are not unknown even among the male Oxyrhynchite gymnasials.[58] There is in short no evidence that any metropolite gymnasials found their status as Egyptians demeaning or wanted to suppress their Egyptian identity; quite the reverse.

---

[54] *E.g.*, Bowman and Rathbone 1992: 121 'they created in the *chora* an urban-based 'Hellenic' gymnasial group above the 'Egyptian' villagers'. A rare exception is Ruffini's suggestion (2006: 85; *cf.* 74-75) that the Romans did not care about distinguishing Greeks from Egyptians.

[55] Van Minnen 2002: 351; Montevecchi 1985a: 330.

[56] Bingen 1991.

[57] Benaissa 2009; Clarysse and Paganini 2009: esp. 78-80; Blouin forthcoming.

[58] Montevecchi 2000a; Ruffini 2006: 75 n.14.

b) 'Hellen' as an official designation: the 6475 Hellenes in the Arsinoite nome, 'New Greek' Antinoites, and 'Greeks who died heirless'.

In the Arsinoite nome, the equivalent of the gymnasial class elsewhere were entitled 'the *katoikoi* from the total of the 6475 Hellenes in the Arsinoite', first attested in AD 55 by a papyrus copy of Nero's letter declining various honours they had voted him on his accession, and confirming all the privileges which they and the 'city' (Arsinoe) had received from his predecessors.[59] Montevecchi argues that the group had been constituted in the reign of Tiberius, from the register of 'Macedonians of the catoicic cavalry' inherited from the late Ptolemaic period.[60] As we saw above, these late Ptolemaic 'Macedonians' were not as they superficially appear, distant descendants of immigrant soldiers, but largely Egyptian in origin. Though not coterminous with the *metropolitai* of Arsinoe, they were all registered in the *metropolis* and paid poll tax at the reduced Arsinoite rate of 20 dr.; thus they must have been legally Egyptian. Despite their impressive title, these Hellenes were in some respects less exclusive and 'Greek' than the gymnasials, since the status was passed on to freed slaves (following Roman, not Greek practice).[61] Women of the class were entitled 'Hellenis' or 'daughter of *katoikoi*' and could submit the declaration for their child along with or instead of the father (as for *metropolitai* but not gymnasials). A population register of 72/3 includes someone co-opted into the class in 69 after (an athletic) victory, and another promoted from it to Alexandrian citizenship, and thus exempted from the poll tax.[62] I tentatively suggest that the 'Greek' identity of the 6475 was stressed in their title because it was not otherwise immediately obvious.

In his important discussion of the ethnic identity of the people depicted in the famous Fayum mummy portraits, Bagnall offers an illuminating analysis of the nomenclature of the 6475 based on Canducci's prosopography.[63] In fact the pattern of their names, especially for men, is even more strongly Greek in character than emerged from Bagnall's analysis, since several Egyptian names feature incorrectly in Canducci's list.[64] The only

[59] Canducci 1990; 1991. Montevecchi 1970 (= SB XII 11012); *cf.* Bowman and Rathbone 1992: 124 on this and related texts (especially OGIS II 668=I.Fay. III 147).

[60] Montevecchi 1997: 724-25. 'Macedonian' *katoikoi* are attested throughout the reign of Augustus and even later: Capponi 2005: 20-22, 93, 219-20; esp. P.Köln V 227. The number 6475, although theoretical, in its order of magnitude supports Ruffini's finding that the gymnasial class of the larger *metropoleis* was numbered in thousands, not hundreds, even bearing in mind that the Arsinoite nome was unusually large (it was administered as two or three units for most of the Roman period).

[61] BGU I 55, 138; Canducci 1990: 228, 234; and 229-30 on the poll-tax.

[62] Canducci 1990: 223, 228. The lists of *katoikoi* were compiled as part of the general census lists (P. Lond. II 260 + SPP IV pp. 72-8, P. Mich. XI 603). Most evidence of the class derives not from *epikrisis* applications (which are few and lack the impressive gymnasial pedigrees) but a range of document types, especially census returns: Canducci 1990: 212-18.

[63] Bagnall 1997; Canducci 1991.

[64] Marsisouchos, Psenkebkis, Thaesis, all from P.Fam.Tebt. 9; Canducci incorrectly equates Thaesis the debtor with the wife of Didymos the elder (*cf.* Keenan 1971, with BL VII). Also dubious are the men named Orsenouphis, father and brother of Ninnarous, an Antinoite (P.Fam.Tebt. 33, 42) – Hadrian's grant of *conubium* with Antinoites applied to all Egyptians, not just the 6475; Petearios and his son Dios (P.Mey. 5), related by marriage to a 6475 family; Spotous, father-in-law of a

two men with Egyptian names who certainly belonged to the 6475, Mysthes-Ninnos (BGU I 55) and Souchos (P.Fam.Tebt. 30), both came from families whose overall nomenclature was more Greek in character; there is thus no reason to think that these families were any more 'Egyptianized' (or 'Egyptianizing') than the rest of their class. Yet as Bagnall noted, less than a fifth of male names are common Greek names with no particular connection with Egypt (*e.g.*, Andreas, Lysanias), and even fewer are Roman in origin (*e.g.*, Pompeius, Valerius).[65] Their male nomenclature, although overwhelmingly Greek, typically displays a specific local identification as Egyptian Greeks; though interestingly, they seem to have chosen their least 'Egyptian-sounding' members as ambassadors to Nero (Aiacidas, Antenor, Nibytas, Polykrates, Nemison: SB XII 11012). And given the particular association of the Arsinoite nome with the Ptolemaic dynasty and the supposed 'Macedonian' origin of this class, the Macedonian and dynastic names are surprisingly few; and predominantly accounted for by Ptolemaios (and its variant, Ptollarion) which was extremely popular throughout Egypt, and Lysimachos (all 22 cases from a single extended family: P.Fam.Tebt.). As Bagnall remarks, 'the overall character of this onomastic repertory is unmistakably rooted in Egyptian religion',[66] although examination of the Greek theophoric names shows that Greek formations referring to zoomorphic deities (*e.g.*, Apion, Anoubion, Hierax, Horion) are relatively rare among this group. More popular were names derived from anthropomorphic cults, especially those associated with Greco-Roman developments in Egypt (especially Sarapion, Sarapammon, Dionysammon; also *e.g.*, Ammonios, Heron).[67] But much the most popular were the 'multivalent' names such as Apollonios, Didymos, or Dioskoros, which could equally refer to both Greek and Egyptian gods; and Herakleides was especially popular because it ticked other boxes too, having associations with both the gymnasium and the Ptolemies.[68] If their names are any guide, the families of the 6475 Arsinoite Hellenes, like the gymnasial class as a whole, saw their Hellenic identity as coinciding with, not opposed to, their Egyptian identity; and these identities were perceived in cultural and religious, not ethnic, terms.

Apart from the 6475, only two other groups in Egypt were officially labelled as 'Hellenes'.[69] The citizens of Hadrian's new city foundation of Antinoopolis were formally entitled the *Neoi Hellenes*; some (apparently chosen by lot: P.Würz. 9 line 54) had

katoikos (P.Prag. I 18=SB I 4299). The Egyptian female names seem more secure. See further my 'Notes on the 6475 Hellenes' at http://kcl.academia.edu/janerowlandson.

[65] Unlike Bagnall, I would also class Herakleides and Philantinoos as (Greek) theophoric, not Macedonian and Roman respectively, and Menelaus as dynastic (Ptolemy I's brother; *cf.* the Menelaite nome in the Delta).

[66] Bagnall 1997: 9.

[67] Dunand 1963; Clarysse and Paganini 2009.

[68] *Cf.* Bagnall 1997: 11.

[69] I follow Bingen's (1987) view that the dedication honoring Aelius Aristides (OGIS II 709, from Smyrna?) purporting to be made by 'the city of the Alexandrians, and Hermopolis the Great and the council of Antinoite New Greeks and the Greeks living in the Delta of Egypt and Thebaic nome' does not reflect the administrative realities of Roman Egypt, although it does show that contemporaries thought that there were people in the Delta and Nile valley who could justifiably be regarded as 'Hellenes' (*cf.* Quet 1992).

relocated from the city of Ptolemais further south, while others were drawn from the 6475 Arsinoite Hellenes and from retired soldiers. All these groups had some claim to 'Hellenic' identity, and clearly the new city was in some sense intended as a beacon of Hellenism in Middle Egypt, but not an exclusive Hellenism, since it embraced both Roman and Egyptian elements.[70] The military veterans were of course Roman citizens, and although its laws were based on those of Naukratis, the city's constitutional organization was substantially Roman.[71] And among its many privileges (including a corn dole) Hadrian granted the Antinoites marriage rights with Egyptians, which the Naukratites did not enjoy, a concession which to Montevecchi indicated the crisis of *'la grecità'* and desperate demographic shortage of 'authentic' (*i.e.*, ethnic) Greeks.[72] Hadrian undoubtedly wanted his foundation to expand and flourish, but more practical considerations were at issue than the preservation or dilution of ethnic purity: it would be unreasonable to prevent his 'new Greek' citizens contracting legitimate marriages within their circles of family and friends, many of whom still possessed Egyptian status.

More problematic is the identity of the 'Hellenes who died without heirs' in the Jewish revolt of AD 116-17. In the aftermath of this war, two special accounts were set up, the *Ioudaikos logos* to handle properties confiscated from the rebels, and the other handling the *bona vacantia* of Greeks who had died without heirs.[73] But who were these Greeks? Not the 6475 Arsinoite Hellenes, since they are also attested in the Athribite nome; nor the same 'Greeks' as in *Gnomon* §18 (*cf.* n.34), who are paired with Romans, not Jews.[74] The war was particularly destructive in Middle Egypt, where most landowners had Egyptian status; at the start of the third century, the Oxyrhynchites, who had assisted the Roman forces, still held an annual festival celebrating the day of the Jewish defeat.[75] So it would be an unexpected designation for the loyal landowners in the *chora* killed in the revolt (who included many villagers, as well as metropolites and citizens of Rome and the *poleis*), cutting across the usually precise Roman status stratification in a way otherwise unparalleled in official (and unofficial) usage. The context where Hellenes were explicitly juxtaposed with Jews was not the war in the *chora*, but the series of conflicts which disrupted Alexandria in 38-41, 66, and again in 115 (just before war broke out in the *chora*), and the *Acta* literature that grew from them.[76] Jewish identity was undoubtedly ethnic by the criteria

[70] Bell 1930: 136; one wonders what the leading residents of nearby Hermopolis thought of this; *cf.* Mélèze-Modrzejewski 1993, van Minnen and Worp 1993. Hermopolis possessed a corn dole already in Nero's reign (P.Heid. IV 338-40), and see 3b below on its *ephebeia*.

[71] Bowman and Rathbone 1992: 120.

[72] Chr.Wilck. 27 Jördens 2012: 253-54; Montevecchi 2001: 991.

[73] P.Oxy. III 500, SB XII 10892-3, P.Köln II 97; *cf.* P.Oxy. IX 1189.

[74] Canducci 1990; Mélèze-Modrzejewski 1989; *cf.* Jördens 2012: 257.

[75] P.Oxy. IV 705 ll.31-5; Harker 2008: 118.

[76] Harker 2012; 2008; Goudriaan 1992; CPJ II 256b ii 7-10 (*Acta Isidori*): 'I am brought here(?), a gym[nasiarch of Alexandria], fifty-six years old, a Hellene [by race? ...] orator ...'; *cf.* P.Oxy. XXII 2339, P.Bouriant 7, P.Harr. II 173; Joseph., *AJ* 18.257, 19.278, *BJ* 2.487-92, Eusebius 4.2.1-2. Philo by contrast conspicuously avoids using 'Hellen' for the opponents of the Jews in Alexandria: Birnbaum 2001.

discussed above (1b), reinforced by the 'Jewish tax' imposed on Jews throughout the empire after suppression of the Judaean revolt in AD 70, and these Alexandrian conflicts had a marked ethnic dimension. Whereas Mélèze-Modrzejewski argued that this led to the unusual official use of this ethnic vocabulary to embrace all heirless loyal landowners killed in the revolt whatever their legal status, the paucity of attestations suggests to me that the designation was perhaps confined to Alexandrians (perhaps residents rather than just citizens). In either case, the usage stems from the well-documented ethnic tensions in Alexandria, not perceived ethnic differences in the *chora* itself.

c) Unsuited to civic life?

According to Josephus, the Egyptians held a uniquely low status among the peoples of the Roman empire, being deprived of civic rights of any kind.[77] Despite the context, of his virulently anti-Egyptian polemic against Apion (an Alexandrian citizen of Egyptian origin) and attempt to show that the Jews, unlike Apion himself, had a legitimate claim to Alexandrian citizen rights, his assertion has a genuine basis in the rule that Pliny encountered when obtaining Roman citizenship for his Egyptian therapist from the emperor Trajan: 'I was reminded by more experienced people that I ought to have asked first for Alexandrian citizenship for him, then Roman, since he was an Egyptian. But because I did not realize that there was any difference between Egyptians and other provincials ...'[78]

Scholars have been tempted to take at face value Josephus' implied explanation for this rule, that the Romans, like the Ptolemaic kings before them, regarded the Egyptians as intrinsically given to disorder and unsuited to civic life, finding authoritative corroboration in Polybius and Tacitus.[79] But the Polybian passage (preserved through quotation by Strabo) while apparently clear in its expression of Greek ethnic prejudice against Egyptians, is textually uncertain and relates specifically to the city of Alexandria under the misgovernment of Ptolemy VIII Physcon: '[Polybius] says that three classes inhabited the city; first, the Egyptian and native tribe, quick-tempered and <not> inclined to civic life, second, the mercenary class ... while the third class was that of the Alexandrians, also not decidedly inclined to civic life for the same reasons, but nevertheless better than the others, for even if mixed, nevertheless they were Greeks by origin and remembered the common customs of the Greeks.'[80] Even if we accept the editorial addition of 'not' here (as required by the later comparison of the Alexandrians as better than the Egyptians, although still not wholly adapted to civic life), Strabo elsewhere

---

[77] *C.Ap.* 2.41: 'Indeed, to the Egyptians alone have the Romans, who are now masters of the world, denied admission to civic rights of any kind'; see also 2.72: 'For on the Egyptians, it seems that not a single one of the kings nor now any of the emperors has ever bestowed civic rights.' For Josephus, Apion's origin in the Great Oasis made him 'more Egyptian than them all' (*C.Ap.* 2.29; Jones 2005: 292); but the Egyptians themselves considered the Oases not fully part of Egypt, being away from the Nile valley (and it is true that the inhabitants were ethnically more Libyan than Egyptian).

[78] Pliny, *Ep.* 10.6 (22), 1-2: 'admonitus sum a peritioribus debuisse me ante ei Alexandrinam civitatem impetrare deinde Romanam, quoniam esset Aegyptius. ego autem, quia inter Aegyptios ceterosque peregrinos nihil esse credebam ...'

[79] Tac., *Hist.* 1.11.1: see 1a above.

[80] Strabo, *Geog.* 17.1.12.

in his book judged the Egyptians a peaceable people, who 'from the beginning have led a civic and gentle life, and have been settled in well-known places, so that their modes of organization are worthy of comment'.[81]

The policy of Strabo's contemporary Augustus towards Egypt was determined not by a crudely derogatory stereotyping of the Egyptian character as innately incapable of self-government, but the realities of the political legacy of the Ptolemaic period. The nome-based bureaucratic organization of Egypt, however worthy of admiration, was quite unlike the civic structures familiar to Rome and the Greek world and exported throughout the western provinces, and the Ptolemies (with the exception of Ptolemais in the Thebaid) had preferred to work with this nome-based administrative structure rather than create many *polis* foundations throughout the country, as the Seleucids did to a much greater extent. Even foundations with much of the physical fabric of Greek *poleis* (like the 'model town' Philadelphia, designed on a grid plan with gymnasia, Greek temples, *etc.*), or officially designated *poleis* (like Euergetis and the other cities founded by Boethos) possessed no institutions of civic government.[82]

The problem was not a lack of urbanism; indeed, on conventional measures of urbanization such as (estimated) population size or range of economic activity, Egypt must have been one of the most urbanized provinces of the empire. Quite apart from Alexandria and over forty *metropoleis* (which ranged in size from maybe 40,000 for Arsinoe or Hermopolis at their second-century AD peak to a few thousand), 'villages' like Karanis or Tebtunis of several thousand inhabitants could vie in both size and cultural sophistication with many of the cities of Italy or the other provinces.[83] The problem was rather the discrepancy between this degree of urbanization and the communities' lack of civic organization. In other provinces, and particularly in Italy itself, communities of comparable size to the larger Fayum villages such as Karanis or Tebtunis had the formal status of cities: Italy had over 400 cities, many with only a few thousand inhabitants.[84]

For Augustus to grant city status to all the nome *metropoleis* would have involved disruption of the administrative status quo on a scale both wholly out of character and politically imprudent, particularly with regard to such a wealthy province of whose stability and loyalty he had justifiable doubts (the reputation for rebellion against both Persians and Ptolemies was confirmed by the almost immediate revolt of the Thebaid against Rome – the seriousness of which Strabo understates[85] – and Cornelius Gallus' treason). His solution, followed by his successors, of maintaining the nome administration while progressively reconfiguring the *metropoleis* to facilitate development of civic institutions, is typically cautious and pragmatic but in fact demonstrates confidence that

---

[81] Strabo, *Geog.*17.1.3; *cf.* 53.

[82] Mueller 2006; *cf.* Mélèze-Modrzejewski 1985: 258.

[83] Rathbone 1990; Bowman 2011. On Greek culture in the Fayum villages, see van Minnen 1998. Large villages were not confined to the Fayum; Oxyrhynchite Seryphis or Takona must have been comparable, and Herakleopolite Tilothis was promoted (renamed as Niloupolis) to *metropolis* of its own nome: Falivene 1998: 137).

[84] Scheidel 2007: 79.

[85] Strabo, *Geog.* 17.1.53.

the Egyptian propertied classes were just as capable as those elsewhere in the empire of organizing themselves for civic life. And from the start, not only the gymnasial class but the wider population of the nomes demonstrated their capacity to organize themselves as communities to commemorate their rulers in a thoroughly appropriate manner (note the decree of 'those of the village of Bousiris of the Letopolite nome who live near the pyramids, and the district and village secretaries serving there' honouring the prefect Balbillus with a column inscribed in hieroglyphs in the precinct of 'the greatest god Helios Harmachis').[86]

The rules on personal status such as those in the *Gnomon* were never intended to segregate the Egyptians entirely from the rest of the social hierarchy of the empire, as Reinhold suggests; the Romans were simply applying their normal laws on intermarriage between statuses to the specific case of Egypt.[87] As with all Roman status regulation, the aim was not to prohibit all social mobility, but to ensure that the hierarchy remained stable by preventing (as far as possible) uncontrolled and illicit claims to higher status, only allowing changes of status carried out with the proper formalities and patronage (as with Pliny's therapist). But the *Gnomon* itself makes clear that there was much flouting of the rules, both intentional and unintentional, and that Roman officials exercised considerable discretion in enforcing the letter of the law:

§13   The children of an *aste* and a foreign man are foreigners and do not inherit from their mother.

§38   Those born to an *aste* and an Egyptian man remain Egyptians but inherit from both parents.

§39   The children of a Roman man or woman who {in ignorance} marries either *astoi* or Egyptians follow the lower status.[88]

§40   The registration for Alexandrian citizenship of persons not qualified is now a matter for the prefect's jurisdiction.

§42   Those who style themselves improperly (*i.e.*, assume a status to which they are not entitled) are fined one quarter (of their property) and those who knowingly collude with them are (also) fined one quarter.

§46   It has been granted to Roman men or *astoi* who in ignorance marry Egyptian women to be exempt from liability and for the children to follow the paternal status.[88]

§47   An *aste* who marries an Egyptian in the mistaken belief that he is an *astos* is exempt from penalty. And if the birth declaration of the children is made by them both, citizenship is granted to the children.[88]

§49   Freedmen of Alexandrians may not marry Egyptian women.

§50   Norbanus confiscated the property of a freedwoman of an *astos* who had children by an Egyptian; but Rufus gave (the property) to the children.

§52   Marriage between Romans and Egyptians is <not> allowed.

§53   If Egyptian women married to discharged soldiers style themselves as Romans, the matter is subject to the rule on usurpation of status.

---

[86] *OGIS* II 666, *cf. SEG* VIII 527.

[87] Reinhold 1980: 101; *cf.* 97, 102; Bagnall 1993.

[88] On the interpretation of these clauses, see Bagnall 1993.

§54   Ursus did not allow a discharged soldier's daughter, who had become a
Roman citizen, to succeed to her mother, who was an Egyptian.

§55   If an Egyptian serves in a legion surreptitiously, on discharge he returns to
Egyptian status. The same is the case for discharged oarsmen, except only those from
the Misenum fleet.

In §55, the key word is 'surreptitiously' (*lathon*); despite the general rule that Egyptians
(like other *peregrini*) could not be recruited into the legions, but only into the auxiliary
cohorts or the fleet, we know that it was not uncommon during the first century, and even of
one clear case where a legionary remained a peregrine until discharge.[89] The rules were
presumably relaxed when military manpower was short.

Illicit infiltration into the Alexandrian *ephebeia* (and thus potentially the citizenship)
aroused the condemnation of the emperor Claudius;[90] is that how Apion from the distant
Oasis had acquired his Alexandrian citizenship, if Josephus' account of him is not mere
slander? And the impressively elaborate genealogies in the gymnasial *epikrisis* returns should
not make us forget the probability that there were other families within the class with more
dubious credentials who did their best to avoid having to prove their status quite so fully.[91]

The Romans knew that to try to enforce impenetrable barriers between social ranks
was neither possible nor desirable. Egyptians as well as Alexandrians had their place on
the same social ladder as the rest of the empire, and the ambitious could always hope to
rise a rung or two, even if until the third century not even wealthy and distinguished
Alexandrians could aspire to enter the Roman senate.

3. Stereotyping, snobbery, and Egyptian identity

a) Egyptians in literary and popular stereotypes

The stereotyping of Egyptians as deceitful, mischievous, and thieving can be traced back in
Greek literature to fifth-century Athenian drama, where the verb *aigyptiazen* (to act like an
Egyptian) suggests that this was more than just a literary motif, and had currency in
everyday speech.[92] Athenian prejudice of this sort was, however, by no means confined to
Egyptians, extending to many foreigners, especially Phoenicians and Phaselites,[93] and is
hardly surprising in a city which drew in so many foreigners for trade and business and had
recently made an unsuccessful military intervention in Egypt itself. The colonial atmosphere
of early Ptolemaic Alexandria no doubt helped to perpetuate the stereotype and reinforce the
disdain for Egyptians among snobbish settlers of the sort gently satirized by Theocritus:
'Nowadays no criminal harms the passer by, sneaking up in Egyptian fashion; wicked games

---

[89] Rathbone 2001: 106.

[90] Whitehorne 2001; P.Lond. VI 1912 = Sel.Pap. II 212, 53-57; *cf. Gnomon* §44, discussed below.

[91] This might explain the omission of the maternal ancestry in PSI V 457: Montevecchi 1985b: 234.

[92] Aristophanes, *Thesm.* 922, schol. to Ar., *Clouds* 1130 (which quotes Aeschylus, fr. 373 Radt and
Cratinus fr. 378 as well as Theocritus 15.48); see further Cooper 2003: 76, Isaac 2004: 353-55. Note
that the scholiast felt that the word *aigyptiazen* needed explanation. For a more profound and
pervasive intellectual Athenian antipathy towards Egypt, see Vasunia 2001.

[93] Cooper 2003.

such as men welded into a mass of deceit used to play, all as bad as one another, those idle good-for-nothings.' Later the same speaker, Praxinoa, boasts of her Doric speech and ancient Corinthian ancestry, 'like Bellerophon himself'![94] Yet as we have already seen, few Ptolemaic papyri betray signs of ethnic antipathy between Greek settlers in the Egyptian *chora* and the indigenous population in contrast with the mass of evidence for their integration and assimilation.

Discussions of attitudes towards Egyptians in Greek and Latin literature have tended to amass material from different contexts and periods into a single highly derogatory picture.[95] This is bulked out with references which on inspection prove to be innocuous or neutral, while more positive assessments are treated as exceptional.[96] The analysis of literary presentations of Egypt needs to disaggregate what is less a homogeneous tradition than a series of comments and representations which, far from straightforwardly expressing their authors' opinions, each reflect the particular demands of their literary context among which may be included intertextual references to earlier writers. For example, the accusations of arrogance and deceit expressed in the *Bellum Alexandrinum* and Cicero's *Pro Rabirio Postumo*[97] are targeted at the Ptolemaic court, not the Egyptian population; it is a nice question how far they should be seen as drawing on Greek literary portrayals of deceitful Egyptians to justify Roman disapproval of Hellenistic monarchy.[98] Likewise it is not obvious how far Seneca's reference to the Egyptian robbers called 'lovers', who attacked their victims by embracing them,[99] also implicitly invokes the Greek literary stereotype. There is not space to pursue this analysis in more depth here (I hope to do so elsewhere), but we do need to ask whether any of this reflects more than a literary theme, and (as is commonly assumed) reflects a disdainful and derogatory attitude towards Egyptians prevalent in the Roman world, which can also be detected in the papyri from Egypt itself.

The Egyptians were far from unique among peoples of the Roman empire in being singled out for literary disdain; the cases discussed by Isaac include much of the population of the empire, from Gauls and Germans to Phoenicians, Syrians, and Jews, not exempting the Greeks.[100] And Spawforth has shown that the persistent literary stereotyping of Lydians as effeminate and servile (according to one proverb, 'The Lydians are bad, second the Egyptians, and third the Carians – the most abominable of all') was no

[94] *Idyll* 15, 47-50; *cf.* 89-93.

[95] Especially Reinhold 1980; Smelik and Hemelrijk 1984; Isaac 2004: 352-70; see now Gruen's (2011: esp. 107-11) very similar criticisms of earlier scholarship. Vout 2003; Pearce 2007 and Cordier 2007 adopt more nuanced approaches to the material. On the stereotyping of Egyptians in Nilotic mosaics, Versluys' (2002) argument that it reflects the Roman conquerors' disdain is somewhat qualified in Meyboom and Versluys 2007.

[96] *E.g.*, Reinhold 1980: 98 n.15 on Dio 42.35.4, or Isaac 2004: 354 on Sophocles, *OC* 337-41; and Isaac 2004: 359 on Diodorus.

[97] *B.Alex.* 7; *cf.* 24; Cic., *Rab. Post.* 35; *cf.* 4.

[98] *cf.* Spawforth 2001: 376.

[99] Sen., *Ep.* 51.13.

[100] Isaac 2004. As Gruen 2011 demonstrates, Roman as well as Greek writers also engaged with foreign peoples more subtly than in crude stereotypes.

barrier to the development, under the empire, of a considerable local pride in the heritage of ancient Lydia.[101] It is questionable whether we should interpret any of this ethnic stereotyping as reflecting genuinely offensive, 'proto-racist' attitudes[102] towards the subject peoples of the empire rather than semi-jocular caricatures of the foibles of particular regions (like the traditional ascription of meanness with money to the inhabitants of Scotland, Yorkshire, or Cardiganshire by their various neighbours). But we are now well aware that racist attitudes need not be conscious to be harmful, and that what is meant as a joke may be understood as an insult.

What papyrological evidence is there that the stereotypes found in Classical literature found expression in real life in derogatory references to the Egyptian population of the province? Five key texts are regularly cited in this context: a petition of a cavalry veteran that he had been insulted 'by an Egyptian fellow', the famous 'letter of Caracalla' expelling the Egyptians from Alexandria, and three private letters which seem to invoke a stereotype of Egyptians as less than fully human. But these need to be set in context; five papyri, however well-known, are an exceedingly small yield from the total of over 17,000 documentary texts from Roman Egypt;[103] it would be an understatement to say they were not representative. We need to look more closely at how the words 'Egyptian' and 'Hellen' were used throughout the Roman period papyri (where they are relatively even rarer than in Ptolemaic papyri), in unofficial as well as official usage.

b) Did 'Egyptian' and 'Greek' ever have an ethnic sense in the Roman papyri?

Searches of the Duke Databank essentially confirm the pattern of usage that Montevecchi arrived at without the benefit of electronic tools.[104] The largest cluster of cases refers to Greek and Egyptian language, especially legal contracts written in Egyptian or translated from Egyptian into Greek, Roman wills translated into Greek, and slave sales in 'Greek diploma' format. Another group consists of references to the old Egyptian calendar, used in religious and astrological contexts as opposed to the reformed Alexandrian civil calendar, which was commonly labelled 'Greek' despite using Egyptian month-names; thus 'from the month of Pachon of the Greeks'.[105] Then there were characteristic kinds of product, like Greek boats, Greek oil (= olive, obsolete after the early first century AD), Greek nitron, Egyptian and Greek reed, and an Egyptian bed. We also find references to distinctive cultural and religious practices, like the 'Egyptian burial' of PSI XII 1263, the

---

[101] Spawforth 2001.

[102] Isaac 2004: 515.

[103] Habermann 1998: 148.

[104] Montevecchi 1985a.: 332. A search of Ἑλλην- 50 BC-AD 300 (on 11/04/13) yielded 137 Egyptian texts, of which 23 refer to Greek language (11 cases opposed to Latin in wills; 5 cases opposed to Egyptian contracts); 22 to the 6475 Hellenes, 18 to Antinoite *neoi Hellenes*, and 15 to the *Hellenion* quarter at Ptolemais Euergetis (Arsinoe). A search of Αἰγυπτί- (on 15/03/13) 50 BC-AD 300 yielded 100 texts, of which 27 refer to Egyptian language, contracts or writing. For a full analysis, see my 'Notes on the usage of *Hellen* and *Aigyptios* in documentary papyri of the Roman period' at http://kcl.academia.edu/janerowlandson.

[105] P.Cair.Isid. 132; Hagedorn and Worp 1994.

three festivals 'of the Egyptians',[106] or the 'temple of Greek Zeus and Hera' in an Oxyrhynchite village (where the priests seem to us Egyptian both in organisation and nomenclature).[107] But none of these cases refers to people being identified as 'Egyptian' or 'Greek', by either ethnic or cultural criteria.

Montevecchi, however, argued that even in official and legal texts the term 'Egyptian' could have an ethnic sense, referring not to legal status, but differentiating indigenous Egyptians from the Hellenized elite who, although legally *Aiguptioi*, were not (on her view) perceived as truly Egyptian.[108] Her strongest case, 'Caracalla's letter to the Alexandrians', will be discussed in detail shortly (3c), but it is important first to establish that no other cases carry the meaning she suggests. At first sight *Gnomon* §44, 'if an Egyptian registers his son as having been an ephebe, both are fined one quarter', distinguishes the metropolite gymnasial class from Egyptians (despite their 'Egyptian' legal status) since ephebes are unequivocally attested at Hermopolis.[109] But the clause undoubtedly refers specifically to the Alexandrian ephebate (notoriously a backstairs route to Alexandrian citizenship; 2c above), especially since the Hermopolite *ephebeia* ceased to be used to define gymnasial status in 64/5.[110]

Writing before Mélèze-Modrzejewski's conclusive demonstration that 'the laws of the Egyptians' meant the whole law applied to the *Aigyptioi*, Montevecchi also interpreted the references to individuals as 'Egyptian' in reports of legal proceedings in an ethnic rather than legal sense.[111] Some parties in legal cases certainly needed interpreters because they spoke only Egyptian (especially women; *e.g.*, P.Oxy. II 237 col. vii 37 – the surprisingly few references to interpreters probably reflects the capacity of most men to speak some Greek),[112] but in these legal contexts 'Egyptian' must always refer to the individual's legal, rather than ethnic or cultural, identity. For example, in BGU I 19 (= Chr.Mitt. 85), what was at issue was precisely the law applied to Egyptians as opposed to Roman or Greek city law.[113] And the dispute involving Thaubarion, Egyptian, concerned families

---

[106] Pantelia, Amesysia, and Merobollia, P.Ross.Georg. II 41: Perpillou-Thomas 1993: 112-13.

[107] Benaissa 2012: 191-92 suggests 'that 'Hellenic' reflects a distinction in administrative status and state-sanctioned differences in the practice of some rituals rather than a strict cultural identity'; *cf.* Gnomon §86. Unlike Benaissa, I guess that the 'Greek Sarapeum' at Oxyrhynchus with a *neokoros* refers either to a different temple from the Serapeum with an Egyptian priestly structure (n.45 above), or a change of use.

[108] Montevecchi 1985a: 338-41.

[109] *E.g.*, Chr.Wilck. 145 = P.Flor. I 79, AD 60.

[110] Montevecchi 2000b: 137 (where she had changed her earlier view of *Gnomon* §44); *cf.* Whitehorne 1982: 175. All Montevecchi's (1985a) other suggested references to 'indigenous Egyptians' in the *Gnomon* are unconvincing: §§38 and 45-51 certainly refer to legal status, and her interpretation of §41 presumes that infant exposure remained a distinctively Greek cultural trait in Egypt.

[111] Montevecchi 1985a, Mélèze-Modrzejewski 1988.

[112] Mairs 2012 cites further bibliography on translators (note how many ancient references are to translation between Latin and Greek, not Egyptian and Greek). On bilingualism, see Fewster 2002.

[113] *Cf.* Katzoff 1970.

from the Arsinoite social elite. Indeed, Canducci lists both Thaubarion and her father Herakleides as members of the 6475, although the only certainly attested member of that group was Ptollarion, son of Thaubarion's brother-in-law Paulinos.[114] Paulinos, who assisted his minor nephew Patron in the dispute with Thaubarion, was an ex-gymnasiarch as well as (by implication) a member of the 6475, and thus would commonly be thought among the most thoroughly 'Greek' inhabitants of the Arsinoite nome (although he seems to have spent part of his time elsewhere, probably at Alexandria; P.Mil.Vogl. 1 25 iv 32), and even if Thaubarion's immediate family were not of such high status, they too came from the 'Hellenized' social elite of the nome. But in the trial, held at Alexandria before the *archidikastes* (an Alexandrian official), it was her legal status as an Egyptian as opposed to Alexandrian or Roman that mattered. Similarly, the various Roman officials cited in the famous 'Petition of Dionysia'[115] had to deal with persons of different statuses (and predominantly in fact with Roman citizens), and again needed to be clear whether the plaintiffs before them were of Egyptian or another legal status.[116]

The only clear documentary use of 'Egyptian' in an ethnic sense is a 'wanted' notice for a runaway slave: '... ros, Egyptian, from Chenres in the Athribite nome, doesn't know Greek ... By trade a weaver, he walks round with a pretentious air, babbling in a shrill voice'. However, identifying slaves by ethnic origin or race (*genos*) was standard practice in the papyri, as indeed was required by Roman law when slaves were sold: 'Those who sell slaves must declare the *natio* of each at sale' [117] since some *nationes* were believed to make better slaves than others. This form of identification marked slaves out from the free population, who all had some civil status even if, like the Egyptians, they were not citizens of a polis.[118]

One text does refer to 'us Egyptians' and 'indigenous Egyptians', in the context of a cult of Apollo, contrasting the 'foreign hymns' and sacrifices with native practice. But this has been identified as referring, not to Greek as opposed to Egyptian cult practice but to the definitely 'foreign' Idumaean cult of Qos-Apollo brought to Ptolemaic Egypt by military settlers.[119] So here, too, 'us Egyptians' was not exclusive of the Hellenized inhabitants of Egypt, and it is arguably more 'national' than ethnic in sense.

---

[114] Canducci 1991. P.Mil.Vogl. I 25 col. iv esp. line 25; *cf.* P.Mil.Vogl. I 27 and VI 264. On this dispute, and the family involved (TM.arch.66), see Takahashi forthcoming.

[115] P.Oxy. II 237.

[116] Other legal reports, BGU 1 329 and P.Dubl. 8, are too fragmentary to demonstrate that 'Egyptian' refers to the legal category. The meaning of 'Diogenis, Aigyptias' in BGU II 558 l.8, is obscure; the other Greek or Egyptian names in this list of money payments from villages near Karanis have patronymics (the list also includes Roman names).

[117] P.Oxy. LI 3617; *Dig.* 21.1.31.21.

[118] *cf.* XII 1463, a female slave named Tyrannis, of Asiatic descent (*genei Asiagenen*), or the purchased female slaves 'Oasitic by race' (XII 1548) and 'Osrhoenian by race' (XLII 3053). Montevecchi 1985a: 341 n.31 restores [γέ]νος Ἑλληνικό[ν in BGU XV 2470, which apparently concerns permission to circumcize boys for the priesthood, but given the lack of parallels and the very fragmentary state of the text, this restoration and even more its meaning are highly dubious (the sense of Ἑλληνικόν in P.Oslo III 87 and P.Wash.univ. II 107 is completely obscure).

[119] Fraser 1972: I 280-1, II 438-40, contra Bowman 1986: 179.

Ethnic labelling of 'Greeks' and 'Egyptians' is certainly evident in the 'sub-literary' genres of the *Acta Alexandrinorum*,[120] and the oracular predictions which in many ways represent a culturally Egyptian analogue to the *Acta* as well as to the (Jewish) Sibylline Oracles, represented in Egypt by only one papyrus.[121] Sharing with the *Acta* bitter hostility to the Jews and often the Romans too, these texts rarely mention 'Greeks' or 'Egyptians' explicitly (as in P.Oxy. XXXI 2554), but their central motifs often concern the clash of Egyptian and Greek civilizations, for instance predicting the destruction of Alexandria and restoration of Memphis as the centre of government. Preserved mostly in Greek versions from the Roman period, from both villages and *metropoleis*, it is difficult to know exactly what their readers made of them. Unlike the *Acta*, most bear no obvious connection with actual conflicts, such as the revolt of the Boukoloi, though the astrological predictions do seem to refer to political events suggesting hostility to particular emperors.[122]

So far, therefore, the only documentary use of 'Greek' or 'Egyptian' in an ethnic sense is the reference to an Egyptian slave. But some people's choice of reading-matter, in Greek and Egyptian, in both *metropoleis* and villages, did bear traces of ethnic vocabulary, juxtaposing Jews, Romans, Greeks, and Egyptians. These ethnic usages stemmed particularly from the Alexandrians' conflict with both the local Jews and Roman rulers, cross-fertilizing with the Egyptian tradition of prophesying the expulsion of foreign rulers and return of a native pharaoh.

c) 'Inhuman Egyptians'

Finally we must scrutinise in detail the five cases which are commonly seen as referring in a disparaging way to 'ethnic' Egyptians. The most straightforward case is a petition of February 15, AD 163 addressed to the *epistrategos* Vedius Faustus from Gaius Julius Niger, a veteran of the *ala veterana Gallica* and citizen of Antinoopolis, complaining that a local official had denied his ownership of a small olive grove which Niger had bought from the treasury. As the petition genre demands, Niger works himself up into quite a state of righteous indignation: 'I have in a violent way suffered an unseemly insult from an Egyptian fellow (ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπου Αἰγυπτίου), Isidoros, son of Achillas, scribe of the superintendent of sequestered property of the village of Karanis of the Herakleides division of the Arsinoite nome, while his servant, Didymos, cooperated with him'; and later, 'And so, his criminal actions against me being evident, I, a Roman, having suffered such things at the hands of an Egyptian ...'.[123] If this at first sight looks like a case of ethnic tension, the context confirms that 'Egyptian' here refers to Isidoros' legal status, not ethnic identity: Isidoros was an Egyptian in the same sense that Niger was a Roman. We are well informed about Niger and his family from their family papers found in a

---

[120] n.76, above.

[121] Harker 2008: 120-24.

[122] Boukoloi: Blouin 2011; oracles: Blasius and Schipper 2002; Harker 2008: 124 for astrological predictions of Avidius Cassius' usurpation and Septimius Severus' death.

[123] SB XXIV 16252, ed. Sijpesteijn 1996. My translation is slightly adapted from Sijpesteijn's (who assumes ethnic tension is involved: 1996: 186).

house at Karanis, and the village tax rolls.[124] Niger's Roman and Antinoite citizenship must derive from his honourable discharge from the army; his two sons certainly both inherited Antinoite citizenship, but the elder, C. Apollinarius Niger, may not have held Roman citizenship because he was born before his father's discharge. Apollinarius' wife, Tasoucharion, was certainly Antinoite but not Roman, and their son, Gemellus Horion, probably acquired Roman citizenship only with Caracalla's universal enfranchizement.[125] In the first and second centuries, Roman citizenship was a fragile status, which families over successive generations could lose as well as gain.

Niger's wife Ptolemais (originally read as 'Ptollois') was almost certainly of Egyptian origin, and although we know nothing about Niger's ancestry, it is highly probable that he too had been born an Egyptian, like most auxiliary troops in the province.[126] In terms of both ethnic and social origin, then, there was almost certainly nothing to distinguish Niger from Isidoros. Niger and his family were comfortably off, owning several houses in Karanis as well as agricultural land, and presumably also a residence in Antinoopolis, although they never permanently lived there. But the rewards of military service did not elevate ordinary veterans (as opposed to centurions) significantly above the rest of the provincial middle class in economic terms. By emphasizing his own Roman status in his petition to one of the relatively few Roman officials in the province (and one with particular responsibility for veterans and Antinoites) Niger was 'pulling rank', asserting his common bond with the Roman administrators of the province and distancing himself from his true social origins.

Of several hundred letters surviving from Roman Egypt, just three ostensibly express ethnic prejudice against Egyptians. In one, Ammonios wrote to two friends, Julius and Hilaros: 'You perhaps think me, brothers, a barbarian, or inhuman Egyptian, but I assure you it is not so', citing his desire to see his friends again after a year's interval, and his intention to leave Egypt before the winter.[127] The sense here seems to be that Ammonios has been out of contact for some time up country, 'in the sticks' as we might say, where he may be suspected of having picked up boorish habits while away from his friends. Ammonios' name suggests that he was native to Egypt, and he has been described as 'an upwardly

---

[124] See TM.arch.90, Bryen and Wypustek 2009.

[125] P.Mich. VI 370. For Apollinarius' non-Roman status, see Bieżuńska-Małowist 1957. She suggests that Gemellus had acquired Roman citizenship sometime between 199 and 212, because he did not take the *gentilicum* Aurelius, but appears in a document of 214 as C. Gemellus Horigenes, Roman and Antinoite. Alston 1995: 131, sees this as 'trying to inflate his importance by falsely claiming Roman citizenship by association with his grandfather'. Even if, as the author of TM.arch.90 suggests, it was permitted for the new citizens of 212 to use a Roman name already in their families in preference to Aurelius, it nevertheless shows Gemellus' desire to distinguish himself from the mass of newly enfranchized Aurelii by invoking his 'Roman' ancestry.

[126] Dietze-Mager 2007: 100-01, *cf.* 121-22, sees 'ethnic Egyptians' appearing in the evidence for auxiliaries only in the later second century, but her criterion for ethnicity is solely nomenclature.

[127] P.Oxy. XIV 1681. The word 'inhuman' (*apanthropos*, not *ananthropos* as in 1681) recurs in the 'Petition of Dionysia', P.Oxy. II 237 vii 35, used by the prefect Flavius Titianus of the 'Egyptian' law permitting fathers to annul their daughter's marriage against her will (which as Mélèze-Modrzejewski 1988 notes, was actually Greek in origin, ultimately derived from Athenian law). But the two passages are often cited together as evidence for the general prejudice against Egyptians.

mobile Egyptian' trying to distance himself from his fellow-countrymen.[128] While 'leaving Egypt' could mean going no further than Alexandria, since Alexandria was regularly differentiated in both official and unofficial contexts from Egypt proper, the intention to set off before winter is more suggestive of a voyage overseas. Ammonios may indeed here be picking up on the literary stereotype of Egyptians to assert his comradeship with his suave friends from Alexandria or overseas. But the point here seems less ethnic animosity than social and cultural snobbishness; 'Egyptian' stands for 'uncivilized', 'country bumpkin' as opposed to the cultural sophistication of Alexandria or the other great cities of the empire.

In the second letter, Heraklas wrote to Archelaus his 'son', sending various foodstuffs and other provisions, and requesting: 'Please send me a desert guard with a warrant against Lastas son of Thonis from Teis (presumably the village of that name in the Oxyrhynchite nome), since he's offered me no little violence (*hybris*). For you know what the Egyptians are like'. As the editor notes, Archelaus 'moved ... in official circles'; another letter shows that he served as secretary to the *strategos* of the Panopolite nome, and was friendly with a secretary to a clerk of court (*eisagogeus*).[129] At this period, nome *strategoi* were Alexandrian citizens, and even if the correspondents were in reality themselves *Aiguptioi*, they again seem to have picked up the social snobbery of the circles in which they moved, regarding themselves as a cut above the ordinary Egyptians.

In the third letter, a rather bad-tempered superior adds an aside, 'for all Egyptians are *anaisthetoi* (dull, lacking sensibility)' amid various instructions to Keletes, who was probably a local manager on the estate of the well-documented Alexandrian landowner Appianus. If this identification is correct, the writer again was someone who stood between the highest ranks of provincial society and the common people, and was anxious to assert his elevation above the men among whom he had to work.[130]

Finally, 'Caracalla's letter to the Alexandrians' requires quoting in full, since the supposed authority of a official pronouncement has greatly influenced scholars' belief in a perceived ethnic division between 'Egyptians' and 'Greeks', and a widely-held disdain for Egyptians:

> All Egyptians who are in Alexandria, and especially country people (*agroikoi*) who have fled from other districts and can easily be discovered, are to be expelled with every thoroughness; not however, the pig merchants and river boatmen and those who convey reeds for heating the baths. But expel the rest, who by their numbers and uselessness disturb the city. I am informed that at the festival of Sarapis and on other festal days Egyptians are accustomed to bring down bulls and other animals for sacrifice – or even on other days; they must not be prevented on this account. The ones who should be prevented are those who have fled their own districts so as not to do rustic labour; not, however, those who gather here wishing to view the glorious city of Alexandria or who come down for the sake of a more urbane life, or on incidental business. A further extract: For the true Egyptians can easily be recognized

---

[128] Harker 2008: 118.

[129] P.Oxy. XLII 3061; *cf.* 3062.

[130] P.Ups.Frid 10, *cf.* SB V 7529, probably between the same correspondents; Rathbone 1991: esp. 74.

among the linen weavers by their speech, which shows them to have assumed the appearance and dress of others. Moreover their lifestyle and habits, which are the very reverse of civilized, reveal them to be Egyptian yokels.

This cannot be a verbatim reproduction of Caracalla's decree. Apart from the acknowledgement that it is excerpted, the inflammatory language, especially in the 'further extract', is quite different from actual edicts, and a variant version indeed exists of the 'amnesty edict' copied on the same papyrus as Caracalla's letter.[131] As an official pronouncement it would be singularly ineffective, since the criteria for those who should be allowed to stay become increasingly subjective and vague, culminating with anyone who wants to go sight-seeing, live more urbanely, or conduct any business at all!

It does, however, unquestionably express a bitter disdain for Egyptian *agroikoi*, the uncivilized 'true Egyptians'; if this was not an official opinion, whose view does it represent? The papyrus was found in the Apollonopolite Heptakomia (a *metropolis* between Lykopolis and Panopolis), and its somewhat 'schizophrenic' tone looks like the product of a copyist who, seeing that the original decree was targeted at all Egyptians of the *chora* including himself, embellished it attempting to demarcate a difference between the useless country yokels and 'urbane' and educated Egyptians like him who had every right to enjoy Alexandria's cultural and economic benefits. But the further extract actually suggests the opposite of what it purports to say; in fact there was no visible difference between the yokels and urbane Egyptians, and it was only their uncouth speech and bad behaviour that gave them away.

What we have here, then, is again certainly not ethnic difference, but an attempt to distinguish in terms of culture and lifestyle what is fundamentally a difference of social class. The resentment is directed at *agroikoi* who dared to escape their allotted agricultural role in life, aping the dress and physical appearance of their superiors, but then let the side down, so to speak, by failing to complete their transformation by learning proper speech and manners; as with the earlier three private letters, this hints that the copyist's own social standing was closer to that of the *agroikoi* than he liked to admit (thus probably not of the gymnasial class).

Admittedly the criteria for proper behaviour were essentially defined according to Greco-Roman norms, but what made the *agroikoi* unacceptable to polite society was not their Egyptian culture, but their complete cultural impoverishment: agricultural workers were even less likely to be literate in their own language than in Greek. The custodians of the native Egyptian cultural tradition were not uneducated peasants, but the learned and sophisticated Egyptian priests whose libraries combined works in Greek and Egyptian, and who were a persistent object of fascination for the Greek and Roman world.[132] The efflorescence of Egyptian literature and scholarship in the Roman period, evidenced especially by the finds from Tebtunis, is rightly seen as the product of stimulation and cross-fertilisation from familiarity with this Greek literary material rather than, as it is

---

[131] For more detail see Rowlandson and Harker 2004: 102-03, Harker 2008: 57-58; contrast the edict of Vibius Maximus (Sel.Pap. II 220). The papyrus (P.Giss. 40 = P.Giss.Lit. 6) contains three edicts in all: the 'Citizenship decree', 'Amnesty decree' and the 'Letter to the Alexandrians'.

[132] Van Minnen 1998: 155-79; Moyer 2011.

often interpreted, the priests' desperate and doomed antiquarian attempt to preserve their cultural heritage from extinction by the onslaught of Hellenism.[133]

In failing to draw the distinction between ethnic and class prejudice, scholars still unwittingly perpetuate the ancient literary tradition of 'dissing' the Egyptians by viewing the evidence not on its own terms but through lenses moulded by the literary caricatures. Just as Greek and Roman personal identities were not defined against, but were readily layered onto, Egyptian identity, both Greek and Egyptian culture could flourish under the impact of Roman rule. And, especially following Hadrian's enthusiasm for Egypt, its traditions increasingly became absorbed into the mainstream culture of the empire.

Acknowledgements

Bibliography

Alston, R. 1995. *Soldier and society in Roman Egypt. A social history*. London.

Alston, R. 1997. 'Changing ethnicities: from the Egyptian to the Roman city', in T. J. Cornell and K. Lomas (eds), *Gender and ethnicity in ancient Italy*: 83-96. London.

Bagnall, R. S. 1993. 'Egypt and the *Lex Minicia*', *JJP* 23: 25-28.

Bagnall, R. S. 1997. 'The people of the Roman Fayum', in M. L. Bierbrier (ed.), *Portraits and masks: Burial customs in Roman Egypt*: 7-15. London.

Baines, J. 1996. 'Contextualizing Egyptian representations of society and ethnicity', in J. S. Cooper and G. M. Schwartz (eds), *The study of the ancient Near East in the twenty-first century*: 339-84. Winona Lake, IN.

Bell, H. I. 1930. 'Antinoopolis: A Hadrianic foundation in Egypt', *JRS* 40: 133-47.

Benaissa, A. 2009. 'Greek polytheophoric names: An onomastic fashion of Roman Egypt', *Ancient Society* 39: 71-97.

Benaissa, A. 2012. 'Miscellanea Toponomastica', *ZPE* 183: 191-96.

Bieżuńska-Małowist, I. 1957. 'La famille du vétéran romain C. Iulius Niger de Karanis', *Eos* 4: 155-64.

Bingen, J. 1991. 'Notables hermopolitains et onomastique féminine', *Chronique d'Egypte* 66: 324-29.

Birnbaum, E. 2001. 'Philo on the Greeks: a Jewish perspective on culture and society in first-century Alexandria', in *In the spirit of faith: studies in Philo and early Christianity in honour of David Hay: The Studia Philonica Annual* 13: 37-58.

---

[133] Jasnow 2002; van Minnen 1998: 169. Knowledge and publication of these Egyptian works are now progressing rapidly; Ryholt 2005; Hoffmann 2007.

Biscottini, M. V. 1966. 'L'archivio di Tryphon, tessitore di Oxyrhynchos', *Aegyptus* 46: 60-90.

Blasius, A. and Schipper, B. U. (eds) 2002. *Apokalyptik und Ägypten: eine kritische analyze des relevanten texte aus dem griechisch-römischen Ägypten.* Leuven, Paris, and Sterling, VA.

Blouin, K. 2011. 'La révolte des *Boukoloi* (delta du Nil, Égypte, ca166-172 de notre ère): regard socio-environnemental sur la violence', *Phoenix*, 64: 386-422.

Blouin, K. forthcoming. 'L'Agathos Daimôn et son culte dans l'Égypte hellénistique et romaine: ce que révèlent les sources onomastiques', in Y. Gourdon and Å. Engshegen (eds), *Études d'onomastique égyptienne*. Cairo.

Boswinkel, E. and Pestman, P. W. (eds) 1982. *Les archives privées de Dionysios, fils de Kephalas* (Papyrologica Lugduno-Batava 22). Leiden.

Bowman, A. K. 1986. *Egypt after the Pharaohs 332 BC-AD 642: from Alexander to the Arab conquest*. London.

Bowman, A. 2011. 'Ptolemaic and Roman Egypt: population and settlement', in A. K. Bowman and A. Wilson (eds), *Settlement, Urbanization, and Population*: 317-58. Oxford.

Bowman, A. K. and Rathbone, D. W. 1992. 'Cities and administration in Roman Egypt', *JRS* 82: 107-27.

Bryen, A. Z. and Wypustek, A. 2009. 'Gemellus' evil eyes (P.Mich. VI 323-24)', *GRBS* 49: 535-55.

Bussi, S. 2008. *Le élites locali nella provincia d'Egitto di prima età imperiale*. Milan.

Canducci, D. 1990. 'I 6475 cateci greci dell'Arsinoite', *Aegyptus* 70: 211-55.

Canducci, D. 1991. 'I 6475 cateci greci dell'Arsinoite: Prosopografia', *Aegyptus* 71: 121-216.

Capponi, L. 2005. *Augustan Egypt. The creation of a Roman province*. New York and London.

Chauveau, M. (trans. D. Lorton) 2000. *Egypt in the age of Cleopatra*. Ithaca and London.

Clarysse, W. 1985. 'Greeks and Egyptians in the Ptolemaic army and administration', *Aegyptus* 65: 57-66.

Clarysse, W. 1992. 'Some Greeks in Egypt', in J. H. Johnson (ed.), *Life in a multi-cultural society: Egypt from Cambyses to Constantine and beyond*: 51-56. Chicago.

Clarysse, W. and Paganini, M. C. D. 2009. 'Theophoric personal names in Graeco-Roman Egypt. The case of Sarapis', *Archiv für Papyrusforschung* 55: 68-89.

Clarysse, W. and Thompson, D. J. 2006. *Counting the people in Hellenistic Egypt.* vol. II: *Historical Studies*. Cambridge.

Collombert, P. 2000. 'Religion égyptienne et culture grecque: l'exemple de Dioskouridès', *Chronique d'Egypte* 75: 47-63.

Connor, W. 1978. 'A nation is a nation, is a state, is an ethnic group, is a ...', *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 1.4: 379-88.

Cooper, C. 2003. 'Worst of all he's an Egyptian', *Syllecta classica* 14: 59-81.

Cordier, P. 2007. 'Dion Cassius et les phénomènes religieux 'Égyptiens.' Quelques suggestions pour un mode d'emploi', in L. Bricault, M. J. Versluys and P. G. P. Meyboom (eds), *Nile into Tiber: Egypt in the Roman World. Proceedings of the IIIrd International Conference of Isis Studies*: 89-110. Leiden.

Coulon, L. 2001. 'Quand Amon parle à Platon (La statue Caire JE 38033)', *RdE* 52: 85-112.

Dietze-Mager, G. 2007. 'Der Erwerb römischen Bürgerrechts in Ägypten: legionare und veteranen', *JJP* 37: 31-123.

Dunand, F. 1963. 'Les noms théophores en –ammon', *Chronique d'Egypte* 38: 134-46.

Elgenius, G. 2011. *Symbols of nations and nationalism: celebrating nationhood.* Basingstoke.

Falivene, M. R. 1998. *The Herakleopolite nome* (American Studies in Papyrology 37). Atlanta.

Falivene, M. R. 2007. 'Patterns of Greek settlement in Egypt during the Ptolemaic period: 'Old settlers' in the Herakleopolite nome', in B. Palme (ed.), *Akten des 23. internationalen Papyrologenkongresses, Wien 22-28 juli 2001*: 207-14. Vienna.

Fewster, P. 2002. 'Bilingualism in Roman Egypt', in J. N. Adams, M. Janse and S. C. R. Swain (eds), *Bilingualism in ancient society: language contact and the written word*: 220-45. Oxford.

Fischer-Bovet, C. forthcoming.a. *Army and society in Ptolemaic Egypt (323-30 BC).* Cambridge.

Fischer-Bovet, C. forthcoming.b. 'Ethnic identity and status: comparing Ptolemaic and Early Roman Egypt', in H. Ziche (ed.), *Identity and identification in antiquity*. Cambridge Scholars Press; online at http://usc.academia.edu/ChristelleFischerBovet.

Fraser, P. M. 1972. *Ptolemaic Alexandria*. Oxford.

Geiger, J. 2002. 'Language, culture, and identity in ancient Palestine', in E. N. Ostenfeld (ed.), *Greek Romans and Roman Greeks:* 233-46. Aarhus.

Goudriaan, K. 1988. *Ethnicity in Ptolemaic Egypt* (Dutch Monographs on Ancient History and Archaeology 5). Amsterdam.

Goudriaan, K. 1992. 'Ethnical strategies in Graeco-Roman Egypt', in P. Bilde *et al.* (eds), *Ethnicity in Hellenistic Egypt*: 74-99. Aarhus.

Gruen, E. S. 2011. *Rethinking the other in antiquity*. Princeton and London.

Habermann, W. 1998. 'Zur chronologischen Verteilung der papyrologischen Zeugnisse', *ZPE* 122: 144-60.

Hagedorn, D. 2007. 'The emergence of municipal offices in the nome-capitals of Egypt,'in A. K. Bowman, R. Coles, N. Gonis, D. Obbink and P. J. Parsons (eds), *Oxyrhynchus: a city and its texts (Proceedings of a British Academy Symposium to celebrate the centenary of The Oxyrhynchus Papyri, 1898-1998)*, (Egypt Exploration Society: Graeco Roman Memoirs, 93); 194-204. London.

Hagedorn, D., and K. A. Worp 1994. 'Das Wandeljahr im römischen Ägypten', *ZPE* 104: 243-55.

Hall, J. M. 1997. *Ethnic identity in Greek antiquity*. Cambridge.

Hall, J. M. 2005. *Hellenicity: between ethnicity and culture*. Chicago.

Hanson, A. E. 1997. 'Isidoros of Psopthis, Augustan cultivator: an update', in *Akten des 21. Internationalen Papyrologenkongresses, Berlin, 13.-19.8. 1995* I: 413-29. Stuttgart and Leipzig.

Harker, A. 2008. *Loyalty and dissidence in Roman Egypt: The case of the Acta Alexandrinorum.* Cambridge.

Harker, A. 2012. 'The Jews in Roman Egypt: trials and rebellions', in C. Riggs (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*: 277-87. Oxford.

Hoffmann, F. 2007. 'Die ägyptischen literarischen Texte: Ein überblick', in B. Palme (ed.), *Akten des 23. internationalen Papyrologenkongresses, Wien 22-28 juli 2001*: 279-94. Vienna.

Issac, B. 2004. *The invention of racism in Classical antiquity.* Princeton.

Jasnow, R. 2002. 'Recent trends and advances in the study of Late Period Egyptian literature', *JARCE* 39: 207-16.

Jördens, A. 2012. 'Status and citizenship', in C. Riggs (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*: 247-59. Oxford.

Johnson, J. H. 1999. 'Ethnic considerations in Persian period Egypt', in E. Teeter and J. A. Larson (eds), *Gold of praise: studies on Ancient Egypt in honour of Edward F. Wente* (SAOC 58): 211-22. Chicago.

Jones, K. R. 2005. 'The figure of Apion in Josephus' *Contra Apionem*', *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 36: 278-315.

Katzoff, R. 1970. '*BGU* 19 and the law of representation in succession', *Proceedings of the twelfth International Congress of Papyrology* (American Studies in Papyrology 7): 239-42. Toronto.

Keenan, J. G. 1971. 'Census return of Herakleides son of Didymos the Younger', *Chronique d'Egypte* 46: 120-24.

Koenen, L. 1993. 'The Ptolemaic king as a religious figure', in A. W. Bulloch *et al.* (eds), *Images and ideologies: self-definition in the Hellenistic world*: 25-115. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London.

La'da. C. A. 2002. *Foreign ethnics in Hellenistic Egypt* (Prosopographia Ptolemaica 10). Leuven.

Lewis, N. 1983. *Life in Egypt under Roman rule*. Oxford.

Mairs, R. 2012. 'Interpreters and translators in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt', in P. Schubert (ed.), *Actes du 26e Congrès international de papyrologie (Genève, 16-21 août 2010)*: 457-62. Geneva.

Malinine, M. 1967. 'Partage testamentaire d'une propriété familiale (Pap. Moscou no.123)', *Révue d'Egyptologie* 19: 67-85.

Malkin, I. (ed.) 2001. *Ancient perceptions of Greek ethnicity*. Cambridge, MA and London.

Manning, J. 2003. *Land and power in Ptolemaic Egypt: the structure of land tenure, 332-30 BCE*. Cambridge.

Mélèze-Modrzejewski, J. M. 1985. 'Entre la cité et le fisc: le statut grec dans l'Egypte romaine', *Symposion 1982*: 241-80. Valencia. Reprinted in J. M. Mélèze-Modrzejewski, *Droit impérial et traditions locales dans l'Égypte romaine* (Aldershot, 1990), ch. 1.

Mélèze-Modrzejewski, J. M. 1988. ''La loi des Égyptiens': le droit grec dans l'Égypte romaine', *Proc. XVIII International Congress of Papyrology* vol. II: 383-99. Athens. Reprinted in J. M. Mélèze-Modrzejewski, *Droit impérial et traditions locales dans l'Égypte romaine* (Aldershot, 1990), ch. 9.

Mélèze-Modrzejewski, J. M. 1989. 'Ἰουδαῖοι ἀφῃρημένοι: La fin de la communauté juive d'Égypte (115-117 n.è)', *Symposium 1985 (Sixth International Conference on Greek and Hellenistic Legal History, Ringberg, Bavaria, May 1985)*: 337-61. Cologne and Vienna.

Mélèze-Modrzejewski, J. 1993. 'Aristote et les Grecs d'Egypte', in M. Piérart (ed.), *Aristote et Athènes. actes de la table ronde centenaire de l'Athenaion Politeia*: 1-24. Fribourg.

Meyboom, P. G. P. and M. J. Versluys 2007. 'The meaning of dwarfs in Nilotic scenes', in L. Bricault, M. J. Versluys and P. G. P. Meyboom, *Nile into Tiber: Egypt in the Roman World*: 170-208. Leiden.

Monson, A. 2012. *From the Ptolemies to the Romans: political and economic change in Egypt.* Cambridge and New York.

Montevecchi, O. 1970. 'Nerone a una polis e ai 6475', *Aegyptus* 50: 5-33.

Montevecchi, O, 1975. 'L'epikrisis dei greco-egizi', *Proceedings of the XIV International Congress of Papyrologists, Oxford, 24-31 July 1974* (Egypt Exploration Society Graeco-Roman Memoirs, 61): 227-32. London.

Montevecchi, O. 1985a. 'Aigyptios-Hellen in età romana', in *Studi in onore di Edda Bresciani*: 339-53. Pisa. Reprinted in O. Montevecchi, *Scripta Selecta* (Milan, 1998): 329-44.

Montevecchi, O. 1985b. 'Egiziani e Greci: la coesistenza delle due culture nell'Egitto romano', in *Egitto e società antica, Atti del Congresso Torino 8/9 VI – 23/24 XI 1984*: 233-45. Milan.

Montevecchi, O. 1997. 'Problemi di un'epoca di trasizione. La grecità d'Egitto tra il 1ª e il 1ᴾ', in *Akten des 21. Internationalen Papyologenkongresses, Berlin, 13.-19.8. 1995* II: 719-26. Stuttgart-Leipzig. Reprinted in O. Montevecchi, *Scripta Selecta* (Milan, 1998): 391-400.

Montevecchi, O. 2000a. 'Gli ἀπὸ γυμνασίου di Λύκων πόλις', in S. Russo (ed.), *Atti del V convegno nazionale di Egittologia e Papirologia, Firenze, 10-12 dicembre 1999*: 175-84. Florence.

Montevecchi, O. 2000b. 'Efebia e ginnasio. In margine a B. Legras, Néotês', *Aegyptus* 80: 133-38.

Montevecchi, O. 2001. '"Ioni nati in Egitto": La parabola della grecità nella valle del Nilo', *Atti del XXII Congresso Internazionale di Papirologia, Firenze 1998, Istituto Papirologico 'G. Vitelli'*: 983-94. Florence.

Moyer, I. S. 2011. *Egypt and the limits of Hellenism*. Cambridge.

Mueller, K. 2006. *Settlements of the Ptolemies: city foundations and new settlement in the Hellenistic world* (Studia Hellenistica 43). Leuven, Paris and Dudley, MA.

Nelson, C. A. 1979. *Status declarations in Roman Egypt* (American Studies in Papyrology 19). Las Palmas.

Oates, J. F. 2001. 'Observations on a demotic will (69 BC) of a *katoikos hippeus*', in *Alexandrian Studies II in Honour of Mostafa el-Abbadi* (=*BSAA* 46 [2000]): 29-38. Cairo.

O'Connor, D. 2003. 'Egypt's views of 'others'', in J. Tait (ed.), *'Never had the like occurred': Egypt's view of its past*: 155-85. London.

Pearce, S. J. K. 2007. *The land of the body. Studies in Philo's representation of Egypt*. Tübingen.

Perpillou-Thomas, F. 1993. *Fêtes d'Égypte ptolémaïque et romaine d'après la documentation papyrologique grecque* (Studia Hellenistica 31). Leuven.

Quet, M.-H. 1992. 'L'inscription de Vérone en l'honneur d'Aelius Aristide et le rayonnement de la seconde sophistique chez les 'grecs d'Égypte'', *REA* 94: 379-401.

Rathbone, D. W. 1990. 'Villages, land, and population in Graeco-Roman Egypt', *PCPhS* n.s. 36: 103-42.

Rathbone, D. W. 1991. *Economic rationalism and rural society in third-century AD Egypt: The Heroninos archive and the Appianus estate*. Cambridge.

Rathbone, D. W. 2001. '*PSI* XI 1183: record of a Roman census declaration of AD 47/8', in T. Gagos and R. S. Bagnall (eds), *Essays and texts in honour of J. David Thomas* (American Studies in Papyrology 42): 99-113. Oakville, Conn.

Ray, J. 2006. 'The dreams of the twins in St Petersburg', in K. Szpakowska (ed.), *Through a glass darkly: magic, dreams, and prophecy in ancient Egypt*: 189-203. Swansea.

Reinhold, M. 1980. 'Roman attitudes towards Egyptians', *The ancient world* 3: 97-103.

Riggs, C., ed. 2012. *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*. Oxford.

Rowlandson, J. and A. Harker 2004. 'Roman Alexandria from the perspective of the papyri', in A. Hirst and M. Silk (eds), *Alexandria: real and imagined*: 79-111. Aldershot.

Ruffini, G. 2006. 'Genealogy and the Gymnasium', *BASP* 43: 71-99.

Ryholt, K. 2005. 'On the contents and nature of the Tebtunis temple library', in S. Lippert and M. Schentuleit (eds), *Tebtynis und Soknopaiu Nesos: Leben im römerzeitlichen Fajum, Akten des Internationalen Symposions von 11. bis 13. Dezember 2003 in Sommerhausen bei Würzburg*: 141-69. Wiesbaden.

Scheidel, W. 2007. 'Demography', in W. Scheidel, I. Morris and R. Saller (eds), *The Cambridge economic history of the Greco-Roman world*: 38-86. Cambridge.

Sijpesteijn, P. J. 1996. 'Complaint to the epistrategos Vedius Faustus', *ZPE* 110: 183-87.

Smelik, K. A. D and E. A. Hemelrijk 1984. ''Who knows not what monsters demented Egypt worships?' Opinions on Egyptian animal worship in antiquity as part of the ancient conception of Egypt', *ANRW* II.17.4: 1852-2000 (with indexes 2337-2357).

Smith, A. D. 2010. *Nationalism: theory, ideology, history*. 2nd edn. Cambridge.

Smith, S. T. 2003. *Wretched Kush: ethnic identities and boundaries in Egypt's Nubian empire*. London and New York.

Spawforth, A. J. S. 2001. 'Shades of Greekness: a Lydian case study', in I. Malkin (ed.), *Ancient perceptions of Greek ethnicity*: 375-400. Cambridge, MA and London.

Stephens, S. A. 1993. 'An epikrisis return and other documentary fragments from the Yale collection', *ZPE* 96: 221-26.

Tacoma, L. 2006. *Fragile hierarchies: the urban elites of third-century Egypt*. Leiden.

Takahashi, R. forthcoming. *The ties that bind: the economic relationships of twelve Tebtunis families. Leases, loans, and labour in a village of Roman Egypt*. London.

Thompson, D. J. 2012. *Memphis under the Ptolemies*. 2nd edn. Princeton and London.

van Minnen, P. 1998. 'Boorish or bookish? Literature in Egyptian villages in the Fayum in the Graeco-Roman period', *JJP* 28: 99-184.

van Minnen, P. 2002. 'Aἱ ἀπὸ γυμνασίου: 'Greek' women and the Greek 'elite' in the *metropoleis* of Roman Egypt', in H. Melaerts and L. Mooren (eds), *Le rôle et le statut de la femme en Égypte hellénistique, romaine et byzantine:* 337-53. Leuven.

van Minnen, P. and K. A. Worp 1993. 'The Greek and Latin literary texts from Hermopolis', *GRBS* 34: 151-86.

Vandorpe, K. 2012. 'Identity', in C. Riggs (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Egypt*: 260-76. Oxford.

Vasunia, P. 2001. *The gift of the Nile. Hellenizing Egypt from Aeschylus to Alexander*. Berkeley and Los Angeles.

Veïsse, A.-E. 2004. *Les 'Révoltes Égyptiennes': recherches sur les troubles intérieurs en Égypte du règne de Ptolémée III à la conquête Romaine* (St. Hell. 41). Leuven.

Veïsse, A.-E. 2007. 'Statut et l'identité dans l'Egypte des Ptolémées: les désignations d'Hellènes' et d' 'Egyptiens'', *Ktema* 32: 279-91.

Verhoogt, A. 1998. *Menches, Komogrammateus of Kerkeosiris: The doings and dealings of a village scribe in the late Ptolemaic period (120-110 B.C.)* (Pap. Lugd.-Bat. 29) Leiden, New York and Cologne.

Versluys, M. J. 2002. *Aegyptiaca Romana: Nilotic scenes and the Roman views of Egypt*. Leiden.

Vittmann, G. 2003. *Ägypten und die Fremden im ersten vorchristlichen Jahrtausend* (Kulturgeschichte der antiken Welt 97). Mainz.

Vout, C. 2003. 'Embracing Egypt', in C. Edwards and G. Woolf (eds), *Rome the Cosmopolis*: 177-202. Cambridge.

Whitehorne, J. 1982. 'The ephebate and the gymnasial class in Roman Egypt', *BASP* 19: 171-84.

Whitehorne, J. 2001. 'Becoming an Alexandrian citizen', *Istituto Papirologico 'G. Vitelli' Firenze: Comunicazioni* 4: 25-34. Florence.

Yiftach, U. 2002. 'Deeds of last will in Graeco-Roman Egypt: A case study in regionalism', *BASP* 39: 149-64.

Yiftach-Firanko, U. 2009. 'Law in Graeco-Roman Egypt: Hellenization, fusion, Romanization', in R. S. Bagnall (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*: 541-60. Oxford.

Yiftach-Firanko, U. 2010. 'A gymnasial registration report from Oxyrhynchus', *BASP* 47: 45-65.

Yoyotte, J. 1969. 'Bakhthis: Religion égyptienne et culture grecque à Edfou', in P. Derchain (ed.), *Religions en Égypte hellénistique et romaine: colloque de Strasbourg, 16-18 mai, 1967*: 127-41. Paris.

Zacharia, K. 2008. *Hellenisms: culture, identity, and ethnicity from antiquity to modernity*. Aldershot.

BECOMING X-GROUP

RACHAEL J. DANN

Introduction

Ethnicity has become an explicit topic for archaeological research in the past twenty years or so. However, in the study of the archaeology of Nubia, it has long been a central concern. Whilst one may trace the burgeoning interest in archaeologies of identity to current social transformations,[1] it can be argued that ethnicity, as an aspect of identity, has been foundational to the archaeological study of the Sudanese past.

With regard to the X-Group of Lower Nubia (*c*. fourth to sixth centuries AD), and more specifically to the royal X-Group tombs at Qustul and Ballana, I suggest that there are three different ways in which X-Group ethnicity has been created: by the Classical authors who wrote about the inhabitants of Lower Nubia in the first few centuries AD, by the archaeologists who excavated remains and designated them 'X-Group', and of course, by the X-Group people, who created a material trace of themselves. The ethnogenesis of the X-Group has therefore had many contributors. An examination of the changing nature of views on X-Group ethnicity and of how the X-Group 'became X-Group' is the aim of the present study. Before entering into such a discussion, we may place the development of the X-Group culture within a broader historical context.

Egypt and the Sudan in context

The first centuries AD in north-east Africa saw the area divided under the control of two major powers. A powerful, centralized Sudanese state was based at Meroe between the Fifth and Sixth Cataracts from the fourth century BC to the fourth century AD, while the Roman Empire had control of Egypt following the death of Cleopatra VII, when Augustus commented laconically 'Egypt I added to the Empire'.[2] During this period, contact between the Roman and Meroitic Empires is well attested both in the textual and archaeological record.

The Roman Egyptian frontier was established at the First Cataract around 29 BC by Cornelius Gallus. Soon after, hostilities broke out, as the Meroites attacked towns in southern Egypt including Philae, Elephantine, and Syene (Aswan). Gaius Petronius retaliated against the Meroites, taking Qasr Ibrim (Primis in the Classical sources), and penetrating as far south as Gebel Barkal and the Fourth Cataract. These campaigns, although

---

[1] Jones 1997; Moore and Scott 1997; Meskell 1999; 2001; Sofaer-Derevenski 2000; Sørensen 2000; Smith 2003; see especially Díaz-Andreu and Lucy 2005: 11.

[2] *Res Gestae* 27.

the accounts differ in certain aspects, were recorded by both Strabo and Pliny. A peace treaty was agreed at Samos, in which the Roman frontier was drawn at Maharraqa (Hiera Sycaminos).[3] Subsequently, in the first few centuries AD, Roman Egypt and Meroe were involved in a trade relationship, with Roman goods found in Meroitic tombs of this period. An inscription in Meroitic hieroglyphs on a Meroitic pyramid records a visit of Romans to Meroe, who brought gifts from Caesar. The southernmost known inscription in Latin is to be found at Musawwarat es Sufra, and was written by a Roman visitor.[4]

To the north, the mid to late third century AD witnessed a decline in Roman interests in Nubia, not least due to more pressing troubles in other areas of the Empire. According to Procopius, the Romans' southern frontier in Egypt was withdrawn from the area between Maharraqa and Philae to the region of the First Cataract during the reign of Diocletian. This withdrawal of the Roman troops, to seven days journey beyond Elephantine, was said to be due to the expense of maintaining the troops in an impoverished area.[5]

The end of Meroitic power was announced on the victory stele of King Aezana of Axum, erected at Meroe in the mid-fourth century AD, which tells of his invasion from Ethiopia and his destruction of Meroitic lands. The Aezana inscription portrays a ravaging force, destroying Meroe and its environs, but the Empire itself was probably already weakened. Trade between Roman Egypt and Meroe via the Nile Valley had declined in favour of trade conducted through the Red Sea. Such a redirection of trade from the Nile towards Axum and Adulis is recorded in the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*.[6] Problems within Roman Egypt, symptomatic of those in the wider Roman Empire, had economic repercussions at Meroe, as its trading partner to the north experienced continuing difficulties. With the attrition of Roman power in the north, and the destruction of Meroe in the south, the socio-political situation in north-east Africa experienced another major alteration, and the official occupation of Lower Nubia, either Roman or Meroitic, declined.

A decline in the occupation of Lower Nubia may be attested by a lack of monumental building projects, settlements, or graves in Lower Nubia, and it is probable that the physical settlement of the area was difficult due to the aridity and barrenness of the region of the Dodecaschoinos. However, during the late Meroitic period, the presence of many inscriptions, both in the Meroitic script and in Demotic at Lower Nubian sites including Qasr Ibrim, Kalabsha, and the important Temple of Isis at Philae are witness to both a Meroitic and a Roman Egyptian claim in the area. The cordial relationship between Meroe and Rome is neatly demonstrated by the inscription, written in Meroitic by Pasan son of Pasae, which appears on the walls of Philae temple *c*. AD 253. Pasan acknowledges both the Roman Emperor Trebonianus Gallus, and the Meroitic King Teqerideamani in his writing.[7]

The presence of Meroitic 'officials' is particularly well-attested by the inscriptions of the Wayekiye family[8] at Philae, and suggest that Lower Nubia was considered to be Meroitic

---

[3] Bagnall and Rathbone 2004: 16-17; Updegraff 1978: 61.

[4] *CIL* III.83.

[5] Procop. Vand. 1.19.29 [H.B. Dewing, Loeb transl. p. 185].

[6] Schoff 1912.

[7] Updegraff 1978: 62.

[8] See for example *FHN* 245, 247, 250, 252.

territory, even if it lay at some distance from the heartland, and was sparsely occupied. The occupation of Lower Nubia following the demise of Meroitic power and the attrition of a Roman presence is the main focus of the rest of this article. The appearance in Lower Nubia of a distinctively different material culture (collectively termed 'X-Group'), most dramatically demonstrated at the sites of Qustul and Ballana by large, rich tumulus burials from the late fourth century AD, offer an opportunity to investigate the identity of the peoples who came to fill the apparent vacuum. The answer to this question is ultimately an elusive one, but answers have been constructed by at least three interested parties. Each has tried to pin down the ethnic identity of the people(s) who appeared in Lower Nubia at this time, by using the evidence in different ways to construct varying narratives of ethnicity. Our first introduction to this discussion comes from written sources, which also advance a further line of evidence regarding Roman difficulties on the Egypt-Nubia frontier, and which also extend a possible reason for Aezana's campaign into Upper Nubia. This concerns the appearance in the textual record of a number of tribal groups, some of whom apparently occupied marginal territory, or who were desert based, and whose presence became increasingly problematic.

The Classical authors

Classical authors writing about Lower Nubia in the early centuries AD do not identify the X-Group as X-group. Instead they name a number of different tribal groups in the area. Even in the area of Upper Nubia and Ethiopia, the stelae of Aezana[9] record more than ten peoples and/or distinctive regional areas, beyond those state level societies which we know to have existed, namely Meroe and Axum. The sources present a picture of fragmentation and perceived difference. However, the two main groups who appear recurrently were the Blemmye and Nobadae.[10] The ethnic markers perceived by the Classical writers can be grouped by three categories: physical characteristics; subsistence; and character, the latter being the aspect of identity which is most frequently commented upon. It should also be noted that very often, the designations which such authors used are quite generalized, in that they refer to the 'land of the Blemmye'[11] or 'land of the Aithiopians' and indeed in Greek, the term 'Aithiopians' often refers to anyone living in Nubia at the time. Many written texts make general reference to the war-like nature of the Blemmye and Nobadae.[12] Bishop Appion, for example, refers to both the Blemmyes and Annoubades as 'merciless barbarians' who attacked churches under his care in the region of the Upper Thebaid.[13]

Priscus, writing towards the end of the fifth century AD when he served in the Thebaid under Maximinus, gives a first hand account of Maximinus' dealings with the Noubades and Blemmye following their defeat. Both groups are forced to return animals which they had stolen, and to pay expenses as compensation for their actions. Their willingness to

[9] *FHN* 298 and 299.

[10] See tables 1A, 1B, and 1C in Barnard 2005: 25-33.

[11] see *FHN* 304 (land of the Blemmye), *FHN* 303 (land of the Aithiopians). On the use of 'Aithiopian' for all inhabitants of Nubia, see *FHN* 1152.

[12] See *FHN* 301, 308, 314.

[13] *FHN* 314.

enter into a peace treaty with Maximinus and to give a number of children as hostages was rescinded after the death of Maximinus, when they forcibly reclaimed their people and 'overran the country'[14]: an example of their duplicity and inherently war-like nature.

Strabo, writing in the first century AD, stated that

> The Ethiopians at present lead for the most part a wandering life… [they] wander from place to place with their flocks…whether sheep, goats, or oxon…Their largest royal seat is the city of Meroe…The inhabitants are nomads, partly hunters, partly husbandmen…The houses in the cities are formed by interweaving split pieces of palm wood or of bricks.[15]

Strabo describes the Nobadae as a large tribe living on the left bank of the Nile who were sub-divided into separate kingdoms. Strabo referred to them as 'nomads and brigands', a term which is later echoed by Ammianus Marcellinus who calls the Blemmye a 'dangerous tribe' and states that all the members of the tribe are warriors.[16] However, in the second half of the first century AD Pliny stated that the Nubians inhabit a town on the Nile called Tenupsis.[17]

An account of the subsistence, social organisation, and even the appearance of the Blemmye is recorded by Ammianus Marcellinus in the latter part of the fourth century. The tribe is described as being nomadic, with no permanent base, nor any inclination towards agriculture. Instead the people are said to eat a large amount of game, plants, and fowl and drink lots of milk. Their nomadic existence is aided by the possession of both horses and camels. The people themselves are apparently naked apart from the wearing of a dyed cloak worn down to the waist.[18] The poetic account of 'The Blemmyan War', written in Greek and dating from the end of the third century to the middle of the fifth century AD states that an unidentified victor named Germanus attacked the Blemmyes' tents and fences.[19]

The religious life of the Blemmye and Nobadae is described by Procopius in book seventeen of his *History of the Wars* which he wrote in his position as the historian to Justinian. He details the special position of Philae in the religious life of the Blemmye and Nobadae. Procopius states that both groups worshipped the same gods as the Greeks but that they also worshipped Isis and Osiris, with a particular reverence for Priapus. Furthermore, Procopius records that the Blemmye made human sacrifices to the sun.[20]

These sources give a relatively limited account of Blemmye/Nobadae/X-Group identity, but they generally classify the group as tribal, nomadic, with a religious life which exists in relation to pagan Egyptian deities, a varied diet, and as owning a variety of animals that are important for socio-economic reasons. The people of this group are

---

[14] *FHN* 318.

[15] Budge 1928: 158 based on Strabo, *Geog.* 17.2.2.

[16] Amm. Marc. 14.4.3-7 [J.C. Rolfe, Loeb transl. pp. 27 & 29]

[17] Pliny, *NH* 6.25.

[18] Amm. Marc. 14.4.3-7.

[19] *FHN*, 1998, 1183-1184

[20] Procop., *Vand.* 1.19.35-36 [H.B. Dewing, Loeb transl. p. 189].

characterized as violent, pagan, robbers, given to going back on their word. However, there is a difficulty with the various sources (often monastic) which complain of Blemmye and Nobadae hostility, as they are rather unspecific. Certainly, there is no reason to disbelieve that they were under threat from raiders who came from the desert. Yet, given that the sources make no attempt to describe the attackers in any detail (their appearance, their location, the items that they stole, the animals which they used), but instead just name them, it is difficult to have any certainty about which group was actually conducting raids, and whether or not it was always the same two. 'Blemmye' and 'Nobadae' may have become generic terms to the settled populations of Egypt, for any group by whom they were harassed. The possibility that this is generic rather than specific naming is apposite, given the use of the term 'Aithiopians' during this period. We have no idea whether or not these raiders would have self identified as Blemmye or Nobadae, or any other name. Despite this fact, the use of such names in the written record that survives has meant that these are the two tribes who became most visible to later scholars.

The archaeologists

Systematic investigation of the archaeology of the Sudan began in 1907 after the foundation of the Archaeological Survey of Nubia. On the first page of the archaeological report for the first seasons of excavation, which were conducted in 1907, two important statements were made. The first was that the survey was undertaken 'for the purpose of making this [archaeological] material available for the construction of the history of Nubia and its relations to Egypt'.[21] The second statement, foundational to the mission, is that 'The questions on which it is hoped to throw light concern the successive races and racial mixtures, the extent of the population in different periods, the economical basis of the existence of these populations, the character of their industrial products, and the source and the degree of their civilization'.[22] Let us begin with the first statement.

That the discovery of archaeological material during the Survey of Nubia was viewed as shedding light on the relationship between Egypt and Nubia is, to a large extent, a valid aim. The relationship between the two areas has been entwined since prehistory.[23] Yet the sentiment behind Reisner's statement was no doubt more fundamentally motivated by the hope of developing knowledge concerning the sometimes hostile relationship between Egypt and Nubia in the Dynastic period, rather than the then rather obscure Predynastic period. What is clear, however, is that there was little explicit concern in the early days of the Survey, for investigating the archaeological remains in Nubia as the remains of an indigenously developing culture. The purpose of the Survey appears to be basically unconcerned with the characteristics and dynamics of the archaeology and culture of Ancient Nubia in their own right.

The second statement betrays another fundamental concern, especially as it appears first in the list of what the Survey intends to illuminate. A positive identification of the

---

[21] Reisner 1908: 9.

[22] Reisner 1908: 9.

[23] Edwards 2004; Takamiya 2004; Wengrow 2006.

'successive races and racial mixtures'[24] in Nubia was viewed as a crucial aim of the archaeological fieldwork. Again, it can be agreed that from a certain perspective, this motivation had some archaeological value. The systematic recovery, recording, and scientific examination of human remains was, in 1908 (the year that the first Survey, including Smith's anatomical report, was published), an innovative and unusual goal. Other archaeological reports on work in other regions, even when published some time later tend not to include such material.[25] In this sense, the archaeologists and anatomists working in Nubia or on Nubian material, helped to launch an area of study which is now regarded as an integral part of the discipline. However, it is the goal of these studies, and the associated interpretation of the human remains which is highly problematic. Smith's first objective in examining the human remains from the Survey was the determination of sex, age, anatomical resemblances that may have suggested familial relationships, race, bodily mutilations, and attempts at bodily preservation. His second objective (although already listed as part of his first objective) was to determine the racial characteristics of the remains.[26] Ostensibly, the definition of racial characteristics was deemed important as the means by which to resolve the then current debate concerning who (racially speaking) occupied Nubia, and what their racial relationship was with both the Ancient Egyptians and the modern populations in the area. More than that, such discussions of racial characteristics as defined biologically, would become linked, in Nubian studies, to the interpretation of social characteristics, inevitably in a negative manner.[27] Inherent in Smith and Wood Jones' arguments concerning the evidence for ancient racial types (Egyptian, Nubian, Barbara, Syrian) and their relationship with modern counterparts, was a slippage between natural biology, lived culture, and the sophistication or lack thereof of that culture.[28]

If we return to part of Reisner's second statement, which I discussed above, we see that he mentions 'successive races' as an object for investigation.[29] We must bear in mind that this statement was written in the context of the very first surveys and small excavations in Nubia, when only a minimal amount of data had been retrieved. However, it was Reisner's basic assumption that successive races would be visible in the archaeological record: the appearance of successive races in an area would be a driver for archaeologically visible cultural change.

It was in 1907, and against the theoretical backdrop outlined above, that Reisner first identified a new and unfamiliar set of archaeological remains as 'X-Group'.[30] Rather soon after Reisner's discovery, the notion of an 'X-Group Problem' was explicitly advanced by certain scholars.[31] In essence, scholars saw The Problem as one pertaining to the

---

[24] Reisner 1908: 9.

[25] see for example Hall 1923; and the negligible study of the remains from the excavation of the royal cemetery at Ur: Woolley 1934.

[26] Smith 1908: 25.

[27] see Dann 2005.

[28] Smith and Wood Jones 1908: 32-36.

[29] Reisner 1908: 9.

[30] Reisner 1908: 9.

[31] Smith 1910; Kirwan 1939.

designation of an apparently distinctive set of material culture and practices in Lower Nubia which appeared to be non-Egyptian, non-Meroitic, and non-Christian in character.[32] Smith, who first named 'The X-Group Problem' in 1910, saw it as one which could be explained by biology (as an indicator of potential, or for the negroid X-Group, a lack of it), his objectives having been discussed above.[33]

The racial argument was only one possible solution to The Problem. The distinctive pottery forms and burial practices and other cultural remains might be explained in another way: 'It is clear that the differences, both cultural and physical, differentiating the X-Group from the preceding Meroitic civilization may most probably be attributed to the immigration of numbers of strongly negroid aliens who subsequently settled in Northern Nubia and intermarried with the inhabitants they found there'.[34] In this scenario, a physical change in the inhabitants of Lower Nubia is due to their racial characteristics, and the cultural change is associated with the new arrival of the group in the area. This concept of cultural change caused by immigration seemed to be supported by the stories about Lower Nubia which can be found in the Classical literature, and to which many scholars have made recourse.

The discovery, in 1931, of the royal X-Group tombs at Qustul and Ballana only served to complicate matters. The cemeteries, situated across the Nile from one another, were excavated by Emery and Kirwan,[35] and proved to be remarkable sites. Alongside the monumental constructions of multi-chambered tumuli, the graves contained animal and human sacrifices, and large quantities of grave goods, including a wide range of pottery, bronze vessels, furniture, weaponry, tools, jewellery, and a number of jewel-studded silver crowns. The discovery of such rich interments belonging to the X-Group was unexpected, and the material culture raised another question. Some of the artefacts, including the jewelled crowns, bore motifs (ankh signs, Uadjet eyes, Christian crosses, three dimensional human figures, characters from Classical mythology) that should not have been present in the material culture of a tribal, nomadic, negroid post-Pharaonic, post-Meroitic, pre-Christian group. The Problem now had another dimension: how did the X-Group have access to sophisticated material culture, of complex manufacture, bearing such a variety of designs?

The material culture of Lower Nubia in this period did not comprise a set of evidence that could be easily classified via one of the major, well-defined, and historically attributable cultural groups or civilizations. Not least, this was a problem of naming. The natural recourse for the archaeologists working with this newly discovered archaeological material was to consult a variety of Classical sources in an attempt to find the name of a people who it was recorded, had been present in Lower Nubia at the time. Unfortunately, those sources recorded that numerous tribal groups existed in the Sudan at the time. Yet

---

[32] Reisner 1910: 345.

[33] But see also Kirwan's article of the same name, 1982.

[34] Kirwan 1939: 36.

[35] Emery and Kirwan 1938a and 1938b.

the names of the Blemmye and the Nobadae recurred most frequently, and have remained the main contenders to be identified with X-Group culture in Lower Nubia.[36]

For example, Kirwan suggested that the X-Group problem might 'to some extent be solved by establishing the identity of the markedly negroid intruders whose contribution to the existing Meroitic culture gave rise to the X-Group civilization'.[37] In order to solve the dilemma, Kirwan discusses the evidence for and against his X-Group material recently excavated at Firka being identified with either the Blemmye or Nobadae, whose modern descendents he believed to be the Beja and Noba respectively. Such a discussion is similar to that found in other archaeological reports.[38] Here Kirwan links the archaeological material, with a racial group, the name for whom can in turn be sought in the Classical sources (Blemmye or Nobadae): for Kirwan, identification lay in the attribution of a name, in a linguistic classification. This attribution also provided an answer for the question of how material of complex design and manufacture and exhibiting 'foreign' motifs had found their way into the Qustul and Ballana tombs. The items had been stolen from Egypt by the raiding Blemmye and/or Nobadae.

In terms of a discussion of archaeology and ethnicity in the early development of Nubian studies, three different but related premises can be identified, each of which have informed interpretation. Firstly, that racial difference, as a biological category, was reliably attributable to human remains and that it could be explicitly associated with material culture. Secondly, that racial difference and cultural change were linked to the arrival of a new group(s) into a given geographical area. Thirdly, that the racial and cultural attributes evident in the archaeological remains in Lower Nubia could be identified with particular historically attested and named people, who had a surviving lineage with peoples living in the Sudan at the current time. Essentially, all of these interpretative paradigms are attempts to deal with and explain change. These points can be linked to a pervasive belief in diffusionism and migration as the reasons for cultural change, coupled with a tendency to see humans as relatively conservative beings, who resisted change in preference for stability and stasis.[39] The figure and influence of Grafton Elliot Smith on both Egyptological and Nubiological thinking should not be overlooked in this development. Smith's later hyper-diffusionist writings[40] which attributed all cultural change (worldwide!) as an effect of diffusion from Egypt, were too fanciful for the majority of serious scholars. Nevertheless, his status as Professor of Human Anatomy at Cairo University and his interest in the past is evidenced in his work on mummification[41] and his status as osteological expert on a number of archaeological excavations.[42] His contributions to the scholarly milieu were, for a time at least, considered to be rigorous and valid.

---

[36] Junker 1931; Emery and Kirwan 1938a: 18-24; Kirwan 1939; Updegraff 1978; Török 1987.

[37] Kirwan 1939: 39.

[38] See Emery and Kirwan 1938a.

[39] Trigger 1989: 151.

[40] Smith 1923a; 1927; 1930; 1933.

[41] For a bibliography see Ikram and Dodson 1998: 342.

[42] See contributions in Carter and Newberry 1904; Davis 1910; Smith 1908; 1923b; Smith and Wood Jones 1908.

Kirwan's statement which is quoted above is important for another reason. He explicitly states that Meroitic culture in Upper Nubia was a causal factor in the development of X-Group culture in Lower Nubia. Indeed, he explicitly calls for the use of the term 'Nubo-Meroitic' rather than X-Group, in order to make clear the association.[43] In the light of the interpretative paradigms discussed above, which link change to new peoples and racial difference, and in the light of the statement which he earlier made (see above) in the same volume, it must be admitted that the suggestion of a 'Nubo-Meroitic' culture seems rather contradictory. Even so, it marks a new departure in scholarly thought on X-Group ethnicity, as it suggests cultural change within a broader historical and archaeological context, which is not divorced from a preceding cultural manifestation.[44] This is cultural change with roots. Nevertheless, Kirwan viewed the appearance of Meroitic cultural traits in Lower Nubian X-Group material (and especially at Qustul and Ballana) as a legacy of the contact between X-Group people with Meroe, and their (partial) acculturation.

This altered view of X-Group culture as a culture with a history was taken up by Trigger in his study of the royal X-Group tombs at Qustul and Ballana and their relationship with the Meroitic state.[45] A major change was that he argued that it was possible to recognize the development of the royal tombs in relation to Meroe, rather than as evidence for a new ethnic group in Lower Nubia. Meroitic traits in X-Group material culture were viewed as evidence for the survival of Meroitic culture in Lower Nubia.[46] 'This population seems to have been a *mélange* made up of the indigenous Meroitic population and various groups of newcomers, all of whom shared a common material culture'.[47] In attempting to interpret the Qustul and Ballana tombs within a longer diachronic dynamic, Trigger was able to raise questions about the socio-political organisation of the X-Group, and longer term cultural developments. The emphasis on the racial and the ethnic had been refocused on different questions.

Nevertheless, studies of X-Group ethnicity have not explicitly progressed much further. Török's[48] influential study of the royal tombs at Qustul and Ballana, the only major interpretative work on the material, was little influenced by anthropological or archaeological developments in the study of ethnic identity. Concerned with developing a meaningful chronology of the royal tombs at Qustul and Ballana, which had not thus far been attempted in any serious way, he undertook a thorough examination of the artefacts in the tombs, with particular emphasis on the metalwork. Using this material he sought art historical comparators in order to establish a chronological framework for the tombs. Ethnicity was not an explicit concern in Török's research, and it is perhaps for this reason

[43] Kirwan 1939: 44.

[44] Junker (1925) had already pointed out the continuity between Meroitic and X-Group material and suggested that they should be viewed as a single culture, but his view did not gain approbation; *cf*. el-Batrawi 1946 for a similar point of view, but from the perspective of the analysis of human remains.

[45] Trigger 1969.

[46] Trigger 1969: 118.

[47] Trigger 1969: 119.

[48] Török 1987.

that his discussions of ethnic identity return to the historical source material which the archaeological remains are seen to largely confirm.

The X-Group

Finally, we can turn to the X-Group themselves and to the material culture and material remains which they used to create their identity. It may seem to the reader rather odd to turn to the group in question at this stage, however any view of the X-Group is one which is couched within, or perhaps in opposition to, but certainly never without, the intellectual traditions and positions outlined above. We might also add that there has been another player in the creation of the X-Group: the taphonomic processes involved in the creation of the material record which remains to be excavated and recorded. The contention that the X-Group made themselves via their material remains is in fact disingenuous. Now, the X-Group can only be created through our gaze.

Following his investigation of a number of anthropological and archaeological case studies on the subject of ethnicity, Emberling suggested that it is helpful to begin any consideration of ethnicity from a detailed understanding of 'contexts of production, distribution, and use'.[49] The first of this list, 'contexts of production' is not an easy question to settle with regard to the X-Group, and especially with regard to the royal tombs. As I have already stated, a number of the artefacts from the royal tombs (often those that Török used as a basis for art-historical comparisons) such as the silver crowns at Ballana, bronze lamps, and some other items of furniture, are decorated with motifs that appear to be recognizably Egyptian, Kushitic, Classical, or Christian. Such items may, according to Trigger,[50] be heirlooms of preceding Meroitic state culture. Alternatively, according to Török,[51] they may be the proceeds of the raids undertaken by the Blemmye and Nobadae, of which we (apparently) have testimony from Classical authors. His other contention is that certain items, especially the folding chairs, can be viewed as diplomatic gifts from the Empire.[52] Other items were certainly indigenously manufactured, such as particular pottery types that are ubiquitous finds in the settlement and cemetery sites of X-Group period in Lower Nubia. These (plus the superstructures and substructures of the royal tombs) are the material traces of the X-Group. What artefacts may tell us about ethnic identity is bound up with how these myriad objects were used and perceived. Other artefacts, especially the more mundane finds which have often been overlooked, may also have something to say.

Imported items may have held a certain value due to their exoticism in terms of material, mode of manufacture, or design. Frequently, artefacts exhibiting ostensibly 'foreign' motifs have been assumed to retain their ethnic identity.[53] The finds of artefacts with Classical, Kushitic, and Egyptian motifs at the sites may represent the continued popularity of artistic styles (particularly in terms of the Kushitic and Egyptianizing motifs)

---

[49] Emberling 1997: 325.

[50] Trigger 1969.

[51] Török 1987.

[52] Török 1987: 81

[53] Emberling 1997: 317. See Török 1987.

that were well established in the preceding Meroitic period. This popularity may be based on the motifs being particularly powerful or meaningful designs, or on their being aesthetically pleasing, although we should not consider these positions to be mutually exclusive. The artefacts may have been construed as important heirlooms that were a material link with the past. Such artefacts may therefore have accrued particular life histories. They may have been artefacts central to the telling of stories concerning group origins, and perhaps a heroic, mythical past. In this sense, such objects may have represented a locus for both a past and a place which had become distant. Objects construed as such represent loci of spatio-temporal meanings. This is a form of presencing,[54] of bringing the past into the present. The artefacts with Kushitic motifs presence and recall a past that was more distant both in terms of time and place.

Although the X-Group may have been familiar with aspects of Meroitic iconography and ritual practice, as seen further south in the continued Kushite funerary practices at el-Hobagi,[55] we must consider that certain artefacts, even if they contained an Eye of Horus design or a representation of Amun, were totally 'unreadable' to the group that acquired them. The figure of Amun may have been figurally recognizable as a ram, but not as a supreme god previously worshipped in complex civilizations in Egypt and the Sudan. The embossed silver casket from BT03 may not have been a piece of furniture with illustrations representing the apostles, but an elaborately produced box with pictures of men engraved on it.

Even if we were to accept that all of the material culture was acquired from outside the group, the manner in which it was re-made as X-Group material culture needs to be considered. What does the church silver in tomb BT03 come to mean in a non-Christian context, or the (possibly) Meroitic crown in a non-Meroitic context, or the bronzes with Classical designs in a non-Classical context? And do they tell us anything about ethnogenesis or ethnic identity?

However unreadable items came to be in the possession of the X-Group, or particular members of the culture, we should not presume that their response to and classification of the artefacts and their designs were the same as those in the culture from which they came, or that they are the same as those produced by the art-historically aware archaeologist. Instead, we should see the artefacts as being transformed within this new cultural milieu. The artefacts were incorporated into existing schemes of power, domination and resistance across individual and group identities. Through the use of the artefacts, they became embodied features of the landscape of material culture. We could suggest that 'new' items may be particularly appropriate artefacts with which to challenge or expand current meanings and uses of objects within the group due to their novelty. Whilst this may be the case, it is also the fact that the artefacts must be actively incorporated into cultural practice, and so may come to fulfil alternative roles, and thereby alternative identities. New meanings are invested in the objects. This is not a matter of meaning being layered on top of a pre-existing essential artefact. In its incorporation in culture, the artefact is effectively re-made. It is re-manufactured with different

---

[54] Chapman 2000: 30.

[55] Lenoble 1994 and 1997.
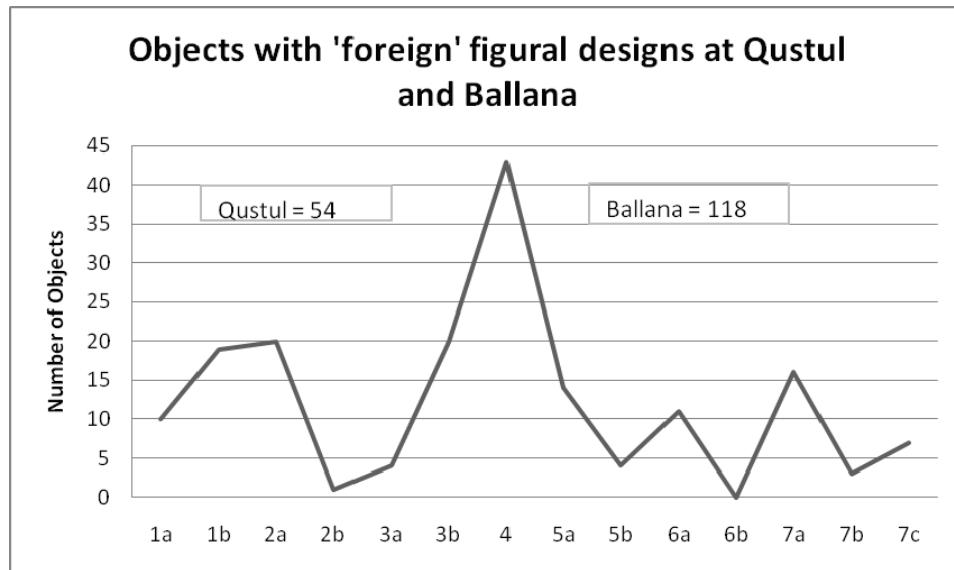
Figure 1

significance and different purpose. As Dobres puts it '[m]eaning does not miraculously hover above everyday material practices any more than it exists as some intangible substrate structuring action from below'.[56] Through use, an artefact creates and gains meaning, and so does the subject or subjects using and viewing the object. Such a model stresses the changing nature of the subject and culture, and whilst the two are distinct, they are also bound together within this reflexive, creative condition. This is altogether a more dynamic view of people and their material culture.

What is certainly obvious is that the context of the deposition of such 'foreign' artefacts was distinctive in Lower Nubia. These are not objects that have been discovered at many sites. They are largely confined to the Qustul and Ballana cemeteries. The élite that were buried in the royal cemeteries made relatively consistent use of objects with designs that could be identified as Kushitic/Classical/Pharaonic (see Figure 1), as objects with such designs are found throughout the period that the cemeteries were in use, albeit in differing quantities. If ethnicity can be viewed as a process of identification, it is unlikely, given the highly restricted recovery of this material culture, that it was a major aspect of X-Group self-definition as such, although as we have seen, their possession of it has been an aspect of X-Group definition by outsiders. As Classical writers almost unanimously agree that the Blemmye and Nobadae (whom archaeologists have most frequently identified as X-Group) were war-like raiders who stole material from Egypt, the deposition of material with Classical motifs at the Qustul and Ballana cemeteries would be exactly the thing to identify the graves as the remains of Blemmye and Nobadae, despite the relatively small quantities of such finds.

There are surviving written sources in Lower Nubia that do self-identify their writers as Nobadae or Blemmye. Some of theses sources are inscriptions written on temple walls

---

[56] Dobres 2000: 131.

at Kalabsha, and others are papyrus finds from Qasr Ibrim, in the form of letters that were exchanged. However, a number of the sources are simply ascribed to Blemmye writers, rather than that identity being stated in the text (see for example the inscriptions of King Kharamdoye, King Tamal, King Isemne, and the inscription regarding 'Blemmyan cult societies' at Kalabsha[57]), although this ascription may be suggested on the basis of personal names.[58]

The first inscription which does contain a relevant self-identification is the Silko inscription written in Greek on the walls of Kalabsha temple. The inscription begins 'I, Silko, King of the Noubades and all the Aithiopians, came to Talmis [Kalabsha] and Taphis. I fought with the Blemmyes; and God gave me victory'.[59] Dating of such material is difficult, but this inscription is thought to date to just before AD 450 (by which point the Qustul cemetery has gone out of use and Török's generation six or seven was buried at Ballana). One may wonder whether or not this change in designation was in part the result of the categorization by outside observers ultimately influencing the construction of ethnicity.[60] In her study of African kingship, Blier gives a pertinent example. After a hundred years of western observers describing and compartmentalizing their groups into neat packages, certain African rulers in particular seemed to have been directly influenced by this classificatory process: 'Yoruba kings looked more 'Yoruba', Asante rulers looked more 'Asante', and Dahomey monarchs looked more 'Dahomey' – like'.[61]

A bundle of texts written on papyrus, and discovered in a cache at Qasr Ibrim[62] provide some examples of self-identification of the authors as Blemmye or Nobadae either in an explicit statement, or by addressing such an individual using the term 'brother'. Of the self-identifying texts, it is significant that these Blemmye and Nobadae writings record within-group and between-group squabbling,[63] or altogether more mundane matters. They do not mention successful campaigns in which Egypt is ravaged and hauls of booty are carried off. If this was a particular pastime of the Blemmye and Nobadae, it does not appear to have been one which they considered important enough to discuss in personal letters, or to refer to in triumphal inscriptions. It is also interesting to note the linguistic variety of these texts, some of which were written in Greek, whilst others were written in Coptic.[64] It is unclear which language that the Blemmye or Nobadae spoke[65] and it is possible that they used a different language to perform written transactions from that which was commonly spoken, but this linguistic fluidity may further suggest the situational aspect of X-Group ethnicity.

[57] *FHN* 300 (King Kharamdoye); *FHN* 310 (King Tamal); *FHN* 311 (King Isemne); *FHN* 313 (Kalabsha).

[58] *FHN* 1138, 1143.

[59] *FHN* 317.

[60] *Cf.* Lucy 2005: 96.

[61] Blier 1998: 39.

[62] *FHN* 319, 320-322.

[63] Notably the extended description in *FHN* 319.

[64] *FHN* 319 (Greek), *FHN* 321-322 (Coptic).

[65] For further discussion see Zaborski 1989.

Whilst X-Group ethnicity was fundamentally situational, and whilst (in a high status context, in the performances of the royal burials) it was also concerned with the construction of a real or imagined heroic past connected with the South, it may also be considered from a broader group perspective. Numerically, pottery is the most frequently occurring class of material culture in Lower Nubia, and that is also the case at the royal tombs, where the number of pottery vessels found runs into the thousands. The most distinctive pottery vessels are the small goblet type drinking cups, which were indigenously manufactured. The goblets, bowls, and other such forms[66] are found in different contexts, at both settlement and mortuary sites. These vessels have been found at numerous Lower Nubian sites including Qustul and Ballana. Indeed, indigenously manufactured pottery remains a consistent feature of the burials at the royal tombs, despite these individuals' access to exotic items and their importation of foreign pottery. It is this aspect of the material culture of Lower Nubia in the period which may really be marking ethnicity. Although stages in the development of the basic Lower Nubian pottery repertoire are also evident,[67] pottery was a form of material culture that cross-cut status divisions, and was a basic marker which is suggestive of some level of group cohesiveness, expressed materially.

Conclusion

This article has sought to trace the ethnogenesis of the X-Group through time, and from at least three distinct perspectives. I cannot pretend to claim that this survey has been exhaustive, but the main moments of formation and alteration in X-Group ethnogenesis have been discussed. I must also admit my own role in continued X-Group ethnogenesis, especially terminologically, as many other scholars have, over the years, called for the term X-Group to be abandoned in favour of another name: Kirwan preferred the term 'Nubo-Meroitic'; Trigger preferred 'Ballana culture'; Williams argues for the use of the term 'Noubadian culture' and Edwards tends to prefer 'post-Meroitic'.[68] Of these alternative propositions, 'post-Meroitic' is the most attractive as it does not privilege a link to a particular site (as 'Ballana culture' does), or people (as 'Noubadian culture' does), whilst it simultaneously acknowledges a link back to Meroe.

The eternal difficulty in interpreting the material culture of the X-Group resides in the co-occurrence of cultural markers in one locality (really two places, Qustul and Ballana) which apparently mark those objects belonging to cultures other than those in which they are actually found. The objects look like ethnic migrants. Or at least that is the way in which they have often been treated. And perhaps to some extent they were: some ghost of their former identity may still have been attendant and recognizable.

X-Group ethnic identity must be viewed as a changing and dynamic aspect of identity which could cross-cut with other identities. At Qustul and Ballana ethnic identity was not the major aspect of identity to be marked out in the material remains. As royal tombs, their construction and furnishing is more about explicit statements of power and the right

[66] See Edwards 2004: 199 fig. 7.7.

[67] Edwards 2004: 199.

[68] Kirwan 1939: 44; Trigger 1969; Williams 1991: 3, 158; Edwards 2004.

to rule, than about X-Group ethnicity. However, certain aspects of the material culture are suggestive of the cultivation of a mythical heritage in connection to the royal burials at Meroe. Even more than this, X-Group ethnicity at Qustul and Ballana may have been constructed as an explicit form of resistance versus an encroaching Christian state in the north. Egypt may not have been actively intending to extend its southern border to incorporate Lower Nubia, and in this period quite the opposite is the case. Nevertheless the Lower Nubian X-Group may have perceived a cultural encroachment that threatened their identity. In Egypt, adherence to pagan cults and the practice of sacrifice had been banned by Theodosius in AD 392.[69] This decree was issued only a few years after the cemetery at Qustul was established, and where the dramatized practice of human and animal sacrifices[70] was an integral aspect of a proper royal burial. The rulers of the X-Group may have felt the potential implications of such a ban acutely, especially following the closure of the pagan temples in AD 389, and their subsequent need to negotiate access to the temple at Philae.[71] Such decisions made in Egypt, whilst not aimed at the X-Group themselves, were good reason to mark out strongly aspects of their cultural practice in order to maintain their independence and difference. These were aspects of identity that were both ethnic and religious.

The continued use of material culture exhibiting Kushitic motifs can be linked to a concern with maintaining a link to a Meroitic past. This link may be entirely culturally constructed, and have little or no basis in biological continuity. This aspect of ethnic identity was almost exclusively emphasized at the royal cemeteries of Qustul and Ballana, and as such may really be about the legitimation of contemporary rule, rather than a genuine ambition to recreate a glorious heritage now passed.

The creation of a more normative (or everyday) X-Group ethnicity can be attributed to the widespread use of similar, indigenously manufactured pottery items, which were encountered on a daily basis. That this type of material culture was a measure of group cohesion is evidenced by its widespread geographical occurrence, its discovery in a wide variety of contexts, and its appearance in contexts which cut across status boundaries. The extent to which this aspect of mundane material life was actively considered as constructing a common ethnic identity by the X-Group themselves is debateable. Such material was perhaps so quotidian that it often 'disappeared' from active view.

The ethnogenesis of the X-Group has been multiply authored and has taken shape a number of times: it has been created by Classical writers, by modern scholars, and by the X-Group as they lived and died. For the ancient writers and the modern scholars, X-Group ethnicity has never been lost sight of. For the X-Group, their ethnic identity and its active perception, marking, and maintenance, was not always a driving concern.

[69] *FHN* 1123.

[70] See Dann 2007 and 2008.

[71] Priscus 27.1 (*Exc. De Leg. Gent.* 11) [transl. Blockley 1983, 323].

Bibliography

Bagnall, R. S. and Rathbone, D. W. 2004. *Egypt: from Alexander to the early Christians. An archaeological and historical guide*. Los Angeles.

Barnard, H. 2005. 'Sire, il n'y a pas de Blemmyes. A re-evaluation of the archaeological and historical data,' in J. C. M. Starkey (ed.), *People of the Red Sea* (BAR S1395): 23-40. Oxford.

Blier, S. P. 1998. *Royal arts of Africa. The majesty of form*. London.

Blockey, R. C. 1983. *The fragmentary classicising historians of the later Roman Empire. Vol. 2: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus, and Malchus*. Oxford.

Budge, E. A. W. 1928. *A history of Ethiopia, Nubia, and Abyssinia.* Vol 2. London.

Carter, H. and Newberry, P. E. 1904. *The tomb of Tuthmôsis IV.* Westminster.

Chapman, J. 2000. *Fragmentation in archaeology. People, places, and broken objects in the prehistory of south-east Europe*. London.

Dann, R. J. 2005. 'Interpreting ancient Nubia,' in R. J. Dann (ed.), *Current research in Egyptology V*: 43-50. Oxford.

Dann, R. J. 2007. 'Changing patterns of violence at Qustul and Ballana. Part one: the humans,' *Der Antike Sudan: Mitteilungen der Sudanarchäologischen Gesellschaft zu Berlin* 18: 189-200.

Dann, R. J. 2008. 'Changing patterns of violence at Qustul and Ballana. Part two: the animals,' *Der Antike Sudan: Mitteilungen der Sudanarchäologischen Gesellschaft zu Berlin* 19: 111-19.

Davis, T. M. 1910. *The tomb of Queen Tîyi. The discovery of the tomb* (London).

Díaz-Andreu, M. and Lucy, S. 2005. 'Introduction,' in M. Díaz-Andreu, S. Lucy, S. Babic, and D. N. Edwards (eds) *The archaeology of identity. Approaches to gender, age, status, ethnicity, and religion*: 1-12. London.

Dobres, M-A. 2000. *Technology and social agency. Outlining a practice framework for archaeology*. Oxford.

Edwards, D. N. 2004. *The Nubian past. An archaeology of the Sudan*. London.

el-Batrawi, A. 1946. 'The racial history of Egypt and Nubia,' *JRAI* 76: 131-56.

Emberling, G. 1997. 'Ethnicity in complex societies: Archaeological perspectives,' *Journal of Archaeological Research* 5.4: 295-344.

Emery, W. B. and Kirwan, L. P. 1938a. *The royal tombs of Ballana and Qustul*. Cairo.

Emery, W. B. and Kirwan, L. P. 1938b. *The royal tombs of Ballana and Qustul*. Cairo.

Hall, H. R. 1923. 'Ur and Eridu: The British Museum excavations of 1919,' *JEA* 9.3/4: 177-95.

Ikram, S. and Dodson, A. 1998. *The mummy in ancient Egypt. Equipping the dead for eternity*. London.

Junker, H. 1925. *Ermenne. Bericht über die Grabungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien auf den Friedhöfen von Ermenne (Nubien) im Winter 1911/12*. Vienna.

Junker, H. 1931. *Die Grabungen der Agyptischen Altertumsverwaltung in Nubien. Mitteilungen des Deutschen Institutes für Agyptische Altertumskunde in Kairo*. Wiesbaden.

Jones, S. 1997. *The archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing identities in the past and present*. London.

Kirwan, L. P. 1939. *The Oxford University excavations at Firka*. London.

Kirwan, L. P. 1982. 'The X-Group problem,' in N. B. Millet and A. L. Kelle (eds), *Meroitica 6. Proceedings of the third international Meroitic conference*: 191-204. Berlin.

Lenoble, P. 1994. 'Une montre pour mon royaume. Sacrifices tromphaux de chevaux et de méhara d'el Kurru à Ballana,' *Archeologie du nil moyen* 6: 107-30.

Lenoble, P. 1997. 'Enterrer les flèches, enterrer l'empire I: carquois et flèches des tombes impériales à el-Hobagi,' *Cahier de Recherches de l'Institut de Papyrologie et d'Égyptologie de Lille* 17.2: 137-52.

Lucy, S. 2005. 'Ethnic and cultural identities,' in M. Díaz-Andreu, S. Lucy, S. Babić and D. N. Edwards (eds), *The archaeology of identity. Approaches to gender, age, status, ethnicity, and religion*: 86-109. London.

Meskell, L. M. 1999. *Archaeologies of social life. Age, sex, class et cetera in ancient Egypt*. Oxford.

Meskell, L. M. 2001. 'Archaeologies of identity,' in I. Hodder (ed.), *Archaeological Theory Today*: 187-213. Cambridge.

Moore, H. L. and Scott, E. (eds) 1997. *Invisible people and processes. Writing gender and childhood into European archaeology*. London.

Petrie, W. M. F. 1896. *Naqada and Ballas*. London.

Petrie, W. M. F. 1939. *The making of Egypt*. London.

Reisner, G. A. 1908. *The archaeological survey. The archaeological survey of Nubia*. Vol. 1: 9-24. Cairo.

Reisner, G. A. 1910. *The archaeological survey of Nubia*. Cairo.

Schoff, W. H. 1912. *The periplus of the Erythraean Sea*. London.

Smith, G. E. 1908. 'The anatomical report,' in G. A. Reisner (ed.), *The archaeological survey of Nubia*: 25-36. Cairo.

Smith, G. E. 1910. 'The racial problem,' in G. Elliot Smith and F. Wood Jones (eds), *The archaeological survey of Nubia. Report for 1907-1908. Report on the human remains*: 15-36. Cairo.

Smith, G. E. 1923a. *The ancient Egyptians and their influence upon the civilization of Europe*. London.

Smith, G. E. 1923b. *Tutankhamun and the discovery of his tomb by the late Earl Carnarvon and Mr. Howard Carter*. London.

Smith, G. E. 1927. *The evolution of man: essays*. London.

Smith, G. E. 1930. *Human history*. London.

Smith, G. E. 1933. *The diffusion of culture*. London.

Smith, G. E. and Wood Jones, F. 1908. 'Anatomical report,' in G. A. Reisner (ed.), *The archaeological survey of Nubia*. Vol. 2: 29-54. Cairo.

Smith, S. T. 2003. *Wretched Kush. Ethnic identities and boundaries in Egypt's Nubian Empire*. London.

Sofær-Derevenski, J. 2000. 'Rings of life: the role of early metalwork in mediating the gendered lifecourse,' *WorldArch* 31.3: 389-406.

Sørensen, M. L. S. 2000. *Gender archaeology*. Cambridge.

Takamiya, I. H. 2004. 'Egyptian pottery distribution in A-Group cemeteries, Lower Nubia: towards an understanding of exchange systems between the Naqada culture and the A-Group culture,' *JEA* 90: 35-62.

Török, L. 1987. *Late Antique Nubia (*Anateus Communicationes Ex Instituto Archaeologico Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae 16). Budapest.

Trigger, B. G. 1969. 'The royal tombs of Qustul and Ballana and their Meroitic antecedents,' *JEA* 55: 117-28.

Trigger, B. G. 1989. *A history of archaeological thought*. Cambridge.

Updegraff, R. T. 1978. *A study of the Blemmyes*. PhD dissertation, Brandeis University.

Wengrow, D. 2006. *The archaeology of early Egypt. Social transformations in north-east Africa, 10,000 to 2650 BC*. Cambridge.

Williams, B. B. 1991. *Excavations between Abu Simbel and the Sudan Frontier. Noubadian X-Group remains from royal complexes in cemeteries Q and 219 and from private cemeteries Q, R, V, W, B, J, and M at Qustul and Ballana*. Chicago.

Woolley, C. L. 1934. *Ur excavations. The royal cemetery: a report on the pre-dynastic and Sargonid graves excavated between 1926 and 1931*. Vol 2. London.

Zaborski, A. 1989. 'The problems of Blemmyes-Beja: an etymology,' *Beiträge zur Sudanforschung* 4: 169-77.

INDEX

The cover image shows
remains of the temples at
Yanuh, Lebanon, in 2005.
For details, see Kevin Butch-
er's article in this volume,
Figure 10 p. 205.

To find out more about our
books, and our journal, the
Bulletin of the Institute of
Classical Studies, and to order
books online, please visit our
website.

You can also order books by
emailing or writing to us
at the Publications Department,
Institute of Classical Studies,
School of Advanced Study,
University of London,
Senate House, Malet Street,
London WC1E 7HU, UK

Questions of ethnic and cultural identities
are central to the contemporary
understanding of the Roman world.

The expansion of Rome across Italy, the
Mediterranean, and beyond entailed
encounters with a wide range of peoples.
Many of these had well-established pre
-conquest ethnic identities which can be
compared with Roman perceptions of them.
In other cases, the ethnicity of peoples
conquered by Rome has been perceived
almost entirely through the lenses of Roman
ethnographic writing and administrative
structures.

The formation of such identities, and the
shaping of these identities by Rome, was a
vital part of the process of Roman
imperialism. Comparisons across the empire
reveal some similarities in the processes of
identity formation during and after the
period of Roman conquest, but they also
reveal a considerable degree of diversity and
localisation in interactions between Romans
and others.

This volume explores how these practices of
ethnic categorisation formed part of Roman
strategies of control, and how people living
in particular places internalised them and
developed their own senses of belonging to
an ethnic community. It includes both
regional studies and thematic approaches by
leading scholars in the field.

web   http://ics.sas.ac.uk/publications
email uolpress@london.ac.uk