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203–204.), demonstrated by honorific verse inscriptions with epic wording (188–195) and displayed in places occupied by the elite (192–196).

Juan Pablo Sánchez Hernández (“Greek literary topoi and local traditions in the etiology of the ‘Antonine plague’”, 199–216) highlights a so far mostly overlooked contemporaneous eastern source that influenced certain traits in later narratives (esp. Amm. 23, 6,24) of the outbreak of the so-called Antonine plague: Five inscriptions of oracles of Claros that were requested in the 2nd cent. CE by different cities about the disease may well have been the origin of some elements (like the adyton, the crevice, and toxic fumes in Apollo’s temple in Seleucia, 210–211.)

Verse inscriptions were produced for members of the elite until the 7th cent. CE (217–219), as Gianfranco Agosti (“Greek metrical inscriptions, classical *paideia* and identity in Late Antiquity”, 217–231) demonstrates with a series of Christian funerary inscriptions from Syria using Homeric verses (219–223). The real degree of familiarity with Hellenic culture was less important than to display it, together with Christian piety (223–228). In this way the deceased (and those who commissioned the stele) asserted their social, local and religious identity against the *ethne* of the desert (225–226; designated with the Homeric term *eremboi*).

The important social role of the language used in Late Antique contexts is also shown by Valentina Garulli and Eleonora Santin (“Greek-Latin bilingualism and cultural identity in the Graeco-Roman East: *Carmina Epigraphica Graeca et Latina (CEGL)* from the Middle East”, 233–257), analysing three long bilingual epitaphs that use a mix of Christian and pagan imagery: neither language necessarily implies a low or high education. The first gives a short Latin summary of the longer, elaborated Greek text (234–243), while in another example (of a woman for her dead daughter, at the same time a cenotaph for her husband, 249–253) the Latin text is much longer and the Greek not of good quality. Obviously they were Latin speakers, and Greek, the local language, had become a communication tool for them.

This is a very stimulating volume, tackling very interesting themes: the wide range of *paideia* in the East; the multi-faceted role of elites who had to address indigenous people as well as to represent their kingdom within the dominating Hellenistic-Roman global culture; the meaning of bilingualism and the means and media of addressing audiences of different cultural backgrounds.

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Jonathan J. Price, Margalit Finkelberg and Yuval Shahar (eds.), *Rome: An Empire of Many Nations: New Perspectives on Ethnic Diversity and Cultural Identity*, Cambridge University Press: 2021. 410 pp. + xiii. ISBN 978-1-108-47945-5.

The issue uniting the studies assembled in this excellent volume is the reconciliation of local identity with Roman power. As such this volume is a worthy tribute to the wide-ranging contributions by its honorand, Ben Isaac, to Roman studies.

As communities and local circumstances differed, so too did modes of assimilation to Rome. If, for instance, there was a Roman legion encamped nearby that would dictate a very different sort of relationship than otherwise. As the two excellent essays on the military camp at Legio-Kefar ‘Othnay (housing successively units from *legio II Traiana* and *legio VI Ferrata*) and *legio I Fretensis* at Jerusalem, show, the Roman army’s presence defined the space in which civilians lived, without necessarily defining how those people thought. The discovery of a Christian meeting house,

meeting house, built in the early third century at Kefar 'Othnay, with an inscribed mosaic recording its construction with money donated by a Roman centurion named Gaius shows that even at a military site there could be enormous intellectual diversity.

As Jonathan Price points out in the volume's introduction, the diversity of identities the empire sustained was the essential factor in its success. Legal status arguably mattered less than did vectors of communication with the imperial power. Readers of the book might reasonably conclude that Caracalla's grant of citizenship in 212 CE was largely irrelevant to a state in which inhabitants had long since reconciled their communities with the imperial power. For centuries the empire's non-citizen inhabitants had been *socii*, "allies." The term *subiectus* "subject," is not applied to the empire's inhabitants before the age of Justinian.

Price's introduction provides an excellent summary of the development of scholarly thought away from the concept of "Romanization" as the imposition of specifically Roman habits in the direction of regional negotiations of participation in the culture of the imperial power. The volume is thereafter divided into four parts. The fourth section, on Judaea/Palestine contains the two articles on the Roman army mentioned above. The first section deals with ethnicity and identity, the second with culture and identity, the third with Judaism in the Roman Empire.

In the first section's opening chapter, Ben Isaac explores the proposition that Rome was an idea, the concept of imperial society (p.17). Rome was not a capital city in the modern sense. It was an imperial residence. By the third century it was the oldest and most notable residence, but it was hardly the only one. A city that became an imperial residence did not forfeit its earlier history. Constantinople still had a past as Byzantium. Trier was also a city that had standing as an imperial residence. The author of the 12th panegyric can celebrate Constantine's liberation of Rome from the tyrant Maxentius, while pointing out that Trier had a continuing claim on his attentions. The excellent publication of the tetrarchic reliefs from Nicomedia shows that Diocletian had integrated the imperial palace into the existing urban landscape and into the city's history.¹ Christians might, as Isaac points out, claim that Constantine founded Constantinople as a Christian alternative to Rome, but there is no evidence Constantine was thinking this way (p. 25–26). More likely he was concerned with having an eastern capital that was not Nicomedia. It took a long time for Constantinople to develop as a fully functional imperial capital; its status as the primary imperial capital in and after the reign of Theodosius I was a result of the collapse of the political order in the west.

Rome may have been an imperial residence, but it was *the* residence of the Roman senate. As Werner Eck shows, the senate was representative of Rome's multi-faceted imperial identity. In Trajan's reign, senators were required to hold a third of the property in Italy. Even when Marcus Aurelius reduced this to a quarter, Italy remained the focal point for a senator's professional life, and, while serving, senate members "did not play an essential role" in their home communities (p. 38), this did not mean that they had broken off all contact and, if they retired, as was possible when they attained the age of 65, they might well reestablish a presence in there (p. 36). As Eck notes the question of what consciousness of their diverse cultural backgrounds had on the collective decisions of the senate or of individual senators remains an issue for further discussion (p. 41).

How did the average person understand the empire's diversity? Daniela Dueck offers an original take on this question by exploring ethnic stereotyping in Latin idioms. Idioms provide "access to the knowledge and concepts of popular, uneducated, and illiterate sectors of Greek and Roman society" (p. 44). Ethnic stereotyping could stem from physical appearance, but, more often, it

¹ T.S. Ağtürk, *The Painted Tetrarchic reliefs of Nicomedia*, Turnhout, 2021.

stemmed from the perceived qualities of people living in certain places or of local habits—e.g. people from Praeneste were arrogant, Boeotians were stupid etc. (p. 48; 50). What is significant, is that the majority of Latin proverbs deal with people living in the Italian peninsula or mainland Greece. People living at a distance appear far less often, though when they do, they are notable for being eccentric or physically distinctive.

Brent Shaw explores the issue of identity through a splendid analysis of a funerary monument for a Roman centurion who served as Gaius Julius Gaetulus, and was known in his home district as Keti, son of Maswalat, where his service for the “supreme chief” (Roman emperor) was noted as important aspect of his identity. Keti, who lived in the second century CE, was a member of a family that received the franchise from Julius Caesar, yet that status marker did not erase his African identity in the region which lies between Hippo Regius and Madauros. Keti was “an apparently Roman man who served a lifetime in its army and municipal institutions” who “still maintained an African identity” (p. 82). There is good reason to think that this “social schizophrenia” was “maintained over many generations in not a few of the provincial families of the empire” (p. 83), a point reinforcing Eck’s observation that we cannot assume we know how a person’s cultural background affected their connection to the empire’s most important institutions. Keti makes an admirable companion to Gaianus the Christian centurion.

Cédric Brélaz and Angelos Chaniotis examine different aspects of the Greek response to Roman imperial habits on the institutional and social levels. Chaniotis shows that as the imperial capital’s nightlife expanded to include pleasurable and respectable activities ranging from bathing to imperial festivals, new forms of nightlife began to appear in Greek cities as benefactors would now fund evening feasts, festivals and bathing. One of the most remarkable instances of an expanded nightlife was the streetlighting of Antioch, praised by Ammianus Marcellinus (14.1.9). Antioch had been awarded colonial status by Elagabalus, an aspect of the varied history of that status in the Greek east that is analyzed by Brélaz. As Brélaz points out, colonial status has a long and complex history in the Greek east. In Roman terms a *colonia* was a Roman city: its citizens were Roman citizens, the language of government was Latin. Membership in the *colonia* was not extended to all residents, which resulted in dual communities of Romans and non-Romans living side by side. That was the theory, the reality was often rather different. Cities could have Roman communities but not colonial status, and client kings like Herod, who liked imitating Roman institutions, could declare settlements of his own soldiers as *coloniae* even though none of the people involved were Roman citizens (p. 107–109). Moreover, many cities preferred to “preserve their ancient rights or to acquire titles that did not imply the loss of their autonomy as a Greek city” (p. 114). Cities seeking to become *coloniae* were adopting a specific strategy to “position themselves in relation to Roman power” (p. 115). Among other things, they would also be adopting a new calendar and forms of worship, as John Scheid points out in his essay on Roman theologies. The first thing magistrates of a *colonia* would do each year would be to set out when feast days would be held, how many of them there should be and what rites should be publicly celebrated (p. 118–119).

Scheid’s paper joins papers by Margalit Finkelberg, and Ido Israelowich in filling out the section on cultural diversity. Israelowich discusses public support for education. He notes the requirement that cities pay the salaries for grammarians was a Roman imposition, and that most salaried grammarians were people of relatively low status. Their purpose was to support the functionality of government by ensuring citizens attained the necessary level of literacy. They were on a social par with archivists, shorthand writers and accountants. Lollianus’ complaint about non-payment of his salary by Oxyrhynchus (*P.Oxy.* 3366) reflects the inability of salaried professionals to break through the glass ceiling covering the artisanal classes. Central to the curriculum taught by

the grammarian would have been Homer in the east, Virgil in the west. The nature of the school curriculum may be a factor lying behind Finkelberg's observation that, despite some suggestion in the Augustan age that a common heritage of Greeks and Trojans could be celebrated, the dominant story of Troy became Virgil's "idea of the inferiority of Greece before Rome and its imaginary antecedent Troy" (p. 98). Hence the revisionist traditions evident in Dio of Prusa, Dares and Dictys, which "correct" the notion of a Trojan defeat (p. 95–97). It should be noted in this context that the negative presentation of Greek heroes did not wait until the imperial period to be formed, it is already present in Lycophron. Finkelberg's argument provides a useful context for the transformation of that remarkable work into an advanced school text.

Scheid's contribution shows not only how Roman institutions shaped the way humans interacted with the divine, but also how important stories and education were in determining public worship. Concentrating on the northern provinces, he argues that communities chose the Roman gods to whom they would assimilate local divinities because of their knowledge of myths connected with the Roman god. Thus, when the people of Trier elected to celebrate Mars Lenus they were recognizing in Mars the quality that the armed citizenry of the new *colonia* felt they represented. To know all this, people had to be literate—it was literary knowledge which served as the theological operator (p. 132).

Erich Gruen opens the volume's third section with a paper on religious pluralism, arguing that "Romans regarded Jews as practitioners of a religion," Romans did not speak of Jews in terms of bloodlines, origin or descent (p. 184). When the Jewish community was expelled from Rome (as occasionally happened) it was not because of their religious practices, but because the community was linked to a scandal. The typical statement of the Roman state's relationship to Judaism was Claudius' in his letter to the Alexandrians—that Jews should be allowed to follow their own customs and worship their own gods (p. 181). The Roman attitude Gruen explores aligns with methods of assimilating local gods that Scheid discussed.

Did Rome's attitude towards Judaism change in the wake of the great revolt of the first century CE? Alexander Jakobson argues that it did not in a significant way. As he points out, our most important sources for Jewish history and traditions was a Jew, Josephus, employed in Vespasian's palace. While Jews may have resented the imposition of the tax in place of the tithe paid to the temple, and the decision not to allow the temple's rebuilding, the Roman view was that the temple cult was dangerous and that the Roman state had an interest in "neutralizing a certain aspect of the Jewish religion that had proved politically dangerous" (p. 199). Jonathan Price and Youval Rotman explore various ways that Jewish communities defined themselves over time. Rotman distinguishes between inclusive definition that predominated in the Hellenistic period and exclusive definitions that were more characteristic of Rabbinic Judaism. Price's analysis of synagogue communities of the imperial period, with their own internal structures and specific histories reinforces Rotman's picture for the imperial period, drawing attention to a significant difference between Jewish and Greco-Roman methods of defining a community. While Greco-Roman communities might define themselves through a relationship with the mythic past, Jewish communities did not define themselves in terms of a relationship with specific characters from the Bible. Even when the decorative pattern for a synagogue included biblical scenes, those scenes did not presume a local connection. Jewish communities also had their own sense of Roman history. The presentation of Roman emperors in the Talmud is the subject of chapters by Yahal Shahar and Aharon Oppenheimer. There are notable omissions (e.g., no Julio-Claudians before Nero), and the most prominent emperors are those who were primarily active in Palestine. Titus and Hadrian, not surprisingly are true villains. More surprising perhaps is the one good emperor—Antoninus son of

most prominent emperors are those who were primarily active in Palestine. Titus and Hadrian, not surprisingly are true villains. More surprising perhaps is the one good emperor—Antoninus son of Aseverus. This is Caracalla. Finally, as an emperor of middling value, there is Diocletian. The positive aspect of Diocletian appears to have been his persecution of the Christians, the more neutral aspect reflected the fact that he was simply very busy reforming the empire.

The contributions to this volume raise a wide variety of theoretical issues, and provide excellent models for their analysis with which all historians of the Roman world need to engage.

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Katell Berthelot and Jonathan Price (eds.), *In the Crucible of Empire: The Impact of Roman Citizenship upon Greeks, Jews and Christians. Interdisciplinary Studies in Ancient Culture and Religion*, 21. Leuven; Paris: Peeters, 2019. Pp. 337. ISBN 9789042936683.

This volume contains the proceedings of a conference held at the University of Aix-Marseille in September 2014. As the editors explain in the introduction, the purpose is that of understanding the impact of the Roman discourse and practice of citizenship on the way Jews and Christians defined and internally organized their own communities both before and after Caracalla's edict of 212 CE (p. 2). This aim fills a gap in the current research on the impact of Roman citizenship on the provinces, which has recently focused mainly on its impact on the Greeks.¹

The volume is divided in two parts. The first (shorter) part, 'Roman Citizenship in the Graeco-Roman World', discusses the impact of Roman citizenship mainly on the Greeks, with the first chapter dealing also with the extension of Roman citizenship to the Italic communities during the Republic. Myles Lavan provides a useful history of the spreading of Roman citizenship from the fourth century BCE to the third century CE. The author rejects the famous view of Adrian Sherwin-White, that Caracalla's edict was the culmination of a linear and teleological process of enfranchisement.² Further, he warns us about the risk of exaggerating the role of citizenship in defining identity and social status. In his view, grants of Roman citizenship to the local elites were not a straightforward form of distinction or the main way of integrating provincials in the empire enhancing the stability of Roman rule (p. 47). Rather, they were a part of a complex ensemble of social, spatial, cultural and ethnic axes, which defined individuals' identities and their positions in the community.

Anna Heller explores the impact of Roman citizenship on the Greeks in the light of two aspects, namely, the accumulation of local (Greek) citizenships and the 'oligarchisation' of the civic communities since the early imperial period. In agreement with Lavan, she highlights the fact that not all of the local notables sought Roman citizenship as a sign of social status (the most famous example was the Lycian magnate Opramoas of Rhodiapolis, a citizen of several cities in Lycia, but not a *civis Romanus*). She also re-discusses Gauthier's famous distinction between Greek citizenship as a form of political participation and Roman citizenship as a form of integration based on conferral

¹ See now Frija, Gabrielle, ed. (2020), *Être citoyen romain dans le monde grec au IIe siècle de notre ère*, Scripta Antica 139 (Bordeaux).

² Sherwin-White, Adrian, N. (1973), *The Roman Citizenship*, 2nd edition (Oxford).