A Multicultural Mediterranean?

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Erich S. Gruen, *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 2011. Pp. xiv, 415. ISBN 978-0691-14852-6

This erudite, lucid, and absorbingly written book has a highly ambitious aim: in it the author proposes an alternative impression of ancient views of others, or of "the Other." It deals with essential elements in our views of any society: group identity, tolerance or feelings of superiority, mutual appreciation or polarity between peoples, and it does so with passion, profound scholarship, and elegance. How does one review such an important work if, in the end, the reviewer is himself persuaded only partially? The sum of the work is far more than a remarkable collection of interpretations of authors writing throughout antiquity and representing societies from Gaul in the North-West to Egypt and Persia. It argues that ancient society, as we know it, was different in kind from all that followed in terms of social acceptance. It does so in spite of our awareness that these were societies in which slavery, war and conquest were an integral part of their system, morally accepted as a matter of course. The question before us is not just whether negative stereotypes and generalizations were balanced by a positive acceptance of others, but whether the latter was an essential feature of ancient world views. As Erich Gruen (hereafter G.) states: 'This study offers an alternative vision to the widespread idea that framing the self requires postulating "the Other." The expression of collective character in antiquity ... owes less to insisting on distinctiveness from the alien than to postulating links with, adaptation to, and even incorporation of the alien'. In other words, the book not only claims to rethink "the Other", as the title indicates, but also to rethink "the Self" (352). The author goes so far as to declare the ancient Mediterranean 'a multicultural world' (253, 287-99, 306, 264-5).

The present reviewer is himself on record as having argued at length that Greeks and Romans developed views of other peoples that approach what we now call racism, which certainly does not deny the fact that many important ancient authors had quite different attitudes.[1] The aim of my study was to demonstrate the existence of various forms of stereotypes, prejudice and xenophobia in Greek and Roman societies. This review recognizes that the work under discussion adds numerous fascinating insights to the subject. There are many topics and specific points which I accept with admiration. Nevertheless, I shall also argue that, to put it succinctly, there is a good deal of utopia in the book.

At this point it may as well be noted that to some extent the study follows a string of publications that question or defend the contribution of Greece and Rome to later societies and cultures. In the 80s and 90s of the twentieth century there was a wide-

1 B. Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton 2004); M. Eliav-Feldon, B. Isaac and J. Ziegler, *The Origins of Racism in the West* (Cambridge 2009).

spread reaction to traditional views about the centrality of the West taken up by classicists who denied or defended the uniqueness of Greece which gave, or did not give the world democracy, free enquiry, freedom and other major features of modern society.[2] That, however, is not our subject. We are concerned with G.'s book and its contribution to our understanding of ancient society and its views of foreigners.

My first question regards method and concerns whether an elementary distinction can be made between attitudes toward foreign, distant peoples and foreign minorities within Greece and Rome. I would regard it highly likely that in antiquity, as in our own days, distinct mechanisms are to be observed when one focuses on attitudes toward different categories of others: one of these are neighbours in a city, who belong to other religions, ethnic groups, or social classes — these possibly include immigrants and indeed often do so; another category are neighbouring countries, whether friendly or not; a third group are distant peoples who are hardly known. A further complication is that feelings about people in the present may be different from those about the same people in the recent, remote, or legendary past. Thus Romans of the first century AD would relate to Egyptian neighbours in their city in one way, but to the inhabitants of the Roman province of Egypt in another and to historical Egyptians, one of the oldest civilized peoples known to them, in yet another. Those same Romans knew Greeks as a conquered people, and lived with a Greek presence in their town, but their attitude to those Greeks was by no means the same as the opinions they held with regard to Periclean Athens or the Homeric heroes of the Trojan War. Finally there is yet another complication: attitudes change over time. In our days this is obvious: Germans in Goethe's days related to German Jews in a manner different from that of many Germans in the 1930s or in the 1990s. Similar variations should be postulated for antiquity. In this connection it is also essential to take into account the social fabric that formed the basis of "self-perception". The citizens of a Greek *polis* in the fifth century BC belonged to a cohesive society. Romans were citizens of a town that gradually incorporated an empire.

G.'s work does not sufficiently take these distinctions into account. Egypt was to the Greeks an old and venerable country with a brilliant history, but odd customs. For the Romans it was, first, a Hellenistic power, and then a province incorporated into the Empire. Many of Rome's inhabitants lived as a minority in their own city. Herodotus, remarkable for his even-handed willingness to concede barbarian achievements on the same terms as those of Greeks, visited it extensively in the fifth century BC. His treatment has for generations been recognized as a classic source of information and intellectual history. G. rightly analyzes him in detail. Plutarch, one of the major Greek authors of the Roman period, despised Herodotus, notably his sympathy for non-Greeks.

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2 The publication of M. Bernal's *Black Athena* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press 1987) and the polemics that followed essentially focused on the question of whether Greek culture was original or a derivative of an older, African culture. Quite apart from this, a fierce discussion about Greek legacy developed, especially in the US. For an extreme example of such polemics on the part of classicists: V. Davis Hanson and J. Heath, *Who Killed Homer? The Demise of Classical Education and the Recovery of Greek Wisdom* (New York: The Free Press 1998); for a judicious review: J. Connolly in *BMCR* 98.5.13.

He calls Herodotus 'philobarbaros'.[3] Plutarch accuses Herodotus of acquitting the legendary king Busiris of alleged human sacrifice and guest-murder.[4] He objects to his claim that the Egyptians have a strong sense of religion and justice.[5] He criticizes Herodotus' version of myth (Helen and Menelaus).[6] Here it is clear that Plutarch objects to any ethical or moral appreciation of Egyptians. He goes on to attack Herodotus for his respectful treatment of Egyptian religion (*de malign.* 13, *Mor.* 857 C-D). G. dismisses Plutarch in two brief notes for his 'naïve and superficial judgment '.[7] However, what should interest us is not Plutarch's profundity or the reverse, but the fact that he, writing late in the first and early in the second century, expressed this sort of opinion at all. G., with his usual eloquence writes: 'It is easy enough to cite authors from Cicero to Juvenal, and beyond, to accumulate ostensibly hostile comments about Egypt, and to pile up numbers that seem impressive at first glance.[8] Do they show that Rome seethed with anti-Egyptian prejudice?' Indeed, it is easy to cite hostile comments, because they exist, but nobody claims that Rome was seething. What has been argued is that there was a measure of hostility. Juvenal, who disliked Egyptians very much, was no historian discussing pharaonic Egypt: his target was contemporary Egyptians living in Rome. Juvenal was a satirist, which means that he may be assumed to have reflected the opinions of many of those who read his poems — citizens of Rome who disliked foreigners. Herodotus, on the other hand, visited the Egyptians in Egypt. He did not meet them in Athens.

Herodotus wrote about Persia as the major power that had failed in an attempt to subjugate the Greeks not long before he produced his work. It was major achievement for the Greeks and a spectacular failure for the Persians. I agree with G.'s assessment of Herodotus' attitude and of that represented by Aeschylus' *Persae*.[9] Where we disagree is

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3 Plut. *de malign.* 12 (*Mor.* 857A): φιλοβάρβαρος. For this treatise see: A. Bowen, *Plutarch, The Malice of Herodotus* (*de malignitate Herodoti*) (Warminster 1992); J. Marincola, 'Plutarch's Refutation of Herodotus', *AncW* 20 (1994), 191-203.

4 Plut. *de malign.* loc. cit., on Hdt. 2.45.

5 On Hdt. 2.37.1 and 65.1.

6 On Hdt. 2.119.

7 P. 30 with n. 115, and p. 81 with n. 32.

8 P.107, n. 173: seven modern works are cited. Cf. p.111: 'The sum of all this is decidedly smaller than its parts. Romans had no fixation on Egypt and were not preoccupied with deploring the nation. They retailed stereotypes ...'. I am not aware of any scholar who believes that the Romans had a fixation or were preoccupied, but the stereotypes are easy to find and need to be taken seriously as an expression of friction.

9 Pp. 9-21 on Aeschylus; 21-39 on Herodotus. Note, however, the different view of J.S. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought* (Princeton 1992), 54-60: 'Herodotus employs the Persians ... throughout the *Histories* to represent a traditional type of ethnocentricism, which sees a central position in the world as the bases of cultural superiority' (p. 60). In 1.134 Herodotus declares that the Persians honour most the peoples nearest to themselves, next the people next to those etc. Romm notes that Herodotus disapproves of this attitude. It is *hybris* that brings disaster on itself. On visual representations, pp.40-53, there is some agreement with the essay, unknown to G. at the time by A. Shapiro, 'The Invention of Persia in Classical Athens', in Eliav-Feldon, Isaac and Ziegler (n. 1), 57-87.

on the subsequent development of Greek views of Persia, marked by an increasingly aggressive attitude. The treatise *Airs, Water, Places* by (Pseudo-) Hippocrates, written probably not long after Herodotus' work, is tucked away by G. in a footnote.[10] G. is formally right in claiming that in this work 'nothing asserts a polarization of Greeks and Persians'. However, the treatise absolutely emphasizes polarization between Europe and Asia, emphasizing numerous essentialist characteristics.[11] It is true that the Persians are not mentioned in the treatise, but neither are the Greeks, who are nevertheless a dominant factor in the treatise even if they are not named. The background should be clear: Herodotus and Aeschylus wrote in the immediate aftermath of the war between Persia and Greece. Unlike those two, the author of the treatise was not an historian or a tragedian. He sought to interpret common stereotypes about the collective influence of climate and geography on human beings. He did so in the spirit of these stereotypes which, obviously, included Persians.

G. is one of numerous scholars who tried to make sense of the problematic last chapter of Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* 8.8, describing Persia's decline after books full of praise of the elder Cyrus.[12] G. proposes the following solution: it is sardonic, farcical, exaggerated. Xenophon does not believe what he writes. On the contrary, he claims, it is a caricature of contemporary stereotypes. To me this would be altogether uncharacteristic of Xenophon, but, more important: this interpretation recognizes the existence and reality of contemporary stereotypes about Persians found in Greek literature: Ctesias, Plato, and Isocrates. Yet G. regards the last of these three as 'hardly ... representative of widespread Hellenic opinion'. I prefer the assessment of Peter Brunt: 'Isocrates' *Panegyricus* ... certainly reflects ideas already current in the fifth century'.[13] A further point: if we look at the key events in history we see that, in the early fifth century BC, Persia attempted, but failed to conquer mainland Greece. A century and a half afterward Greeks successfully conquered Persia. It is not a far-fetched idea that a gradual development in Greek ideology can be traced to reflect the sense of victory following the failed Persian invasions leading to war initiated by Greeks to conquer Persia.

On Phoenicians and Carthaginians there is partial agreement. G. argues that 'The construct of *Punica fides* as antithesis of all that Rome stood for could provide a valuable vehicle for projecting that desirable image, and would bring a reassurance of moral superiority ...Yet the picture may be too simple and too monochromatic ...' (115-16). This somewhat overstates the case that he is arguing against. Modern discussions of Roman attitudes toward Carthage have been varied and sometimes subtle.[14] G. declares that (the Phoenicians) 'were not the most obvious candidates to serve as foils for the Romans or to represent the "Other"' (116). I am not aware of anyone who claims that this is how they were presented. More important, one should distinguish between the image of Phoenicians and that of Carthage, taking into account developments over time. Carthage was the major power Rome faced throughout the third century BC. It was a

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10 P. 39, n. 168.

11 As argued and, I claim, demonstrated, by Isaac (n.1), 60-69.

12 Gruen, 58-65, and Isaac (n. 1), 290-6. I have nothing to add to what I wrote at the time.

13 P. Brunt, 'Laus Imperii', in id., *Roman Imperial Themes* (Oxford 1990), 161.

14 Ample references are found in G.'s footnotes.

dangerous enemy during two large-scale wars and finally destroyed by Rome in the second century BC, when Carthage was no longer dangerous. The Phoenicians were never a threat. From Homer onwards, their image was a decidedly mixed one, as craftsmen and traders. Incorporated as part of the province of Syria by Pompey, they were known to urban Romans mostly as a minority in their city which inspired negative views, as stated in quite a number of sources from Lucilius onward (second century BC). That said, I would note G.'s very interesting observations about bilingualism in Rome (128-130). He is also undoubtedly correct that there is no noticeable ethnic hatred before or after the destruction of Carthage (130-132). However, as I have argued, xenophobia and ethnic hatred are often aimed at minorities at home, and do not always play a significant role in the moral and political climate before and immediately after a major war.

At this point I ought to mention that G., far more than I would regard as convincing, accepts the possibility of reconstructing Persian, Egyptian, and Punic perspectives on the basis of Greek and Latin sources.[15] Even if Greek and Roman authors were somehow acquainted with texts in Persian, Egyptian and Phoenician, we cannot know where they found access to them and how they interpreted them.[16]

The Gauls were, for centuries, until their final incorporation into the Empire by Caesar, a formidable and nearby presence. G., in a fine chapter (Chap. 5) which focuses on Caesar in particular, concedes the existence of a string of stereotypes in several authors: Polybius, Diodorus, Cicero,[17] and Caesar. The latter, who fought the Gauls for almost a decade, repeats several of the usual stereotypes, observed by G. I agree with G. that this is less important than the unconventional elements in Caesar's description indicating respect for them. For instance he speaks with admiration of Vercingetorix (*BG* 7.89.1-2) and emphasizes that the Gauls fought for their freedom (*BG* 3.8.4). These features indeed do go beyond the usual trick of exaggerating a defeated enemy's strength in order to enhance one's own victory.

Regarding the Germans, G. extensively considers one source, Tacitus' *Germania*, one of the most discussed works that have come to us from antiquity (Chap. 6). The aim and message of the monograph have been considered in numerous ways and G. has added his own, original view on the work in a chapter full of subtle insights.[18] 'Germans, it is often presumed, were in Roman eyes the quintessential "barbarians"'. If so, Tacitus certainly does not perpetuate the stereotype' (161). Whatever Tacitus thought about the Germans, it was certainly not his aim to convey such a simple message and I am not sure that any modern authors would claim it was. G. is right in insisting on the complexity of Tacitus' views. 'The *Germania* remains an ambivalent and slippery text', as G. observes toward the end of his chapter (178). When all is said and done, however, one has a feeling that it did not actually have a clear-cut aim or message, as G. interprets it. 'The historian serves

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15 Egyptian: pp.80-81; 90; 265-7; 266-272; Persian: 256-7; 260; Punic: 272-6.

16 Sall. *Jug.* 17.7 claims to have consulted 'Punic books' by King Hiempsal II, translated for him.

17 G. is clearly right in describing Cicero's *Pro Fonteio* as judicial rhetoric. That is no reason to dismiss it as evidence of popular views, however, for a good Roman lawyer will always employ judicial artifices that work among his audience.

18 E.g. the observations about *virtus*, 173-4 and the *interpretatio Romana*, 174-7.

up innuendos and imputations with balanced roguery. He aims not to underscore the "Otherness" of the Germans but to dissect and deconstruct it, to complicate and confuse it. For Tacitus, irony regularly trumps ideology' (178). Every reader may decide whether to accept this or not. It is my view that for Tacitus irony and rhetoric are instruments in conveying ideology and this ideology is not likely to have been the deconstruction of the "Otherness" of the Germans. In this connection there are two points to raise. First, there is Tacitus's insistence on the fact that the Germans are of pure lineage, 'not mixed at all with other peoples through immigration or intercourse'.[19] Tacitus (*Germ.* 4) repeats that he is of the opinion that 'the peoples of Germany have never contaminated themselves by intermarriage with foreign nations and that they appear as distinct, of pure blood, like none but themselves'. This, repeated twice at the beginning of the work, makes it hard to deny that Tacitus sees them as "Others". Second, there is Tacitus' insistence on the *libertas* of the Germani (discussed by G. on 169-172). I interpret this in not quite the same sense as G. We need to clarify what kind of *libertas* is meant: collective or individual. I would say that it refers to the collective, the group: to collective freedom as the opposite of collective slavery / foreign rule, not to personal and individual liberty. Tacitus does not deny the internal social hierarchy which existed among the Germans, but here discusses freedom from foreign rule and absence of internal tyranny or domination by one man. There is ideology in this: the Germans did not live under foreign domination or tyranny, while the Romans did, since the principate had robbed them of their *libertas*. On Germans G. considers only Tacitus. It is not difficult to cite respectable authors who were far less subtle about Germans, such as Galen, who was no more in favour of them than of wolves and bears.[20]

Next, G. relates to Tacitus' excursus on the Jews (Chap.7), another text that has been considered by generations of scholars. It attests to G.'s originality that he manages to interpret such a well-known text in a novel manner. Whether we accept his view is another matter.

G. recognizes that Tacitus does not like Jews. However, the excursus is not a simple condemnation but a teasing, cunning, cynical text, full of paradoxes. G. frequently attempts to moderate hostile criticism by claiming that it is irony that needs to be taken *cum grano salis*. We see the same in the case of Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 8.8, which he explains as a caricature (64-5), and of Juvenal's mockery of the Egyptians (110-11) and of people of colour (207). G. also uses it to moderate Juvenal's hostility toward the Jews: '...it is hazardous to place too serious an interpretation on Juvenal's sardonic wit' (182-3). This is a dangerous argument that could be applied to virtually every form of anti-Semitic and racist propaganda. G. further makes the point that Tacitus' many derogatory remarks about Jewish customs must be seen in perspective. He also skewers other groups he does not like, such as the Caesars and imperial freedmen. This is highly interesting and indubitably true, but does that reduce his animosity toward the Jews?

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19 *Germ.*1, discussed in Isaac (n. 1) 137-40. Tacitus's claims of German pure blood are mentioned only in passing by G., 162.

20 Gal. *San. tu.* 6.6.5: ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς γε νῦν οὔτε Γερμανοῖς οὔτε ἄλλοις τισὶν ἀγρίοις ἢ βαρβάροις ἀνθρώποις ταῦτα γράφομεν, οὐ μᾶλλον ἢ ἄρκτοις ἢ λέουσιν ἢ κάπροις ἢ τισι τῶν ἄλλων θηρίων, ἀλλ' Ἕλλησι καὶ ὅσοι τῷ γένει μὲν ἔφυσαν βάρβαροι, ζηλοῦσι δὲ τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐπιτηδεύματα.

It is possible to read too much even into an author as complex and ambiguous as Tacitus. In *Historiae* 5.13, he at length criticizes the Jews for their misinterpretation and mishandling of threatening portents in AD 70, during the siege of Jerusalem by Titus. G. (194-5) argues that this is not a rebuke of Jewish belief, practice, and trust in the divine: '... one might well ask just how much faith Tacitus himself put in prodigies ...'. I see no reason to ask this question. Tacitus was quite capable of taking omens seriously. At the beginning of the revolt of Boudicca, 'without any evident cause, the statue of Victory at Camulodunum fell prostrate and turned its back to the enemy, as though it fled before them ... and in the estuary of the Tamesa had been seen the appearance of an overthrown town; even the ocean had worn the aspect of blood ...'(*Ann.* 14.32). Tacitus tended to respect religion in such circumstances.[21] As G. agrees (195), Tacitus does not like the Jews, but unlike G., I would argue that even for him there is a limit to paradox, cunning, and cynicism.

In my opinion there are three points to consider in Tacitus' attitude toward the Jews that G. appears not to regard as relevant. First, Tacitus wrote his excursus as introduction to his lost account of the siege of Jerusalem, but his acquaintance with Jews clearly goes back to their presence as a minority in Rome. His excursus is therefore part ethnography and history of a distant people and partly a reflection of his views on the minority in the city. Second, many Romans disapproved of Jews because of what they *did*, not because of what they *were*, because of their peculiar ways and manner of living, not because of any presumed inborn qualities. Third, Jewish monotheism as such was not so much an issue: the Jews were free to restrict their own pantheon as much as they wanted, but it was unacceptable that they rejected other peoples' gods. The rest followed from this. The bottom-line, as I see it, while G. does not, is that rejection, even if it is not racist, is still moral and social condemnation.

Chapter 8 deals with the People of Colour.[22] Here again it is essential to distinguish between attitudes toward the people of colour actually living among Greeks and Romans, and legendary Ethiopians who already appear in the work of Homer.[23] The Ethiopians are said to be autochthonous, a dubious compliment applied mostly to remote peoples such as the Britons, Germans, Indians, but also to some Greeks by those Greeks themselves: Athenians and Thebans. I call it dubious because the idea that pure lineage produces peoples of better quality than mixed stock has a pernicious later history, as has the notion of a connection between "blood and soil". G. rightly observes that the Ethiopians, once they appear as real people rather than legend, frequently come off well (201-4). However, in some texts there are also negative qualifications that, in my opinion, need to be recognized for what they are.

The Pseudo-Aristotelian *Physiognomica* asserts that blacks and curly-haired, namely Ethiopians and Egyptians, are cowardly.[24] G. (105) says this is an exception. I cannot

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21 R. Syme, *Tacitus* (Oxford 1958), 523-527.

22 G. does not mention the work of D. Goldenberg, *The curse of Ham: Race and Slavery in Early Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (Princeton 2003).

23 For the legendary Ethiopians, see Romm (n. 9), 49-60.

24 Ps. Arist. *Phgn.* 6.812a-b; cf. G., 205. For physiognomy and opinions on other peoples in antiquity, cf. Isaac (n. 1), 149-162. For physiognomy and proto-racism between 1200 and 1500, see J. Ziegler in: Eliav-Feldon, Isaac and Ziegler (n. 1), 181-199.

agree. Physiognomics was a highly popular (pseudo-)science in antiquity and is represented by several treatises. A fourth-century CE essay, based on a lost one by Polemon, combines ethnic stereotypes with physiognomics: Egyptians and Ethiopians, because of their dark skins, are said to be 'frivolous, peaceful, cowardly, and shrewd. Peoples with light skins, living in northern regions, are said to be courageous and bold and so forth'.[25] This is a popular form of stereotyping based on environmental determinism. It is part of an often repeated idea about the effect of northern and southern climates not only on the physical, but also on the mental qualities of groups.

Here we are concerned with distant peoples. However, there were dark-skinned people living among Greeks and Romans. Petronius, and especially Martial and Juvenal, refer to them in clearly unflattering terms. G. (207-9) again suggests that 'Satirists must have their due ... One need not conclude that their parodic ethnic jabs represent widespread public prejudice'. I certainly agree with G. that there is no need to conclude that this is evidence of 'seething Roman hostility against blacks' — I am not aware of anyone claiming that this is the case, but neither am I convinced by G.'s generous interpretation in a sphere of innocent and harmless fun.

In the second part of the book G. offers what may well be the most stimulating and original part: on 'Foundation Legends' (Chap. 9), 'Fictitious Kinships' (Chaps. 10 and 11), and 'Cultural Interlockings and Overlappings' (Chap. 12). Even if not all of us may agree with the conclusions, it is immediately clear that here we have a series of topics that are important and relevant for the discussion, besides being fascinating in their own right. They touch on essential questions regarding the manner in which Greeks, Romans and Jews dealt with their own origins in various periods. These chapters undoubtedly will engender much exchange and further work.

The subject here is the distant, mythical past and the manner in which contacts and relationships with other peoples in that mythical past were invented and imagined. The legendary past was manipulated in surprising ways. This is a highly interesting topic, but it is a pity that so much material is analyzed with so much care, exclusively in order to prove that the Greeks and Romans were tolerant and that the ancient world was multicultural. It is quite possible that there is more to it than that.

The essence of all this is that it concerns the mythical past. It remains to be seen and understood what this meant to Greeks and Romans in their classical age. G. asserts: 'The idea that nations had a common ancestor transcends conflict and warfare, and challenges the concept of "otherness" (257)'. I am not persuaded, but I do agree with G. that this is an important issue which demands careful thinking.

G. is not the first to devote extensive discussion to the issue of Athenian claims of autochthony and their descent from the original native population, the mythical Pelasgians (236-43). Many scholars have analyzed the sources. It will suffice here to say that G.'s arguments have not persuaded me to revise my published views.[26] I do not see

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25 Anonymi, *De Physiognomonia* (ed. J. André, *Anonyme Latin Traité de Physiognomonie* [Paris 1981]), 79: *Color niger levem, imbellem, timidum, versutum indicat: refertur ad eos qui in meridiana plaga habitant, ut sunt Aethiopes, Aegyptii et qui his iuncti sunt. Color albus subrubeus fortes et animosos indicat: refertur ad eos qui in septentrione commorantur.*

26 Isaac (n. 1), 114-124 and passim.

that it is legitimate to discard Plato's *Menexenus* as mockery, Herodotus' relevant paragraphs (1.56-8) as muddle, and Isocrates' speeches *Helen* and *Panathenaicus* as rhetoric. G. does not mention Pericles' citizenship law of 451/0 BC which reserved the status of full citizenship for those who could prove that both parents were Athenian citizens.[27] Others have found this relevant. "Pelasgians versus Hellenes" is a subject that demands more reflection than the question whether authors of the fifth century BC wrote in a spirit of kindness about their imagined predecessors. G. observes that 'Pelasgians are commonly conceived as "barbarians". Yet the designation nowhere carries a pejorative connotation' (242). It needs to be repeated: the Pelasgians are an imaginary people in the past and not a reality to fifth-century BC Greeks.

Furthermore, concerning the Greeks a distinction must be made between Hellenic chauvinism and chauvinism at the local or regional level. The Athenians saw themselves as autochthonous, but the Spartans or Corinthians made no such claim. Many Greeks had no serious thoughts about pure lineage, but it definitely exists as a theme in Greek thinking about origins. It is the great merit of G.'s analysis that it shows that most Greeks did not mind having mixed ancestors in the distant past. This does not change the fact that they regarded contemporary non-Greeks as inferior.

'The ancient Mediterranean was a multicultural world' is the first sentence of Chapter 10 (253). The *OED* defines "multicultural" as follows: 'Of or relating to a society consisting of a number of cultural groups, esp. in which the distinctive cultural identity of each group is maintained'. This means that G. declares the ancient Mediterranean to be a single, coherent society adhering to an ideology that respected internal diversity in which the cultural identity of each group was maintained. It is a challenging statement that invites discussion. This review cannot do more than suggest that the subject should be debated.

Quite apart from the question how the Greeks and Romans related to other Mediterranean peoples, the statement above implies that the other Mediterranean peoples, such as the Egyptians, Phoenicians, Persians and Jews had a similar outlook and agreed with the Greeks and Romans on such matters. The Jews are the subject of separate treatment in Chapter 11. In Chapter 10 various episodes are discussed which, according to G., provide evidence of a multicultural outlook on the part of the Egyptians and Persians. Herodotus (2.91) reports on Egyptians at Chemnis, who celebrate games in Greek style, 'because it was the home town of Danaus and of Lynceus, ancestor of Perseus ...'. Here we have a serious question of method. What can we really deduce about Egyptian attitudes in the fifth century BC from what Herodotus says about Egyptian customs involving Greek mythological characters? G. accepts that Herodotus' report contains precise and genuine information about Egyptian customs and their significance for Egyptian attitudes toward Greeks. The Egyptians respected kinship ties in this period, he says: 'The Chemnitans took the initiative here, adapting Hellenic modes of paying tribute to a Greek hero whom they claimed as their own by virtue of his Egyptian lineage' (85-6, 259). Alternative interpretations exist: 'To Herodotus the Greek character of the festival of Perseus was so striking in the light of Egyptian distaste for

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27 C. Patterson, *Pericles' Citizenship Law of 451-50 BC* (New York, 1981), 97-104 133; D. Ogden, *Greek Bastardy in the Classical and Hellenistic Periods* (Oxford 1996), 169-70, for the connection between autochthony and the citizenship law.

foreign customs that it became a θῶμα'.[28] 'At Chemnis (Perseus) had evidently been identified with a local deity who must be either Horus or Min-Hor ... We can only assume that, when Perseus was identified with the local god, Greeks resident in the area introduced games of a Hellenic type which were celebrated in association with the cult of the Egyptian god'.[29]

The next topic is a Mesopotamian affiliation for Perseus, as reported by Herodotus, 6.54: 'According to the Persian story, Perseus was an Assyrian who became a Greek; his ancestors, therefore, according to them, were not Greeks'. Herodotus was not a direct source for Persia, as he was, somehow, for Egypt, because he had visited it. Yet G. concludes: 'But it appears that Persian fictions, drawing on the reshaping of Hellenic legend, connected their own history in diverse ways with Assyrians, Greeks and even Egyptians, a genuinely multicultural mix' (260). What we have, however, is just one Greek author who did not even read Persian.[30]

Perseus, as G. interprets it, also has a Jewish connection (260-1). The basis for this claim is the identification of Joppe / Jaffa with the site of Perseus' rescue of Andromeda from the sea monster. G. calls this 'Jewish appropriation of the classical myth'. This identification is first attested in Pseudo-Scylax's *Periplus* of the fourth century.[31] The text, in bad shape, also describes the city as one 'of the Sidonians', i.e. controlled by Phoenicians. There is good evidence that these were Hellenized Phoenicians. The Jews obtained control over Jaffa and its port only in the Hasmonaean period, after the middle of the second century BC, under the leadership of Simon the Maccabee.[32] The transfer of Perseus' and Andromeda's adventure to Jaffa was therefore the initiative of Hellenized Sidonians, long before the Jews took control over the city.

G. concludes (264): 'Perseus is the quintessential Hellenic hero, ancestor of Doric kings. He had a mother with Egyptian roots. Egyptians appropriated him for their own. Persians happily accepted Perseus as a forebear, but they tampered with his ancestry. Phoenicians and Jews attached themselves to the multicultural blend'. The material is fascinating, but, in my opinion, requires further investigation. The Jewish connection here is quite uncertain.

Then there are the origins of Rome. Virgil's *Aeneis* is familiar: Aeneas, Aphrodite's son and a Trojan, migrated to Italy and became the ancestor of the founders of Rome. Thus the destruction of Troy by the ancestors of the Greeks would have resulted in the foundation of Rome as a new Troy. G. analyzes the various versions and alternatives of the legends surrounding the pre-history of Rome's foundation (243-9). Rome was a city

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28 D. Asheri, A. Lloyd and A. Corcella, *A Commentary on Herodotus*, Books I-IV (Oxford 2007), ad loc., 302-3, with references to 2.79.1 and to pp. 234-7.

29 G. regards this as 'an unnecessary hypothesis' (259). He insists that Egyptians, not local Greeks, were the agents.

30 Hdt. 7.150, cites envoys of Xerxes who accepted the regular Greek view.

31 G. Shipley, *Pseudo-Scylax's Periplous: The Circumnavigation of the Inhabited World, Text, Translation and Commentary* (Bristol 2011), 104.3: Δῶρος πόλις Σιδωνίων, κ[αὶ Ἰόππη πόλις· ἐκτε]θῆναί φασιν ἐνταῦθα τὴν Ἀνδρομ[έδαν τῷ κήτει. Ἀσκά]λων πόλις Τυρίων καὶ βασίλεια. ἐνταῦ[θα ὅρος ἐστὶ τῆς Κοίλης] Συρίας.

32 See on Jaffa in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Judaeae / Palaestinae* vol. 3 (forthcoming) with my historical introduction.

that acquired an Empire, unlike any Greek city before Alexander including Athens which, after all, only dominated other Greek cities for some time, but not foreign peoples. As G. rightly observes, 'The most celebrated and familiar case of fictitious foreign kinships must surely be that of Troy and Rome. Readers of Vergil from antiquity to the present have the tale of Rome's linkage to the survivors of the Trojan War as a fixture in their consciousness' (243). The fact that Rome as a city claimed that it had roots in Asia Minor is important and should be evaluated. Undoubtedly G. is right in concluding that the idea of autochthony or indigenous origins never made much headway in Rome — at least for the Romans themselves. G. discusses a complex web of associations and relationships in the mythical past: Rome's association with Troy, Greece's legendary enemy through Aeneas is one such tie. Another is the assertion that Evander the Arcadian (son of Hermes) planted a colony, Pallantion, on the Palatine. Yet another is the claim of an association of Aeneas with Arcadia. Thus Rome had Greek roots as well. As G. says rightly, this is complex. There is no simple, linear story.

Further thought may be given to the contemporary significance, attached in imperial Rome to foreign descent in the legendary past. Romans did not claim to be autochthonous. Perhaps it was therefore seen as desirable to have an association with Phoenicians and Egyptians, Greeks and other Asiatics in the past, when they were at the pinnacle of greatness. I am not certain that such ideas are a testimony of Roman tolerance. Perhaps an indication of this may be found in Cato's work: the Spartans were among the ancestors of the Sabines. According to Cato that was where Roman toughness originated.[33] In other words: Spartan toughness in the distant past was the progenitor of Roman toughness in the present. It is one thing to identify with past glory, another to respect your foreign contemporaries.

All of Chapter 11 is devoted to 'Fictitious Kinships, Jews and Others'. I am not competent to assess G.'s discussion of the Bible. Two points to be made, however, are the following: if the people of Israel had a joint ancestor with the Ishmaelites, that did not reduce the enmity felt through the ages. Second, there is a long list of mixed marriages in the biblical tradition, as G. points out. This undoubtedly says something about biblical attitudes toward such marriages, but I cannot begin to evaluate the significance of this phenomenon for the social attitudes it represents.[34]

We owe G. an enormous debt for his beautifully written, provocative study. It gives due weight to a topic central to our evaluation of ancient social relationships. It will stimulate intensive exchange about the moral standards of Greeks, Romans and Jews in their attitude toward foreigners.

Rather than summarize and describe the contents and architecture of the book, let me give the basics of its contents:

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33 Cato F 2.22 (Beck and Walter), cited by G., 248 n.148. Cato was not so anti-Greek as is usually claimed, argues G. (245-6) with a reference to A. Henrichs, 'Graecia Capta: Roman Views of Greek Culture', *HSCP* 97 (1995), 243-261, at 244-250. All I can find in this study is evidence that Cato knew Greek well.

34 Pp. 250-2: The Jews also claimed to have numerous foreign ancestors in the Hellenistic and Roman traditions. I shall leave it to others to consider these remarkable assertions. They belong to biblical as much as to Hellenistic culture and I am here out of my depth.

Part I: Impressions of the "Other":
Chapter 1: 'Persian in the Greek Perception: Aeschylus and Herodotus'
Chapter 2: 'Persia in the Greek Perception: Xenophon and Alexander'
Chapter 3: 'Egypt in the Classial Imagination'
Chapter 4: '*Punica Fides*'.
Chapter 5: 'Caesar on the Gauls'
Chapter 6: 'Tacitus on the Germans'
Chapter 7: 'Tacitus and the Defamation of the Jews'
Chapter 8: 'People of Color'.
Part II: Connections with the "Other"
Chapter 9: 'Foundation Legends'
Chapter 10: 'Fictitious Kinships: Greeks and Others'
Chapter 11: 'Fictitious Kinships: Jews and Others'
Chapter 12: 'Cultural Interlockings and Overlappings'
Conclusion

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