ROMAN

URBANISM

BEYOND

THE CONSUMER

CITY

Edited by

HELEN M. PARKINS

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Beyond the Consumer City

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Preface

The chapters in this volume are the result of a symposium entitled 'Beyond the Consumer City', held at the University of Leicester in 1993. The original symposium arose from a concern to round up new work, most of it being carried out at doctoral or early post-doctoral level, on new approaches to the Roman city. This coincided with and was partly inspired by ongoing work and publications on the subject. Foremost among these was *Cityand Country in the Ancient World* (Rich and Wallace-Hadrill eds 1991), in which many of the contributors addressed, both implicitly and explicitly, issues raised by Weber's consumer city model. A conference held in London in 1991, now published as *Urban Society in Roman Italy* (Cornell and Lomas eds 1995), took up similar themes. Individual research, too, contributed to bringing the consumer city to the forefront of ancient historians' minds once again, chief among which were combative monographs by Jongman (1988) and Engels (1990) on the consumer and service city respectively. These were offset by more general surveys of the consumer city model (Whittaker 1990; Harris 1993) that reiterated anxieties about and dissatisfaction with its validity. There was, in addition, an already substantial bibliography on the consumer city and the Roman city;[1] in sum, this combination of influences made another conference imperative, but this time one that was concerned expressly to *move beyond* the consumer city, and also to explore other ways of looking at the Roman urban centre that are largely, or wholly, independent of Weber's model.

The present volume comprises substantially revised versions of most of the papers from the conference, together with two others: one by Penelope Allison, who was then working on related issues, and the other by David Mattingly, who kindly offered to write a concluding chapter.

The chapters can be considered as falling into two general categories, reflecting the dual objectives of the original symposium. Starting with Laurence's survey of the historiography of the Roman city, and of the lessons we might draw from it, one group of chapters considers the various and wider implications of Roman urbanism—with the emphasis, broadly speaking, on social and cultural processes—and the organization of urban space (Laurence, Allison (on the micro-level of households), Alston, Marshall), while the others attempt, with more direct reference to the Weberian model, to recontextualize the Roman city in the realms of social, political, and economic relationships (Lomas, Morley, Mouritsen, Parkins). These categories are not, however, exclusive of one another, and some of the chapters could happily fall into either (especially those by Lomas and Morley, both of which link élite behaviour to the process of urbanization and urbanism more generally). It is symptomatic of the inextricable bonds that existed between social, cultural, political, and economic spheres (and, one might note, of arguably the ultimate futility of modern efforts to separate these spheres at all) in the Roman world that such overlap of interests occurs. It should also be noted that a few of the authors have taken the opportunity specifically to review the use and validity of Weber's consumer city model, thus confronting, on the one hand, the problems arising from its previous application to the Roman city and, on the other, the reasons for the increasing dissatisfaction, or even downright weariness, with the model (see also Mattingly, this volume). Rather than extracting these discussions and placing them in what would, in effect, have been a consolidated introduction and overview, it seemed both justifiable and desirable to keep them in their separate chapters—at the possible expense of some apparent repetition. This decision was made on the grounds that not only does each author have something different to say about the model but, more importantly, they use different points of contention from which to lead into their own themes and arguments. To remove these individual reviews of the Weberian model seemed both unhelpful and tantamount to scholarly hijacking; moreover, there is a strong case for seeing these separate accounts as valuable additions to the

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[1] The bibliography on the consumer city and Roman city is far too extensive to list here. See, for example, Whittaker 1990 and 1995 for a selection of the more recent and pertinent bibliographical references.

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evolution of thought on the consumer city. The subject now surely merits its own historiographical study.[2] However, while realizing the need both to acknowledge and account for the prominence of Weber's model in previous explanations of and debates about the Roman city, this volume is not primarily concerned with where we have come from, but with where we can go from here. While diverse in their approaches and specific interests, all the chapters in this book are joined in the attempt not just to produce answers to questions about the Roman city and Roman urbanism, but more importantly, to construct the right kinds of questions and critical methodologies that will allow us to understand our subject better, and to continue to open up further study into this at once familiar, but ever newly-revealing phenomenon.

> I am grateful to all those who took part in the symposium, both to those who agreed to give papers, and to those who did not give papers but contributed to some lively and wide-ranging discussions. Particular thanks are due to Professor Graeme Barker, and to the School of Archaeological Studies for funding the symposium, and to all staff and students of the School who generously gave of their time to help out on the day, especially Lin Foxhall, Mary Harlow, and Janet Bradford. Richard Stoneman's enthusiasm for the project, on behalf of Routledge, greatly encouraged the process of turning the papers into chapters for a published volume. Greg Woolf, John Patterson, and David Mattingly were most helpful in reading all the chapters in their original versions and making many perceptive comments and suggestions. To them, and all the others who have been involved in the preparation of this book, my warmest gratitude.

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[2] This is also hinted at by Morley, Chapter 3, this volume.

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Abbreviations

Abbreviations of names of classical authors and works generally follow the form of *The Oxford Classical Dictionary,* eds N.G.L. Hammond and H.H.Scullard; 2nd edition (Oxford, 1970).

AE	*L'Année Épigraphique*
Aeg	*Aegyptus*
ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*
ASP	American Studies in Papyrology
BASP	*Bulletin of American Society of Papyrologists*
BIFAO	*Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale*
BM	British Museum
CE	*Chronique d'Égypte*
CIG	*Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum*
CIL	*Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum*
FGH	F.Jacoby (1923–58). *Die Fragmente der griechischenHistoriker* (Berlin)
GIBM	*Greek Inscriptions in the British Museum*
HM	Rufinus's *Historia Monachorum*
IFAO	L'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale
IGRR	*Inscriptiones Graecae ad res Romanas pertinentes,* ed. R.Cagnat, *et al*. (Paris, 1911–27)
ILS	*Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae,* ed. H.Dessau (Berlin, 1892–1916)
JARCE	*Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt*
JbAC	*Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum*
JEA	*Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*

JJP	*Journal of Juristic Papyrology*
JRA	*Journal of Roman Archaeology*
JRS	*Journal of Roman Studies*
MAAR	*Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome*
MBAH	*Münsterische Beiträge zur antiken Handelsgeschichte*
NA	Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae (Attic Nights)*
NSc	*Notizie degli Scavi dell'Antichità. Atti dell'Accademiadei Lincei*
PBSR	*Papers of the British School at Rome*
RG	*Res Gestae Divi Augusti*
RIDA	*Revue internationale des droits de l'antiquité*
SEG	*Supplementum epigraphicum Graecum*
ZPE	*Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*

1
Writing the Roman metropolis[1]
Ray Laurence

The city goes soft; it awaits the imprint of an identity. For better or worse, it invites you to remake it, to consolidate it into a shape you can live in. You, too. Decide who you are, and the city will again assume a fixed form round you.

(Raban 1974, 9)

Introduction

The classical city has often been seen as an ideal form of urbanism. The architectural forms have inspired both classical architects and modernists (Laurence 1993). The classical city continues to be viewed as a planned entity, and the appearance of urbanism in north-west Europe is often seen as an index of Romanization. In contrast, the city of Rome is presented as a metropolitan dystopia. The architectural forms of the public buildings at Rome are celebrated. However, when historians and archaeologists turn to the private sphere, they find little to comment upon. There is little archaeological evidence for dom estic housing in Rome. Therefore, authors are dependent upon literary perceptions of life in the metropolis. Much of this literary material has been assimilated,

uncritically, into modern accounts. Indeed, source books continue to present Juvenal's *Satire* 3 without any discussion of how the author represents the city (e.g. Shelton 1988, 63, 64, 69–71). Further, as we shall see, this literary material can be moulded according to our own viewpoint of what the city should be.

My concerns in this chapter are to examine how the city of Rome has been constructed to represent a metropolitan dystopia. This contrasts sharply with the historiography of the Roman city elsewhere, which sets the Roman city up as a utopia to be aimed for in the present (I do not intend to discuss this material here; see Laurence 1994a, b). I will argue that the theme of a metropolitan dystopia at Rome has its origins in the twentieth century, rather than in the ancient source material. It is at its most explicit in Lewis Mumford's *The City in History* (1961) but it can also be traced in the classic works of Yavetz (1958) and Scobie (1986). First, I will examine the modern literature on the city that inspired these authors. There follows a detailed examination of the work of Lewis Mumford, who used the city of Rome as a vehicle for expressing his views on modern planning. Then I shall move on to the work of ancient historians and their efforts to represent an urban dystopia at Rome, and these are as much an ideological construct as Mumford's work was. However, I do not believe ancient historians made a conscious decision to create a dystopia at Rome. Certainly, they did not have a vested interest in doing so. In fact, they hoped to establish an objective framework for viewing life in ancient Rome (Scobie 1986, 399–401). Finally I will discuss the ease with which the metropolis, ancient or modern, can be manipulated to create a dystopian vision of urban life. Therefore, I wish to examine the preconceptions behind our treatment of Roman urbanism to demonstrate an agenda in the history of the Roman city that filters through into other authors.

Metropolitan commentators

The dichotomy between Rome and the other Roman cities is at its strongest amongst English-speaking scholars, whether from Britain, the Americas or the Antipodes. This reflects these authors' common tradition in their approach and experience of cities and city planning. German, French and Italian planning traditions are quite different (compare the different versions of city life at Rome by various European commentators: Friedlander 1907; Paoli 1940;

Carcopino 1941; Grimal 1960; Balsdon 1969; Guillen 1977. Dupont 1993 updates these versions to form a politically correct 1990s' version, which relies only on the literary source material). To understand the construction of Rome's metropolitan dystopia, we need to examine the emergence of planning in Britain during the early decades of the twentieth century.

The nineteenth century had been preoccupied with conditions in the city, following the massive growth of the urban population of Britain. Mayhew, Engels, Hill, Kingsley, Gaskill, Dickens and the Hammonds—all provided commentaries on the subject of adversity in the city. Poverty was highlighted by the early statistical surveys of Booth and others. Following on from Thomas More, a number of authors suggested solutions to the urban situation in Britain. James Silk articulated an ideal urban utopia in *National Evils and Practical Remedies,* published in 1849—an ideal city of 10,000 inhabitants, with eight radial streets named Peace, Concord, Fortitude, Hope, Faith, Charity, Justice and Unity. This concept was replicated north of Bradford in 1850: Thomas Salt established Saltaire, his ideal community of 2,000 people, with a boating park, baths, wash houses, an institute, shops and a church, but no pubs or pawnbrokers. At the centre of this community was his alpaca mill, which replicated the dimensions of St Paul's cathedral (Cherry 1988, 9). Similar communities to that of Saltaire were founded at Bourneville and Port Sunlight. These ideal communities existed in stark contrast to their neighbouring cities of Bradford, Birmingham and Liverpool, with their poverty documented by the statistical surveys. In spite of legislation with reference to the regulation of public health in towns, these towns continued to exhibit unacceptable levels of poverty. Some 16 per cent of the population of London lived in overcrowded conditions, and this figure rose to 30 per cent on Tyneside. Moreover, these overcrowded conditions were blamed for the ill health of the urban population in general. Some 50 per cent of all recruits for the Boer War in Manchester were rejected on the grounds of poor health. Moreover, the urban birth rate was seen to be declining (Cherry 1988, 56–7). Finally, the middle class's moral crusade had failed in the slums of Britain (Searle 1976, 20). These glimpses of urban dystopia challenged those who believed in the progress of man.

In the face of this failure, the city was perceived as a form that was less than perfect and an alternative to the metropolis was sought along the lines of Saltaire. The end of the century saw two

landmarks in the history of planning in Britain. The year 1899 saw not only the publication of Ebenezer Howard's *ToMorrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform,* but also the foundation of the Garden City Association. This association attracted a wide variety of members: from radicals to conservatives, socialists and individualists, artists, lawyers, architects, medics, merchants, ministers, manufacturers, and cooperators. The aim of the association was to remedy the problems of the Victorian city and countryside by presenting an alternative, which combined the best of the city and countryside in a new urban form known as the Garden City (Hardy 1991, 19–20). This ideal form was physically created at Letchworth by Raymond Unwin from 1903 (Miller 1992). Further, the association successfully campaigned for legislation culminating in the passing of the first town planning Act in 1909. This was followed by a celebration of planning at the London Town Planning Conference in 1910. Some 1,200 delegates came from Europe, America, Africa, Australia and New Zealand. On the first day, a session on cities in the past emphasized how the cities of Greece and Rome were geometrically planned entities with relatively small populations. For the delegates, these were ideal formations similar to those they wished to create in the form of the Garden City. Ancient Rome was discussed, but dismissed (Laurence 1994a). As a whole, the conference rejected the over-crowded metropolis in favour of a lower density urbanism: the suburb or the Garden City.

The rejection of the 'overcrowded' metropolis continues to play a role in the discussion of the ancient Roman city. Many of these modern themes, so apparent in the nineteenth century, appear in the literature written on Roman urbanism. The emphasis on overcrowding in the metropolis is a theme pursued by ancient historians in their treatment of Rome. It characterizes urban dystopia and provides the ultimate condemnation of life in the city. The lower density settlements, for example Pompeii or Timgad, are always praised in contrast to Rome's overcrowded conditions so easily identified from the texts of Juvenal or Martial. However, it should be recognized that this emphasis comes from our own planning tradition with its stress on low density suburbs. This partly accounts for the uniqueness of the English-speaking tradition that deals with Rome's metropolitan dystopia. There is little or no writing upon this subject from France, Germany, Italy or Spain. (However the English-speaking examples might be seen to be writing in the tradition of Friedlander 1907, who throughout his four volumes on Roman life

and manners makes cross-cultural comparisons.) In these countries, there is not such an emphasis upon low density suburban development; hence, the metropolitan dystopia literature hardly exists. Moreover, this literature should be seen as a product of modern urban conditions, rather than any form of objective truth gleaned from the study of ancient texts. Therefore, we find this historiographical theme at its most virulent among British, American and New Zealand scholars.

Lewis Mumford's Rome[2]

Lewis Mumford's *The City in History* (1961) became a best seller and in the three years after publication it sold 55,000 copies (Miller 1989, 461). Underlying the book is a belief in Patrick Geddes' evolution of settlement types from the neolithic village to the metropolis. The book also contained the most damning indictment of Roman urban culture ever to have been written (Miller 1989, 469). The appearance of Mumford's book in bibliographies of articles and books upon the Roman city is a tribute to his importance in twentieth-century culture.

Mumford had been closely associated with Patrick Geddes, a key actor in the foundation of town planning in Britain. Geddes was not only a town planner, but also a biologist, a peace campaigner and an educational commentator. In many of these roles he was self-appointed and highly opinionated. For example, he was 'Wandering inspector-critic of Universities' and concluded there were too many 'portly word fog giants' (teachers) and too much 'cram-jaw-exam' (Boardman 1978, 4). In many of his projects he failed, but in town planning he achieved an unrivalled status. His first volume on this subject—*City Development,* published in 1906—was an acclaimed volume detailing how to conduct a city survey: a book should be devoted to the city's history and geography, a second book should be composed of a social survey of the present population and finally a third book should detail the city's hope for the future (Boardman 1978, 200–1). This was to be the format for the 1910 Town Planning Conference with sessions on the past, present and future. His own survey of Edinburgh took pride of place at the exhibition held at the

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[2] Miller 1989 provides a full biography of Lewis Mumford's life and purpose in writing about the city.

Royal Academy alongside the 1910 Conference. This formed the core of his 1911 Cities and Town Planning Exhibition, which was visited by thousands. In recognition of his unique contribution to town planning he was offered a knighthood in 1911, which he characteristically refused. His contribution to town planning added a sociological dimension to the sterile geometric planning of his contemporary architects (Meller 1990, 156). Moreover, he revealed the complexity of town planning and shifted the emphasis away from the beautiful and technologically efficient city to an ideal of the city as a community based upon social justice.

Geddes' influence on Mumford cannot be underestimated. Geddes was the first person to equate the modern metropolis with that of ancient Rome. At the London Town Planning Conference, he stated that the modern metropolis was a 'type of Caesarism' (as reported in the recently founded journal *Sociological Review,* 4 (1911), 54) and this was later drawn out by Mumford, as we shall see. More importantly, Mumford subscribed to Geddes' evolutionary schema for the city, as set out in Geddes' *Cities in Evolution* published in 1915 (Mumford 1940, 294). The earliest form of city in this schema was the Eopolis, which was equated with the neolithic village. This evolved into the *polis* of Greece and Rome. Eventually, there followed the metropolis with its emphasis upon capitalism. This degenerated into megalopolis, which Mumford equated with Rome in the second century AD or Paris in the eighteenth century and New York in the early twentieth century. Potentially, this urban form could turn into tyrannopolis—the city of Mussolini or Hitler. Finally, there was necropolis—the ultimate fate of Rome (ibid., 284). Here we see a form of Darwinian evolution heading for disaster. Mumford also inherited Geddes' preference for biological metaphors, for example:

> The growth of a great city is amoeboid: failing to divide its chromosomes and split up into new cells, the big city continues to grow by breaking through its edges and accepting its sprawl and shapelessness as an inevitable by-product of its physical immensity.
>
> (ibid., 233–4)

In *The Culture of Cities,* Mumford preserves many of the ideals of the early town planners, which were ultimately based upon the arts and craft movement of Morris and Ruskin. He attacks luxury and

advertising. The desire for hot water in the home was seen by Mumford as a potential cause of higher density settlement due to the cost of bathrooms (ibid., 237). Moreover, morally the metropolis was sick, because its size allowed people to ignore the social pressures of a smaller community, which he saw leading to drunkenness and adultery—favourite themes of the nineteenth-century commentators (ibid., 265). Ultimately, for Mumford, the survival of the modern metropolis was dependent upon bread and circuses to negate the evils of daily life (ibid., 268–9). Naturally, the situation of ancient Rome was never far away—a metropolis that had disintegrated after greatness. Rome provided an important example of what could happen in the future. This is summed up by Mumford:

> Imperialism, pretending to conquer the wilderness and civilize the natives of backward areas of the planet, actually helps the wilderness to creep in on civilization. It was so in the Roman era and it is so again today, the Romes have multiplied and the whole surface of the earth is now endangered.
>
> (ibid., 274)

The only solution to avoid this danger was for a more dispersed form of urbanism to develop. The doom of the 1940 edition of *The Culture of Cities* was still present in *The City in History* published in 1961.

Significantly, the chapter on Rome is entitled 'Megalopolis into Necropolis'. Throughout the chapter we find that Mumford's interpretation reflects contemporary planning issues. He was a firm advocate of dispersed urbanism based upon the Garden City concept or the contemporary New Town, such as Harlow. He saw the metropolis, with its greater density of population, as a human travesty when compared to what could be achieved in low density settlements. This contemporary situation is all pervasive throughout Mumford's treatment of the Roman city. For example:

> Does one not detect in the silence of Latin writers with respect to the new towns…something of the fashionable snobbishness one finds in circles in England over the New Towns that now dot the landscape around London? They had rather be found dead in Rome than alive in Turin or Pavia. (Read Harlow or Crawley!)
>
> (Mumford 1961, 210)

Mumford drew a distinction between the new towns founded by Rome and the metropolis of Rome itself. Simply put, the new towns were Mumford's utopian vision, whereas Rome was a dystopian megalopolis. As he eloquently portrays Rome: 'a veritable cesspool of human debasement and iniquity' (Mumford 1961, 208). Moreover, he notes that there is a didactic lesson to be learnt from Roman urbanism, the metropolis such as ancient Rome is to be avoided at all costs (ibid., 244). In contrast, his attitude to the development of urbanism upon green-field sites mirrors many of Haverfield's attitudes (Haverfield 1913). For him, Rome 'universalized' the town throughout the empire. He sees the process of imperial conquest and cultural reproduction graphically: 'Rome was the great sausage grinder that turned other cultures, in all their variety, form and content, into its own uniform links' (Mumford 1961, 208). Drawing a parallel with the New Towns policy in contemporary England, Mumford suggested that there was a conscious policy of town foundation: 'certainly even if we lack the written evidence of it, there must have been forethought and conscious policy behind the founding of these new towns' (ibid., 209).

It was when this 'policy' of dispersed urbanism ceased in AD 68 (the date of Rome's last colony), that Rome reached 'the upper limits of congestion and disorganisation' (ibid., 209) according to Mumford. The modern policy of dispersed urbanism is praised obliquely:

> Rome never had the imagination to apply the principles of limitation, restraint, orderly arrangement, and balance to its urban and imperial existence; it failed dismally to lay the foundations for the stable economy and the equitable political system, with every group effectively represented, that would have made a better life for the great city possible.
>
> (ibid., 210)

Indeed, he suggests that congestion in Rome increased on the basis for the need to ban wheeled traffic during the day by Julius Caesar, and the limitation of the number of carts in the city by Hadrian (ibid., 218–19). From this, he concludes that the increase had been catastrophic by the second century. In doing this, he makes reference

to the modern planning concept that there should be a suitable balance between streets and buildings, and suggests that in Rome the proportion of buildings was maximized, creating congestion and overcrowding. Later, he uses this evidence to criticize the modern planner widening roads and adding new traffic arteries, because the amount of traffic would expand to fill the road space available.

Mumford recognizes that in ancient Rome a very sophisticated level of technology was achieved. However, the absence of social planning condemned the population of Rome to poor services which were only sporadically available. Moreover, the size of Rome made the provision of services impossible to all on an equal basis. For Mumford, Rome was the brutal urban landscape of Juvenal's satires with toppling apartment blocks, parasites, insomnia, luxury and sensationalism.

The relationship between ancient Rome and the modern metropolis is defined. The baths are compared to the modern American shopping centres, 'an ideal environment for lollers, spongers, voyeurs, exhibitionists—body coodlers all' (ibid., 226). The games are compared with modern entertainments. Compare:

> Roman life centered more and more on the imposing rituals of extermination… Sensations need constant whipping as people become inured to them: so the whole effort reached a pinnacle in the gladiatorial spectacles, where the agents of this regime applied a diabolic inventiveness to human torture and human extermination.
>
> (ibid., 229)

and

> The inhabitants of modern metropolises are not psychologically too remote from Rome to be unable to appreciate this new form. We have our equivalent in the daily doses of sadism…the newspaper accounts, the radio reports, the television programs, the novels, the dramas, all devoted to portraying as graphically as possible every variety of violence, perversion, bestiality, criminal delinquency and nihilistic despair.
>
> (ibid., 230)

Mumford deliberately draws comparison between the ancient and modern to demonstrate that the modern world is on the brink of destruction. He concludes the chapter:

> Rome remains a significant lesson of what to avoid: its history presents a series of classic danger signals to warn one when life is moving in the wrong direction. Wherever crowds gather in suffocating numbers, wherever rents rise steeply and housing conditions deteriorate, wherever a one-sided exploitation of distant territories removes the pressure to achieve balance and harmony nearer at hand, there the precedents of Roman building almost automatically revive, as they have come back today: the arena, the tall tenement, the mass contests and exhibitions, the football matches, the international beauty contests, the striptease made ubiquitous by advertisement, the constant titillation of the senses by sex, liquor and violence—all true Roman style.
>
> (ibid., 242)

In many ways, Mumford is a modern Juvenal screaming for a return to the values of the arts and craft movement. He wishes to see the return of a lost morality of a former age before the metropolis existed, just as Juvenal or Umbricius idealized a Rome without its terrors and Greeks. Mumford combines the evils of the ancient and modern metropolis in his account of Rome. They are fused together to provide an ideal type of dystopia to be avoided at all costs. His purpose is to argue for the dispersed urbanism of the New Towns, such as Harlow. These he sees as a civilized alternative to the oversized metropolis. Hence, the cities of the Roman empire and the colonial foundations are idealized.

Ancient history's metropolitan dystopia

Ancient historians have attempted to reconstruct life in the Roman metropolis. Many accounts use the literary sources to create a handbook featuring aspects ranging from housing, social classes, women and the family, education, religion, occupations, shows and spectacles through to beards and hairstyles. This genre is international, with classic works in French, Italian, German, Spanish, and English (Friedlander 1907; Paoli 1940; Carcopino 1941; Grimal 1960; Balsdon 1969; Guillen 1977). Such an approach has been

transformed by Robinson's *Ancient Rome:City Planning and Administration* (1992) with a greater emphasis on legal sources and administration. A recent approach to Rome, following the daily life theme is Dupont's 1990s' 'politically correct' version (Dupont 1993). This alters the categories of the chapters but, ultimately, depends upon literature for its source material. All of these approaches are particularistic and seldom locate their subject chronologically. They provide at best encylopaedic information for reading texts, rather than history.

A different approach is presented by those wishing to survey life in ancient Rome. This genre is very similar to the city surveys of the late nineteenth century. These authors wish to examine what life was like in ancient Rome (Yavetz 1958; Brunt 1966, 1980; Scobie 1986 are the classics of this genre). Unlike the writers of the 'daily life in Rome' theme, these authors wish to build an overview of life in the city of Rome. I will not examine all of these accounts, but I will concentrate on Scobie's approach. This is the most recent and can be seen as the culmination of an approach begun by Yavetz in 1958.

Scobie provides by far the most all-embracing account of life in the Roman city, with particular reference to housing conditions and sanitation. His intention is 'to estimate, as accurately as available evidence permits, how sanitary or insanitary Roman towns were' (Scobie 1986, 399). His approach is rigorous. He defines slum housing with reference to Townsend's survey of poverty (1979) in the UK. This provides a reference point from which to measure the living conditions in the Roman world. He is conscious that in doing this he might create 'a negative aspect to Roman achievement' and that 'negative inferences will sometimes inevitably occur' (Scobie 1986, 400). From the outset Scobie is not comparing like with like. He takes a modern Western standard and compares this with Rome's pre-industrial cities. Often the Roman conditions are elucidated with reference to situations in developing countries and are seen to be similar (ibid., 410, 428, 432).

Scobie is conscious of the limited nature of the ancient evidence. He attempts to find further evidence for the anxieties of urban living outside Juvenal, whom he is wary of using. Such caution does not extend to other texts used by Scobie. His approach to the evidence is positivistic. If there is a source, however anecdotal, that creates a negative impression of sanitary conditions at Rome, then he will use it. This is at its most apparent in his discussion of the existence of corpses in the streets:

Suetonius (*Vesp*. 5. 4) records that while Vespasian was lunching a dog from the street brought a human hand into the dining room and deposited it below the table… In one of Phaedrus' fables (1. 27) a dog is moralized by a vulture for digging up human bones… In a poem about the hardships of a beggar's life Martial (10. 5. 11 ff.) depicts a derelict man in his dying moments listening to dogs howling in anticipation of eating his corpse.

(ibid., 418–19)[3]

From this evidence, Scobie states that such a situation was probably a commonplace event in the capital. The evidence at best is anecdotal and at worst fictional. The ancient historian's approach to such material is to cite the ancient evidence and then draw conclusions from it (Hopkins 1978). Therefore, if there is any evidence concerning the mutilation of corpses by dogs, it must have taken place. In this case, Scobie chooses to highlight these cases as normality, even though he previously discussed the meticulousness with which the Romans disposed of their dead outside of the city (Scobie 1986, 409). This is inevitable, given that his methodology is to measure whether Roman sanitary conditions came up to the standards of Townsend's ideal.[4] Positive evidence for sanitary excellence is dismissed, particularly in cases of conflicting evidence. Vitruvius' assertion (2. 8. 17) that the inhabitants of *insulae* were comfortably housed is dismissed, because this statement is seen as 'a reflection surely of the architect's will to flatter Augustus rather than a statement of his personal views of residential tower blocks at Rome' (ibid., 406).

The problem of using archaeological evidence from other cities is addressed. The Ostian brick-faced concrete *insulae* do not conform to our perception of slums (e.g. in Roberts 1971). In spite of archaeological evidence from Rome of a similar type (Packer 1968/1969), Scobie suggests that 'conclusions about housing at Ostia should not be uncritically applied to Rome' (Scobie 1986, 407; compare Whittaker 1993, 282–3). Instead, he falls back on the literary sources:

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[3] Whittaker 1993, 282 also accepts Suetonius' account.

[4] Whittaker 1993, 275–6, discusses at length the construction of poverty in the modern world.

the persistence of an unfavourable literary tradition about Roman insulae from Cicero to the end of the empire, strongly suggests that jerry-built multiple dwellings were the norm at Rome, even though they appear to have been the exception at Ostia.

(Scobie 1986, 407)[5]

Maybe we too easily see the Ostian *insulae* as sturdy remains built to last, which in reality may have been overcrowded and correspond to our conception of the classic slum. After all, our knowledge of the conditions of habitation in these structures is at the best limited (Packer 1971). Certainly, Rome was a larger and more congested city, but it does not necessarily follow that housing conditions should be so different from those of Ostia, where the pressure upon space created the need for taller buildings and the optimization of space. In any case, the Casa Giulio Romano in Rome (an *insula* of the Ostian type) is seen as overcrowded on its top floors (Scobie 1986, 427); why should similar *insulae* in Ostia be so different from this example? Perhaps, the modern mind has been trained to see slums in Rome, a metropolis, and these become invisible in settlements with a smaller population and area.

When Scobie discusses sanitation and the disposal of human waste, the Western standard established by Townsend is revealed as inappropriate in its application to a pre-industrial context. Scobie rigorously pursues the malpractice of moving human waste out of the city in line with the standards of Townsend's survey. This misses the point. Rome utilized this human waste as a fertilizer, as Scobie critically admits.[6]

Scobie's discussion of water-supply and overcrowding is reminiscent of the nineteenth-century treatises on the problems of the city, for example Edwin Chadwick's pioneering 1842 sanitary report cited by Scobie (1986, 417). In fact, he is writing a sanitary report on the city of Rome. Like Chadwick, he takes a standard that had never existed and looks for abuses of that standard. That standard, defined by Townsend, has been built up over more than a century of similar surveys in the UK, most of which found the urban environment to be substandard in some way. These standards need

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[5] See Whittaker 1993 on the construction of the genre of urban decay from Cicero to late antiquity by the élite.

not have occurred to the inhabitants of Rome, whose enviromental perception was not constructed in the same way (see Whittaker 1993 on the construction of the urban genre in Latin literature). Certainly the concept of a statistical survey is inconceivable then or now, the data we are looking for in ancient Rome simply did not exist. What we see in the modern writing on the Roman metropolis is a desire to explain and tabulate the ancient sources in the form of a modern urban survey. Such a desire is doomed to failure, because the city is malleable and no literary account can account for a city's labyrinthine complexity.

Soft city

In this section, I wish to return to the subject of representation and, in particular, Juvenal's *Satire* 3. As we have seen, this text has been instrumental in the construction of a metropolitan dystopia in ancient Rome. The text is pulled apart and decontextualized by authors in order to support an argument. In doing so, few authors have considered the text as a whole. *Satire* 3 belongs to a genre about the city, which has no plot. Instead, the author presents a series of images, which form a montage; there is little or no dialogue with other actors. *Satire* 3 follows a similar structure to Jonathan Raban's *Soft City.* This novel, published in 1974, self-consciously presents a very personal view of the city. It has been seen as a prescient text, which Harvey sees as 'a vital affirmation that the postmodernist moment has arrived' (1990, 6). Raban emphasizes that the city is moulded to our personal expectations and imagination. Fundamentally the city is soft, and it is both threatening and liberating. Anonymity promotes freedom for the individual, but equally this aspect can traumatize a person (Raban 1974, 15). Throughout the book, Raban is preoccupied by the dystopia of Le Corbusier's modernism and the threat of violence. The murder of a man outside the ICA by two anonymous assailants in 1972 forms a watershed for Raban (ibid., 10–11). This is further backed up by

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[6] In many ways, this is a more appropriate disposal method in a pre-industrial context than the flush toilet and sewage works, which would have wasted water. The use of human waste in market gardening close to Rome may have caused this to have been one of the most fertile and productive agricultural areas, as a consequence of the city of Rome producing 40,000–50,000 kg of body waste per day.

rumours of a gang known as the Envies, who attack the well-dressed unprovoked.[7]

Raban's self-conscious explanation of the city and his writing about it can begin to inform us about Juvenal's text. He stresses that 'The city as we imagine it, the soft city of illusion, myth, aspiration, nightmare, is as real, maybe more real than the hard city one located on maps and in statistics' (ibid., 10). This is key to an understanding of *Satire* 3. We are presented with a soft city and not hard statistics. In this context, it appears futile to utilize Juvenal's city of the imagination to reconstruct data, which forms part of a meta-narrative about living conditions in the city of Rome. Juvenal's dystopian vision of Rome in *Satire* 3 should not be seen as unique or, necessarily, historically specific because as Raban points out:

> The city has always been an embodiment of hope and a source of festering guilt, a dream pursued and found vain, wanting, and destructive. Our current mood of revulsion against cities is not new; we have grown used to looking for Utopia only to discover that we have created Hell.
>
> (ibid., 17)

Similarly in Rome, the city was expected to represent Utopia but, in spite of the emperor's emphasis on bread and circuses, there was still room for a dystopian vision of the city. Therefore for Juvenal's dystopia, there was also a utopia that liberated people by its size and the consequent anonymity.

To turn to the text of Juvenal's *Satire* 3. Braund (1989) has demonstrated that this text cannot be viewed as straightforward evidence of life in the city of Rome. She emphasizes that the satire embodies the moral values of Roman society. This set of values stresses an antithesis between city and country; the city is seen as

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[7] This background coincides with Juvenal's situation. He wrote in a period that had become disillusioned during Domitian's rule. Some would argue that *Satire* 3 was set retrospectively in the Rome of Domitian (Braund 1989, 38–9). Significantly, there had been a craze for stabbing people at random with poisoned needles (Dio. 67. 11. 6). Moreover, Domitian took the power of images to the point where it became ridiculous (Wallace-Hadrill 1990). The similarity in situation is striking, but we should also note that there are many situational differences.

dangerous, hot, and unpleasant, with an emphasis on *officia* and *luxuria,* whereas the country is safe, cool, pleasant, and a place of simplicity and physical exertion (ibid., 28). Moreover, she shows that the images in *Satire* 3 are exaggerated and compressed in a rhetorical form that stresses the differentiation between rich and poor (ibid., 26–34). For Braund *Satire* 3 provides evidence of attitudes and not facts (ibid., 39). However, what is presented is only one set of attitudes: the city as dystopia. There was another side to the city, which is excluded—the city as utopia. Such a view was present in Roman rhetorical exercises about whether the city or countryside was preferable (Quintilian, *Institutes,* 2. 4. 24). This fact should not be ignored, we have only one set of attitudes in *Satire* 3, which coincides with many of Raban's more pessimistic statements about the city.

Raban emphasizes the ability of metropolitan inhabitants to shrink from contact with strangers (1974, 12). Moreover, the person in the metropolis characterizes and labels those people they meet. This labelling emphasizes a single characteristic (e.g. ethnicity), thus simplifying an individual's complex history to a single synecdochal role (ibid., 31). Equally, individuals take on abstract roles and identities at will. According to Raban, this causes life in the city to become a formal drama.

> The city itself becomes an allegorical background, painted with symbols of the very good and the very evil. The characters who strut before it similarly take on exaggerated colourings. Isolated from their personal histories, glaringly illuminated by the concentrated light of a single defining concern.
>
> (ibid., 34)

Nowhere is this more true than in Juvenal's *Satire* 3. A series of scenes appear and disappear through the text, the preference of Greeks over native Romans provides the prevalent theme to line 232; there follows a series of scenes: the inability to sleep in the city (232–8); congestion in the city (239–67); violence at the hands of a drunken psychopath (268–301), and, finally, the level of crime in the city provides the closing theme (302–14). All are familiar concerns for those living in the city. Moreover, in his treatment of Greeks, we find Juvenal accentuating their abilities to conform to the expectations of others. He suggests that they bring roles with them:

the *grammaticus,* the *rhetor,* the *geometres,* the *pictor,* the *aliptes,* the *augur,* the *medicus* or the *magus* (76–7). In short, the Greek was the expert at changing his character according to circumstances. The audience would quickly see the irony here: Plato, a Greek, had stressed that the lowest man was one who took on any role (Plato, *Republic* 3. 396–8). A text noted by Raban in his discussion of the presentation of the self in the city (Raban 1974, 37). However, whatever their role, for Juvenal a Greek's defining characteristic was his ethnicity (58–125) (see Rudd 1986, 184–92). In contrast, for Juvenal, the Roman poor were always identified by their scruffy appearance (147–53). This illustrates how an individual's presentation of herself or himself provided information to characterize that person in an urban context, without looking deeper into that person's character or life history. Obviously, this provides neither evidence for life in the city, nor evidence about Roman moral attitudes. What we see in Juvenal's *Satire* 3 is a representation of the city, which is illusory, imaginary and, yet, is real. It coincides with our modern conception and categorization of the city. This in itself causes many modern readers to view the images in *Satire* 3 as evidence of what actually happened. However, like all representations of the city it is partial and selects certain detail to comment upon. For Juvenal's dystopia, there was a utopian vision of ancient Rome. The difference between Juvenal's and Raban's discourse on the city lies in Raban's admission that both dystopia and utopia exist within the metropolis.

Conclusions

What can we conclude from this investigation into the historiography of the city? Any conception of the city is based upon a limited amount of knowledge from literary and archaeological sources. Such sources are not capable of telling us what it was like to live in the city; necessarily an interpretative framework forms part of any description or analysis of the ancient city. In the case of Lewis Mumford, he writes about the city of Rome in the framework of planning principles drawn from contemporary America and Europe. At the same time, he sees the decline of Rome as a predictive model of what will happen to the present metropolis. In contrast, Alex Scobie's writing utilizes a modern survey of poverty in the UK as a standard against which to measure the level of

sanitary provision in ancient Rome. Naturally, ancient Rome fell below the modern standard.

Further, we might conclude from the writing of Raban in *SoftCity* that we cannot only characterize a city as a place of adversity. A city can liberate a person by its anonymity and opportunity, yet at the same time the seemingly ever present threat of violence in the city can oppress a person. Urban living, whether ancient or modern, is full of contradictions. To indulge in any exercise that asserts that life in ancient Rome was 'good' or 'bad' is to pursue a rhetorical exercise familiar to the ancients.

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2
The idea of a city: élite ideology and the evolution of urban form in Italy, 200 BC–AD 100

Kathryn Lomas

An understanding of urbanization is central to understanding mechanisms of Roman rule in Italy, and the processes of acculturation. It is also crucial to our understanding of the operation of Roman society, and in particular élite society. Given this degree of importance, it is clearly an area which requires serious investigation. However, the most influential theorists of the pre-modern city—Sombart, Weber, and most recently, Finley—have perhaps, in some senses, constricted rather than enhanced the scope of the debate. The continuing emphasis on the Weberian ideal types of consumer and producer cities, however valid these may be for understanding ancient economics, has had the effect of restricting the debate on the nature of the ancient city very largely to the sphere of economic history.[1] However valid the consumer city model may be for ancient economic behaviour, cities were not, then as now, purely economic constructs. They were just as much the arena for social and political interaction as for economic exchange, if not more so. Paradoxically, this point was stressed by Weber himself in his earlier works, but is much less prominent in his later (and better-known) work *The City* (Weber 1909; 1921; Capogrossi 1995). More recently, interest has been divided between attempts to refine or replace the consumer city model and exploration of other avenues of research with a greater emphasis on the social structure of the city and how it operated. The aim of this chapter is to examine the physical form of the Italian city, as it evolved in the first century BC and first century AD—what public buildings were being constructed, who was undertaking the construction, and why—and to suggest some ways in which this

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[1] For a comprehensive discussion of the consumer city model and the various alternatives, see Whittaker 1990; 1995.

can throw light on how the Italians thought about cities, about their social dynamics, and about the role of the city as a vehicle for acculturation and Roman unification of the peninsula. Few cities have been preserved in a state which allows detailed study—Pompeii, Herculaneum, Ostia, and to a lesser extent, Paestum, are very much the exceptions rather than the rule. Nevertheless, examination of urban development can give some clue as to how élite perceptions of a city changed. This may, in turn, suggest something about changing social and political conditions within cities, and about relations between Italian municipalities and Rome.

Ancient views on cities and urbanism are not entirely clear, but we can deduce a certain amount from comments by Greek and Roman authors. These are, perhaps, less helpful for the study of Italian urbanism than for the study of the Greek *polis* since most of them were made by Greek writers, but since many of them date from the period of Roman domination in the east, they may also reflect the views of the élite throughout the empire. However, caution must be exercised in approaching this material. The extent to which sources concerning Greek *poleis* in the Roman empire are distorted by unflattering and inaccurate *topoi* is notorious (Alcock 1993, 24–32).

By the end of the first century AD, two views dominate. One is that the city is both the symbol and definition of civilization (Strab. 4. 1. 5; Tac. *Agr*. 21; *Germ*. 16). Barbarians live in villages or isolated farms, or pursue a nomadic transhumant way of life; civilized people practise settled farming and live in cities. The act of settling into a farming, rather than pastoral, community and of founding a city marks the arrival of civilization, and conversely, a transition from farming to pastoralism is indicative of a moral collapse. The conflation of urbanization with acceptance of Roman rule is underscored by Tacitus' comment that the anti-Roman factions amongst the Germans regarded urban life as a symbol of slavery (Tac. *Hist*. 4. 64). In part, this is a reflection of the well-documented cultural division between rusticity—the uncouth, boorish ways of the yokel—and *urbanitas*—the more sophisticated values of the city. It did not always have much to do with where one lived, as demonstrated by the development of an 'urbane', sophisticated élite culture based on the villa—an honorary part of the city which just happened to be located in the countryside (Purcell 1985; 1995). Nevertheless, it reflects a very strong bias in

favour of cities among the Roman and municipal élites, and probably a strong pressure towards urbanization.

There is also a perceptible chronological change from a definition of the essence of a city in terms of the strengths, weaknesses and outlook of its citizens, towards one which placed greater emphasis on its physical attributes and amenities. As early as the sixth century BC, a *polis* was defined primarily in terms of its citizens, although the most striking enunciation of this is given by Thucydides in Pericles' funeral oration.[2] By the Roman period, however, there is a noticeable change of emphasis. Symptomatic of this is Vitruvius' work *De Architectura,* a central purpose of which is to enumerate the necessary buildings for an ideal Augustan city. Dio Chrysostom (31. 159–60) and Aelius Aristides (14. 93–6) both place emphasis on the structures of a city, or lack of them, as an indicator of its status, but the clearest representation of this view is given by Pausanias. In his description of Panopeus, a small town in Phocis (10. 4. 1), he pours large measures of scorn on its claims to be a city, saying that since cities, by definition, had an agora, a fountain house, a proper water supply, and various other amenities, Panopeus, which did not have these, should only be called a mere village. Nevertheless, he is forced to admit that as an independent member of the Phocian League Panopeus did indeed have the status of a *polis,* despite the lack of what were in his view essential amenities.

Clearly, a change had taken place in the ways in which the Graeco-Roman élite viewed cities and how they operated—a change which was almost certainly connected with the changing role of the *polis* in a world dominated by Rome, and the constriction of the actions of formerly autonomous states. However, this is by no means a simple shift of emphasis, and there are further tensions in our sources, particularly those written by Greeks. The emphasis on the importance of a flourishing urban population is still present in a somewhat inverted form in the *topos* of *oliganthropia* (Gallo 1980, 1233–70; Alcock 1993, 24–32). This makes an equation between paucity of urban population, decrepitude of physical structures and moral and political decadence. It is a theme particularly prominent in the Greek writers of the early empire as they sought to come to terms with the role of the Greek *poleis* in a world dominated by

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[2] Alcaeus fr. 28; Homer, *Od*. 9. 105–15; Hdt. 8. 61; Thuc. 1. 2, 7. 77; Plato, *Laws,* 778 a–779 d; Arist. *Pol*. 1330 b–1331 b.

Rome, and one which bears little resemblance to the actual population levels and economic health of the cities described as suffering from it, as reconstructed from archaeological and epigraphic sources (Alcock 1989, 5–34; 1993, 24–32). In Italian terms, it is less prominent, although the concern for population levels in Italy expressed by Augustus and later, by Trajan, may reflect a similar vein of thought,[3] and the *oliganthropia topos* is used by a number of writers, both Greek and Roman, in connection with Magna Graecia (Lomas 1993a, 13–17; forthcoming). As Alcock points out, however, *oliganthropia* is most notably the concern of members of the Romanized Greek élite writing under Roman rule, and their preoccupation with the physical structures of urban life, or the lack of them, must be read against the comparative lack of urban amenities and monumental public buildings in the *polis* of the fifth century. Clearly a change in perceptions of the city and expectations concerning urban life were taking place during the late Republic and early empire. It may in part be due to the absorption of a more Italian view of urban life, with a stronger emphasis on monumental building and urban structures, by the Greek élite, but it may also reflect the changing role of both Greek and Italian élites and their relation both to their home cities and to the emperor.

Whatever the underlying cause, the change in the idea of a city, as viewed by the élite, had a profound effect on the way in which cities developed. Recent research on urban space has emphasized just how far the evolution of the city is determined by the world view of its inhabitants, particularly those in a position of power, and also the extent to which the physical form of the city shapes social behaviour and interactions.[4] The problem we face is how to trace this change, and its effects, using an incomplete set of archaeological and epigraphic data.

Modern literature on ancient building and urban development has, until relatively recently, been fragmented by subject boundaries. Traditionally, classical archaeologists have tended to focus on the details of building techniques, decorative motifs, etc., sometimes at the expense of the social and political contexts of building programmes, while historians have tended to use examples of building activity as evidence for interpretations of social, economic or political trends, but have not, until recently, attempted to get to

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[3] Suet. *Aug*. 46, 89. 2; Dio 54. 16. 3–7; Epit. *de Caes*. 12. 4; *CIL* xi. 1147.

grips with the idea of changes in urban space as a means of studying socio-political change. More recently, there have been attempts to adopt a more integrated approach. The ground-breaking study by Pierre Gros explains the architectural and urban development of Campania principally in terms of cultural and economic contact with the Greek world (Gros 1978), but the work of Gabba emphasizes the relation between urbanization and its wider social context, relating the changes in the urban environment of the first century BC directly to the process of municipalization following the social war (Gabba 1971).

This integrated approach links changes in urban form and the number, type and form of public buildings to the shift away from indigenous, non-urban forms of organization towards the Romanized city and posits a combination of Roman influence, and to some extent legal imposition, and a change in socio-political structures at local level which together engendered a profound shift in the idea of what a city was and how it should operate. This approach has become widely accepted and has given rise to some very fruitful avenues of research but has yet to provide a definitive answer to the question of how the Italian city worked and what shaped its development. This chapter does not set out to do anything so ambitious, but may provide some avenues for exploration.

The definitive collection of data on public building compiled by Hélène Jouffroy (1986) provides a starting-point, revealing the basic chronological and geographical patterns in public building and the euergetism which generated it. In using this, I have retained Jouffroy's division of public buildings into the following categories: religious buildings; fortifications; major public works (i.e. roads, aqueducts, cisterns, harbours); civic buildings (*curiae,* basilicas, *macella* and baths); triumphal monuments; and buildings for public entertainment (theatres, amphitheatres and circuses). Dating is as given by Jouffroy, and uses broad chronological categories as precise dating of structures is often difficult. However, these correspond with the major periods of urban change, and so can reveal interesting patterns. Data are derived from a mixture of epigraphic and archaeological sources, with some corroborating literary evidence, and are broadly categorized according to the

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[4] Laurence 1994, 1–19. For a more theoretical discussion of urban space, see Lefebvre 1991, Duncan and Ley 1993.

Augustan *regiones* of Italy, although Regio I has been subdivided into separate sections for Latium and Campania.

Public buildings of Republican date show a distinctive pattern (Table 2.1). There is a substantial number of fortifications, either as new structures or embellishments of existing ones. Density is highest in Latium (fifteen examples), followed by Etruria and Campania (seven each), Lucania (five), Picenum (seven), Umbria and Samnium (six each) and Apulia (five). There are a further sixteen examples in Cisalpine Gaul. Many of these are reconstructions or elaboration of existing systems, involving addition of turrets, additional courses of stonework, or monumental gateways, mostly undertaken by civic magistrates as *summae honorariae,* although there are some examples paid for by private patrons. Temples, sanctuaries and religious buildings are also numerous, again with the highest concentrations in Latium, followed by Campania, Samnium, Etruria and Southern Italy, but with none from Picenum, Umbria or Northern Italy. A large number of these date from the Sullan or triumviral periods and a considerable proportion of the figures represent addition of new buildings to existing major sanctuaries, or the construction of *capitolia* in newly-founded colonies. A considerable proportion are also built as a result of Roman intervention, in some cases by individual grandees, but in many as a result of direct intervention by the censors or other magistrates. In 170 BC, for instance, the sanctuary of Aesculapius at Antium was embellished by one of the praetors for that year, and in 174 BC the censors supervised the building of new temples at Fundi and Pisaurum (Livy 41. 28. 11–12). Large-scale public works such as road-building, harbours and water-supplies were almost entirely concentrated in Latium and Campania and were under close Roman control, being mainly handled by the censors. Civic buildings—baths, basilicas, *curiae* and *macella*—are relatively few in number and have an irregular distribution. Baths are almost exclusive to Campania, although there are a number of examples in Latium, and are mostly built by magistrates either as *summae honorariae* or out of civic funds. There are seventeen examples of basilicas with a fairly even geographical distribution, but few firmly identified *curiae,* most belonging to colonies (Paestum, Cosa and Alba Fucens), with a possible, but less securely identified, example at Pompeii. *Macella* show a rather more complex pattern. There are ten securely identified examples, mostly dating from the late second century or to the Sullan period and mostly clustered in Latium or

Campania, but with examples in such far-flung places as Aquileia, Firmum Picenum, Volsinii and Brundisium. Theatres and amphitheatres are also rather thin on the ground and heavily weighted in distribution towards Campania and, to a lesser extent, Samnium, with very few in Latium. These figures, however, are for stone buildings, but there is a considerable body of evidence that temporary wooden structures, erected only for specific occasions and then dismantled, were widely used for housing games and theatrical performances.

All the evidence so far indicates a high level of public building in central Italy, with a concentration in Latium and Campania, but relatively little in Southern Italy and Etruria or Umbria. Some building activity was clearly related to the Roman conquest, notably in northern Italy, where it is connected with the extensive programme of colonization, mostly involving creation of new cities, which took place in the second century, in the aftermath of the conquest of the region. However, patterns of conquest and colonization are not by any means the whole story behind patterns of public building. The only category for which a simple answer can be posited is that of large-scale road, water or harbour works. These are almost invariably the province of Roman magistrates, usually the censors. Usually they formed part of the creation of a superstructure for control of Italy, and for communications and supply of the city of Rome, which was of interest primarily to Rome and which was geared to the needs of Rome, not those of Italy. Apart from these categories, most public   building for which the source of finance can be identified was paid for by magistrates as *summae honorariae,* or from the municipal treasury. There are relatively few examples of voluntary élite euergetism before 90 BC, although there are an increasing number in the post-Sullan period.

In contrast to this, the Augustan period and the first century AD (Table 2.2) were the high point of public building paid for by private wealth, with a significant fall in *summae honorariae* and buildings paid for by the municipality. Imperial patronage is also notable by its scarcity, and is concentrated mainly on buildings in Rome, and on the major public construction programmes of roads, harbours and water supply, many of them intended to benefit Rome rather than the Italian municipalities (Millar 1986; Patterson forthcoming). It was also the period in which many cities in Italy acquired a 'standard' set of amenities—theatre, amphitheatre, baths, forum, civic buildings —a vision of city as presented by Vitruvius in *De Architectura.*

Table 2.1 Public building in Italy 200–30 BC

	Walls	Public works	Temples	Arches	Baths	Basilicae	Curiae	Economic building	Theatres	Amphitheatres
Reg. I	15 7	14 8	47 18	0 0	3 6	5 2	2 2	4 2	2 7	0 5
Reg. II	7	4	4	0	3	1	1	2	1	0
Reg. III	5	3	8	0	2	1	1	0	1	1
Reg. IV	6	6	14	0	0	4	1	1	7	1
Reg. V	6	4	5	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Reg. VI	7	4	2	0	1	0	0	0	3	0
Reg. VII	9	4	10	0	3	2	2	1	5	1
Reg. VIII	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Reg. IX	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Reg. X	7	3	4	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Reg. XI	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Emphasis on walls and fortifications decreases, except in the less urbanized regions in northern Italy; large-scale public works are also limited, apart from in Latium and *regiones* VIII–X; the number of baths rises, with an emphasis on central and northern Italy, in contrast to the Republican bath building which had been concentrated in Campania. The figures for temple building as presented in this form show an increase in activity in the Augustan period, but the picture is not actually as simple as this. The figures show the number of cities at which building work on temples and sanctuaries took place, not the number of actual constructions. In fact, there was a vast amount of religious building in the second and first centuries BC, often with each city building a number of temples or undertaking several phases of redevelopment on a particular temple or sanctuary. Augustan and Julio-Claudian building took place on a large number of sites but without the same intensity of activity. It was also more specific, oriented towards urban constructions rather than the great extra-urban sanctuaries of central and southern Italy. In fact, the range of cults represented by these figures is very small, and the vast majority of first-century temple-building involves repairs to war damage and construction of *Capitolia* and temples of the imperial cult and the cult of Roma (Jouffroy 1986). In other words, there was a high degree of emphasis on the physical manifestations   of Romanization and imperial loyalty. Curiously, the number of basilicas and *curiae* being built declined in the post-civil war period, and the numbers of economic buildings (principally *macella* and *horreae*) remained fairly low, with a heavy bias towards Regio I.

Where we see a very marked increase in activity is in the category which Jouffroy terms 'edifices du spectacle'—principally theatres and amphitheatres. The other area in which this period sees a large amount of building activity, and one which Jouffroy does not quantify, is that of forum construction. While most cities had an area which was used as a forum, there seems to be two periods at which an attempt was made to systematize and enclose this area, namely the Sullan and Augustan periods, with a third phase of Trajanic or Antonine date in some cities. Typically, this would entail the enclosure of the forum area with porticoes and *tabernae,* creating an inward-looking piazza with few entrances, and the addition or refurbishment of temples (often *Capitolia* or imperial temples), basilicas or *macella*.

Table 2.2 Public building in Italy 30 BC–AD 100

	Walls	Public works	Temples	Arches	Baths	Basilicae	Curiae	Economic building	Theatres	Amphitheatres
Reg. I	3	17	23	3	9	3	1	7	14	11
Reg. II	0	2	2	1	2	1	1	0	0	4
Reg. III	0	3	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	0
Reg. IV	1	5	8	0	2	1	0	0	3	3
Reg. V	1	3	3	0	0	0	1	0	6	2
Reg. VI	4	6	7	2	2	3	1	0	7	4
Reg. VII	0	6	12	1	6	4	0	0	7	2
Reg. VIII	1	5	5	2	1	1	0	0	2	5
Reg. IX	1	3	3	0	0	1	0	0	1	3
Reg. X	5	4	9	1	0	2	0	0	6	4
Reg. XI	5	0	2	3	1	0	0	0	3	1

To round off this survey of changes in public building and public space, I shall take a specific example, Herdonia. This is located in Regio II, and was Peucetian in ethnic origin. Its pre-Roman development is fairly typical of cities of the region. It shows an increasing concentration of population during the sixth century, stabilizing in the fifth but reaching a peak of economic growth at the beginning of the fourth century. Structurally, it is very similar to many other Apulian cities, characterized by a large and heavily fortified enclosure which included grazing and farmland and cemeteries as well as areas of habitation. There was an urban nucleus and traces of a street grid have been found, but habitation was scattered throughout the walled area in small groups, possibly representing a gentilicial group, each with their own cemetery (Lomas 1993b, 65–70). After the Roman conquest, it undergoes a considerable change. There are traces of third-century rebuilding to the walls, the addition of a late second-century BC temple (Temple B) to an unidentified deity, and a first-century BC bath built by *quattuorviri quinquennales*. The most striking change, however, is the transformation in the use of urban space, replacing the diffused pattern of habitation with a nuclear one, concentrated in the northern part of the site. This type of development is often attributed to impoverishment and population shrinkage, but this need not be the case. In the analogous instance of Metapontum, the replacement of a diffused settlement pattern by a smaller yet more compact and densely populated city is now regarded more as a cultural change reflecting Romanization than a sympton of terminal decline (D'Andria 1975). Herdonia remained a going concern through the period of Roman conquest, despite the depredations of Hannibal, and enjoyed a considerable lease of life in the early empire. The forum area was rebuilt twice, with the addition of an Augustan basilica, *curia* and porticoes and a first-century AD temple to house the imperial cult. An amphitheatre was built on the edge of the city in the middle of the first century AD, but the third major phase of urban renewal was connected with the construction of the Via Traiana in the early second century. The road ran through the centre of the city, necessitating some changes. The gateway by which the Via Traiana entered Herdonia was replaced by a monumental arch in honour of Trajan and a circular *macellum* and a further set of baths were added at the same period. Overall, the patterns of public building and urban development in Roman Herdonia suggest not so much a city in decline as the metamorphosis of a pre-Roman city into a Romanized

one, a phenomenon which seems to reflect a fundamental change in the idea of what a city was, and which crystallizes in the Augustan period.

The pattern revealed by these statistics is that there is a distinct change both in the types of buildings erected due to the sources of finance and in the social and political background of the men responsible over the period under consideration. There is also a geographic concentration of building, with the vast majority of activity in Latium and, to a lesser extent, Campania. These points raise a number of important and wide-ranging questions—what prompted this building activity? What is the implication of these geographical patterns? What do the patterns of building say about the progress of urbanization and Romanization? Can we conclude anything about social changes, the nature of euergetism or the élite concept of the city? The motives for any increase in public building in a given city must inevitably vary according to circumstances, but there are a number of common factors.

Given the high level of colonization in the first century BC, this must have been a powerful factor. Some colonies were new foundations, but the vast majority involved placing substantial numbers of colonists in existing cities. Nevertheless, the wish, on the part of the incoming colonists, to stamp their own identity on a city is a documented phenomenon. Cicero, in the *Pro Sulla,* speaks at length about the political tensions between the Oscan élite and the Sullan colonists at Pompeii (Cic. *Sull*. 60–2), and one of the few things which most students of Pompeian epigraphy agree on is the fairly rapid disappearance of the pre-Sullan élite from the prosopography of the city (Castrén 1975). It would be surprising if this wish had not found concrete expression in building activity. Cicero (*Cat* 2. 20) refers to building by Sullan colonists, and extensive amounts of public building took place at Pompeii in the years after the foundation of the Sullan colony (Laurence 1994, 20–37). However, there is no easy correlation between colonization and urban change. One of the notable things about the colonies of Caesar and Augustus is that the levels of building activity are not enormously higher than other cities of the same period (Keppie 1983, 114–21). There is also little sign of Roman patronage in the way of buildings paid for by founders of colonies, and no chronological clustering of building activity around the date of foundation. In point of fact, both Suetonius and Augustus himself, in the *Res Gestae,* place a heavy emphasis on benefactions to Rome and very

little on benefactions to Italy, although Augustus does claim (in contradiction of the archaeological evidence) to have provided his veteran colonies with the necessities in the way of public amenities (Suet. *Aug*. 46; *RG* 16, 20, appendix 4; Keppie 1983, 114–21).

Clearly, colonization provides at best only a very partial explanation for the changes taking place in the cities of Italy during the period of the civil wars and the early empire. Another possible approach is to consider patterns of public building as a manifestation of peer polity interaction. This would certainly go some way to explain the distinctive regional patterns of activity, and there is some corroborative evidence from Tacitus' *Histories*. During AD 69, the amphitheatre at Placentia, reputedly one of the biggest and most famed in Italy, became the focus of intense inter-state rivalry. It was burned down during Caecina's siege of the city, but the populace took great umbrage at this, believing that it was not a random incident but a case of arson perpetrated by people from neighbouring cities acting out of jealousy and intent on destroying a symbol of prestige (Tac. *Hist*. 2. 21). Although peer polity interaction addresses the variable geographical distributions of different types of building activity, it must also be only a partial explanation, which does not take account of the more specific social and political factors motivating élite activity.

The changes in élite behaviour during the first century BC are attributed by Gabba entirely to the process of municipalization and to the consequent breakdown of non-Roman (and particularly non-urban) forms of social organization (Gabba 1971; Frederiksen 1976; Patterson 1991). He identifies a shift of emphasis from building activity based on the non-urban and pre-Roman *pagus* and conducted by magistrates to élite euergetism unrelated to *summae honorariae* and focused on cities, and relates changes in the type and financial basis of public building to the process of municipalization after 90 BC and the emergence of municipal aristocracies. While it is true that a seismic upheaval took place within the élites of Italy as a result of the social war, the relation of this to wider patterns of élite behaviour is a complex issue. Striking changes were wrought by public building programmes in the Oscan regions of Italy, with an emphasis on activity in Samnium and Campania, and these seem to be related not simply to urbanization of the non-urban parts of Samnium but to a distinct change in the identities of well-established Campanian cities (Gabba 1971; Poccetti 1988). In particular, the wholesale demolition of many city walls constructed in polygonal

masonry and their replacement by a peculiarly Roman type of fortification in *opus quadratum,* reinforced with watch-towers and monumental gateways, highlight the fact that major construction projects were about more than utility. The cities which undertook this type of project were making a very visible statement about their new, Romanized, cultural identity (Rykwert 1976; Poccetti 1988). The use of these changes in emphasis in public building to suggest a major change in élite behaviour is, however, more difficult, and given the culturally specific background of many of these changes in Oscan Samnium and Campania, it is also difficult to know whether they would be valid as a model for the rest of Italy. Inscriptions are not, on the whole, forthcoming about the source of finance for the reconstruction of cities after the social war, but much of the activity concentrating on fortifications which is highlighted by Gabba and Poccetti is carried out by magistrates, and thus presumably paid for either by the state, or by the magistrates as *summae honorariae*.

The municipal charters of the first century BC give some insight into the legal background to élite behaviour. The charters of the *municipium* of Tarentum and of the *colonia* of Urso both outline legal restrictions on building activity in the city (*CIL* i^2 590. 27. 25–38; 594. 70–1, 75). Decurions were obliged to maintain private houses of a certain minimum size within the city; magistrates were legally obliged to undertake paving of streets and provision of gutters and drainage as necessary (*CIL* i^2 594. 77–8), and there were restrictions on the demolition of existing buildings, except for the purposes of refurbishment, with the specification that replacements for demolished structures must be of equal size and importance. Clearly, Rome took an active interest in regulating building activity in Italy and elsewhere, and civic magistrates had a legal obligation to involve themselves in public building, but despite this, the principal *summae honorariae* specified are not buildings, but games (*CIL* i^2 590. 27. 35–8).

The link between the change to private euergetism unconnected with municipal office in the post-Sullan period and the rise of the first generation of Romanized municipal élites is problematic. Although there were changes in the composition of élites, particularly where colonies had been founded, strong local élites existed prior to the municipalization of Italy, and can be found in inscriptions, both Latin and Oscan, from the great sanctuaries of Apennine Italy performing euergetic activities, notably building. The changes in emphasis from Oscan sanctuaries to Roman *municipia*

can be seen in the wholesale shift of élite activity away from the sanctuaries in the generation after the social war (Patterson 1991, 152–7), but this change of location does not necessarily imply a change in the forms of élite activity. The complexity of the interaction between municipal benefactions and political office in this period is underscored by Cicero, whose interventions in support of the interests of Arpinum were prompted in large measure by local patriotism but also by familial concerns. In particular, his role in expediting the collection of municipal revenues in 46 BC was due to his wish to secure the election of his favoured candidates—his son, nephew and friend— as magistrates for the following year (Cic. *Fam.* 13. 11).

Whatever the process which led to a diminution of *summaehonorariae* and growing importance of voluntary euergetism, it was not due only to municipalization. Admittedly on the basis of argument *ex silentio,* I would suggest that the change indicates a combination of factors, including the Romanization of the Italian élite, the growing wealth and status of those municipal aristocrats who became part of the Roman élite, some of whom undertook voluntary euergetism on a grand scale within Italy, and the increasing diversion of municipal resources and *summae honorariae* into other activities such as *sportulae* and the provision of games and festivals. However, the changing political circumstances within Rome cannot be ignored as a factor. The establishment of Augustus as *princeps* fundamentally altered the pattern of public building and munificence within the city of Rome itself. The construction of major building projects whose form was geared towards a specific ideological programme and the political dominance of a single figure undoubtedly helped to undermine Republic patterns of competitive munificence at Rome (Eck 1984). It became very difficult for members of the élite to build on a grand scale without the risk of seeming to challenge the authority and agenda of Augustus. The conclusion drawn by Eck, however—that much of the upsurge of élite building activity in Italy was caused by this displacement of activity which would, under other circumstances, have taken place in Rome—is less clear. The ideological preoccupation of Augustus with Italy and the increasing absorption of élite families from Italy into the Roman aristocracy combine to elide the distinction between Rome and Italy to an increasing degree. In this context, it becomes unclear whether Augustan building would indeed have taken place in Rome under other

conditions, or whether it is a manifestation of civic pride on the part of the newly-emergent Italian élite.[5]

The second striking feature of the pattern of building is its geographical distribution, with a huge emphasis on Regio I, and in particular, on Latium. Some elements, such as the concentrations of public building in northern Italy, are obviously the result of the need to build entire new cities in non-urbanized areas. Others are more problematic, for instance a noticeable tendency for patterns of public building to follow the arterial road network of Italy. This can be strikingly seen at Herdonia, where the construction of the Via Traiana stimulates a large-scale building programme quite unconnected with the physical presence of the road and may reflect the raised economic expectations of cities located on major roads. Similar patterns are found elsewhere in Apulia at around the same time and in connection with the same road. It may also, however, reflect an increased cultural exposure to developments at Rome. The main concentration of building in central Italy has traditionally been explained in economic terms—i.e. that these were the richest cities in Italy and had the richest élites, while other regions of Italy, most notably those in the South, were in terminal economic decline. However, positivism of this sort must be rejected. Whatever the relative economic status of any given group of cities, there must also be cultural and social factors involved. For instance, Etruria, which produced a considerable number of senators from amongst its élites, is not a region with a strikingly high level of public building (Jouffroy 1986). In southern Italy, the élites of the Greek cities had by no means totally vanished, but they put their energies into very different forms of activity, notably the revival, in the first and second centuries AD, of a Greek civic culture which bears a strong resemblance to the 'Olde Englande' heritage culture promoted in contemporary Britain. This can be seen most sharply in the Greek cities of Campania and Lucania. Despite being part of the region where public building was most prominent as a part of civic culture, the élites of cities such as Naples and Velia were far more involved in exchanges of elaborate Greek honours among themselves and

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[5] As Eck himself acknowledges (1984, 129–68), the division between Republican and Julio-Claudian practice is not as clear-cut as it seems at first glance. Tac. *Ann*. 3. 72 (AD 22) indicates that some level of building at Rome was still expected of the Roman élite.

with their Roman counterparts, than in building (Lomas 1993a). Rather than relating patterns of building only to élite and municipal wealth, we should place them in the context of élite culture and its regional variations. Etruria and the Greek-influenced areas of the south seem to behave in a significantly different manner to the Oscan/Latin region of central Italy, and differently again to Picenum and the Adriatic coast. The region immediately around Rome came to form an extended *suburbium,* in which economic development was dictated by the needs of the city of Rome and the high density of élite villas, and the terms of social behaviour and cultural interaction were likewise set by the Roman élite. The high level of building activity in early imperial Latium and Campania is not just a reflection of wealth, but is the result of a particular form of urban culture which was shaped very largely by the Roman élite, and which is rather different from the expressions of urbanism in other regions.

Finally, there are important implications in developments such as enclosed fora and the vast upsurge of building of theatres and amphitheatres in Augustan and post-Augustan Italy. The extent of rebuilding in this period had a clear impact on urban form, as witness the example of Herdonia, which represents a use of buildings as physical emblems of the new social and political order. [6] There seems to have been a change in focus of power and élite activity throughout Italy as result of the political changes of the establishment of the principate. The trend towards enclosing and monumentalizing fora closely resembles the remodelling of the city of Rome by Augustus, reflecting his political programme in the wholesale reconstruction of areas such as the Forum of Augustus (Zanker 1988). While Italian building programmes are not remotely on the same scale nor as ideologically specific, they do seem related to a change in élite ideology. The new-style enclosed and monumental forum, often with a *Capitolium* or imperial temple in a prominent position, underlines the increasing pre-dominance of the élite. It is now a space designed to exclude rather than include, and is dominated by buildings geared to élite activity. The upsurge in building of theatres may have a similar rationale. Frézouls and others have argued that the association of permanent stone theatres with popular assemblies in the Greek world, and the tradition of using drama as a vehicle for political comment, had inextricably linked theatres with democratic agitation in the Roman mind, with the result that no permanent theatre was allowed at Rome until the

construction of Pompey's theatre in the first century, after which they became a standard part of the urban landscape (Frézouls 1983). This, however, does not explain why they were acceptable in Campania, a region noted more for its oligarchic factions and one in which Rome would be unlikely to tolerate a strong democratic tradition, from a much earlier date. Bejor (1979, 126–38) goes further and sug gests that the decoration of theatres and amphitheatres with imperial emblems and statuary allowed them to be seen as symbols of loyalty to the emperor, thus neutralizing any possible democratic connotations. Perhaps the real reason lies less in the décor than in the *Lex Julia Theatralis,* the law by which Augustus gave concrete representation to his vision of an ordered society. The social order was graphically illustrated by the divisions of seating at different types of games and festivals; women were excluded from some types and relegated to separate seating at others; dress codes were prescribed; youths were segregated; decurions and Augustales were given prominence (Suet. *Aug*. 44; Rawson 1987, 83–114). Grants of special seats at the games became a means of giving honour and prominence to citizens. Thus the building of theatres became a means of giving concrete representation to the growing dominance of the élite as well as adherence to the new social order.

In conclusion, patterns of public building and urban development seem to indicate a distinct change in the idea of the city and the ideology of its élite, and also reflect the progress of acculturation. They enable us to chart the changes in civic identity which occurred as part of the progress of Romanization and also those involved in the growing dominance of both the élite and the central influence of Rome in the early empire. Élites appear to become more inward-looking. Their building activities reflect a vision of the city which is becoming more distinctively Roman, but at the same time there is still an important sense in which this development was concentrated in Campania and Latium, which was more heavily influenced by the Roman élite, with different regional traditions persisting in other parts of Italy. The processes which lay behind the 'Augustanization' of many cities are still obscure and require much further research, but many of the more obvious and intuitive explanations are becoming increasingly inadequate. The changes occurring in this period are part of a much more complex development than simple

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[6] On the use of buildings for specifically Augustan ideology, see Zanker 1988.

changes in differentials of wealth in cities, or absorption of local élites into Roman power structures. Augustus's own intense concern, and political identification, with Italy points to a period of change driven by a combination of political, social and cultural factors. However, it would be too crude an explanation to posit a centrally generated 'propaganda' initiative. There are also signs of signifi cant changes in élite culture taking place in the same period, and Zanker (1988) has amply demonstrated that so-called Augustan propaganda was in fact a much more subtle and interactive exchange between the *princeps* and the Roman and Italian élites. Nevertheless, élite behaviour in the early empire was clearly modified considerably by the political conditions and the cultural assumptions of the new regime, and this, equally clearly, was represented in changes to the urban environment.

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3
Cities in context: urban systems in Roman Italy
Neville Morley

Modelling ancient cities

In one sense, all cities are consumers. The existence of urban centres depends on the ability of farmers to produce a regular agricultural surplus, and on the efficiency of economic, social, and political institutions in mobilizing this surplus for the use of a population which is not involved in primary production. However, the idea of the 'consumer city' implies much more than this (Finley 1981). It and its sibling concept (the 'producer city') are concerned with the economic aspects of the relationship between city and countryside; that is, the means by which the agricultural surplus was extracted from the producers. The producer city pays for its keep through trade, manufacture, and services; the consumer takes what it needs in the form of rents and taxes. No real city will conform exactly to either of the models, but the use of ideal types such as these allows the historian to isolate the essential nature of the city's economy for the purposes of classification, analysis, and comparison (Weber 1958, 70; Finley 1985b, 60–1).

If the 'consumer city' label referred to nothing more than the way in which the urban population was fed, it seems unlikely that it would have dominated discussion of ancient cities to the extent that whole conferences are now dedicated to its overthrow. The problem is that the implications of the label go far beyond the narrowly economic question of urban food supply. It is a model of a type of city, not merely a type of city economy; it seeks to encompass the social and political aspects of the town-country relationship, not to mention the nature of urban institutions, power structures, and ideologies. If you accept the model, it tells you almost everything

you might wish to know about the ancient city. Inevitably this makes it rather difficult to pin down.

Study of the 'intellectual biography' of the concept, putting it in the context of its authors' ideas and preoccupations, suggests that its basic message may be summarized quite easily: the ancient city was entirely unlike the medieval town.[1] For Bücher, Sombart, and Weber, this was very significant. Each of them saw the medieval town as the key element in the emergence of capitalism and the modern world at the end of the Middle Ages. They differed over the essential nature of modernity—alienation and the division of labour, the capitalist *Geist,* the modern state, economic rationality, the bourgeoisie—and therefore differed in their identification of the crucial factors in its emergence, but all three located those factors in the late medieval town. It was a 'producer city', engaged in free and fair exchange with the countryside; it represented the original division of labour, and it offered a safe haven for the development of new institutions, new modes of thought, and a new class of entrepreneurs.

In contrast, the ancient world had clearly failed to develop, despite all its artistic achievements. Logically enough, the explanation for this was to be found in the nature of its cities, and their inability to play the same progressive role as the towns of medieval Europe. The ancient city was a consumer, not a producer; there was no political separation between town and countryside; both were ruled by the same élite, the same set of values. The multifarious implications of the 'consumer city' label boil down to an explicit contrast between antiquity and the Middle Ages, in which the latter period is judged superior in almost every respect. The ancient city was responsible for the economic failure of the ancient world.

The most common response from opponents of this view has been to argue that the ancient city was not a consumer—implicitly accepting the characterization of consumer cities as having a malign effect on the countryside, while producer cities are seen as

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[1] Finley 1981 offers a partial (in both senses of the word) account of the development of the concept in the works of Bücher 1968, 345–85; Sombart 1902, i. x–xxviii, 191–4; 1916, i. 142–3; Weber 1958; 1976, 48–58, 337–52; 1978, 1212–368. For the intellectual, cultural, and political background see Mitzman 1970; 1973; 1987; Käsler 1988; Scaff 1989; Love 1991; Harris 1992. See also Bruhns 1985, 1987–9; Whittaker 1990; 1993; Nippel 1991.

progressive (e.g. Leveau 1983; Engels 1990). These assumptions, with all their ideological baggage, can and must be challenged. Medieval historians have questioned the role of towns in the emergence of capitalism, and above all the extent to which they were separated from the countryside; they are no longer seen as 'non-feudal islands in a feudal sea' (Hilton 1985; Holton 1986). Meanwhile, cities like ancient Rome and early modern London, indisputably consumers, nevertheless had a dynamic effect on the economies of their hinterlands (Wrigley 1967; Aerts and Clark 1990). The explanatory power of the ideal types, the extent to which they encapsulate the whole of the ancient or late medieval economy, is drastically reduced.

There is a more fundamental flaw in the consumer city model, one which would also affect any attempt at devising a new ideal type for 'the ancient' or 'the Roman' city. One question never addressed either by Weber and Finley or by their opponents was whether 'the city' is a defensible or productive category of analysis. Philip Abrams argued, over fifteen years ago, that urban historians and sociologists had been guilty of the fallacy of misplaced concreteness in treating 'the town' as an independent variable (1978). It is not true that 'a town is a town wherever it is', having the same progressive effects in any historical context (cf. Braudel 1973, 373); and the attempt to distinguish between progressive and non-progressive types of town was only a marginal improvement. The town cannot be separated from its social and economic context. It makes more sense to study, for example, the division of labour within a society as a whole, including both town-dwelling farmers and rural industry, than to concentrate on the town alone. This holds true for many topics which have traditionally been studied exclusively in the context of the city (cf. Whittaker 1993, 15).

Moreover, any ideal type of the Roman, let alone the ancient, city must somehow cope with the immense variety of sizes, histories, forms, and functions of cities which can be found across the Roman empire. There are two responses to this problem. One, that of the consumer city model, is to talk only of the 'typical' and the 'average', which almost by definition excludes those cities, like Rome, Corinth, and Pompeii, for which we have a reasonable amount of evidence.[2] Alternatively, the model must be broad enough to include all different kinds of cities, which is to risk it being so vague as to be almost useless.

This is not to argue that the concept 'city' should be abandoned altogether. For all the problems of definition, of deciding at what point a village becomes a town and a town a city, that would be ridiculous: within a given historical context, we can adequately define our area of interest. But, if we are to build generalizing models about the nature and function of these cities, it is necessary to desist from any attempt at producing a single, all-encompassing ideal type. Cities must be set in context; their economies as part of the systems of production and consumption in society as a whole, their political and social roles as part of larger structures of power and domination. Instead of trying to characterize the perfect Roman city, we should look at the process of urbanization in different parts of the empire; which, although it may start from the same point, in the Graeco-Roman idea of the city, can lead to very different results in different contexts.

Trade and markets

One possible approach to the study of Roman cities is to place them in the context of larger urban systems. In the strict sense, an urban system is one in which the units, the cities, are interdependent, bound together by economic interactions in such a way that any significant change in one unit brings about changes in one or more of the others (Garner 1967; de Vries 1984, 81–4). In other words, if the population or economic structure of one city changes, this affects other cities in the system. In a more limited sense, perhaps more readily applicable to pre-industrial contexts, the concept implies that the whole, the urban system, is greater than the sum of its constituent cities. This implies that we need to do more than note the presence and nature of cities in a region: the ways in which they are arranged and interact with one another are a significant aspect of the organization of space at this level (Smith 1976, 3–7).

Even in this limited sense, the concept of systems of cities is somewhat alien to traditional Roman urban history. In part, this is because it may be considered a modernizing theory devised for an

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[2] This is a particular problem with Engels' attempt (1990) to produce a new model for Roman cities (the 'service city') using Corinth as a model, but the same may be said of Jongman's defence of the consumer city type in the case of Pompeii (1988): these are not 'typical' cities.

industrial-capitalist society and therefore inapplicable to traditional economies; in part, it is due to the fact that the idea cuts across one of the basic assumptions of this field of study. For all the disagreements over the relationship between town and country, the unit of analysis has always been the *polis* or its Roman equivalent: *astu* and *chora,* town and territory together.[3] The indivisibility of this pair, and their separation from other such units, is based on the political definition of the town, promulgated by the ancients themselves, but it has been taken to apply to every other aspect of life, to economic and social affairs.

This assumption is reinforced by the traditional view of the ancient economy: the cost and inefficiency of transport, the low level of surplus production and hence of demand, mean that local self-sufficiency is not only a political ideal but a necessity.[4] The ancient world is therefore seen as a patchwork of semi-autonomous, more or less autarkic town-country units—the standard Roman community—only occasionally intruded upon by outside influences (cf. Dyson 1992). There is considerable truth in such a picture, but I wish to argue that the isolation of the ancient city has been greatly exaggerated. The level of interaction between these local cells was such that we are justified in identifying, in at least some regions of the empire, an urban system that is more than the sum of innumerable independent political units.

The most obvious form of interaction, and the one which has received most attention from historians, is the movement of goods. As Keith Hopkins among others has pointed out, complete self-sufficiency could never be more than an ideal (1978b; 1983b). The vagaries of climate and environment meant that there was a considerable volume of trade in staple crops, moving between areas of surplus production and areas of shortage. More importantly for the idea of an interdependent economic system, other goods could be traded on a more regular basis. The supposed homogeneity of the Mediterranean climate, the ubiquity of a particular set of crops, has

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[3] For this reason, Hodges (1988, 126) characterized the Roman city as a 'solar central place', a political/administrative centre dominating the countryside. It should be noted that this is a distortion of Smith's formulation of the concept, which envisages the solar central place as dominating a region or even a country (as in parts of South America) rather than a small area of territory (1976, 36–9).

[4] e.g. Finley 1985a. A useful summary in Hopkins 1983a.

been greatly exaggerated; differences in climate and soil create the possibility of exchange between regions, especially between areas of predominantly arable and predominantly pastoral economies. Some regions became the major supplier of a particular good: for example, leucitite grain mills originally quarried at Orvieto are found all over Italy, and also in Carthage, Sicily and Spain (Peacock 1980; 1989). Archaeology reveals the wide distribution of fine wares across the empire; regardless of the economic significance of trade in pottery, this clearly shows that even remote regions were not wholly cut off from the channels of distribution (Greene 1986, 17–44). The local town market was one way—certainly not the only way—in which goods might be distributed to the consumer.

This discussion is unavoidably limited by our poor knowledge of the level of demand for such goods among the mass of the population: Cato's list of the towns in Campania and southern Latium from which particular items should be bought may be relevant only to the land-owning élite (*Agr.* 135; de Ligt 1990, 43–56). In many parts of the empire, an alternative stimulus to trade might be provided by the need to pay taxes in cash (Hopkins 1980), but this did not apply to Italy. What we have there instead is a very high level of demand for all kinds of goods concentrated at a single point, the city of Rome (Loane 1938; D'Arms and Kopff 1980; Pleket 1993). As the archetypal imperial capital, Rome not only could rely on other provinces of the empire for its grain supply, but also could afford to draw on the resources of the whole of Italy for its other needs: staples like wine and oil; fruit, vegetables, and meat; wool, wood, and other raw materials.

The prosperity of Puteoli and Ostia can be linked directly to their important positions in Rome's supply network, and smaller ports like Pompeii were also linked to the capital.[5] A large proportion of the goods shipped to Rome came from the estates of the wealthy, who sold their produce to middlemen or carried it to the market themselves, in either case by-passing the town (de Ligt 1993, 163–5). However, the mention of Rome on several of the Campanian *nundinae* lists suggests that these local markets, held periodically in towns of the area, were also involved in supplying the city, as sites where small peasant surpluses could be collected together for shipment.[6] This flow of goods linked inland towns to those on the coast, and thence to Rome itself.

Communication and mobility

Trade and exchange were not the only ways in which Italian towns interacted; it is possible, for example, to identify networks of power and influence. Italy was not administered through a formal political hierarchy; the different titles given to towns— *forum, municipium, colonia*—relate to different relationships with Rome, not different levels of authority over other cities (Garnsey and Saller 1987, 26–34). Beneath the umbrella of Roman *imperium,* each city was independent and autonomous (even if some, like Capua, were clearly more independent than others). Systems of power were informal and far less visible.

Power was mediated by distance and the speed of travel. The rate at which news was received from Rome determined what might be called a hierarchy of information, favouring towns situated on major roads, and ports. As has been seen for Roman Egypt, even news as urgent as the death of an emperor could take a long time to reach remoter areas (Duncan-Jones 1990, 7–29). Cicero refers in a speech to 'people who live in the territory of the Sallentini or Bruttii, where they can get news scarcely three times a year' (*Rosc, Am.* 132). In the absence of a formal political hierarchy, access to the main channels of information could be an important determinant of the relative standing of towns.

Still more important was the relationship of towns to the networks of friendship and patronage of the Roman élite; not only with regard to the question of the formal patronage of towns. Senators maintained links with their home towns, and places where they owned property, through benefactions (the obvious example being the younger Pliny's series of gifts to Comum) and through exercising influence on their behalf in Rome (e.g. Pliny *Ep.* 1. 8, 4. 1, 4. 13; Nichols 1980). This may be contrasted with the problems of the town of Vicetia, which had to hire an advocate for a case at Rome, only for him to fail to appear in court after having second thoughts (*Ep.*5. 4, 5. 13). Other ties could be formed by the arrival from Rome of retired freedmen, some of whom became respected

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[5] Meiggs 1960; D'Arms 1974; Frederiksen 1984, 319–58; Pompeii is described as the point of export for goods from southern Campania by Strabo (5. 4. 8); Purcell 1990, *contra* Jongman 1988, 97–137.

[6] Inscriptions in Degrassi 1963, 300–4; discussed by MacMullen 1970; Shaw 1981, 41–4; de Ligt 1993, 112–16; Frayn 1993, 38–41.

local figures while still, we may imagine, retaining links with their former patrons (Purcell 1983). In general, despite the absence of a formal political hierarchy, it is clear that some towns were effectively closer to the centres of power than others.

Finally, there is the question of personal mobility. Goods and information did not of course travel around Italy of their own accord; along the roads, waterways and coastlines of Italy passed merchants, pilgrims, soldiers, officials, envoys, tourists, teachers of rhetoric, and poets (e.g. Hor. *Sat*. 1. 5). The idea that ancient society was characterized by low mobility and parochialism can easily be exaggerated. Of particular importance for any discussion of Italian urbanization is the question of permanent, or at least long-term, migration. It is a common assumption of many studies of urban systems that the importance of a centre in administrative, economic, or social terms will be reflected in its size. This depends on the existence of personal mobility, on the assumption that people can and will migrate to higher order centres which offer better economic opportunities; clearly this is a problem for the ancient world, where the primacy of politics in people's lives is stressed, and political rights could only be fully exercised in one's place of origin (Crook 1967, 36–67).

We can be certain of the existence of one major channel of migration; as with goods, people flowed into the city of Rome. From what we know of urban living conditions and pre-industrial mortality patterns, it is clear that Rome's massive expansion in the two centuries before Augustus, and its success in maintaining that level of population, could only have been achieved through large-scale migration on a regular basis.[7] As the archetypal consumer city, the metropolis offered potential migrants the chance to share in the spoils of empire through employment in construction work, crafts, and urban services, and through provision of the corn dole and other largesse. 'Pull' factors like these, rather than negative motives like expropriation by rapacious landowners, drew in thousands of people every year from Italy and the rest of the empire.

Other Italian cities could offer similar economic opportunities; above all, the great ports and other cities involved in Rome's food supply. However, moving to Rome from elsewhere in Italy involved no loss of political rights, since the migrant could exercise his Roman citizenship there (this privilege being extended to different groups at different times). The Italian who moved to a city other than Rome became an *incola,* entitled to vote in local elections but

not to stand as a candidate, and liable to *munera* not only in the place of his domicile but also in his place of origin—and *origo* was inherited, so that a man remained bound to the place from which his father or grandfather had come.[8] The migrant retained his legal rights as a Roman citizen, but the prospect of losing the right of political participation might be assumed to have discouraged migration to anywhere but the capital.

Three points can be made in this respect. First, the laws might not be enforced too strictly; it seems unlikely that civic authorities would pursue any but the wealthiest migrants for unpaid *munera,* while it is possible that towns might turn a blind eye to the election of a wealthy *incola* to local office (Sherwin-White 1973, 304; cf. 1966, 724–5). Second, we may doubt whether political rights were really so important to the mass of the population. Finally, there is evidence that migration took place, with a study of tombstones from Lusitania which mention the *origo* of the deceased, and the lists of the *Augustales* of Herculaneum, a third of whose free-born members belonged to tribes other than the local one (Ostrow 1985; Stanley 1990). Questions of status and disenfranchisement do not appear to have dissuaded at least some people from changing their place of residence.

The development of the Italian urban system

The towns and cities of Italy were bound together—some, admittedly, rather loosely—by the movement of goods, people, information, and power; they were part of a wider system which transcended the isolation of the town-country political unit. Within this system there was a hierarchy, determined above all by proximity to the main source of political, social, and economic power, the city of Rome. Major ports like Ostia and Puteoli prospered; new sites sprang up along the roads to meet the demands of travellers; other towns were bypassed by the flow of goods and people, and declined.

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[7] On the urban population, Hopkins 1978a, 96–8; Hermansen 1978; Purcell 1994. Scobie 1986 on living conditions. Urban natural decrease in early modern Europe: Wrigley 1967, 134–5; de Vries 1984, 179–97; Landers 1990, 129–95.

[8] Most evidence on *incolae* is provincial: e.g. *lex municipalis Malacitana,* 53, *lexColoniae Genetivae Iuliae,* 98, 103. Livy, 25. 3. 16; *Digest* 50. 1. 11; 50. 1. 6. 1; 50. 1. 29; Sherwin-White 1973.

[9] Finally, Italian towns were linked, via the capital, to Mediterranean-wide networks of trade and power, and thus could obtain a share of the goods and wealth flowing in from the rest of the empire.

However, the insatiable appetite of the metropolis was by no means the only force acting on Italian urbanization. Towns also served local needs, as places where the population of the surrounding territory could obtain goods and services and participate in social and political life. As such, they can be studied as independent town-country units in the traditional manner, but it is also necessary to put them in the context of regional systems. Central place theory suggests that a hierarchy of market centres should be expected, with some offering basic goods and services with low demand thresholds and others also providing higher order goods to a much wider area; the consequence being that consumers would visit their local town regularly and make occasional trips to a more important centre (Smith 1976). Meanwhile, demography suggests that local variations in fertility and   mortality would create a need for a significant level of short-distance migration and the development of complex kin networks across an area (Clark and Souden 1987). Of course, we simply do not know whether Italian peasants remained loyal to a single market (unlike those in Africa, they were free to choose where to buy and sell: Shaw 1981), nor whether political boundaries were a significant hindrance to intermarriage. We do have evidence of some degree of market integration in one region of Italy, namely Campania.

This is provided by the *indices nundinarii,* a series of inscriptions which date to the first century AD (Figure 3.1).[10]*Nundinae*were periodic markets, serving the rural population (although in a highly urbanized area like Campania they were held in towns). Periodic markets offer one solution in cases where there is insufficient demand for a good to support a permanent retail outlet in an area; traders became mobile, following circuits of periodic markets to

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[9] Strabo 5. 2. 10 on new sites along the Via Flaminia; 5. 2. 9 and 5. 3. 1–2 on the decline of old towns in South Etruria and Latium. On Veii, Ward-Perkins 1961 and Liverani 1987. The town of Cosa fails to prosper in the late Republic, despite its strategic position as a port for an agricultural boom area (Brown 1980).

[10] See footnote 6 for bibliography.

Key   • Town appearing on *nundinae* inscriptions
      ○ Other town   ▓ Higher ground   Major road
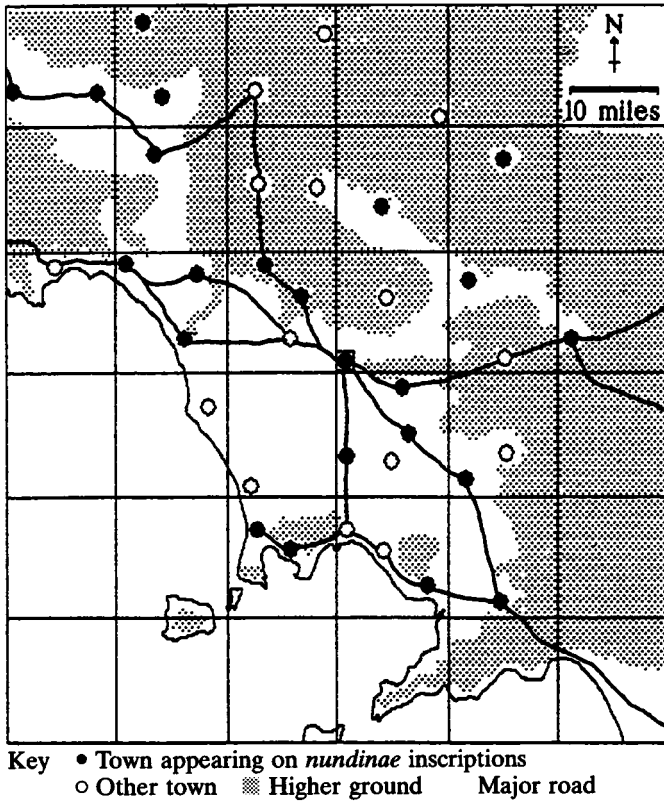
Figure 3.1 Central places in Campania

reach the maximum number of potential customers (de Ligt and de Neeve 1988). This is what we find in the Campanian inscriptions: none of the lists seems to represent an actual market circuit, but their mere existence suggests that some merchants were in the habit of visiting several markets during the week. The lists include several Samnite towns, and even Luceria in Apulia, an indication that the *nundinae* played an important role in exchange between the pastoral highlands and the mainly arable coast. The unexpected appearance of the city of Rome in three of the inscriptions may be explained by reference to the part played by such markets in collecting together peasant surpluses for shipment to the capital.

Clearly, however, the demands of the city were not the only force operating on the Campanian market system. Rather, we seem to
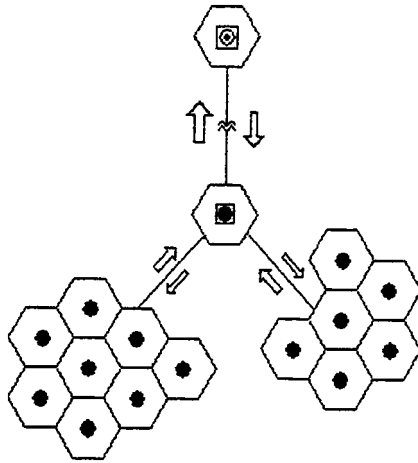
Figure 3.2 Dendritic network linking major centre to local market systems

have a combination of a regional central place system and a dendritic network; the former distributing goods across the region in response to local demand, the latter siphoning them off towards an external consumer (Figure 3.2). The development of an urban hierarchy was determined in part by external pressures, by no means exclusively economic ones; hence the development of ports like Puteoli and Minturnae, and strategic sites like Cales. However, external pressures can hardly account for the continuing importance of Capua, which retained its economic role even when stripped of political authority by the Romans (Cicero *Leg*. *Agr*. 2. 88; Frayn 1993, 84–7).

In other parts of Italy, different patterns emerged; the impact of Rome's economic and political dominance was not uniform. Some regions lacked the indigenous urbanization found in Campania, and a striking feature of 'Romanization' was the creation *ex nihilo* of nucleated centres on the 'Roman' model (e.g. Patterson 1991). Some regions were too close to the city, and their towns declined in the face of competition from the capital; more distant areas were less affected by metropolitan demands. The most productive approach to Italian urbanization would surely be to consider it at the level of these regional systems, examining both how they help to organize space in the region, and how they link the region to a national and

even international network of cities through their ties to the city of Rome.

Conclusion

The search for 'the Roman city' is fraught with theoretical perils, and there are good reasons for abandoning the enterprise. We can continue to talk of cities, so long as we recognize that they are not independent units, somehow separate from and having a dynamic and/or stagnatory effect on the rest of society. We can certainly talk of the Roman idea of the city and the nature of Roman urbanization, provided that we keep in mind the huge degree of variation between cities, even those formed by the same process of urbanization.

The study of urban systems has much to offer the historian of Roman cities; if nothing else, a model which predicts differences in sizes and functions is surely to be preferred to one which rejects certain cities as 'untypical'. Research in the past has tended to concentrate either on a very small scale or on grand abstractions: an individual city or The Ancient City. The first may be a cul-de-sac, as Finley thought, but the second has proved scarcely more productive. It is surely time to abandon the argument over whether Pompeii is a consumer city, and to consider its role as just one of the towns—not necessarily a particularly important one, except in the accident of its preservation—in southern Campania; to consider its economic links with Nola, or its long-standing sporting rivalry with Nuceria (Tac. *Ann*. 4. 17). It is time, in other words, to consider it and other Roman cities in their regional context.

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4
Mobility and social change in
Italian towns during the principate[1]
Henrik Mouritsen

Few will doubt the importance of social mobility as a significant aspect of life in Roman Italy during the principate. The rise of members of the lower classes, especially freedmen, was a commonplace in Roman literature, and even a brief look at the epigraphic evidence conveys a similar impression of strong mobility in the towns of imperial Italy. There has been a long tradition, going back to the tirades of the Roman satirists against wealthy freedmen, for perceiving these examples of social mobility as departures from the normal and—when appearing in greater numbers—as signs of general instability and change in society. Imperial Italy has thus been construed as a virtual battleground between nobles and newcomers, the latter forcing their way into the domains of the old aristocracies. The paradigmatic examples of Italian municipalities struck by such turmoil have been provided by Pompeii and Ostia. A deep crisis has been traced in the last decades of Pompeii, which saw the old élite, after generations of stable rule, being overtaken by new families risen from humble, often servile, backgrounds. Likewise in Ostia the dominance of an old aristocracy seems to have been broken under the Flavians, when outsiders and descendants of freedmen entered the *ordo decurionum*.

These two examples have had a great impact on our perception of social structure and change in Italian towns; however, their historiographical context, underlying historical assumptions, and epigraphic basis all raise a number of questions. Thus, the crises of

Pompeii and Ostia were both conceived within a historiographic tradition of narrative 'town-histories' written entirely on the basis of epigraphic sources. This approach, as I shall argue below, not only turns structural analysis into story-telling but also fixes the interpretation of social processes into a particular, event-oriented frame of understanding. Moreover, the model relies on general assumptions about the economic structure of imperial Italy which seem out of line with most recent research. Finally, the use of epigraphic evidence has tended to be impressionistic, and little attention has been paid to the issue of epigraphic habits and the influence of changing patterns of self-representation on our picture of the local élites.

In the following pages these points will be further investigated and a general model of social mobility formulated on the basis of a study of five well-documented Italian towns: Pompeii, Ostia, Puteoli, Beneventum and Canusium.

The Pompeian crisis, first suggested by Gordon and Maiuri, was further developed by Castrén, whose extended version has proved highly influential (Gordon 1927; Maiuri 1942; Castrén 1975, 108–21). The transformation of the Ostian *ordo* can be traced back to Wilson, but was given its final form in Meiggs' authoritative study of Roman Ostia (Wilson 1935; Meiggs 1973). The historiographic context for these two theories is quite similar.

Castrén's social history of Pompeii was written as a progressive narrative, focused entirely on dynamic change. This format influenced the conceptual framework; for generally Castrén is not looking for a structure—but a plot. Thus, the Augustan age has been construed as a dramatic conflict between—virtually unknown—pre-Augustan families and Augustan partisans, the latter gaining power through the support they enjoyed from the emperor (Castrén 1975, 92–103). The extant sources, however, are profoundly non-narrative in nature, consisting of isolated inscriptions recording individual magistrates holding office, making donations, receiving honours etc.; a material which in itself suggests no takeovers, confrontations or direct imperial interventions—in sum, no story-line whatsoever. The dramatic plot structure seems to be a function of the chosen format, which has naturally turned the study of social history into an 'histoire évenémentielle', focused on changes and upheavals.

Castrén's 'late crisis' should be viewed as a part of this general concept of social history. Evidentially it is based, not on a statistical validation of continuity and change, but on the identification of

some magistrates and candidates in the last period as *homines novi* and descendants of freedmen. This observation has then formed the basis for a broad vision of late Pompeii as a place in deep social turmoil and decline; what Castrén has traced is nothing less than a plebeian takeover. Moreover, a ten-year period, in which there happens to be no documented magistrates, is turned into a general state of emergency *without* magistrates, heralding the imminent takeover.

Meiggs' account of the transformation of Ostia is both more subtle and more cautious than Castrén's 'Pompeian crisis'. But here too the dramatization of a non-narrative source material is evident. In his history of the 'governing class' Meiggs draws a vivid picture of a 'social revolution' during the first century AD. The Augustan and Julio-Claudian age, described as particularly stable periods dominated by a few powerful families virtually monopolizing the highest offices, is sharply contrasted with the subsequent *c*. 100 years, where new families, mostly immigrants and descendants of freedmen, entered the *ordo*. The result of this clash between new and old was a 'substantial admixture of servile blood in the ruling class' followed by 'the eclipse of the old families'.

In both cases we not only find an apparent incongruity between the mode of historical representation and the nature of the evidence; the narrative strategies used in these accounts have also reinforced a set of—unreflected—assumptions about the nature of social mobility. New and old curial families are automatically treated as distinct groups, inherently opposed to each other. The dramatic plot structure, which follows from the narrative concept, naturally operates with a few players representing opposite interests. By implication the social mobility indicated by the presence of new families is perceived exclusively in terms of antagonism and conflict between collectives defined by their *nobilitas* or *novitas*.

Implicit in this scenario lies the assumption that collective social mobilty was a realistic possibility in Roman society. Economically, this idea is problematic. The Roman economy being overwhelmingly agrarian—and the land firmly in the hands of a small upper class, it is hard to see how new social groups could emerge and challenge the established élite. Thus, Vittinghoff recently noted that—for those reasons—the productive forces of the ancient economy did not have the capacity for a collective advancement of new classes (Vittinghoff 1990, 161; cf. Alföldy 1986, 72 n. 5). How, therefore, were the lower classes in Pompeii and Ostia able to take

on the old élite? The answer implied by Castrén—and hinted at by Meiggs—supposes a rigid separation of agriculture and commerce, the élite being exclusively agrarian due to the low status of commercial activity, left to freedmen and other members of the lower orders (e.g. Meiggs 1973, 205–6). The difference in material background would in turn have allowed these groups to prosper independently of the élite.

Even on its own terms this solution is not entirely satisfactory. While it accommodates the rise of new classes, the collective decline of—supposedly stable—landowning élites is left unexplained. And applied to Ostia the shortcomings are evident. The Ostian economy, commanding only a small and insignificant territory, was overwhelmingly commercial in its foundations (cf. Meiggs 1973, 195–6). Consequently, the collective rise and fall of families, most of whom were at some level involved in commerce, cannot be explained by a traditional dichotomy between aristocrats and traders. Furthermore, this model of the Roman economy has come under increasing attack in recent decades, where scholars have upgraded the scale and importance of trade (see e.g. H.W.Pleket, in Vittinghoff 1990). The strict division between agriculture and commerce has consequently become still more difficult to uphold as a general principle prevailing in the Roman world.

The primary expression of the élite's anti-commercial view has been found in the philosophical writings of Cicero (cf. Finley 1973; Jongman 1988, 262). But even within Cicero's own senatorial class the separation of trade and agriculture may have been more of an ideal than economic reality (cf. D'Arms 1981). In any case this aristocratic self-image cannot as a matter of course be applied to local élites in imperial Italy, where a rigid distinction between landed and commercial income seems unrealistic.[2] Representing as it did the only safe investment available in antiquity, land formed a natural complement to commercial wealth. On the other hand, the opportunity for commercial income would have followed directly from agricultural production. In practice, therefore, the two types of economic activity would often have been closely integrated.

Furthermore, even if a distinction could be drawn, its application to social structure would be problematic. The economic background of individual members of local élites can rarely be identified. The general equation of newcomers with traders and nobles with landowners is therefore purely conjectural; a function of the confrontational model which has treated them as distinct social

classes. Where the sources give insight into the economic interests of individual nobles, we frequently get a glimpse of a much more complex socio-economic structure. Here just a single case will be discussed—that of the Pompeian Umbricii Scauri.[3]

The funerary inscription *CIL* x 1024 commemorates A.Umbricius Scaurus, a *duovir* who had been honoured by the *ordo* with a publicly sponsored funeral and an equestrian statue in the Forum. The tomb monument, erected by A.Umbricius Scaurus *pater,* has been dated to around the middle of the first century AD (Kockel 1983, 74–5).

A large patrician *domus,* VII, *Ins. Occ.* 12–15, may be identified as the house of the Umbricii Scauri. Here one of the two *atria* features a floor mosaic with four large *amphorae* placed diagonally around the *impluvium*. Each of them carries an inscription which gives the content, *garum,* and the producer—Umbricius Scaurus. This floor is datable to the years AD 25–35 (Curtis 1984).

The strong involvement of the Umbricii in the fish industry is confirmed by the large number of inscribed containers found in Pompeii. The vessels contained *garum Scauri* and were produced at local *officinae* run by the family's freedmen. The majority of them must date from Pompeii's last decades.

Together these sources indicate a continuous engagement in *garum* production from the first to the last quarter of the first century AD; apparently it provided a very substantial part of the family's income. The involvement of a curial family in urban production is itself interesting as it shows that a commercial background was no bar to public honours. But perhaps even more illuminating is the rare insight it offers into the values and outlook of the Pompeian élite. The proud display of the source of the family's wealth in the *atrium* suggests that this was not considered incompatible with high social standing or noble credentials. A family occupying a mansion on this scale would presumably have entertained curial ambitions—and decorated their house accordingly. It is possible that Scaurus *pater* himself may have held public office; in any case his son certainly reached the duovirate. It follows that we will have to accept the scenario of the town's highest magistrate receiving his guests in an *atrium,* which openly advertised his economic interests in fish

[2] For Pompeii see Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 118–42.

[3] On this figure see Curtis 1984 and 1988; Mouritsen 1990, 141–2.

sauce. Clearly this did not diminish his standing in the *ordo,* which posthumously honoured him with an equestrian statue—itself the most spectacular public commemoration ever documented in Pompeii.

The Umbricii may not have been a typical curial family. Still, their example demonstrates that it was possible for families with a strong involvement in urban production and commerce to become fully integrated into the élite. Moreover, since no particular bias against non-agricultural income can be traced, there is no valid basis for positing any general differences between the economic interests of old and new families.

This conclusion creates serious problems for the traditional model of social mobility, casting doubt as it does on the economic feasibility of a collective rise of new classes in opposition to the old élite. We may therefore turn our attention to the epigraphic basis for the takeover scenarios in Pompeii and Ostia, comparing it with evidence from Puteoli and Beneventum. In Pompeii Castrén's crisis will have to be re-examined from a quantitative viewpoint. For by relying on subjective impressions of 'stability' and 'change', Castrén's approach missed the real opportunity offered by the Pompeian evidence—the chance to conduct a proper statistical analysis of a municipal élite.

An impressive corpus of 255 magistrates and candidates is known from Pompeii (Mouritsen 1988, 70–112). The evidence, however, is not evenly distributed over the 159 years of Roman administration. There is a concentration in the early years of the colony and an even stronger one in the final *c.* thirty years of the town's existence. Between these two peaks the coverage is much thinner, occasionally quite lacunose. Thus, in the late Republic we know only *c.* 20 per cent of the magistrates, a percentage rising to 55 in the Augustan age (30 BC–AD 14), but falling to *c.* 35 in Julio-Claudian times (AD 14– 50). In the last generation virtually all families taking part in local politics must be represented in our material. The implication is that while the evidence still offers ample basis for statistical analysis—at least for the first century AD—these variations must constantly be taken into account when evaluating specific findings.

The idea of a radical change around the middle of the century can be tested by looking at the number of old and new curial families represented in the three periods given above.[4] The evidence from the last period contains mostly candidates; to avoid distortions only those elected to an office, i.e. duoviral and quin-quennial candidates,

are included. The number of individual magistrates datable to the three periods is 48, 24 and 56, respectively, the share of old curial families being 27 per cent, 46 per cent, and 52 per cent. The steep rise in the proportion of old families may be explained statistically as a result of the accumulation of earlier evidence. It may be argued that there is no certainty of *gentes* in the last period being identical with homonymous families from earlier periods, or representing direct—indeed freeborn—extensions of their lines. But that potential hazard is probably set off by the statistical fact that several of the families of the final phase, with almost complete coverage, must have been represented among the unknown magistrates of earlier, less well-documented periods. The claim of a 'noble' decline in the last period can therefore be dismissed; there may even have been a small increase in their representation. At the same time, however, a remarkably high turnover within the *ordo decurionum* can be traced throughout the first century AD. In each generation about half the members seem to have been recruited from families not previously represented in the council. This combination of continuity and renewal suggests an internal structure which in effect divided the *ordo* into two more or less separate strata.

On one level a group of families stayed for generations, unaffected by the steady turnover. They maintained continuous representation over long periods, some throughout the history of Roman Pompeii. Due to the uneven coverage of curial families between the early colony and the last period they cannot all be named. But their existence can be deduced statistically from the overall distribution and composition of the sources. This stable core may have numbered between twenty and thirty families, which were often stronger and more prominently represented in the *ordo* than other curial families.

Alongside these old families existed a larger group of families represented for shorter periods. These new families, constantly entering the *ordo,* generally managed to hold their seat for only a single generation. In Augustan times 72 per cent of the new families were represented only in this period, while the percentage in the Julio-Claudian period is 69. By contrast, in the same periods more

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[4] Family continuity is here defined broadly; also second *nomina* and *cognomina* derived from *gentilicia* are given consideration.

than 70 per cent of the *gentes* previously attested maintained their position in the council.

This structure would seem to undermine the traditional crisis interpretation, which entailed (1) that the representation of old families declined; (2) that the high turnover was a temporary phenomenon; and (3) that the newcomers gained real, lasting influence in the *ordo*. The continuous—but partial—turnover forces us to reconsider the way new families entered the council. The inherent opposition between old and new families, commonly treated as distinct categories with different interests and outlook, may no longer be maintained. The problem of the sons of freedmen highlights the issues involved.

This debate has occasionally threatened to hijack the discussion of social mobility for two reasons. First, the sons of freedmen are by and large the only group of newcomers which we have a fair chance of identifying epigraphically; and it should be borne in mind that the 'freedman's son' is a modern social category—not an ancient one. Second, the rise of members of this category has been invested with a particular social significance. Representing as they do a rapid social ascent from servile to curial status in just two generations, their appearance in the council has been seen as the ultimate sign of a breakdown of the aristocratic order. Following their natural instincts towards exclusivity, it is assumed that the old nobility would have strongly opposed the entry of these *nouveaux riches* into their order. This supposition, however, is open to doubt. For not only has the Pompeian nobility turned out to be much less aristocratic in their economic views and interests than previously assumed, their staunch opposition to the freedman's son may also be a modern invention.

Let us first briefly assess the extent of this phenomenon. Several criteria for identifying freedmen's sons have been attempted. Some are highly problematic. Thus, the circumstantial evidence used to establish family connections, is generally unreliable. Due to the size and structure of the epigraphic source material, the existing Pompeian prosopography is neither chronologically nor socially representative; the parental links assumed between otherwise unconnected individuals are therefore purely speculative. Onomastic criteria have proven far more useful. Greek *cognomina* are a fairly reliable indicator, while the Latin ones call for a more individual evaluation.[5] Apart from a few distinctly servile names these only allow statistical probabilities to be established, not individual

identifications. Applied to the Pompeian evidence these criteria leave us with 5, or 7 per cent, 'servile' magistrates from Augustan-Julio-Claudian times and 12, or 21 per cent, from the last period.[6] The composition of this group was not constant; descendants of imperial freedmen, absent in the first period, make up no fewer than 42 per cent in the second. By far the most successful of these 'servile' magistrates was Cn.Alleius Nigidius Maius; his case may throw light on the social climate in which some descendants of freedmen made it to the *ordo*.

Cn.Alleius Nigidius Maius enjoyed one of the most brilliant careers we have documented in the last generation before the Vesuvian eruption. According to the receipts of Jucundus he held the quinquennialate in AD 55 (tablet 143), while his first post, the aedileship, is attested in an electoral inscription. Since no example of this source type can be securely dated before the early 50s, his aedileship would have preceded his quinquennialate by only a few years (Mouritsen 1988). Most likely Alleius went directly from the lowest to the highest office. Later he may have held yet another duovirate. The electoral inscription *CIL* iv 499, datable after the earthquake in 62, endorses a 'Maius', presumably Alleius, for this office.

In the 70s Alleius rose to outstanding prominence. He was appointed to the highest priesthood, the imperial flaminate, and

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[5] For the Greek *cognomina,* see Solin 1971, for the Latin, Kajanto 1965; Duthoy 1989.

[6] First period: L.Abonius Iucundus, D.Alfidius Hypsaeus, N.Istacidius N.f.Cilix, M.Lucretius Manlianus, N.Paccius N.f.Chilo. Second period: Cn.Alleius Nigidius Maius, Ti. Claudius Claudianus, Ti.Claudius Verus, Julius Modestus, C.Julius Polybius, L.Julius Ponticus, Ti.Julius Rufus, P.Sextilius Syrticus, P.Sittius Coniunctus, L.Statius Receptus, T.Terentius T.f.Felix, L.Veranius Hypsaeus, A.Vettius Caprasius Felix. Los (1992, 295–6) has produced a much longer list of 'servile' magistrates. Several identifications, however, seem pure speculation, e.g. L.Caecilius Capella and C.Calventius Sittius Magnus. In other cases the servile character of the *cognomina* may be less certain, e.g. Secundus (cf. Duthoy 1989, 197) and Siricus (cf. Kajanto 1965, 346), while Minius appears to be a unique Latin *cognomen*. Note also the doubts expressed by Solin 1971, 88 n. 5, about the origins of Hypsaeus. The *cognomen* of L.Laecanius is fragmentary, while the candidature of Calventius Quietus remains altogether dubious. It is documented in only a single *programma* (*CIL* iv. 7604) datable to the last years of Pompeii. Most likely this isolated inscription, if not simply a scriptor's error, did not form part of a real election campaign.

received the title *princeps coloniae*.[7] His daughter Alleia shared his honours, becoming *sacerdos publica* of both Venus and Ceres (*NSc* 1890, 333). In return he made generous donations of *venationes* and gladiatorial games, some celebrating the dedication of other gifts; *opus tabularum* and an altar are attested, while other donations may not have been preserved epigraphically. This earned him the status of the town's foremost *euergetes,princeps munerariorum* (*CIL* iv 7990).

Since the discovery of a funerary stele in the Porta Nocera necropolis, which showed that Alleius was adopted by the freedwoman Pomponia Decharchis and her husband Alleius Nobilis, probably himself a freedman, his career has been linked to the late Pompeian crisis; it has come to represent a prime example of the extraordinary opportunities open to the sons of freedmen during a period of aristocratic decline.[8] However, a closer look at his familial connections may call this conclusion into doubt.

Alleius Nobilis shows links with three prominent families from the time of Tiberius, the Alleii and the Eumachii/Numistrii, the latter linked by the marriage of Eumachia L.f. to a Numistrius— presumably—the *duovir* M.Numistrius Fronto. The Alleii had been represented in the *ordo* during the Republic, in Augustan times and again under Tiberius by the *quinquennalis* M.Alleius Luccius Libella and his son. Nobilis' link with this family is evident from his *gentilicium,* although his *praenomen,* probably Gnaeus, suggests that his patron may not have been the magistrate but a relative of his. Maius' association with the Eumachii/ Numistrii appears from the location of Pomponia's epitaph on the funerary monument of Eumachia L.f. The nature of this connection can only be conjectured, but in the following decades several of Maius' own freedmen were commemorated here next to his mother—on the monument which Eumachia had built 'sibi et suis'.[9]

The fate of these prominent families opens up some interesting perspectives on the possible origins of Maius' wealth. All three families seem to have vanished from Pompeian public life during the reign of Tiberius. The noble line of the M.Alleii probably became extinct with the death of the 18-year-old *decurio* M.Alleius Libella. Likewise the son of Eumachia, M.Numistrius Fronto, co-sponsor of

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[7] The sources are given in Mouritsen 1988, 126.

[8] D'Ambrosio and De Caro 1983, 11 OS no. 13.

the large building on the forum and destined for a brilliant public career, remains conspicuously absent from later records. Most likely he too died before reaching adulthood. The *gens* Eumachia itself makes its last documented appearance in local politics in AD 31, when L.Eumachius Fuscus held the aedileship.

Our evidence is far from complete; still, the disappearance of all the noble families who can be linked to the adoptive father of the most eminent citizen of later Pompeii is indeed striking. Assuming that their disappearance is more than a caprice of our sources, large fortunes would have changed hands in the second quarter of the first century. Most likely the wealth of the Eumachii/Numistrii and/or the Alleii had passed—directly or indirectly—to the freedman Alleius Nobilis. That would explain the exceptional prominence of his adoptive son, whose natural family, the Nigidii, was quite undistinguished. Not least the fact that Nobilis' *familia* took over the tomb of Eumachia would support this theory. The implication is that he was not simply an independent freedman who had made his fortune, but one particularly favoured by noble families who had left him theirs.

The case of Cn.Alleius Nigidius Maius may not have been typical. Nevertheless, it shows a remarkable potential for social integration in imperial Pompeii. The intrinsic hostility of the old nobility to the entry of freedmen's sons may have been less ingrained. Apparently the élite might actively assist freedmen in their aspirations and pave their way to public careers. Certainly, ambitious freedman had to face many obstacles, but it seems they might be overcome by noble patronage—and the prosperity that might follow from such favour. Maius' success was obviously founded on superior wealth, which had neutralized the stigma attached to the origins of his adoptive father, and there is every probability that his fortune was old rather than new. If, as seems likely, the presence of inherited wealth was a common factor in the rise of freedmen's sons to curial status, we will have to reconsider the status of this phenomenon as a definite sign of social turmoil. In Pompeii 'servile' magistrates made their first appearance in the *fasti* long before the alleged crisis began. Their share may have increased in the second half of the century, but that was primarily due to the emergence of the new category of

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[9] Ibid. no. 10, 12.

imperial freedmen. And quite crucially their entry did not reduce the representation of old families; most likely they did not compete with them at all.

Turning to Ostia, the other example of a local élite becoming popularized in the first century AD, we find a considerable number of new families, including outsiders and descendants of freedmen, among the magistrates and decurions from Flavian times onwards. It does not follow, however, that this development constituted a plebeian takeover, as Meiggs would have it; it may have been part of a continuous renewal of curial families similar to the one described in Pompeii. Two aspects, not considered by Meiggs, must be taken into account: the composition of the epigraphic source material and the hierarchical structure of the Ostian *ordodecurionum*.

Our sources on the Ostian councillors fall into four categories: inscriptions featuring magistrates in their official capacity, epitaphs, and honorific and dedicatory inscriptions. In Augustan and Julio-Claudian times the vast majority of known magistrates appear in the *fasti,* supplemented by a few dedications and honorific inscriptions (cf. Vidman 1982). Funerary inscriptions were extremely rare in this period, yielding only two examples.[10] This picture changed in the Flavian period. The *fasti,* no longer the most important source, were overtaken by a substantial increase in the production of epitaphs; thirty-five of the thirty-seven epitaphs which feature magistrates and decurions date from Flavian times or later.[11] Dedications and honorific inscriptions remain secondary. The change in the composition of the source material coincides with the new influx of newcomers, also datable to Flavian times. The possibility of a link between the two draws attention to the social character of the funerary genre. The question is whether the epitaphs represent an unbiased sample of decurions. Again the interest will have to concentrate on the sons of freedmen, the only social category we can distinguish in the sources. Apart from the onomastic criterion, already mentioned, they may be identified also on the basis of *tribus,* the Palatina generally being considered a reliable indicator of servile origins, and prosopographical information offered by the inscriptions. Most often several criteria corroborate the identification. The result is that twenty-six—or 67 per cent—of the thirty-nine decurions attested in post-Julio-Claudian epitaphs may be identified as descendants of freedmen.[12] The remaining thirteen were not necessarily of freeborn descent; in several cases the names are fragmentarily transmitted.[13]

Comparing this material with the official sources from the same period we find a striking difference in the social composition. From Flavian times to the early third century only five out of thirty-eight duovirs recorded in official documents may be identified as 'servile', three of whom were related to imperial freedmen.[14] In the same period, as we saw, 67 per cent of the decurions documented in epitaphs may be thus identified, suggesting a fivefold difference between the two samples.

The conclusion to be drawn from these figures is that funerary epigraphy does not give a representative picture of the composition of the *ordo*. This type of commemoration was almost exclusively used by descendants of freedmen, outsiders (identifiable by *tribus*) and low-ranking decurions. Thus, more than half of the sample had not held an office but were simply *decuriones adlecti*. By contrast, in the same period only a single high-ranking magistrate of apparently local freeborn background is documented in this type of document, *CIL* xiv. 171—put up by a freedwoman. The apparent rise of the freedman's son in Ostian politics can thus be linked directly to the increase in the use of funerary epigraphy within this particular group. From the first to the early third century no fewer than 70 per cent of the decurions of unfree descent are known through this medium.[15]

The official sources, giving a more realistic picture of the representation of freedmen's sons than their own self-

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[10]*CIL* xiv. 426, *Scavi di Ostia; Le necropoli* 169 ff.

[11]*CIL* xiv. 171, 292, 294, 298, 314, 321, 323a, 332, 335, 341, 354, 364, 378, 401, 409, 411, 412, 414, 415, 435, 4622, 4623, 4625, 4632, 4642, 4653, 5376, *AE* 1987. 204; 1988. 181, 182, 183, 184, 188, 201, 209.

[12] C.Aemilius Cf.Pal.A[-], AE 1988. 201; M.Aemilius Hilarianus, 332; T.Antistius Favor and T.Antistius Favor Proculeianus, 294; M.Annius M.f.Pal. Proculus, 292; C.Baebius Marcianus, *AE* 1987. 204; M.Caneius Zosimianus, *AE* 1988.182; Sex. Carminius Parthenopeus, 314; Cassius C.f.Pal. Augustalis, *AE* 1988. 184; P.Celerius P.f.Pal. Amandus, 321; Cladius Venidius Eupalius, 4632; Claudius, 323a; L.Combarisius Pal. Vitalis, 335; M.Cornelius M.f.Pal. Valerianus and M. Cornelius M.f.Pal. Valerianus Epagathianus, 341; C.Domitius L.f.Pal. Fabius Hermongenes, 4642; L.Fabricius L.f.Pal. Caesennius Gallus, 354, L.Julius Crescens, 4653; D.Junius D.f.Pal. Bubalus, 4625=*AE* 1988. 207; D.Lutatius D.f.Pal. Charitonianus, 378; M.Modius M.f.Sucsessianus, *AE* 1988. 188; Cn.Sentius Cn.f. Ter.Felix, 409, Cn.Sergius, 411; Cn.Sergius Cn.f.Vot. Priscus, 412; CC.Silii C.f.Vot.Nervae, 415.

[13] Thus *AE* 1988. 181, 208, 209.

commemoration, suggest a much lower frequency of 'servile' decurions. Moreover, those who entered the council generally enjoyed only modest careers; almost half of them, commemorated simply as *decuriones adlecti,* did not reach magisterial rank. The claim of a 'social revolution' therefore seems an undue dramatization of their entry into the *ordo*.

The stability of the pre-Flavian *ordo* may also have been over-estimated. The predominance of a few powerful families is indisputable, but our picture of this period is distorted by the fact that the evidence consists entirely of higher magistrates; the lower echelons of the council are virtually unknown. Moreover, some of the *duoviri* from the 'stable' period may in fact have come from less aristocratic backgrounds. Thus, neither the Suellii, Avianii, Bucii, Caecilii, or Otacilii—among others— appear more than once and reveal no links with the Augustan élite. These isolated magistrates may have been newcomers only briefly represented in the *ordo*.[16] In reality the difference between the two periods may have been much less pronounced. Many of the prominent old families, e.g. the Egrilii, Lucilii, Naevii and Acilii, were represented also after the 'social revolution'.[17] And several of those who disappeared simply moved upwards to careers in Rome.

The *ordo* of Ostia may thus fit into a 'Pompeian' model of political continuity. The dramatic changes, previously envisaged, were based on the assumption that the epitaphs represented an unbiased sample of the élite—a premise which has turned out to be highly questionable. Although some descendants of freedmen did enter the higher ranks of the *ordo,* and even obtained the colonial patronate, they are clearly too few to suggest any major upheaval in the social structure. Their share may have risen during the first century, but hardly at the expense of 'the old nobility', which maintained much of its influence.

If we turn to the other great commercial port, Puteoli, a picture emerges largely similar to that just outlined for imperial Ostia.[18] The differences that remain all seem to derive from disparities in the structure of the epigraphic evidence, the most obvious being the virtual absence of funerary inscriptions for the curial élite. Whether

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[14] AD 108 A.Manlius Augustalis and C.Julius Proculus, AD 109 M.Valerius Euphemianus, AD 115 Ti.Claudius, AD 127 M.Antistius Flavianus.

[15] Other decurions of this type are found in *CIL* xiv. 5, 374, 390, 4142.

due to local epigraphic habits or—more unlikely— vagaries in the transmission of sources, it is a fact that only nine epitaphs from Puteoli commemorate members of the *ordo,* all datable to the first century AD.[19] This feature may plausibly account for the lower proportion of decurions of servile descent in the imperial material, 23 per cent—compared with 32 per cent in Ostia. However, as in Ostia this figure may not be representative of the actual composition of the *ordo*. Thus, the official decrees and documents referring to members of the council show a markedly lower share of 'servile' decurions. Only five, or 15 per cent, of the thirty-three councillors documented in this random sample can be identified as the descendants of freedmen.[20] Despite the small figures involved, preventing a proper statistical analysis, the position of the 'servile' decurions within the *ordo* seems comparable to that encountered in Ostia. Here too a few reached the pinnacle of the municipal hierarchy, most obviously Octavius Agatha, who was *patronus coloniae* (*CIL* x. 1786). But generally decurions of servile extraction seem to have occupied lowly positions within the élite. Thus, seven out of twelve had not held an office but were simply *decuriones adlecti*.[21]

Two important aspects of the Puteolan *ordo* can be grasped from the evidence. On the one hand, a relatively low level of representation of freedmen's sons, and on the other hand, the

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[16] The origins of the Tiberian *duovir* N.Naevius Opt[atus] are also questionable, his *cognomen* having a distinctly servile ring to it, cf. Duthoy 1989. Despite his *cognomen* L.Julius Carbo, *duovir* in AD 30, may also have been of freedman stock.

[17] Acilii, AD 106, *NSc* 1953, 24; Egrilii, AD 106, 126, 140, 146; Lucilii Gamalae, AD 71, 137, xiv. 376; Naevii, AD 95, 110. Among the other pre-Flavian curial families represented later were the Valerii, AD 109, 111, 127, Turranii AD 145, Tuccii cf. D'Arms 1976, 394–5.

[18] The relevant evidence is presented in D'Arms 1974, 122–4, with the later addition of *AE* 1976. 140. A single change to D'Arms's list may be suggested. Q.Aemilius Helpidephorus is given as decurion on the basis of *CIL* x. 1790, which lists his honours as 'decur et dendrophoro et au[gust] duplic'. The combination of decurion and *augustalis* is itself highly unusual, as is the epigraphic form. For his greatest honour, *adlectio in ordinem decurionum* has been abbreviated to *decur* leaving space to commemorate both his membership of the *dendrophori* and the *augustales*. *Decur* may therefore have been a less prominent distinction; Helpidephorus was probably a *decurialis* rather than a *decurion*.

continuity of old curial families. As noted by D'Arms, half the notables mentioned in official documents from the late second century 'are the bearers of *gentilicia* which belonged also to the ruling municipality gentry of the late Republic and the early empire'.[22] Considering the paucity of early sources, these findings suggest a strong continuity in the local élite; statistically it must have been even higher than indicated by the actual figures.

Beneventum was an important inland town with a more mixed economic basis than the two commercial centres of Ostia and Puteoli.[23] Here the sources have yielded twenty-seven councillors from the principate, twelve (41 per cent) of whom may be identified as descendants of freedmen.[24] Before accepting this figure at face value as a reliable indicator of the composition of the Beneventan *ordo,* we may consider the structure of the epigraphic material. Epitaphs make up 70 per cent of the sources and, as we saw above, this type of evidence may not always be socially representative. The nineteen epitaphs feature only two duovirs of apparently freeborn descent, compared with six in the eight non-funerary inscriptions.[25] The large majority were either related to freedmen and/or held only lower magistracies or, in nine cases, none at all.[26] This result throws doubt on the value of funerary epigraphy as a source on social structure. As in Ostia and Puteoli, funerary self-representation does not appear to have been used by the Beneventan nobility. It thus conforms to a general pattern, discernible also in Pompeii, where the local élites largely ceased to put up epitaphs during the second quarter of the first century AD—perhaps in response to imitation of this practice by *augustales* and other wealthy freedmen.[27]

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[19] x. 1685, 1725, 1804, 1806, 1807, 1808, 1810. D'Arms 1974.

[20] P.Aelius Eudaimon, Cn.Haius Pudens, Cn.Papirius Sagitta, x. 1786, Calpurnius Pistus, x. 1784, M.Laelius Atimetus, x. 1783.

[21] The *adlecti* include C.Aelius P.f.Quirinus Domitianus Gaurus, *ILS* 2748, Clodius Euhodus, Clodius Pal. Sabuius, *AE* 1976. 140, M.Falcidius M.f.Pal. Hypatianus, vi. 1944, C.Julius Puteolanus, x. 1804, N.Naevius N.f.Vitulus, x. 1807, M.Nemonius M.f.Eutychianus, x. 1576, while P.Aelius Eudaimon, x. 1786, M.Bassaeus M.f.Pal. Axius, x. 1795, Octavius Agatha, x. 1786, Pollius Felix, Stat. *Silv*. 2,2 133, Veratius A.f.Pal. Severianus, x. 3704, held magistracies. Calpurnius Pistus, x. 1784, M.Laelius Atimetus, x. 1783, Cn.Haius Pudens, Cn.Papirius Sagitta, x. 1786, are known simply as members of the *ordo*.

[22] D'Arms 1974, 114.

We can therefore safely assume that the real proportion of 'servile' decurions in Beneventum was considerably lower than indicated by the sources. Their position within the *ordo* may have been relatively prominent, however. Five out of twelve reached the duovirate or an equivalent office, while four held no magistracy.[28] It might seem that the freedmen's descendants penetrated deeper into the ruling class of Beneventum than they had done in Ostia and Puteoli. The issue of family continuity in the élite cannot be addressed on the basis of the available evidence.

In an attempt to move away from the traditional event-oriented approach to social history, these town studies have looked for some general patterns of continuity and change in local élites. On this basis a model for the workings of social mobility, i.e. the ways curial seats were vacated and filled, may now be outlined.

It seems clear that the constantly high turnover, which is apparent in Pompeii and traceable in the other towns, must be explained by structural factors rather than economic class struggle. Extinction was a very realistic threat to any family in antiquity; the fate of the Pompeian Eumachii, Numistrii and Alleii illustrates the level of risk to which even the nobility was exposed. Another hazard came from the practice of partible inheritance, which threatened to split up family fortunes whenever several heirs survived.[29] These factors

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[23] For the composition of the *ordo* of Beneventum see Garnsey 1975.

[24] 'Servile' magistrates and decurions: C.Adiectius C.f.Macedo, x. 1637, N.Afinius N.f.Pal. Hierax, x. 1638, C.Alban. Optatus, x. 1639, M.Gavius M.f.Pal. Sabinus, x. 1646, L.Lollius L.f.Suavis, x. 1648, C.Oculatius C.f.Pal. Modestus, x. 1619, M.Rutilius Aeliano, x. 1654, L.Staius L.f.Scrateius Manlianus, x. 1655, C. Umbrius A[pol]austus, C.Umbrius C.f.Concordius Secundus, *AE* 1981. 238–9, A. Vibbius A.f.Pal. Proc., x. 1657, C.Vibius Stephanus, x. 1658. Other magistrates and decurions in x. 1419, 1503, 1540, 1604, 1614, 1617, 1640, 1641, 1645, 1651, 1653, 1659, 1656, *AE* 1968. 125, 126. The list only includes inscriptions datable to the empire.

[25] Funerary: x. 1614, *AE* 1968. 126; non-funerary: x. 1419, 1540, 1640, 1641, 1645, 1656.

[26]*Decuriones:* x. 1604, 1617, 1638 (perhaps a *praetextatus*), 1639, 1653, 1654, 1659, *AE 19*68. 125; 1981. 238, quaestores/aediles: x. 1648, 1651, AE 1981 239, 'servile': x. 1637, 1638, 1639, 1646, 1648, 1654, 1655, 1657, 1658, *AE* 1981. 238, 239.

[27] This idea is further developed in a paper due to appear in the proceedings of a seminar on 'Bread and Circuses' held at the Institute of Classical Studies in London, September 1994.

may have provoked a continuous renewal, especially among the families with less solid backgrounds, who had to pass on their fortune intact if curial status were to be maintained. Other, probably wealthier, *gentes* managed to stay in the *ordo* for several generations.

New decurions were primarily recruited from among the annually elected *aediles* who were formally admitted by the *quinquennales* after their term in office. Members of the council were thus in effect appointed by general elections; the character of these annual events has been the object of considerable speculation. In Pompeii the idea of a plebeian takeover has been closely linked to the notion of the local elections as an open, almost modern democratic process, where candidates competed for the favour of the ordinary voter. By assuming the existence of an independent popular assembly, appointing the members of the *ordo,* it has been possible to explain the entry of new groups against the opposition of the established élite. However, the picture of democratic elections now appears both anachronistic and outdated; a closer study of the electoral campaigns suggests that the modern aspects have been exaggerated (cf. Mouritsen 1988, 44–69). They now emerge as highly structured processes, in which the élite through its social and economic power exerted a decisive influence on the voting. The elections remained crucial moments of élite competition, the outcome of which may not have been a foregone conclusion; but the 'old versus new' model ignores the importance of clientelism and social control in Roman society. Without the support from parts of the old élite new families would probably never have made it to the *ordo*. In reality the electoral contests would often have crossed the old/new divide, which may have represented a social rather than a political distinction.

In this model of social change a high degree of mobility is fully reconcilable with a fundamentally stable power structure. It combines the inherent stability of the traditional élite with a considerable demographically conditioned turnover of new families.

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[28] High offices: x. 1619, 1637, 1646, 1655, 1657, decurions: x. 1638? 1639, 1654, *AE* 1981. 238.

[29] The importance of these demographic and legal factors has been stressed by Hopkins 1983, 31–200, explaining the high turnover in the republican and imperial senate.

Their entry was not the result of economically distinct social groups competing against each other, but relied on integration into existing social networks controlled by the old élite. The inner circle within the *ordo* was itself not a static body; but precisely because their position generally rested on a solid material basis, such changes were gradual, un-dramatic, and caused primarily by structural factors, i.e. extinction, splitting up of fortunes, and internal competition within the nobility rather than pressures from below.

It follows from this interpretation that the *ordo* was a highly heterogeneous body; in fact, it may no longer represent a precise definition of the ruling class. A distinction must be drawn between the official élite, which was a centrally prescribed number of councillors, and the families who dominated the town economically, socially, and politically. Thus, the entry of new men into the *ordo* does not necessarily imply that they had gained real power or prominence. They may simply have held some of the seats frequently vacated by families falling victim to the structural risks, which restricted the membership of most newcomers to a single generation. We are therefore not so much dealing with 'an open élite' as with a *de facto* élite which was considerably smaller than the official élite, represented by the *ordo*. To bridge the gap between the two bodies new men were constantly recruited from among ambitious commoners who were willing and able to meet the far from negligible costs involved.

The low ranking of newcomers, observed in both Ostia and Puteoli, suggests that the social heterogeneity, apparent also in Pompeii, may have been reflected in the internal hierarchy of the *ordo*. Thus, a similar correlation between social standing and curial rank can be traced in the *album* from Canusium (ix. 338), which gives the complete register of the Canusine *ordo* in AD 223. It lists the patrons of the town, the *quinquennalicii, duoviralicii, aedilicii, quastoricii, pedani,* and *praetextati,* junior members of the council. Unfree descent cannot be traced here with the same degree of certainty, Greek *cognomina* being a dubious indicator of servile origins in southern Italy. The social composition of the *ordo* will therefore have to be approached from a prosopographic rather than an onomastic angle. Scholars have managed to identify two social types, representing opposite ends of the status ladder: first, 'isolated' decurions who have no identifiable relatives on the list, and second, decurions who were related to the highest ranking members, the *quinquennalicii*. Both criteria indicate that the lowest stratum of the

ordo, the *adlecti* or *pedani,* as they are called here, were socially distinct not only from the higher magistrates but also from the *praetextati,* young nobles already lined up for a magisterial career (see e.g. Jacques 1984, 456–96). Apparently the *pedani* were new men continuously admitted to fill the lower ranks of the council, under the control and patronage of the established nobility.

The general patterns of social mobility, which have been outlined so far, merely constituted the basic grammar of a language which allowed a great variety of expressions. The towns of imperial Italy showed an immense diversity in terms of size, urban development, level of prosperity, and economic structure. In most respects, therefore, the 'typical' Italian town would seem to be an abstract notion with little bearing on the reality of individual communities.[30] However, this local diversity may not be entirely beyond systematization. The structure of the local *ordines* can possibly be brought down to a few crucial factors which determined the influx of new members: (1) the overall size of the community and (2) the format of the municipal institutions and the number of councillors.

In general, there was no direct relationship between the size of a town and the number of seats in its *ordo*. Traditionally it has been assumed that a standard *ordo* of 100 decurions was generally applied (cf. Duncan-Jones 1982, 283–7). Such uniformity now seems unlikely;[31] often the councils would have been smaller, consisting almost exclusively of former magistrates.[32] Occasionally we have indications of larger *ordines* with 100 or more decurions, but they are limited to a few major cities, where they may be the result of a later enlargement under the empire. In Pompeii the epigraphic evidence suggests that the number of decurions was considerably lower than 100. However, even if the councils were not themselves subject to any standardization, the general uniformity of the magisterial system meant that the size of their membership would have remained on a similar scale. In most Italian towns two new officials were appointed each year and subsequently admitted to the *ordo*. The number of individuals recruited to a council was therefore largely the same irrespective of the size of the community.

There are wide implications for the social make-up of the *ordo*. Filling an identical number of seats was obviously a different matter in a small to medium-sized community than in a major urban centre.

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[30] Patterson 1987 has rightly stressed the diversity of the Italian peninsula.

The *census* qualifications may not have been uniform throughout the peninsula; still, the figure of HS 100,000 appears to have been a common requirement (ibid., 243). Pliny gives it as the *census decurionalis* in Comum (*Ep*. i. 19), but perhaps more significantly Petronius (44) makes an oblique reference to this figure suggesting that it was a sum immediately recognizable as the property qualification of a municipal magistrate. The expenses involved in office-holding were also considerable. The electoral campaigns may have involved expensive private entertainment and perhaps public donations of *sportulae* or games. When elected the magistrates were obliged to pay *summae honorariae* and sponsor public games, in addition to providing the costs of running the town administration (Duncan-Jones 1982, 147–55). The number of families who could continuously meet these financial qualifications and demands would obviously have varied according to the size and affluence of the community. Presumably they would have been more numerous in large, wealthy cities like Ostia or Puteoli than in smaller towns. Given the identical size of the magisterial body, it follows that in large cities the economically solid nobility would have been able to hold a larger proportion of the posts. In other words, the bigger the community the lower the turnover of curial families.

A correlation of this type might explain the somewhat paradoxical differences between the Pompeian élite and those of Ostia and Puteoli. We do not know the turnover in the latter *ordines,* but assuming that the proportion of freedmen's descendants gives an indication of the total turnover, it was significantly lower than in Pompeii. The later official sources from the large ports indicate 13 per cent and 15 per cent of the magistrates being of servile origins, compared with 21 per cent in late Pompeii. Moreover, in Ostia and Puteoli most of the new families reached only the lower ranks of the *ordo,* which presumably were considerably larger than in Pompeii and most other Italian towns. If the *ordines* had been typical there might have been even less room for new-comers in these cities. On the other hand, in Beneventum, perhaps closer in size to Pompeii than the two ports, the new-comers seem to have held a more prominent position within the élite.

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[31] Nichols (1988) has convincingly shown the diversity of council sizes.

[32] The town councils, their size, structure and development will be discussed more fully in a forthcoming study of the administration of Italian towns.

Mobility can of course never be separated from the economic opportunities offered by a society for the creation of new money. But the appearance of new men in the local councils of imperial Italy may also be linked more specifically to the institutional structure of the *ordines* themselves. The fixed number of councillors—bearing little relation to the size of the town and its naturally sustainable élite—meant that a high turnover was often built into the system. As the margin between the stable élite and the statutory number of decurions varied from town to town, so did the level of social mobility surfacing in our sources. Viewed in this light the situation in Pompeii may represent, not typicality, but the system under its most optimal conditions. Economically the town was naturally prosperous with an important harbour and commercial interests; in size it was relatively small while still able to command a full complement of annually elected magistrates. High social mobility, allowing large sections of the population an (often brief) taste of public honours, was therefore an integral part of the structure of Roman Pompeii, rather than a disaster wrecking its foundations.

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5
The 'consumer city' domesticated? The Roman city in élite economic strategies[1]
Helen Parkins

The Roman city presents the ancient historian with something of a paradox: representing the hub of political and social life as it did, the city at the same time often receives a bad press in the extant literary sources for its corruption and immorality, typified by the presence of petty traders. Also paradoxical is the élite's relationship with the urban centre; while needing to maintain a presence in the city in order to win influence and ultimately political office, they frequently opted for the physical and moral haven of their country villas. To some extent this is explained by Weber's formulation of the concept of the 'consumer city', a model of the ancient city that locates these ambiguities in its socio-political composition, and which, by offering a solution to these apparent paradoxes, has attracted particular attention from ancient historians. In the Weberian scheme, the élite used the rents from their agricultural estates to pay for their conspicuous consumption in the town; this behaviour characterized both the ancient city and its economic outlook, and the élite's power base.

However, the most cursory glance at the sources for the ancient Roman city reveals a level and variety of economic activity and involvement in the town by the élite that appears to be largely unexplained by, or arguably even in conflict with, Weber's model. Not only does this apparent conflict itself need accounting for, but more importantly so too do the reasons for the extent of the élite's economic involvement in the town.

The former problem is addressed in the first part of this chapter, which briefly reconsiders the original intent of the consumer city model, the ways in which it has sometimes been (mis)appropriated by ancient historians for use primarily as an economic model,[2] and the implications this has had for looking at trading activity in the city. It also reviews the recent construction of an alternative perspective that avoids economic modelling but which nevertheless offers the beginnings of an explanation for economic activity by the élite in the city—though not its extent and variety—in a way that incidentally underlines the validity of Weber's model while adding some significant refinements. The second and more substantial part of this chapter specifically examines the reasons behind the élite's economic presence in the urban centre. Given that there is little or no argument with one aspect of Weber's model, namely that the economic activity of the Roman city (incorporating the rural hinterland) on a general level can be explained in terms of social and political relationships, this section of the chapter suggests that examining the operation of these socio-political relationships should help explain the scale of the élite's investment in the town, and thereby help us also to arrive at a new understanding of the Roman city.

The consumer city revisited

The concept of the consumer city—as resurrected for ancient historians by Moses Finley[3]—is derived from Weber's *The Agrarian Sociology of Ancient Civilizations*.[4] Briefly, it forms part of an attempt by Weber to characterize the ancient city, in order to determine the extent to which capitalism could be said to have existed in ancient society. In focusing attention on the basis of wealth in ancient society via this ideal-type, Weber offered a generalized sociological explanation not only for the location of social and political power but

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[2] See also Lomas, Morley, and Mattingly, this volume.

[3] Finley 1985, 125 n. 4.

[4] The 'consumer city' idea appeared first in Weber's *The Agrarian Sociology ofAncient Civilizations* (1909, republished in 1924 in *Gesammelte Aufsätze zurSozial- und Wirtschaftgeschichte*=Weber (1988); cf. also 'Die sozialen Gründe des Untergangs der antiken Kultur', *Die Wahrheit,* May 1896=Weber, op. cit.). It resurfaced in 'The City', first published in 1921 in the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik,* 48=Economy and Society, Chapter 16.

also for the lack of what we would call rational capitalism in ancient society. Put crudely, there were too many disincentives for the power-holders, that is, the land-owners, for rational capitalism to develop; large-scale investment other than in land would necessarily have reduced their power base. A related argument is that no capitalist development, such as that of 'industries', could be profitable (i.e. sufficiently large-scale) without the development of technology, but the land-based power of the self-interested élite prevented that investment, thus also precluding the development of market capitalism.

The second, and related, objective of Weber's characterization of the ancient city was to offer a comparison with the medieval city, again as part of the exercise in tracing the development of western capitalism. Weber's original argument runs as follows:

> the economic surplus of the ancient city…always had its basis in the rents which the landed princes and noble clans derived from their estates… The ancient cities were always much more centres of consumption than production, whereas the opposite is true of medieval cities.
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> (Weber 1988, 48)

According to Weber's scheme, the medieval world was typified by the separation of town and country, and by the competition between the élites from these two different spheres. The ancient world, on the other hand, provides a sharp contrast:

> Because town and country were united politically, and because the locus of politics was the heart of the town…the great landowners…formed at least the core of the political élite,… [and] played a dominant role in the organization of the town. In its crudest form, the model makes the landowners the sole members of the élite; the corollary is that specifically urban economic interests carry virtually no weight in the political process, and that no specifically urban élite can emerge.
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> (Wallace-Hadrill 1991, 241)

Weber's model, then, can be seen to represent the ancient city in terms of its economic function. In this view the role of the urban centre is largely a passive, rather than active one, in which the city is little more than the recipient of the rural élite's landed wealth. In

direct contrast, the country represents the dynamic half of the equation, actively generating rents for wealthy land-owners. It is this 'economic' interpretation of the consumer city model—rather than the historical-sociological explanations that it offers for the ancient city, and that were originally intended by Weber—with which ancient historians have principally been concerned. From this perspective, the Roman city has been seen in somewhat abstract and dichotomizing terms, of town versus country, in which their respective 'economies' are played off against one another in order to decide whether the ancient city was in fact a net consumer or producer (cf. Lomas 1995).[5] In this respect, the consumer city model has arguably been (mis)appropriated by ancient historians in recent years as a basis for understanding economic activity both in the town and the country.

Those who, for the most part, embrace Weber's 'consumer city' model,[6] particularly the idea that the landowning élite had little interest in the 'economy' of the town have, in addition, appeared to possess in their favour the evidence of Roman moralizers like Cicero, whose *De officiis,* 1. 150–1, which appears to denigrate all those involved in small-scale, typically urban trade, is often taken as confirmation of the avoidance of the commercial sphere —and the town—by the landowning élite. But a recent study has sought to challenge this idea of an élite who largely eschewed economic activity in the town, by bringing to bear the archaeological evidence of Pompeii. Taking his lead from Weber, Wallace-Hadrill's study (1994) is predicated on fundamental observations about élite behaviour which, taken together, indicate that the élite's apparent rejection of the urban centre, in the manner suggested by Cicero's moralizing, is misleading. We know, for example, that for political and social reasons these rural landlords were in fact obliged to spend much of their time in the town, since the town was the hub of all significant activity in these spheres. Largely through the extension of patronage, the élite were bound together with traders; partly in reciprocation of that patronage, the élite then drew electoral support from those traders. In addition to the necessary close contact that the élite had with the social and political spheres of the town, 'the

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[5] See also Whittaker 1995 for a review of other possibilities, such as the service city, the organizer city, and the processor city.

[6] See e.g. Finley 1985; Hopkins 1978; Jongman 1988; Whittaker 1990 and 1995.

economic dimension was also vital' (Wallace-Hadrill, 1991, 250). Opportunities for economic advancement abounded in the town, and could be harnessed, too, chiefly by the exercise of patronage. In this way, the élite could draw income from a variety of sources: from rental property, from the ownership of slave-run shops and workshops, and from businesses run by their freedmen. Consequently, it is argued, 'traders were…a simultaneous source of revenue and social position for their landlords' (Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 121).

Wallace-Hadrill's analysis of houses in Pompeii and Herculaneum confirms these basic assumptions, showing how the dependency that existed between the Pompeian élite and those involved in commerce —slaves, freedmen, clients, and so forth—is manifested in the residential and non-residential buildings in the town. In other words, the organization of these spaces strongly suggests that out of social, political, and economic necessity, or mutual dependency, members of the élite and traders lived in very close proximity to one another. While Wallace-Hadrill's study is primarily a revealing expose of Roman attitudes towards trade, its incidental effect is very broadly to endorse the 'consumer city' model of the ancient town. The dominance of the landowning élite in the ancient city is in fact underlined, if given a subtle twist, by the demonstration first, of the ways in which these rural landlords and agriculture could happily coexist with the town and its traders and, second, of how involvement with the town did not actually compromise the landowners' socio-political status. The supposition in the consumer city model that agriculture was the mainstay of the town's economy and of its élite is generally upheld, and it is equally clear that there is no new reason to posit the existence of a distinct urban bourgeoisie, with specifically urban interests, of the medieval type.

The consumer city re(de)fined?

There is in Wallace-Hadrill's picture, however, a significant progression from the original Weberian model. For in identifying the kinds of dependency that appear to have existed between élites and urban traders, and by exploring the ways in which these relationships of dependency were managed, Wallace-Hadrill brings into focus the role of households[7] and the socio-political, but also economic, relationships that they encompassed. What this suggests is that, in order to understand a city's 'economy', we should move

away from the town/country division which, as already mentioned, has typically fuelled ancient historians' interest, and instead look at the ways in which the élite managed their economic relationships— under the organizational umbrella of the household.

This should not be considered surprising; the original import of Weber's model was that the economy could be located in social and political relationships—indeed, it was only by doing this that Weber was able to isolate the unique characteristics of both ancient and medieval societies. Realizing the pivotal role of élite households demonstrates the continuing and underlying validity of Weber's thinking.

We can, in this way, move beyond the 'consumer city' (and, in particular, beyond perpetuating the town/country dichotomy style of analysis), and see the urban centre and its economic activities more clearly through its actors, thus giving the abstract 'city' a more meaningful shape and form in the sense of delineating more clearly the basis of its economic activities. We might, then, begin to model the city in a different way: one way of conceptualizing a city's economy would therefore be to regard it, as has been suggested for the Greek city, as the 'aggregate of economic activities of households and the relationships (both vertical and horizontal) between households' (Foxhall 1990a, 24). From this perspective, the urban economy should be seen not as different from (except where state-owned enterprises are concerned), but as inextricably bound up with the households of élite families. The 'city', then, can be regarded as comprising many mini-economies: the economies of individual households.

Urban investment: a question

It is not, however, my wish to be drawn further into remodelling the ancient city or into arguing for the validity or otherwise of the Weberian ideal type. My concern instead is with accounting for urban investment by the élite, a problem which arises from the refinements to the model suggested by Wallace-Hadrill. We have seen that the élite's presence in the town can be largely accounted for

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[7] I refer to households here to include immediate agnates and cognates, slaves and freedmen—arguably best conveyed by the Roman use of the word *domus* (Saller 1984; 1994, 80–8; cf. Dixon 1992, 1–11).

by their need to tap into the multiplicity of social and political ties that existed there, and that this need brought them into direct contact with the urban centre and its traders. But the level of urban investment suggested by the sources, especially the *Digest* (see further below), indicates that investment of this kind equated to something much more than just the convenient by-product of socio-political ties, as implied by Wallace-Hadrill. Otherwise it is hard to conceive that such extensive contact with low-status trade and traders could be of such importance for members of the élite who aspired to political office. The 'consumer city' model explains little in this respect; the modifications offered above, however, suggest that the answer will be found in the realms of social and political relationships, in the conceptual framework of the household; the question of urban investment therefore provides a test.

Contextualizing urban investment: élite households and economic management

Political competition

In Weber's model, and Wallace-Hadrill's additions to it, the élite's reliance on the urban centre for their social, but particularly their political contacts is central. The town was the centre of the political universe, and was thus the focus for the élite's aspirations in that direction. But, ultimately, the success of a member of the élite depended not just on the organization of his own personal contacts, but on the management of his entire household. For large-scale, wealthy households were always in competition with one another, not only trying to maintain their status, but also vying with one another socially and politically in order to improve that status and thus the status of the *paterfamilias,* since the greater one's status, the greater one's chances of political success. The importance of the country in terms of conferring status and prestige on those who invested their money in rural estates is beyond doubt. If there was any aspect of their wealth that the Roman élite were keen to play up, it was their rural investment. In the letters of two particularly well-known figures, Cicero and the younger Pliny, it is significant that their country estates often figure prominently. Duncan-Jones (1965, 181) notes Pliny's 'quiet ostentation' in his letters; Cicero, too, seems to take pleasure in mentioning the acquisition of new estates.[8]

Whether Cicero or Pliny actually involved themselves in the running of the estates was largely immaterial. Whether one's farms generated huge rents, too, was not entirely the point. As important as the amount of rental income was the fact that symbolically the ownership of a rural estate signalled one's arrival amongst the gentry, and thus represented a potential step on the political ladder. Status was in part dependent on ownership of rural property, and the acquisition of further status and political office was the point behind the élite's presence in town. But status and an income from agriculture were not enough for those intent on entering the political arena: in order to play the political game one needed financial readies.

Ready cash was necessary since influence and support could partly be won, as is well documented, by making direct payments, and by providing loans and services; but the display of financial largesse and well-being also helped to make an impression, such as paying for civic buildings or for their repair, financing shows, buying grand residences, erecting private monuments,[9] and so on.[10] All these could add up to make a substantial claim on one's financial resources (Frederiksen 1966). This kind of competitive pressure is further reflected in the sumptuary legislation of the late Republic (including senatorial decrees and censorial edicts) and the early empire (imperial edicts). This took the form of measures to restrict both individual display and, interestingly, the consumption levels of individual households *(luxus mensae);*[11] some laws in this period (*c.* 100 BC–AD 50) were explicitly aimed at restricting expenditure by electoral candidates.[12] Broadly speaking, however, sumptuary laws *(leges sumptuariae)* enacted during this period were designed to put a brake on the extremes of ostentatious expenditure and to prevent the aristocracy from bankrupting themselves in the attempt to compete with one another in this way.[13] The restrictions also carried with them the aim of stopping any *one* individual or family from 'winning' the (political) competition and permanently carrying off the trophy (as did eventually happen with the establishment of the

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[8] Duncan-Jones (1965, 181) counts references in different letters to Pliny's various rural estates, as follows: Comum, 14 times; Tifernum, 9; Laurentium, 7. The letters in which Cicero mentions his rural estates are too numerous to cite here, but are listed in Shatzman 1975, especially 403–9.

[9] Such as the *fanum* Cicero had built in memory of his deceased daughter, Tullia. On Tullia's *fanum,* see *Att*. 12. 12; 12. 18; 12. 19; 12. 23; 12. 35; 12. 36; 12. 37; 12. 38a; *Phil*. 9. 15.

principate).[14] Conspicuous consumption was thus all part of the political competition, and another aspect of that competition meant accumulating friends, clients, and dependants, some of whom might periodically need financial help,[15] at times that could not be predicted. In short, the élite were forced to look for income that would go some way to meeting immediate cash needs.[16] Thus the need to get ahead economically, and to produce (and consume) surpluses entailed the *paterfamilias* of a wealthy household exploiting opportunities for enrichment (leading, hopefully, to improved status), and in particular, for generating ready cash. This aim resulted in a 'branching out' of the household and its economic interests.

Now, a wealthy Roman might have large sums of money tied up in land, but while rural estates could undoubtedly be very profitable and could provide the bedrock of financial (and status) security, it is unlikely that rural rents could be depended upon for ready cash (Duncan-Jones 1965; 1982). The operation of credit —in various guises—went some way to meeting immediate needs, and a study of the financial portfolios of senators in the late Republic (Shatzman 1975) details most vividly the ways in which the finances of a Roman aristocrat were likely to be in a constant state of flux. Finance, it seems, could be procured from patrons, clients, friends

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[10] See Duncan-Jones 1965 and 1982 on Pliny's expenditure on public and private gifts. His lifetime gifts to the town of Comum alone are estimated to have amounted to HS 1,600,000. On senatorial expenditure more generally during the late Republic, see e.g. Shatzman 1975, Chapter 4.

[11] For the difficulties created by the *luxus mensae* and sumptuary laws generally, see *Fam*.7. 26; 9. 15; 9. 19; 9. 20; 9. 23; 9. 24; 9. 26; *Att*. 13. 7; 13. 52.

[12] The *lex Antia* of 71 BC restricted dining out (aimed at magistrates and magistrates-elect); the *lex Tullia* (63 BC) put limits on gladiatorial shows held by electoral candidates.

[13] Daube (1969, 117 ff.) sees sumptuary legislation as acting to protect the 'non-tipper': 'the then prevailing strict notions of *officium,* of what was owing to one's friends and retainers, the problem of pressure was…so serious that it could not be left to convention'.

[14] The effectiveness of sumptuary legislation may, however, be doubted. Athenaeus (6. 274), on the subject of an earlier sumptuary law, the *lex Fannia* (161 BC), suggests that only a small minority strictly observed the restrictions.

[15] Urban property could be used, too, by wealthy patrons to provide housing for their clients (Wallace-Hadrill 1989a); it could also be used to loan or let to friends and family members (Patterson, forthcoming; cf. Rawson 1976, 87).

and family, as well as from professional money-lenders; additionally, lending money was itself another way of raising cash.[17] But the scale on which the Roman élite invested in urban property, such as houses, apartments, warehouses, shops, and so forth, seems to suggest that the town represented more than just the social and political hub of things; that it was, in fact, another important source of finance.[18] The income from these urban sources was as significant, albeit in a different way from, as that from their rural estates.[19]

The function of urban property in generating revenue is a subject that has received relatively little attention in recent scholarship. A key reason for this may lie in the nature (though not the quantity or variety) of the extant source material, for although urban investment was of concern only to the richer members of society, and 'although the ancient sources overwhelmingly reflect, and normally emanate from, the same upper strata of the population, their indifference [to property] is shattering' (Finley 1976a, 2). That we do not have much explicit evidence for urban investment by individual members of the élite may be for a number of reasons: the very extent and diversity of property investment makes it difficult for us to reconstruct many individuals' property holdings, and that diversity in itself may have been desirable for the sake of appearances—for reasons of social *mores* it may not have been desirable to 'advertise' one's urban investments. Thus, although we are faced with apparently abundant and varied evidence—archaeological, epigraphic, legal, and literary—we can, for the most part, reconstruct Roman use of urban property only from incidental and anecdotal references. Nevertheless, used with due caution and placed in a wider context,

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[16] This problem is underlined in Duncan-Jones's assessment of Pliny's finances. While Pliny was undoubtedly well off, and had a number of rural estates, 'his immediate cash resources amounted to considerably less than his holdings in land' (Duncan-Jones 1965, 180); one way in which Pliny was able to meet his cash needs was by borrowing cash from his mother-in-law.

[17] Duncan-Jones (1965, 180) estimates Pliny's annual income from loans made at interest to have amounted to HS 200,000.

[18] The town was, of course, only one way of generating income. Others might typically include making loans, taking public contracts, and long-distance or whole-sale trade. See e.g. D'Arms 1981 for fuller discussion of other options.

[19] See also Garnsey (1976, 127), who suggests that Cicero's income from urban rents largely matched that from his rural properties.

those references can be revealing of the relevance of urban property to individuals such as Cicero.[20]

It is sometimes thought unlikely that the Roman élite would choose to invest in urban property, on the grounds that it was a high-risk operation. It was financially risky on a number of counts: if the owner did not invest in the upkeep of the property—either because he could not afford to do so or because not to do so meant a greater net profit—then he ran the risk of his property collapsing. Alternatively, the safety of one's own property might be placed in jeopardy by neighbouring, badly maintained properties, making them particularly vulnerable if fire were to break out; one also ran the risk of defaulting tenants, or even bad middlemen.[21] All these possibilities might wipe out one's profit and investment at a stroke.

On the other hand, such risks could be rationalized against the possibility of substantial financial gain. No doubt if one could always find tenants, there was little incentive to maintain a tenement properly; Juvenal (*Satires,* 3. 165)[22] hints that finding tenants to fill wretched lodgings[23] was not difficult, such was the demand. That demand meant that rents could be high in relative terms. But although profits might be spectacular—especially in the short term—they were never guaranteed. Modern doubts over the attraction of urban property to the Roman élite are no doubt fuelled by apocryphal tales in the sources, and by the concern expressed by people such as Cato and Cicero (Pavis D'Escurac 1977, 343–4). The thought that urban investment was risky probably derives largely from Aulus Gellius (*NA* 15. 1. 1–3), in which the sight of an *insula* on fire provokes a discussion amongst Antonius Julianus and his friends about the high returns, but also about the correspondingly high risks, of urban investment.[24] This anecdote does not, of course, stand alone as far as highlighting the risks of urban investment is concerned: the dangers of collapsing tenements, together with the fire risk that they posed, were widely recognized. Part of Juvenal's urban nightmare

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[20] See papers by Garnsey and Rawson, in Finley 1976b. Garnsey, however, discusses urban investment mainly with a view to speculation or urban rents. Investment in 'industry' is for the most part ignored.

[21] For the potential benefits and drawbacks of using middlemen in the management of urban property, see generally Frier 1980. On Cicero's employment of middlemen to manage his urban properties in both Rome and Puteoli, and on the particular legal advantages to Cicero of using middlemen to handle the troublesome Puteolan buildings, see Frier 1978.

includes the dangers posed by poorly constructed (or badly maintained) *insulae:*

> nos urbem colimus tenui tibicine fultam
> magna parte sui; nam sic labentibus obstat
> vilicus et, veteris rimae cum texit hiatum,
> securos pendente iubet dormire ruina.
> vivendum est illic ubi nulla incendia, nulli
> nocte metus…

> (But here we inhabit a city supported for the most part by slender props: for that is how the bailiff holds up the tottering house, patches up gaping cracks in the old wall, bidding inmates sleep at their ease under a roof ready to tumble about their ears. No, no, I must live where there are no fires, no nightly alarms.)

<div align="right">(Satires, 3. 193–8; Loeb translation)</div>

Building regulations designed to prevent both fire and collapse seem to have been a continual preoccupation, perhaps especially during the early principate.[25] The constant enactment of new legislation, or the re-enactment of old laws, during this period is itself testimony to the problem, and also to the difficulty of finding an effective remedy. Fire continued to be a hazard of urban life despite the efforts of the early emperors: clearly, the possibility of fire was still a real threat by the time Aulus Gellius was writing, around the middle of the second century AD, and slightly later, in the time of Herodian (7. 12. 5–7).

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[22] It is worth noting that Juvenal goes on to mention (*Satires,* 3. 166) that as well as having to find money to pay the rent, plenty of money was also necessary to feed one's slaves. It is therefore questionable how wretched the lodgings are that he has in mind, or whether in fact he is adopting the persona of a grumbling member of the senatorial order; the context is partly one of moaning about social competition. It was certainly not uncommon for the senatorial orders to rent urban property for their personal use: see Frier 1980, 41–7, for sources and commentary.

[23] On living conditions generally, see especially Yavetz 1958 and Scobie 1986.

[24] Discussed more fully by Frier 1980, 21–2.

It might be thought that having a number of urban properties would entail a fair amount of risk for the owner. But diversity actually made for security,[26] reducing as it did the risk of complete household failure or bankruptcy. In a diverse household the loss of, say, one shop due to fire need not have meant financial ruin.[27] In this respect, therefore, it is unlikely that, as is sometimes suggested, urban investment was high-risk. On its own, perhaps, and in comparison to investing in land, urban investment probably *was* more risky. But if seen in the context of an economic portfolio that included—like Cicero's—enterprises both in the town and in the country, then the risk involved in urban investment was effectively limited; in any case, for the very rich the risk was undoubtedly worth taking, and could be coped with. We should not forget, either, that rural land was by no means immune from unforeseeable disaster[28] and, as has been suggested, it could be the case that urban property was regarded as a kind of insurance against such a possibility— reinforcing the idea that a 'balanced portfolio' (that is, balanced between town and country)[29] was in fact the ideal.

But other evidence very much supports the idea of extensive urban investment by the élite, despite the relative lack of specific individual examples. The frequency with which properties were let is reflected particularly in the *Digest,* a substantial chunk of which is

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[25] For building regulations in the sources see Robinson 1992, 34–8 and, on the prevalence of fires and the organization of firefighting, 105–10.

[26] Diversity in urban property is paralleled in rural landholding. On rural land fragmentation and its implications, particularly as an indicator of risk avoidance see e.g. Foxhall 1990a, ch. 6; Parkins 1995, 188–91 (though cf. esp. Duncan-Jones 1976, and 1982, Appendix 1, where it is argued that land fragmentation was largely the result of inheritance mechanisms). On other risk-avoidance strategies for agricultural land use (and for the household more generally), see especially Foxhall 1990a and 1990b for discussion and further bibliographical references.

[27] The objective of risk avoidance suggests that it may have been preferable not to own a whole *insula* block, particularly if, as in Rome, many tenements were constructed largely of wood, often poorly constructed and poorly maintained, and therefore especially susceptible to fire. Alternatively, it is possible that ownership of an entire block enhanced that *insula's* value as is arguably suggested at Pompeii.

[28] *D.* 19. 2. 15. 2–5 (referring to actions arising from tenancy) lists a number of possible catastrophes, ranging from the ravages of jackdaws and starlings to enemy invasion and earthquake.

given over to the countless legal problems, taken from all periods, arising directly from urban leasehold. Perhaps the best-known evidence for leasing among the richer social groups comes from Cicero's letters. Cicero sometimes purchased purely for his own personal use—his house on the Palatine falls into this category;[30] but it is equally clear that he acquired property that was only ever intended to be put to productive, or revenue-earning use. Amongst this latter category, for example, were the shops that Cicero inherited at Puteoli, in which he never sought much personal involvement, yet which brought him some 80,000 sesterces a year in rent (*Att.* 14. 9). He owned a number of other properties like this,[31] including other shops, workshops, and *deversoria;* some of them were purchased, some of them were the product of inheritance or dowry (see below). It should not be thought that Cicero, as a *novus homo,* was unusual in this respect; Shatzman's (1975) economic prosopography of senators in the late Republic demonstrates that urban property ownership was common among the senatorial order in this period, even for those with extensive hereditary wealth. No similar study has yet been undertaken for senators during the early principate, but there is evidence to suggest that urban property investment con tinued to be a feature of property 'portfolios'.[32] Frier (1980, 24) notes, for example, that Martial considered urban property investment to be typical among the élite, and that the *Digest* refers to brothels *(lupanaria)* owned by respectable men (*honestorumvirorum, D*. 5. 3. 27. 1).

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[29] A balance might also exist between different types of property within those two spheres, between high and low yield properties, and between properties that provided income more or less frequently. See Frier 1977 and 1980, and Patterson, forthcoming, on the variety of possible rental arrangements, ranging from those in which the rent was payable as often as once a week, and those that might be payable once a year or even less frequently.

[30] Cicero's enthusiasm to acquire a house on the Palatine in 62 BC is in itself symptomatic of social and political competition. He was motivated to make the purchase by the knowledge that it would guarantee him a place in Rome's most exclusive district, and that it would, by its very location, confer significant prestige; see e.g. Treggiari 1979, 59. See also Patterson, forthcoming, on evidence for other members of the Roman senatorial order owning houses on the Palatine.

[31] For a more detailed list and discussion of Cicero's properties, see Parkins 1995, Chapter 1.

Inheritance and dowry

Cicero's 'portfolio' of property shows, apart from purchase, two social and legal institutions[33] constantly at work: dowry and inheritance. Both these forms of property transmission had the potential to extend greatly a household's economic interests. The particular implications of dowry and inheritance for the economic significance of urban property have not, however, been specifically considered, despite a spate of recent and major studies of the Roman family and Roman women (e.g. Gardner 1986; Rawson 1986; 1991; Dixon 1988; 1992; Treggiari 1991). While it would be stretching credibility to argue that the provision of dowry and inheritance were the only motives behind urban investment, these two institutions can be shown to have a direct bearing on the economic outlook of a household, and on the management of urban property within an élite household's portfolio.

It is noticeable that, for the most part, separate entities were kept intact on inheritance. That is to say, although an estate might be divided into fractions, the beneficiaries could expect to receive whole 'enterprises' rather than, for example, a quarter-share of a workshop. This practice can be illustrated by Cluvius's will, in which Cicero received a rural estate at Puteoli, and at least two *tabernae*. He may have bought out the share of one Balbus (*Att*. 13. 46. 3), which comprised some *horti*. These were all separate entities, and the heirs do not seem to have had part shares in any one enterprise. Being able potentially to have one's estate divided into separate economic units in this way was, we may assume, preferable to leaving one's heirs to argue about how an estate was to be split up into fractions if there was no obvious way of doing so.

Having an estate comprising discrete units also meant that making legacies was an option for a testator. Ties of patronage, friendship, and so on could be numerous for someone in as public and influential a position as Cicero or the younger Pliny. Although one might make a friend an heir to one's will, another way of publicly

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[32] For more details of urban property ownership among wealthy families during the early principate, see Parkins 1995, Chapter 1.

[33] See Saller 1991, 28–9, for a summary of the debate over the relationship between law and actual practice, with particular regard to inheritance. Saller himself argues for seeing Roman law as largely embodying Roman habits and mores.

acknowledging a personal connection, without perhaps significantly diminishing the estate for the main heirs of the will, was to leave a (small) legacy to the person concerned. Although Cicero was often co-heir to a will, he also received numerous legacies.[34] Pliny, too, was 'regularly the recipient of legacies as a literary celebrity'; these amounted to a 'far from negligible source of income' (Duncan-Jones 1965, 180–1).[35]

In practice, leaving legacies may have been more of an obligation than an option. Gardner (1986, 179) argues that 'legacies to one's friends and social equals were…a normal and, indeed, expected provision'.[36] These considerations may well have encouraged the creation and maintenance of small, discrete 'enterprises'. Some indication of how urban property might be used in this context is provided by the *Digest;* an example of a legacy includes the bequest of a purple shop with its slave *institores* and the purple (32. 91. 2), but the legacy did not include the shop's debts and arrears. The legacy of a house could include an adjoining *insula* provided that they had been purchased as one and that the rents from both had been entered in the accounts together (32. 91. 6). Two adjoining shops might be legated to two different people (33. 3. 1). Small enterprises seem to be a common feature of legacies.

We should also remember that property offered the possibility of leaving the usufruct. That heirs or legatees could be left the usufruct of property seems to have been a common expectation (*D.* 7). *Insulae* feature among the examples given by the jurists; *insulae* could be built by the usufruct of vacant land (7. 1. 36); equally, one could become the usufruct of an *insula* (7. 53). A usufructuary of *tabernae*

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[34] Shatzman 1975, 409–11, lists all Cicero's testators.

[35] See also Duncan-Jones 1982, 22: 'Revenue from this source cannot be ignored when seeking an explanation of Pliny's capacity for large-scale generosity during his lifetime and in his will.'

[36] Cicero himself writes of his inheritances as being left to him by *amici etnecessarii* (*Phil.* 2. 40), thus broadly confirming Gardner's comment. Legacies were not, of course, confined to these categories; they could be left to one's patron, or to a former owner, as the list of Cicero's testators seems to demonstrate (Shatzman 1975, 409–11, although it is uncertain whether any of these specifically made Cicero a legatee, rather than an heir). Nevertheless, the *expectation* of receiving a legacy was probably greatest among social equals and friends. The apparent social unacceptability of trade does not seem to have deterred legacies of shops and workshops to similar, or same-status, friends to judge by Cluvius's will.

was entitled to let them for hire, or even to use the shops to sell different merchandise from that of the testator (7. 1. 27. 1). Urban property must have been particularly suitable in this respect.

In short, inheritance was the main way in which a (wealthy) household might accrue economic enterprises. But it was unpredictable: one might inherit an agricultural estate or a tiny urban workshop. At the same time, the laws pertaining to the division of an estate on the death of the testator, together with social considerations and obligations, probably encouraged the formation—at least among those possessing a large household—of a multi-faceted estate, with easily separable units that were economically productive.

Another way in which a household might acquire or give away property was via dowry. As with inheritance, the laws concerning the giving, use, and recovery (and even inheritance) of a dowry were many and complex. By Cicero's time, however, some fundamental principles had become established.[37]

In the early Republic the most common form of marriage was *manus* marriage, in which the woman left her natal household (and the *potestas* of her father) for that of her husband. She then belonged in her husband's *potestas,* and any dowry that she brought with her (usually comprising some property) was completely merged with that of her new household. By the later Republic, *manus* marriage seems to have become less popular. Non-*manus* marriage, in which the woman remained in her natal family (and in the *potestas* of her father), appears to have taken preference over *manus* marriage (Dixon 1992, 41–2, 114). In mar riage *sine manu,* any property the wife brought with her as dowry remained hers.[38] The husband was thus regarded not as the absolute owner of the dowry, but simply as a kind of temporary administrator, expected to maintain the dowry's value at all times (ibid., 51–2; Gardner 1986, 102–3).

A dowry belonging to a woman of a well-off family was typically expected to comprise property and cash, and in practice 'many families would probably make up a package of cash, movables and real estate' (Treggiari 1991, 346).[39] Notable individuals like the younger Pliny, who had many ties of patronage and friendship, might, in addition, often provide the dowries for others outside their

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[37] Gardner 1986 and Treggiari 1991 contain the most useful recent discussions of more specific social and legal aspects of dowry than it is possible to cover here. Older, but still valuable, is Corbett 1930.

immediate family (see further below). Our knowledge of actual dowries and their exact composition is, however, rather more tenuous than Treggiari's remark suggests.[40] Cicero's first wife Terentia is thought by Plutarch to have brought to the marriage a dowry worth HS 400,000. Plutarch probably refers only to the cash element; the *insulae* on the Aventine and the Argiletum are generally assumed to have formed the property part of the dowry.[41] But given the paucity of evidence for other dowries it is difficult to know whether specifically urban property was commonly included in a generous dowry (although this seems to be the expectation of the jurists: see, generally, *D.* 23 and 24). Another example is the dowry that Cicero intended to provide for his daughter Tullia: in *Att.* 11. 2. 2 he refers to *fructus praediorum* that he clearly has it in mind to set aside for the dowry. The *praedia* he is referring to could mean either his urban *praedia* or his rural estates, although the former seems to be implied. The younger Pliny mentions the presents of dowries made to daughters of his friends, one to Calvina (*Ep.* 2. 4. 2), and the other to the fiancée of Nonnius Celer (*Ep.* 6. 32. 2). However, it is only for Terentia's dowry that we have virtually certain confirmation of a property component; Tullia's dowry is only discussed in terms of *fructus,* and both Calvina and Nonnius Celer's fiancée seem to have received only cash from Pliny.

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[38] This was also apparently the case, by this time, for a woman *in manu,* although the legal force behind this observation is not known; see Treggiari 1991, 325.

[39] It should be noted that, strictly speaking, a dowry was optional: it was not a legal requirement for a marriage. However, social pressure, particularly among the élite, probably made the provision of a dowry 'customary, though not compulsory' (Gardner, 1986, 97).

[40] To illustrate the scale of the problem: there are 144 Roman senators from the period from Sulla to Augustus about whose financial affairs something is known (Shatzman 1975). Of these, only seven are known to have definitely received a dowry, of whom two are Cicero and his brother Quintus.

[41] The *insulae* must have formed part of the dowry since, at the time of their divorce, there seems to have been some debate between Cicero and Terentia as to whether he should return the *insulae* to her. In the event, he retained the *insulae* to cover Marcus's expenses (Att. 15. 17. 1; 16. 1. 5); payment of children's expenses was one of the recognized functions of a dowry. See also *Att.* 15. 20. 4, on the mention of *praedia dotalia,* which seems to refer to the *insulae.*

'Real estate', the modern term used by Treggiari, is arguably most suggestive of rural property or land, and farms, orchards, vineyards, and so forth are certainly most frequently mentioned in the *Digest*. However, that non-agricultural property like Terentia's *insulae* could equally be a feature of a dowry is also indicated by the *Digest;* dotal land was taken to refer to both urban and rural land (*D*. 23. 13 pr.). According to the jurists, examples of what a dowry might comprise include quarries and mines (*D*. 23. 3. 32; 23. 5. 18; 24. 3. 7), but, as suggested, could also comprise 'urban lands' (*praedia,* 24. 3. 7. 11; Treggiari 1991, 349 n. 138) and other, presumably urban, property such as a bakery *(pistrinum),* a shop (*taberna,* 25. 1. 6), or *horrea* (25. 1. 1. 5). That urban property was often included in dowries is indicated by measures to be taken for recovery of a dowry, or for the maintenance of its original value. If a dowry were to be recovered then rents from urban land needed to be taken into account (*D*. 24. 3. 11). Repayment for expenses on dotal property had normally to be deemed 'useful'; expenses of this kind included the addition of a shop or bakery to the wife's property (*D*. 25. 1. 5. 3–25. 1. 6).

The ultimate purpose of the dowry was to provide for, or at least contribute to the expenses of, any children of the marriage. More immediately, however, the social and legal expectations were that it would be used to benefit the conjugal household in general. The extent of that contribution is not altogether clear: it may have been intended simply to supplement the household's income or produce or, to take a more positive view, to '*enhance* the conjugal economy' (Dixon 1992, 51–2; my emphasis). Whatever the case, it was clearly supposed to be more than just a token gift.

In sum, if a wife were to bring a dowry to her marriage, then, whether she was in a *manus* marriage or not, two considerations above all were important: property (if forming part of the dowry) had to be made available straightaway, and it had to be both revenue-earning and, preferably, profitable. For the provider of the dowry—usually the woman's *paterfamilias*—this obviously meant that it was essential to have one or more parts of his estate that were instantly 'detachable'. The necessity of providing a dowry must therefore have encouraged, as did considerations of inheritance, the formation of small economic enterprises within the estate.

Pompeii: a test case?

An élite household, then, was highly likely to have an urban interest. Income from urban property helped provide for consumption needs that were commensurate with political competition; at the same time, urban property was probably more readily divisible into smaller, economically viable units than rural estates, and allowed the élite to meet the demands that inheritance and dowry made on their resources. So far the arguments for urban investment rest largely on the literary, epigraphic, and juristic sources, but if the suggestions made on the basis of non-archaeological sources are largely correct, it follows that we should find evidence for both divisible and rental properties in the archaeological record.

Pompeii's extensive and generally well-preserved urban remains, and particularly its numerous non-monumental buildings, make it an obvious choice for testing these ideas. The potential dangers of using Pompeii as a historical testing-ground, particularly for applying conclusions to Roman society more generally, have been thoroughly rehearsed in recent years;[42] nevertheless, its advantages are usually held to outweigh its possible hazards. In addition, Pompeii is especially useful for the purpose of ident ifying divisible and rental properties since its epigraphic record also includes rental advertisements.

The two most well-known examples of rental notices refer, between them, to the leasing of shops, baths, apartments, and a town house (*CIL* iv. 138, 1136). The buildings were owned by Gnaeus Alleius Nigidius Maius and Julia Felix respectively. Alleius ranked among Pompeii's most prominent citizens; he was *quinquennalis* at least once, in AD 55, and seems also to have stood for aedile and *duovir* at some time (Mouritsen 1988). Of Julia Felix we know virtually nothing, although the very fact that she appears to have owned a range of properties including baths clearly suggests that she

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[42] Arguments for and against the use of Pompeii as a testing-ground for aspects of Roman social behaviour are now too numerous to list here. As well as the difficult question of how far Pompeian evidence can be used as evidence of Roman social behaviour in general, another severe problem is the destruction of valuable archaeological evidence by past excavators and the potential that has for distorting inferences made on the basis of the remaining archaeology. Among the most pertinent and comprehensive discussions of these and related problems are those by Wallace-Hadrill 1991; 1994; 1995; Laurence 1994; see also Dunbabin 1995.

was relatively well-off. These two Pompeians seem to have had sizeable blocks of property available for lease; in the case of Alleius, this included most or all of a small *insula,* the so-called Casa di Pansa. The advertisement relating to Alleius' properties is of most interest for our purposes, since we know that he was one of Pompeii's most successful and powerful citizens. The notice (*CIL* iv. 138)[43] refers to the leasing of shops, apartments, and a town house, and is generally thought to refer to the *insula* where the notice itself was found, the Insula Arriana Polliana (Regio VI, insula vi; see Figure 5.1).[44] A recent detailed re-examination of the *insula's* fabric (Pirson forthcoming) casts new light on the interpretation of the advertisement, and provides a useful insight into Pompeian property organization.

There are *tabernae* on both sides of the main entrance to the *insula* (VI. vi. 1). One of these (VI. vi. 22) is connected to the main house by a doorway. There is good reason to suppose that the fact that the *taberna* is connected directly to the house, and to the *atrium,* can be taken as suggesting that this shop was leased to a tenant. This is because, according to our extant literary sources, the *atrium* represented the focal point of the (élite) house: its very presence distinguished a 'man of fortune' (and political ambition) from one of only everyday means (Vitr. *Dearchitectura,* 6. 5. 1). It was part of the house's public façade, the area which both accommodated and reflected the social relationships of the owner; it was the place where guests were received (Cic. *De off.* 1. 139), but more particularly where the owner'sclients came for the morning *salutatio.* It was therefore a vitalelement in the expression of one's social status (Tac. *Ann.* 3. 55;Saller 1984; Wallace-Hadrill 1988; 1994). It would have beendetrimental to the owner's status to allow many of his tenantsdirect, uninvited access to the *atrium.* Instead, the connectingdoorway is suggestive of some kind of direct social and economiccontinuity between the house and the *taberna;* it is thereforepossible that this *taberna* was run by a member of the owner'sfamilia, a slave or freedman.

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[43]*CIL* iv. 138: Insula Arriana/Polliana [C]n Al[le]i Nigidi Mai/locantur ex [k (alendis)] Iulis primis tabernae/cum pergulis suis et c[e]nacula/equestria et domus conductor/convenito Primum [C]n Al[le]i/Nigidi Mai ser(vum).

[44] On the location of *CIL* iv. 138, see Fiorelli 1875, 105–6.
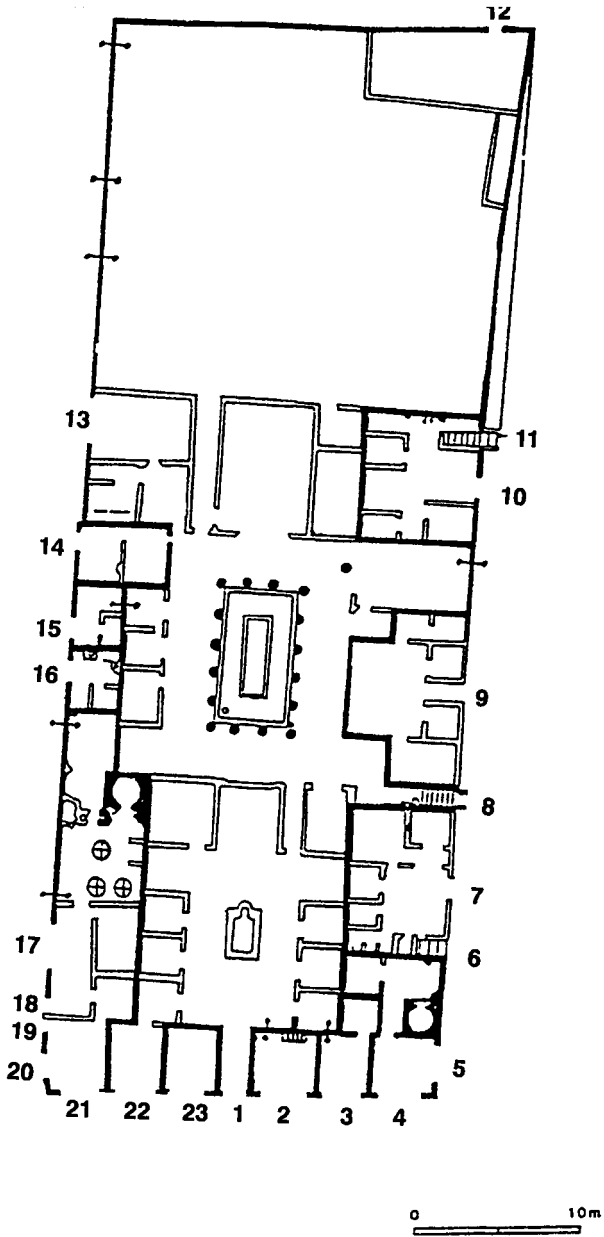
Figure 5.1 Plan of the Casa di Pansa/Insula Arriana Polliana (Regio VI, insula vi),
Pompeii

The other *tabernae,* at VI. vi. 2–4 and 23, do not share a connecting doorway with the house, but are self-contained units. This is now further underlined by Pirson's study: beam-holes and downpipes in the partition walls between the *tabernae* are evidence for upper floors, which means that the *tabernae* would conform to the *tabernae cum pergulis suis* of the rental advertisement. Pirson suggests that another three units on the west side of the *insula* (VI. vi. 14–16), likewise incorporating mezzanine floors, should also be considered. Although they are clearly not shops or workshops (none of them possesses the chief characteristic of either, namely a wide entrance), he points out that this does not conflict with the use of the word *taberna* in literary texts, where no layout is specified and where *taberna* can have a variety of meanings, from a small residential building to a public eating-and drinking-place (cf. Gassner 1986, 1–7). Given that *taberna* can mean the former, and that both the structure and location of the units at VI. vi. 14–16 are suggestive of leasing, Pirson argues that these *tabernae* should be regarded in this context as 'living-*tabernae*', and are among those meant in the rental notice.

Any identification of spatial function based on the literary texts should of course be regarded with caution (Allison 1992; 1993). To assume (on the basis of Vitruvius) that a Pompeian *atrium* had the same function as one in Rome may be mistaken: it may be that the former had a significantly less social and status-related function than its equivalent in Rome. If so, then there would be little or no basis on which to distinguish potential rental and non-rental property attached to an *atrium* house. That the Pompeian *atrium* was fundamentally similar to its Roman counterpart is, however, suggested by the very fact that some house-owners were clearly bothered about having the *taberna* or *tabernae* physically separated from the *atrium* by a wall. If the *atrium* was not the focal point of the house, as it was at Rome, there would simply be little point in making this distinction. Moreover, since we can identify with some confidence the separate *tabernae* at VI. vi. 2–4 as the *tabernae* offered for rent in *CIL* iv. 138, it would seem that, where there is no connecting doorway between an *atrium* (or *atrium* house) and a *taberna,* it suggests that the *taberna* was leased. It also tends to confirm that the Pompeian *atrium* had much the same significance as its Roman equivalent.

Thus the lack of a connection between *tabernae* and the main structure (usually a *domus*) can be regarded as a probable signifier of rental property. Further confirmation of the physical separation of

rental property comes from the suggested location of the *cenacula equestria* belonging to the Insula Arriana Polliana. These rented apartments, almost certainly on the first floor, were characterized by their external entrances reached by external staircases (Pirson forthcoming). By comparison, a connecting doorway between the *atrium* and *taberna* is strongly suggestive of non-rental property, since it indicates continuity between house-owner and business (e.g. Gassner 1986; Parkins 1995; Pirson forthcoming).

This analysis of the Insula Arriana Polliana shows Nigidius's ownership of a variety of urban property. Alongside the rental property mentioned in the advertisement, identifiable from its non-connection with the main house, Nigidius also appears to have had some kind of direct involvement with other urban trade and traders, indicated by the existence of *tabernae* sharing a connecting doorway to the house. In Wallace-Hadrill's (1994) study of the urban fabric of Pompeii, while interaction between the élite and traders is suggested on the basis of *tabernae* within houses, as in this study, no further distinction is made between rental and non-rental *tabernae*. Yet for the purpose of understanding the ways in which the élite exploited economic opportunities in the town as well as in the country, the distinction is clearly relevant. It points up and confirms the picture painted by the non-archaeological sources; that is, of an urban environment in which the élite were able to generate income both through the ownership of rental property and through involve ment in businesses operated by their slaves and freedmen.[45] At the same time we can see how urban property lent itself to being readily divisible into small, self-contained units and 'enterprises'. These could either be let or separated from the economy of the household in order to make up a property component of a dowry, will, or legacy.

Moreover, it seems that what characterized the economic behaviour of the richer Roman or Pompeian in an urban centre was not just the maintenance of a couple of shops in the front of his house. Rather, it was economic opportunism, and this could lead to the ownership of disparate units across a city, or perhaps even across several towns, as in Cicero's case. It is this kind of behaviour that is reflected not only in Cicero's letters, but also, as we can see, in the urban fabric of Pompeii. It is, of course, impossible to tell from the archaeology alone the motivation behind urban investment of this kind; but I suggest that it makes greater sense when put in the context of the overall economic aims and concerns of the household.

Conclusions

None of this contradicts Weber's consumer city model. The point is, however, that by going beneath the surface of the model more interesting possibilities for understanding the function of the Roman city reveal themselves and other dimensions are opened up. Aspects of the extant sources begin to make sense and are accommodated in ways that are simply not possible in more generalist, and 'economic' applications of the model. Weber gave us a key to the Roman city by arguing for the primacy of élite social and political relationships. But it is only by moving beyond the consumer city that we can fully unlock the potential for understanding the urban centre by exploring the products and reflections of those relationships, the sources themselves.

Moving away from the consumer city model, then, but retaining its central sociological tenets, the exploration of social and political relationships of the Roman élite opens up a new dimension to their power in Roman society—their economic exploitation of the urban centre. The income they derived from rural rents may have provided the bedrock of their social status and wealth, but the city helped to supply more immediate cash needs as well as to meet the unpredictable demands—including dowry and inheritances—made upon their economic assets as a consequence and reflection of socio-political relationships. These demands were necessarily attendant on anyone playing the status and politics game. The urban centre held out the ultimate prize for those competing—political office—but, just as crucially, went a long way to providing the means for winning.

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[45] For the use of slaves and freedmen as agents in business, particularly in an urban context, see now Aubert 1993 and 1994. See also Garnsey 1981 (including discussion of freedmen as partners, not just as agents) and 1982; Treggiari 1980; Fabre 1981, especially 267 ff.

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6
Roman households: an archaeological perspective
Penelope M. Allison

This chapter assesses how a study of Pompeian house contents can throw light on the nature of Roman households. The study to which it refers was based on the analysis of thirty Pompeian *atrium* houses and their contents (Allison 1992a).[1] The chapter is particularly concerned with archaeological data, its relationship to textual data and with the nature of the information which the archaeological record can provide on the interactions of the people within a Roman household.

It commences with an appraisal of recent approaches to the concept of households which are directly relevant to the approach presented here. This appraisal plays an important role in the chapter because it demonstrates that previous research into the archaeology of households has not always fully appreciated the possibilities and limitations as well as the extent of the archaeological data. By highlighting some of the results of my Pompeian house contents study, I hope to illustrate how the available material culture, when used independently but in a systematic manner, can provide new and interesting perspectives on people living in the past.

How is a household identified archaeologically?

The term 'household', as defined by the *Oxford Dictionary,* refers to the people living in a house as well as to the maintenance of that establishment and to all the goods and furniture found in it. Thus, the components which can be investigated archaeologically and which are, therefore, of specific concern for an archaeological perspective of a household are the structure and its contents.

A recent publication which might be expected to provide a good model for such a study is Robert Blanton's contribution to the archaeology of households (1994). Blanton (1994, vi-vii) has summarized numerous and various types of recent archaeological and socio-anthropological studies of households. He argues (ibid., 3–4), somewhat simplistically (cf. e.g. Bourdieu 1970; Pader 1993), that anthropologists in their concern for concepts of kinship and social structural arrangements have neglected to give due emphasis to the house itself as a significant force in household behaviour.

Blanton's approach is, therefore, to concentrate on the structure of houses with a view to a comprehension of the wealth and economy of a society and to an understanding of how a household demonstrates its position in that society. However, he shows little concern for the internal dynamics and relationships of the household itself. His perspective is that the household is a social and economic unit which presents a united front to the wider community. In other words, while to anthropologists the term 'household' refers to people living in a house, to Blanton a household is a social entity, contained in a house, whose importance is the role it plays in the community at large. If Blanton is concerned with an archaeological perspective of households one might expect him to also pay attention to the inter-relationships of the members, spaces, fixtures, and fittings of the household itself.

As Lisa Nevett (1994, 666) has pointed out, Blanton's study is based on current anthropological material in the hope that this will assist in the interpretation of archaeological material. As such, he is dealing with apparently 'known' ethnographic infor mation. He does not need to elicit information on the spatial and hierarchical organization of the houses themselves as this information is provided by the published sources he uses. For example, he does not need to identify the functions of various parts of the house and hence how the house functions as a whole.

If Blanton were dealing with archaeological data, particularly that from prehistoric houses, these are the sorts of questions which would first need to be answered before using the household to extrapolate on its role in society at large. Because no archaeological data is used in his study, he is not faced with this problem. Thus, while his approach stresses the importance of cross-cultural studies and comparative methodologies to deepen our understanding of archaeological assemblages (Nevett 1994), despite its apparent objective, it does not actually deal with the problem of using archaeological assemblages to acquire an insight into households and household activities. Available archaeological and textual data from past cultures do not generally provide such 'known' information about the internal dynamics and spatial function in houses, as Blanton's ethnographic comparisons do.

A scholar whose work provides a more suitable model for the analysis of archaeological material for the examination of households is Amos Rapoport. In his environment-behaviour studies, Rapoport (1990a) is concerned with the cultural information provided by 'Nonverbal Communicators', precisely the approach one would expect to be taken by archaeologists. He has emphasized (ibid., 19–34) the difference between the meaning of the built environment to the producers (the architects) and to the consumers (the occupants). To study only the structure of a house, the fixed feature elements, or indeed also the semi-fixed feature elements, is not sufficient to develop some comprehension of this differentiation in meaning (Rapoport 1990b, 13). In a study of households, the non-fixed feature elements (the people, their activities and behaviours) are also very important sources of evidence. According to Rapoport (1990a, 101), more meaningful insights into household behaviour are provided by these non-fixed feature elements—the arrangement of the furniture, coffee cups, ashtrays, etc.

However, despite this crucial observation, Rapoport seems (1990b, 19) to be of the opinion that the relationship between environment-behaviour research and archaeology consists of a correspondence between the built environment—the fixed and semi-fixed feature elements only—and archaeology. He does not seem to have fully comprehended that this relationship also includes the non-fixed feature elements. By his own use, the term 'non-fixed feature elements' does not refer just to people and therefore ethnoarchaeology. It also includes artefacts and their distribution—furniture, coffee cups, ash trays, etc.

A number of recent Old World Archaeology studies have included such non-fixed elements in studies which present a more complete picture of ancient households and household activities (e.g. Roaf 1989; Daviau 1993; Nevett 1995). They have investigated settlement sites and used the artefacts which were excavated from the dwellings, as well as the structural remains themselves, to assess household behaviour and the activities which took place in the various spaces within the house.

As mentioned above, when dealing with contemporary houses and households, or even those of recent history, the reading of the types of non-verbal communicators—fixed, semi-fixed, and non-fixed feature elements—is relatively straightforward. However, this reading becomes more problematic when dealing with archaeological remains. There are two major problems in using archaeological excavations for analysing these aspects of settlement sites in order to obtain a better comprehension of the households.

The first problem, as scholars who have carried out such studies are well aware, is a technical one. The investigation of households through the non-fixed physical feature elements is a fairly recent development in archaeological research. It often requires a large inter- and intra-site sample to investigate meaningful patterns of domestic behaviour. The acquisition of such a study sample is by no means easy (cf. Daviau 1993, 25–33, 63; and *passim*). One of the main reasons for this is that the traditional perspective for the interpretation of domestic behaviour at archaeological sites has been to rely on the architectural remains, often with textual or ethnographic analogy (cf. Allison n.d. (1)). The actual artefacts which were excavated from these structural remains have been removed for production-oriented studies (e.g. pottery manufacture, stone tool technology, etc.). The provenance information required for household studies is invariably unpublished, and therefore not generally available for consideration without a detailed and time-consuming study of the original excavation notebooks and the compilation of the necessary data from scratch. Thus, while it is often impossible to use published excavation reports to carry out such a household study, it is also difficult to acquire a large enough sample from a modern excavation to make any general statement concerning household behaviour (cf. Roaf 1989).

However, another major, more theoretical problem in using archaeological sites to identify households does not seem to have been dealt with by scholars who have carried out such studies. Just

as ancient texts do not produce information which can be treated as if it were contemporary ethnographic data, archaeological sites do not produce tidy ethnographic pictures of past activity. Michael Smith (1992, 29) has argued that the household is an ethnographic category. He points out that, while this category undoubtedly involves the bulk of the population of ancient societies, it is extremely difficult to isolate the remains of a single household archaeologically. If one is concerned with the concept of a household then one is generally concerned with those people alive within the span of one generation only. Such a phenomenon is almost untraceable in most archeological sites. Smith therefore proposes that, because archaeologists are normally examining a sequence of households which have successively inhabited a given structure, household series and not households are the relevant and detectable unit in archaeology. Smith argues that this is the case for most archaeological sites, but that at sites which had a catastrophic abandonment event (and he specifically refers to Pompeii), it might be possible to identify a single household. I would be more cautious and argue (Allison 1992b) that even at Pompeii the archaeological record is much more complicated than is proposed in the idealized 'Pompeii Premise' (cf. Binford 1981; Schiffer 1985). In other words, at all archaeological sites including Pompeii, investigations of domestic behaviour are concerned with household series. However, Smith warns (1992, 30) that the concept of a household series is a construct whose social significance is virtually unknown.

In summary, while Blanton may criticize anthropologists, if unjustifiably, for their lack of concern for the physical aspects of a household, similar criticism might be levelled at him for his lack of concern for the internal dynamics of a household. Rapo port presents a much more coherent view of the role which non-verbal communication plays in domestic behaviour, and he argues for the relationship between environment-behaviour studies and archaeology. However, he too seems to have neglected to include a dimension of the archaeological record which plays an important part in the household—that is, the non-fixed feature elements. Conversely, the archaeologists who have dealt with all these aspects to reconstruct past domestic behaviour have not emphasized the differentiation between households and household series. A discussion on an archaeological perspective of the Roman household must take all these aspects into consideration.

How has the Roman household been identified?

Studies of 'the Roman household' have been dominated by Roman social historians who have investigated Roman textual evidence for the information it can provide on the behaviour and inter-relationships of the people who constitute a household. Because of the nature of the available texts, which are largely literary, legal or epigraphical, these historians have followed an anthropological style of approach by showing concern for the behaviour of the people within a household as well as the social responsibilities of the household as an economic unit (e.g. Gardner and Wiedemann 1991). However, as Gardner and Wiedemann point out (ibid., xv), the available texts were not written with the purpose of providing such information for historians. The information is anecdotal and not specifically about Roman households. There is no Roman Mrs Beeton to give us an insight into how a Roman did or should run his/her household in each Roman period, for each Roman social stratum or in each part of the Roman world. Therefore social historians cannot behave, in relation to these texts, as if they were ethnographers extracting information from contemporary 'informants'. Fragments of information from diverse sources must be pieced together in an attempt to present glimpses of the form and structure of the Roman household.

Another problem with this textual approach is that the available texts are written, almost exclusively, by and for a particular class of Roman householder. These are the male élite, usually upper-class, householders. Therefore the image of a Roman household presented in such sources is that of this particular social group. While such an image is valid, it cannot be regarded as an holistic perspective of Roman households. The other members of the household, the women, children, slaves, have no direct voice in these sources. Epigraphical material can perhaps provide better insights into these other perspectives but the view-points presented in this evidence are also restricted. Funerary inscriptions, in particular, are written to impress the outsider, and therefore often present a more positive, or idealistic, picture of intra-household relationships than might actually be the case (Dixon 1988, 7; Gardner and Wiedemann 1991, xv).

A still further problem for an investigation of 'the Roman household' through any source of available evidence, already alluded to, is that it is not really feasible to present the impression

that 'the Roman household' was a uniform concept (cf. Gardner and Wiedemann 1991, xiv). Chronologically, the Roman period covers nearly 1,000 years. Geographically, the area under Roman control stretched from Scotland to Iran and included many diverse cultures. Therefore Roman households, in composition, practices, and ideals, would have varied considerably over time and space.

Not only is the textual information fragmentary and diverse, but one must also be cautious of taking it at face value or making generalizations from it. Nevertheless, from Roman texts we can learn much about people living in a house, during the Roman period, and about the maintenance of that establishment (e.g. Saller 1991; Gardner and Wiedemann 1991). Roman historians can use comparisons with anthropological methodologies and results, to present a rigorous assessment of the possibilities and limitations of their own data and interpretations.

How has archaeological evidence been used in the investigation of Roman households?

As Beryl Rawson has pointed out, while archaeology can contribute much to our view of Roman households (1992, 3; 243), recent studies have paid little attention to this possibility (ibid., 249). This seems rather strange, considering Smith's suggestion that it is only at sites like the Roman town of Pompeii that archaeologists can isolate the remains of a single household in the past. While I will take issue with Smith's statement later, I do agree that, if archaeology can contribute to our knowledge of Roman households, then the towns destroyed by the eruption of Mt Vesuvius should provide some of the best available evidence.

Previous research and research interests

Ever since its earliest excavations Pompeii has been famed as a window through which we can glimpse Roman domestic life. Scholars like August Mau (1908, 250–402) have purported to use the houses and artefacts from Pompeii to present an insight into Pompeian life. In fact, this insight has been achieved by ascribing textual nomenclature to the spaces and artefacts in Pompeii as if the archaeological remains provide an intended illustration of such texts. Recent scholars (e.g. McKay 1977, 30–63; Dwyer 1982, 113; Richardson 1988, 107–27, 154–83, 221–45, 309–60) have continued

to use ancient texts to label spaces in Pompeian houses and therefore to interpret the function of these spaces and Pompeian household activities accordingly (Allison 1993; n.d. (2)). The works of Vitruvius, Varro and Pliny the Younger have been employed to provide the nomenclature for the spaces and the functions of the various parts of Pompeian houses. Little heed has been taken of the original intentions of these sources. Vitruvius wrote an architectural treatise on the ideal Roman house, describing the recommended dimensions and locations of its components. Varro, in his study of the origins of Latin words, described how certain domestic spaces acquired their names. Pliny the Younger was using his literary expertise and demonstrating his architectural knowledge to encourage his friend Gallus to visit him (Drummer n.d.). In reality, the archaeological remains at sites like Pompeii have been treated more as a mirror of the ancient texts than as a window to Roman domestic life.

Andrew Wallace-Hadrill (1988; 1990; 1991; 1994) has recently taken major steps towards a more sociological approach to Roman archaeological remains. He is well aware that our most complete information about Roman houses and households involves a combination of information from literary sources and archaeological remains and that Pompeii and Herculaneum can provide us with much information about Roman housing, the physical composition of Roman households and the importance of the house in Roman public life. At the same time he has criticized the traditional 'ransacking [of the ancient texts] for labels' (Wallace-Hadrill 1988, 48) as an inappropriate method to explain the organization of a Pompeian house and therefore to interpret domestic behaviour there.

Wallace-Hadrill acknowledges (1990, 187–9; 1994, 87–9) that the archaeology of households includes more than the study of their architecture and decoration and cross-comparisons with other ethnographic studies. However, his work still seems to be based on the premise that the archaeological remains can only be used to enhance the picture provided by the text and by ethnographic analogy and that they are not capable of contributing unique information. He also acknowledges the male élite perspective of his sources but continues to rely on such sources to interpret the physical remains of Pompeian houses. His lack of training in the analysis of material culture has often forced him to accept, uncritically, the assumptions and interpretation made by more archaeological scholars.

Wallace-Hadrill's study (1991; 1994, 91–117) of Pompeian houses and households is the most relevant to this chapter. It is mainly concerned with the number of occupants of each house and with the ownership of the establishment. Wallace-Hadrill (1991, 199–201; 1994, 95–6) criticizes the methods, assumptions, and indeed the relevance of calculations which use the sizes of houses and the number of rooms to calculate the number of people in each house and the total population of Pompeii (e.g. Fiorelli 1873, 12–14). Population studies are important for considerations of transformations in land use, technology and socio-political organization (Kramer 1985, 315; Kolb 1985, 581), phenomena which have not been of concern to those calculating Pompeii's population. Wallace-Hadrill argues that a more important question for Pompeii is that of the various sizes and types of the Pompeian households. However, his analyses appear to be based on the very methodologies and assumptions which he and other scholars interested in such demographic studies (e.g. Fletcher *ap*. Kolb 1985, 592; Postgate 1994, 62; 63) have criticized. In his concern for the character of the occupants of these Pom peian houses, Wallace-Hadrill (1991, 214–25; 1994, 103–16) has only used such Pompeian evidence as is appropriate to illustrate textual information. Also, he has treated information on Pompeian household series as if it were information on single Pompeian households. Structures and decoration which may have existed for up to 400 years have been employed to present some timeless concept of a Pompeian household.[2]

But the dwellings in sites like Pompeii do not represent the shells in which textual illusions can be housed. One of the main problems is that the training of social historians, in the intellectual supremacy of the written text over material culture, often prohibits such scholars from 'reading' clearly what Rapoport (1990a) has referred to as the Nonverbal Communicators. Just as the evidence from the texts is fragmentary and diverse, Pompeian houses should not be taken to provide some ethnographic concept of a Roman household.

This is not to say that the evidence from Pompeii cannot be used to discuss Roman households. It is just that all the extant evidence must be more rigorously analysed and used to present the type of picture of which it is capable.

The nature of Pompeian evidence

Pompeii is a peculiar archaeological site in that one can still visit the houses long after their excavation. One can walk into a house and get a sense of its organization and its decorative programme. It is these extant remains which are the archaeological data used by scholars to interpret Pompeian, or indeed Roman, domestic life.

However, there are two major components of the original Pompeian house which are no longer so readily available for the modern scholar for inclusion in his/her interpretation of the Pompeian household. If the original inhabitants and the furnishings of these buildings were included in the analysis they would very probably show that the architecture and decoration of these houses could have had quite different meaning to the occupants from that which it has for contemporary social historians and archaeologists (cf. Rapoport 1990a, esp. 21). Unfortunately, it is not possible to carry out an ethnographic study with the original owners. However, the contemporary social historians and archaeologists would surely come much closer to understanding the dynamics of a Pompeian house if they included in their studies the original contents of these buildings.

A study of Pompeian house contents

It is the purpose of this chapter to show how the non-fixed feature elements, the contents of a Pompeian house, can be studied and what sorts of results they are capable of producing. I do not intend to deal with the way in which households behaved as entities and presented themselves to the wider community. Rather, I wish to concentrate on households as groups of people and the material possessions with which they were surrounded.

The method

In 1987 I commenced a study of the contents of thirty Pompeian houses to assess the use of space in these houses and the abandonment processes of the site (Allison 1992a). The sources used to collect the necessary data included the unpublished daily

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[2] Since the initial publication of this study Wallace-Hadrill seems to have been made more aware of this aspect of Pompeian houses (1994, 108; 116).

notebooks—the *Giornali degli Scavi*—as well as the published reports (see also Allison 1995, 150–3). A study of the unpublished reports was important because, as is common for such studies (see above), much of the necessary information was inadequately, or even inaccurately, published.

I selected thirty houses, covering different areas of the city and different excavation phases between the late nineteenth century and the 1970s (for plan of distribution see Allison 1994, fig. 1). Region I is the most recently excavated area so these reports contain more information on the less artistically interesting finds. I therefore had a larger concentration of houses from this area. The sample houses were all *atrium* houses. These houses had received more attention from the earlier excavators and were therefore better documented. Also, the use of a particular type of house produced considerable architectural conformity within the sample and made it possible to isolate a set of room-types, relative to the overall plan of the house. I also included many of the houses which are currently being studied for their architecture and decoration—e.g. Insula del Menandro (Ling 1983), the Casa del Lucretius Fronto (Peters *et al* 1993), and the houses published in the *Häuser in Pompeji* series (Strocka 1984). This meant I had up-to-date information on the other aspects of the houses in my sample.

The study involved the formation of a database of some 10,000 artefacts and some 860 rooms (Allison 1992a, 27–9; 1994, 36–8; 1995). However, a major difficulty in the compilation of this database arose from the fact that I was not researching the actual artefacts but their documentation in unillustrated excavation reports. The excavators often assigned the artefacts a Latin or Greek term (e.g. *lagoena*), or some contemporary Italian term (e.g. *guardispigolo, forma di pasticceria*), which necessarily involved an interpretation of the function of the object at the time of excavation, but which was not always justified. Any translation of such terms would only be further interpretation.

In 1989, with the support of Roger Ling (Director of the British Pompeii Research Committee) I carried out a detailed study of the artefacts from one group of houses, the Insula del Menandro. Four houses in this *insula* are included in my sample, the Casa del Menandro (see Figure 6.1) being one of the biggest houses. Also, as a relatively recent excavation, most of the finds from this *insula* were recorded and are currently stored in the Pompeii Collection. Through this supplementary study I was able to familiarize myself

with the individual Pompeian artefacts, identifying what objects are given which Latin and Italian names and also the range of Pompeian house contents. In 1993, funded by the British Pompeii Research Committee, I compiled a catalogue of all the finds from the *insula,* by room and by assemblage within each room (Allison n.d. (3); cf. Allison n.d. (1)).

The results

The primary purpose of sorting the contents of Pompeian houses into their precise findspots was so that the collation of a large body of material would facilitate the study of the assemblages as meaningful groups, which, in association with their related structures, would give information on ongoing room use in Pompeii. This would, therefore, provide an insight into household behaviour and activity in Pompeii, independent of external textual evidence.

However, despite beliefs to the contrary, the excavations of Pompeii have not produced 'systemic inventories—unmodified by formation processes' (Schiffer 1985, 38) which represent the activities of single households (Smith 1992, 30). During the assessment of artefact distribution patterns for ongoing or 'habitual' domestic behaviour it quickly became apparent that the patterns did not indicate behaviour which equated with the concept of a 'frozen moment'. Neither, as believed by many Pompeianists (e.g. Ling 1991, 72), did they equate with the concept of two textbased time horizons, AD 62 and AD 79, to which all alteration, disruption or abandonment could be attributed. Rather, the distribution patterns demonstrated a much less straightforward relationship between disrupted room use, reconstruction work (traditionally attributed to the AD 62 earthquake) and abandonment (Allison 1992b). In other words, as at other archaeological sites, the assemblages in Pompeian houses could be shown to be those of household series. Further, they not only belonged to generations of inhabitants but possibly also to re-occupation, or at least altered occupation conditions, during the last decades before the final eruption.

Therefore, in dealing with a concept of 'normal' Pompeian households it was also necessary to identify and assess the 'abnormal' distribution patterns, related to the complex disruption and abandonment processes of Pompeii, as well as the predominant patterns which could be seen to be related to more 'habitual' domestic activity.
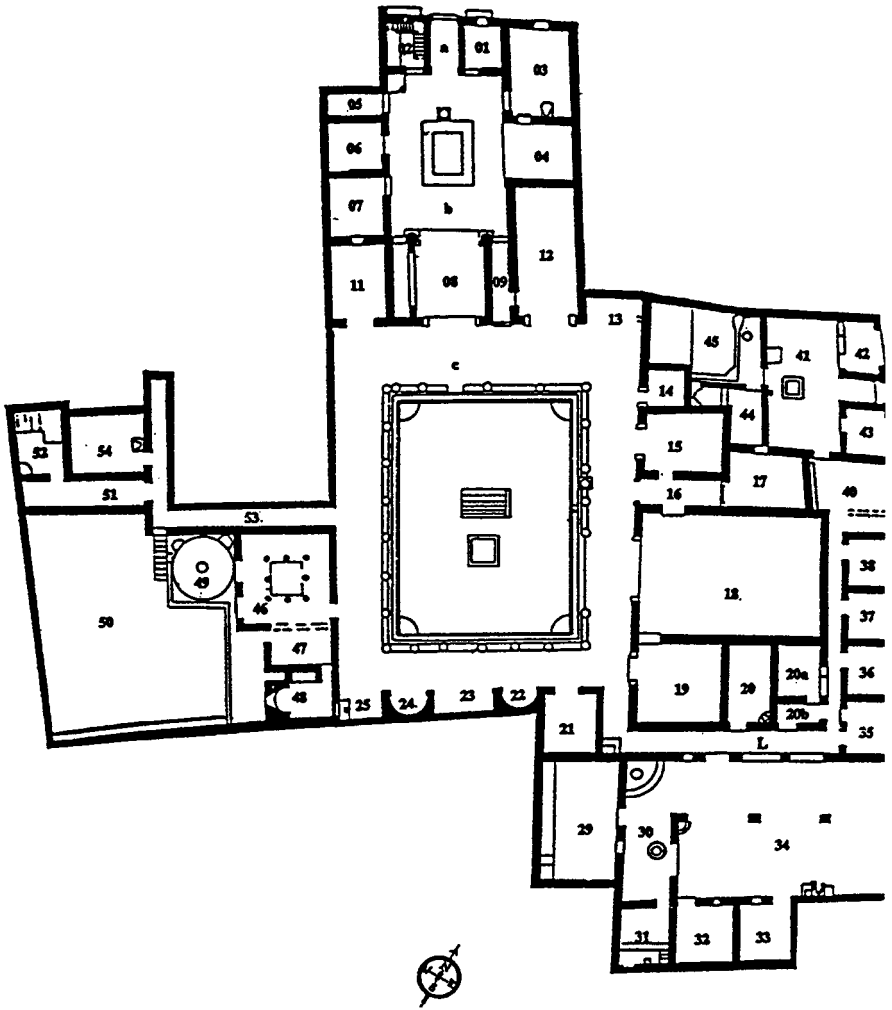
Figure 6.1 Ground floor plan of the Casa del Menandro, Pompeii

Disrupted household activity

As might be expected, some of the observable distribution patterns can be seen to document the abandonment processes of the site during the final eruption. For example, collections of jewellery, coins, and other portable valuables are easily movable material which was often hoarded and then deposited during the final

Figure 6.2 Part of assemblage found in chest in court 41, Casa del Menandro (inv. nos 4960–5; bone container illustrated here is not part of the assemblage)

eruption. Also recorded skeletons are invariably those of the victims of the final eruption (Allison 1992a, 92; Allison 1995, 168). However, there were other patterns which demonstrated a rather confused state but which do not appear to be those of habitual domestic activity or activity during the period of the final eruption.

A good example of distribution patterns indicating more complex disruption and abandonment processes is found in the area of court 41 in the Casa del Menandro (see Figure 6.1). In the south-west corner of court 41 (Maiuri 1933, 205 fig. 94) a bed, decorated with bone pieces, was found. Beside it, against the west wall, was a chest and a decorated marble table. The former contained sixteen vessels constituting a diverse domestic assemblage (see Figure 6.2). On the latter were found two bronze jugs and a bronze *'casseruole'*. In this location were also found an ivory handle, reputedly from a knife, and a bone boss which may have been a chest-fitting. In the doorway to courtyard 44 were found an iron tripod, a bronze cooking pot, two jugs, one smoke-blackened ceramic pot, and three pottery lids. In the niche in the west wall were found three terracotta lamps. Attached to the wall nearby was found a grate. Included in the assemblage

Figure 6.3 Part of assemblage found against west wall in court 41, Casa del Menandro (inv. nos 4967–9, 4951)

against the west wall, 1.5 m above the floor, were three *'cas-seruole'* and three shells (see Figure 6.3), a pottery jug, and two strigils. These may have been on a shelf along the west wall, similar to that reputedly along the north wall (Maiuri 1933, 207). In the same area were found seven iron hoes, one iron rake (Maiuri 1933, 462 fig. 184), and possibly a large knife blade, all identified as agricultural implements (ibid., 212).

In the north-west corner of this court, presumably from a collapsed shelf, were found a marble arm (see Figure 6.4), two wooden 'collars' (ibid., 453 fig. 179), glass beads, an iron hoe, a heap of straw (ibid., 207 fig. 96), another piece of marble (possibly statuary), and a glass-paste mortar. In the opposite, north-east corner, were found bronze buckles and rings, bronze nails, and a bronze lamp (see Figure 6.5), which were undoubtedly on the same shelf.

A group of finds from the south-east corner (Allison n.d. (2) fig. 13.3) included one cooking vessel with indications of use, one pottery jug, and four pottery and glass bowls.

To Amedeo Maiuri (1933, 201), the confusion of material here showed that this part of the rustic quarter had not yet been

Figure 6.4 Fragment of marble sculpture found in north-west corner of court 41, Casa del Menandro (inv. no. 4990)

'systematized'. According to Ling (1983, 53), this area had been incorporated into the Casa del Menandro complex after AD 50. Maiuri (1933, 199; 201–2, 461) interpreted the mixed nature of the material remains as indicating that the procurator, who was presumed to have lived in this section, had a double function as the superintendent of a city house and also as the administrator of an agricultural homestead.

The decoration of the bed in the south-west corner suggests that it may not originally have been intended as the bed of a servant or slave. Likewise, the marble table seems more appropriate for a more formal part of the house. The presence of luxury furniture in this utilitarian context suggests rather disrupted conditions, perhaps even a salvaging and reuse of cast-offs, than the furnishings for a servant.

The finds in the south-east corner and to the right of the door-way to courtyard 44 suggest that cooking and food preparation had been

Figure 6.5 Part of assemblage from north-east corner of court 41, Casa del Menandro (inv. nos 4985–7, 4989)

carried out in or near this area. The combination of cooking and the above furnishings points to a multifunctional area.

There is no evidence, in this house, of the statue to which the arm from the north-west corner belonged. As it was found with part of a small unrelated marble pilaster, it seems that they may have been salvaged for the sake of the marble. Similar salvaging patterns were witnessed in other houses in the sample (Allison 1992a, 179, 248, 250, 304, 312 *passim;* 1992b, 53–4).

The bronze rings and buckles found in the north-east corner have been identified as belonging to horse harness. Their association with a bronze lamp and glass-paste beads suggests that they may have had a more luxurious and domestic function, conceivably to do with dress. Their presence on a shelf with straw (Maiuri 1933, 207 fig. 96) and a hoe implies rather arbitrary storage. The finds from 1.5 m above the pavement, along the west wall, also form an incongruous group.

The mixture of domestic and industrial activity represented by the finds in this court does not appear consistent with hoarding during the final eruption. It suggests, rather, that the occupant or occupants lived separately from the rest of this large house. It is conceivable that the assemblage belongs to occupants who have moved out of

another damaged area into a rustic storage area, and occupied it in a seemingly makeshift manner.

The finds in the adjacent room 43 (ibid., 211 fig. 98) tell a similar story. Remains of a wooden and iron bed with three red-painted sides was discovered along the south wall of this room. The two rear feet of the bed were of iron, decorated with bone, but the forefeet were not recorded, suggesting that they were of wood. Maiuri (ibid., 210) described the bed as being nailed to the ground, but this is not the impression gained from the *Giornali degli Scavi*.

A skeleton, identified as male, was found across the bed in a diagonal position, lying on its right side, the lower body contracted and head to the south-east corner. Another skeleton, reputedly of a younger female (ibid., 16), was found in a heap in the south-east corner, between the foot of the bed and the wall. The first skeleton was carrying a leather purse containing a silver bracelet and some smaller silver rings, a silver spoon, and over ninety silver and gold coins. Near the second skeleton were found an elaborately decorated bronze bucket and three bronze jugs.

Towards the north-east corner of the room the remains of a chest were identified. In the same area were found four rectangular pieces of marble (Allison n.d. (2) fig. 13.5), a terracotta lamp, a pottery *'abbeveratoio'*, two *'paterae'*, two strainers, an elliptical bronze *'fruttiera'*, a bronze basin, a bronze furniture foot, seven large bronze bosses and two bronze locks (see Figure 6.6), a set of scales, and 12 bronze coins. There is no direct evidence that any of these objects were from the chest. It is possible that some of the fittings belonged to the chest, but it is unlikely that heavy bosses would have formed part of the same object as the lock plates, which were of quite fine lamina. It is also improbable that the bronze foot, or that both lock plates, belonged to one chest which was 60 cm in length.

In the centre of the room was found a collection of agricultural implements which, in combination with those found in court 41, is probably one of the largest collections found in Pompeii (Maiuri 1933, 212). The tools consisted of three iron picks (see Figure 6.7), six axes (Allison n.d. (2) fig. 13.5), one pair of shears (see Figure 6.8), seven knives, and two chisels. The majority of these implements were for woodworking (Maiuri 1933, 463 fig. 185; 465; Matthäus 1984, 134 fig. 43. 1; 135). The exceptions are one pick, which has been described as a mason's tool, and the pair of shears.

A bronze basin, two locks, one bronze coin, and seven more knives, reputedly for pruning, were found a few centimetres above

Figure 6.6 Furniture fittings from north-east corner of room 43, Casa del Menandro (inv. nos 5023, 5027)

the pavement. Maiuri argued (1933, 210; 212), on the basis of nails and pieces of wood also found in the centre of the room, that these and the above mentioned implements had been suspended from one of the walls, possibly the north.

On the threshold were found a lampstand, a bronze seal with an inscription QUINTO POPPEO EROTE, an iron key and a silver ring. Other finds included a iron knife and *'gubbia',* a bronze lamp and two bronze coins, found 1 m above the floor, and a bronze spoon, a bronze terminal and a lead ring.

According to Maiuri (ibid., 208), the furnishings and disposition of this room correspond to a *'cella ostaria'* or *'cubiculum dell'atriensis',* the partly conserved wall-painting of simple linear and geometric decoration on white ground being of a type found in small rooms in the final period of the life of the town. On the other hand, he suggested (ibid., 210) that the combination of the bed, the furnishings and the decoration indicated a certain nobility of the occupant.

Regarding the nobility of the bed, it seems curious that the two rear feet were decorated and not the forefeet. Either the bed was missing its original forefeet, i.e. it was broken, or it was not in its

Figure 6.7 Iron picks from centre of room 43, Casa del Menandro (inv. no. 5032)

intended location. In either case the seeming nobility may not be directly attributable to the occupant. The nailing of an elegant bed to the floor, as suggested by Maiuri, seems curious and provisional.

Maiuri also noted (ibid., 210) that a mass of iron implements was suspended from nails and wooden pegs in the wall without regard for the decoration. If the decoration is being defaced in this way, this room may have been undergoing a phase of occupancy which post-dated its final decoration, dated by Maiuri to the final phase of the city.

The skeleton on the bed has more coins than most other hoards in Pompeii and more than those in the rest of this house taken together. To Maiuri (ibid., 212), this was a reflection of his economic situation which was quite different from that of skeletons found in corridor L

Figure 6.8 Iron and bronze shears from centre of room 43, Casa del Menandro (inv. no. 5033)

of this house (Allison 1992a, 181–3). Is it likely that one servant would have a personal wealth in currency so astronomically greater than that of the other ten servants who between them only carried about twenty coins, of which most were bronze?

The vessels at the foot of the bed would not seem to be *in situ* for habitual use. The vessels in the north-east corner, which may have fallen from shelving (Maiuri 1933, 210), seem to be of similar types and may be from the same assemblage. The presence and quantity of quite fine, often large, pieces in a 'servant's bedroom' suggest haphazard storage.

In total, four lock plates were found in this room, and only one chest was identified. Only one bronze foot from a folding stool was found, of which an exact parallel was reported from peristyle c (Allison 1992a, 164). Conceivably these fittings were being salvaged independently.

It seems curious that so many axes for heavy woodwork should be found inside a house, in a decorated room. One might expect them to be in a service context. Thus, they seem to have been hoarded, perhaps suggesting that the man in this room may have been a carpenter or wood-cutter, with the tools of his trade.

The unexpected combination of valuable vessels and workman's implements suggests that either the so-called 'procurator' had salvaged and was hoarding this material, or the rightful owner of the

furnishings had had to retreat to very humble dwellings. Lack of regard for the decoration implies that the present occupant was not responsible, or at least not concerned, for the decoration. Therefore, the decoration must belong, at the latest, to the penultimate phase of occupation of this room. This room must have had a change of occupancy after its Fourth Style decoration, which is of a type traditionally dated after the earthquake of AD 62 (Ling 1991, 75–85).

Courtyard 44 (Maiuri 1933, 206 fig. 95) is accessible only through court 41. A bronze *'situla'* and part of a grinding stone were found near the entrance to court 41 and might have belonged with other vessels found near this doorway (see above). Piles of building material were found in the north-east corner, with a terracotta puteal (over a cistern head) and a number of amphorae. Other quantities of amphorae and vases were found in the north-west and south-west corners of this courtyard. According to Maiuri (1933, 201), the amphorae were full of *'polvere di signino'* for making plaster.

The piles of construction material in the corners and also a provisionally installed latrine in room 45 reputedly showed that this part of the rustic quarter did not have 'la sua definitiva sistemazione' (ibid., 201). To Maiuri (ibid., 199–201; cf. Ling 1983, 53), it is clearly part of an older habitation joined to this house in the last phase. But it has already been noted that there was a subsequent phase of activity, after the annexation of this area.

With these obvious signs of building work, or storage of building materials, in this courtyard and in room 43, it seems unlikely that the proprietor of such a large house would choose this part of the house as a safe area to store precious bronze vessels and luxury furniture, especially when there seems to be storage of agricultural/industrial material in this area as well. There is no way of knowing whether the building material belonged to ongoing repair work, abandoned during the eruption, or previously abandoned work and downgraded living conditions (Maiuri 1933, 204). A possible interpretation is that the repair work had been abandoned prior to the apparent multifunctional occupancy of this area.

The preceding detailed description is an example of the kind of data used and the type of analysis and interpretation carried out in the house contents' study. Numerous examples of such disruption and upheaval were identified in the sample and served to show that artefact distribution patterns which indicate behaviour during disrupted circumstances, or gradual or rapid abandonment need to be

identified, as well as patterns which describe habitual household activity. The obvious existence of such patterns in Pompeii illustrates that, even at this supposedly pristine site, sequences of households could successively occupy a given structure (Smith 1992, 30) without change to the structure itself.

Habitual household activity

The isolation of the more prevalent distribution patterns, particularly those of less mobile furnishings and fixtures, was employed to identify patterns of ongoing room use and habitual household activity. Again, it is beyond the scope of the current article to present all the results of this analysis here (Allison 1992a, 37–97), some of which have already been presented elsewhere (Allison 1993; 1995; n.d. (2)). I will present a general summary of the predominant patterns of activity which were witnessed across the sample and throughout the various, more typical, areas of the house.

(a) Entrance and forecourt area

As might be expected, the entrance corridors to Pompeian houses were generally devoid of finds, save door fittings. Only eight of the thirty houses in the sample had fixed masonry benches outside the main entranceway (e.g. Casa dei Ceii, Michel 1990, fig. 59). These seats, presumed to be for waiting *clientes* (de Vos and de Vos 1982, 90) were relatively infrequent in this sample, which consisted of the larger, and presumably wealthier, Pompeian households. It is also noteworthy that, within the sample, they were not concentrated in the largest and most elaborate houses.

While the presence of luxury and shrine furnishings indicated some formal display and religious activities in the forecourt (the so-called *atrium*) areas, the main distribution patterns suggested that the forecourt's principal function was as the centre around which many of the household activities revolved. These activities included domestic industries such as spinning and weaving, the storage of most domestic utensils in wooden cupboards and chests, and some bulk storage (e.g. amphorae). Similar activities appeared to have continued in the open rooms (the so-called *alae*) to either side, while the prevalent pattern in the rooms leading from the forecourt to the garden (the so-called *tablina*), was that they also had storage furniture with domestic utensils.

The most common assemblages in the small closed and decorated rooms off this courtyard area (the so-called *cubicula*) were generally small which suggests that these items were used in these locations rather than stored. From their character they seem to be related to personal domestic activities. They consisted of small storage chests, fine quality serving, pouring and storage vessels and items related to dress, toilet, needlework and lighting. Objects associated with more communal domestic activities, such as cooking, eating and drinking, are apparently not represented. Evidence of permanent bedding was relatively rare. Of the 129 rooms of this type in the sample, actual evidence of bedding was only found in six. So-called bed recesses were located in seven rooms of this type but, as discussed elsewhere (Allison 1992a, 80ff.; 1995), it is by no means certain that such recesses were indeed always intended for beds. This lack of definitive sleeping evidence implies such rooms might have acted more as a type of 'boudoir', than as a bedroom in the modern sense.

The contents of the small closed undecorated rooms off the forecourt, and the frequent occurrence of shelving in such rooms, implies that they were for storage, which could be both domestic and industrial.

No clear pattern of artefact distribution to indicate habitual activity was discernible in the long narrow rooms off the corners of the forecourt (the so-called *triclinia*). Perhaps this suggests that this room type lacked a distinctive function at least at the time of the eruption.

Thus, there is ample evidence that the front area of the house was the main circulation and meeting place for the whole household—men, women, children and slaves—and that it was used for general domestic activities by all members of the household, as well as perhaps for a certain amount of more commercial activities. However, notable domestic activities for which evidence is lacking in this area are food preparation and eating.

Textual descriptions to early *atria* indicate that they were the focus of the household. However, it is believed by many modern scholars (e.g. Wallace-Hadrill 1988, 85; Zanker 1993, 18; Nevett n.d. (1)) that by the first century AD, and with the development of large peristyled houses as those in this Pompeian sample, the activities in the Roman house had become more separate, with family and domestic activity taking place in the rear of the house. At Pompeii, at least, the house contents indicate no such change in the living patterns.

(b) Garden/peristyle area

The garden/peristyle area, in general, seems to have been the most ostentatious area of the house, particularly in the larger houses, with fixtures such as *aediculae,* pools and fountains, statue bases and dining areas (either a masonry or wooden structure), as well as movable marble furniture and sculpture. However, many of the small houses seem to have given over this display area for more utilitarian purposes, at least during the final occupation of the town, as evidenced by the presence of stairways, amphorae, large jars *(dolii)* and other industrial/commercial material.

But even in the houses with a wealth of display in the garden area and spacious and richly decorated banqueting rooms, utilitarian and everyday domestic activities were not excluded from this area. The predominant patterns showed that in the ambulat ories, like the forecourt area, chests and cupboards with domestic contents, but sometimes also tools and weaving implements, were found.

The contents of the large rooms around the garden, both the more closed type (the so-called *triclinia*), and the more open (the so-called *oeci* or *exedrae*), would seem to confirm that rooms of this type were used for dining. However, the predominant pattern is that these rooms were also used for the storage of equipment which was not necessarily fine tableware. The persistence of this pattern suggests that this was probably not just an activity during disrupted circumstances. In both the ambulatories of the garden and these large rooms were found evidence of cooking, in the form of braziers as well as other cooking apparatus.

In the smaller closed decorated rooms off the garden it was very difficult to find a predominant assemblage pattern because there was a considerable mixture of material, much of it of a utilitarian nature which might seem strange for rooms of this type. In the undecorated examples the predominant distribution patterns indicated that these were storage areas for a variety of material, not excluding utilitarian and bulk storage. While evidence for beds was rare in both decorated and undecorated examples, the contents of some imply that both could be used for private activities.

The garden itself seems often to have performed the function of a produce garden (Jashemski 1979, 31) as well as a formal area, as reconstructed in the Casa dei Vettii (Sogliano 1898, pl. 8). It also seems that it was not improper to have latrines in this area, or domestic storage, weaving and other household activities in the ambulatories

of the entertainment areas, or even in the dining-rooms themselves. Bulk storage could be found side-by-side with banqueting halls and food preparation could be carried out in this area, possibly in front of the diners.

(c) Other areas

The assemblages in the so-called kitchens, identified by the presence of a built-in hearth, indicate food preparation activities but, as noted above, it is very probable that some cooking, perhaps formal cooking, was carried out much closer to the formal dining areas. It would, therefore, not be quite accurate to assume that these kitchen areas functioned as their counterparts in large nineteenth- and early twentieth-century European domestic establishments.

Other areas outside the main forecourt-peristyle complex seem predominantly utilitarian. However, in some of them personal and more luxury assemblages were recorded, and hence the activities witnessed in these areas vary considerably across the sample. Where many of these areas include back entranceways and rear courtyards, the goods which passed through them did not necessarily relate to the domestic activities of the household but either to repair work or to the commercial/industrial activities of the establishment, emphasizing the multiple character of such residential establishments in a pre-industrialized society. The supposed shops in this sample (i.e. rooms attached to the house but which opened onto the street) showed a marked lack of evidence of commercial activity.

(d) Upper floors

What little evidence there is for upper-floor activity indicated personal activities but also storage. Objects which were probably destined for the upper floor, such as amphorae, were often found deposited on the stairway.

A reassessment of the Pompeian household

The above analysis demonstrates the nature of the archaeological evidence in Pompeii and what household information it is capable of providing. By including the non-fixed feature elements, this house contents study has attempted to put the opinions and theories about the internal dynamics of Pompeian households, traditionally based

on a combination of evidence from architecture, decoration, and textual reference, on a sounder footing. Only when this further important body of material is included in a systematic manner can a more rigorous investigation of Pompeian households be carried out.

By looking at the patterns in the archaeological data, over a large sample, one can start to identify prevalent patterns of domestic behaviour. To produce a rounded view of Pompeian households and household behaviour it is not sufficient to rely only on the archaeological data which reflect domestic behaviour known from Roman textual information. Archaeological information which does not reflect often unrelated textual information should not be considered a deviation. If certain prevalent patterns do not comply with current interpretations of textual information, this does not mean they are distortions of the reality. Rather, it means that one should examine more carefully the interpretations of textual information.

As can be seen, archaeological evidence mainly provides information about the spatial division of the house itself, about what kinds of activities took place in the house and how those activities were distributed between the different spaces in the house. To use this distribution of Pompeian household activity to isolate the individual members of the household and their interactions is much more difficult. It requires the introduction of some sort of model of who the individual household members were and what they did. This is not possible from the Pompeian evidence alone. Such models are provided by modern analogy, ethnographic comparisons, or related textual material. To date, most studies have tended to combine all of these in a fairly haphazard fashion. Ethnographic material which would provide suitable comparisons for houses of the size and luxury as those in Pompeii is generally that of large European houses. The use of such comparisons from the dominant western culture, often by investigators with the same background, tends to provide a rather biased perspective.

For example, previous investigators (e.g. Mau 1908, 260 f.; Dwyer 1982, 114 f.) have concentrated their attention on the discovery of luxury furniture, sculpture and religious paraphernalia in the forecourt of the Pompeian house to illustrate that this was the public space for the patron of the house, the place where owner and clients carried out their business. The concept of a public space which was a neat, sparsely furnished display area, allowing easy circulation and with domestic activities relegated to service areas, can be seen to have

parallels with, for example, the foyer of a Georgian house. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century middle-class European male scholars, as most of the interpreters were, would have considered this model to have been a suitable one for the residence of an aristocratic Pompeian.

Likewise, the assumption that the small rooms off the forecourt were called *cubicula* and can be equated with a bedroom in a modern house (e.g. McKay 1977, 33 fig. 8 with Shelton 1988, 60 fig. 1) again involves an over-simplistic combination of architectural evidence with textual information and modern analogy. First, we have no explicit evidence for the term used by Pompeians for these rooms, particularly by the first century AD. Second, the term *cubiculum* is used in Roman texts not only to describe different architectural types (Pliny, *Ep*. 2. 17) but also in association with several different activities (Nevett n.d. (2)). Third, to my knowledge, the concept of a private bedroom in the Roman world is a modern construct. Whatever these small rooms were called, the predominant artefact distribution patterns do not indicate these rooms were set aside for private sleeping.

Are Pompeian households like Roman households?

The foregoing discussion has concentrated on Pompeian houses and household activity. The provision of labels from Latin texts to buildings and artefacts in Pompeii makes the assumption that the site of Pompeii is an archetypal Roman town. In fact this assumption is so entrenched in the modern literature that it is difficult to break free from it. But can we assume that Pompeian houses provide the model for Roman houses and households?

There are a number of points where such an assumption needs further clarification. First, as mentioned earlier, given the chronological, geographical, and cultural diversity of the Roman world, the available evidence needs to be examined more much critically before a generalized concept of a Roman household can be discussed. Further, although Pompeii is on Italian soil and was destroyed during the early years of the Roman empire, the assumption of a direct relationship between the concept of a Roman household and a Pompeian household pays little regard to Pompeii's independent cultural history. It should not be forgotten that Pompeii became a walled town in the sixth century BC and was undoubtedly

influenced by local and Greek traditions, if not actually inhabited by such populations, for many centuries. Even if a similarity can be found between domestic buildings in Pompeii and other Roman towns, the actual occupancy of such buildings can be very different. Such an assumption is based on the belief that the dominant culture will dictate behaviour. However, the domestic sphere is one particular area where this assumption has proved to be oversimplistic (see Pader 1993, esp. 126–30).

To assess the relationship between Pompeian households and some generalized concept of a Roman household, two important investigations should be carried out, both of which should pay close attention to the encroachment of the cultural and gender biases of the investigators. One is to examine more critically the architectural terms used in Latin texts and to investigate precisely what kinds of spaces they applied to, what activities they refer to and how these changed over time and through space. Once such an investigation is carried out it might then be possible to re-examine the relationship between these textual spaces and their activities and the activities which artefact distribution patterns indicate for Pompeian houses.

A second, independent, investigation involves similar studies of artefact distribution patterns at other Roman settlement sites, and inter-site comparison, to help to establish a generalized concept of Roman household behaviour from an archaeological perspective. Again, the results can be used to test trends which are observed in the closer examination of the textual information.

Such investigations cannot be carried out instantaneously and require much time and potentially fruitless research. However, until this type of research is explored it is not possible to ascertain how representative a Pompeian household is of a Roman household. All I can say is that, to date, the work done on Pompeian households provides the best available archaeological information on Roman households. As long as we are aware of that and do not try to oversimplify the relationship we become involved in a more sensitive and enlightened discussion of the Roman household.

In conclusion

Studies of Roman domestic behaviour have been dominated by the literary approach, and full credit has not been given to the independent evidence which can be provided by a non-verbal communication approach. By concentrating on information elic ited

from the writings of a specific group we learn very little about the perspectives of other groups, or, indeed, about the goods and furniture and the physical organization which also constituted a household. For information on these aspects of the Roman house we must turn to its physical remains, beyond the structure and its decoration. But previous works on Roman households which have employed both textual information and archaeological data have considered the evidence as if it were ethnographic. The investigators have treated this fragmentary information as if it were provided by anthropologists' 'informants'. Little attention has been paid to the origins of this data and the nature of the information which it is capable of providing. While increasing research into the relationships between the varied types of evidence and the importance of non-verbal communicators in environment-behaviour studies is being carried out, not only for contemporary societies (e.g. Rapoport 1990a, 225–35) but also for past societies in both the New and the Old Worlds, scholars of Roman social history have been slow to adapt the appropriate techniques for similar investigations of Roman society.

For example, current concepts for the separation of specific domestic activities into individual, public, and service private activity areas in a Roman house (e.g. Wallace-Hadrill 1988, 55) owe much to masculinist interpretations of the Roman texts and architecture and to contemporary Northern European and Anglo-Saxon patriarchal cultural analogy (see Burton 1985, 33–56). A study of Pompeian house contents can highlight the need to radically revise many of these concepts of the Roman household and to investigate, using diverse cultural but at the same time appropriate analogies, possible alternatives for the mechanics of a Roman house and household. A more rigorous analysis of the relevant textual material will assist in identifying these appropriate analogies.

This study can also demonstrate that if Pompeii provides an eponymous ideal for an ethnographic picture through archaeology, the picture must be reassessed. It is only logical to conclude that, even at Pompeii, generations of Pompeians lived in the same house during periods of radical change in the Italian and Roman world. Just as contemporary households can represent activities, behaviour and ideals of generations of occupants, the remains of Pompeii are also the result of household seriation. However, by using a large sample of Pompeian houses and their contents it might be possible to isolate generalized concepts of Pompeian household, as opposed to

household series, activity. Thus, irrespective of the evident complexity of the data, Pompeii still provides us with the nearest thing we have to a single period site and best example of the concept of Roman households from an archaeological perspective.

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7

Ritual and power in the Romano-Egyptian city[1]

Richard Alston

This chapter surveys the varied histories of the old Egyptian temples, the Graeco-Roman civic élite, and the Christian institutions which dominated the city in Egypt from the Roman conquest to the end of Byzantine rule.[2] One of the paradoxes of ancient history is that although it is generally acknowledged that the majority of the population of the ancient world lived in non-urban settlements, the centrality of the city to Classical society is a notable feature of ancient and modern literature. In the industrialized world, the centralization of production and consumption in the city has transformed the demographic pattern and made the cities centres of power. The predominance of the ancient city is, however, seen primarily as institutional or political, and not resting on economic functions.[3] The changes in the rela tive power of these various institutions should, therefore, have had fundamental effects on the ancient city, but, as we shall see, the level of continuity is surprising.

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[1] References to papyrological texts follow the standard abbreviations in Oates, Bagnall, Willis, and Worp 1992. This chapter is part of a project funded by the British Academy to which I give thanks. It is a little unusual to dedicate essays but, since the initial conference was rearranged to avoid the most likely date of his birth, an exception can be made. I, therefore, dedicate this paper to Samuel Matthew Alston.

[2] This account will concentrate on the *metropoleis* of Egypt. Alexandria and the other Greek cities of Egypt have, of course, rather different histories and the changing patterns of institutional dominance in these cities, though showing similarities, should be treated separately.

[3] In the 'consumer city', the concentration of élite secures the political status of the city and the political status of the city ensures the concentration of the élite. See the often quoted Pausanias, 10. 4. 1, for the centrality of institutions to the ancient aristocratic conception of the city.

Mapping the histories of these three key bodies allows us to explore and question the nature of urbanism in Roman Egypt.

The Egyptian temples

From the New Kingdom and probably from earlier, any observer of the Pharaonic Egyptian city would have had no doubt as to the dominant factor in urban topography (Kemp 1989, 185). As industrial cities were overshadowed by their factories, so the Egyptian cities were dominated by their temples. Each village had its own temple, but the temples in the urban centres, the *metropoleis,* were grander than the temples of other settlements. The temples were physical manifestations of the relationship between Egypt and the gods. Through the temples, Egypt thanked the gods for the annual rise of the Nile and ensured that the prosperity of the two lands would continue. When the Egyptians colonized new areas in Nubia and in the desert regions, they assured the prosperity of these lands by building temples to honour the gods (Kemp 1971). The temple was an instrument of religious colonization, but the policy was far from 'irrational'. Economic factors were involved in the imposition of the institution since the temple was supported by assigning land or revenues. The temple also became a centre of expenditure and administration, an institution of political and economic as well as religious colonization.

The general view of Egyptian religion in the New Kingdom is that it was practised by an exclusive élite, located in special structures to which access was strictly limited, and conducted by intermediaries, from Pharaoh downwards, on behalf of the people but not by the people (Sadek 1987, 1). Major ceremonials were conducted by priests and the temples were designed so that access to the Inner Sanctum of the temple was restricted to the select. Nevertheless, the outer courts could have held a considerable number of people, and processions and festivals allowed, perhaps even demanded, popular participation. The gods and priests processed in their various grades, carrying various images, through the streets of the cities and the great processional ways of Luxor, Hermopolis and probably other cities were not merely for occasional use. Classical descriptions of the staid and learned customs of the priests were contrasted with the riotous behaviour of the Egyptian population in celebration of their festivals, showing a measure of popular involvement beyond that of the passive observer of priestly rites.[4]

It is important not to separate the power of the Egyptian temples from that of the Egyptian state. Pharaoh was also high priest and in control of the economic assets of the temples which he so richly endowed. As the representative of the divine on earth, Pharaoh ensured the prosperity of Egypt by the correct performance of ritual and the temples celebrated the achievements and power of their Pharaonic patrons. Many of the great temples of Upper Egypt were reshaped and rebuilt by Ramesses II (1289–1224 BC) who followed Seti I (1303–1289 BC) in pursuing an active policy of temple construction. The temples were not only built on huge scale but also richly endowed. The annual offerings of grain alone at the temple of Medinet Habu under Ramesses III (1184–1153 BC) were sufficient to support 3,600–4,800 adults (Janssen 1979). The power of the temples declined and rose with the fortunes of the ruling family but no ruler of Egypt, with the possible exception of Cambyses, attempted to rule without the temples. All adopted the traditional role of the Pharaoh as controller of these vastly important economic, political, and cultural institutions.

The Ptolemies were no exception to this. In fact, it is only with the Ptolemies that the temples came to enjoy some precarious independence. The Greek dynasty sponsored a programme of refurbishment and new building so that the Ptolemaic period came to be a final golden age of the temple in Egypt.[5] Our knowledge of the city in the Ptolemaic period is comparatively slight, excepting the archives from Memphis explored by Thompson; and Memphis, being the old Egyptian capital, may have been less open to Greek influence than other cities (Thompson 1988). The problem of the inter-relationship of Greeks and Egyptians in Ptolemaic Egypt is a dominant theme of the historiography of the period and is far from admitting easy generalizations.[6] The papyrological record suggests that the old Egyptian religion was hardly influenced by Greek models but the archaeological record, especially that of the small finds, suggests some limited Hellenization of the forms of expression of Egyptian religion (Dunand 1979). Greek religious practices had a definite impact, however, on the general religious milieu, and temples to Greek deities were constructed in many

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[4] Compare Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride,* 72, and Juvenal, *Satire* 15.

[5] Quaegebeur 1979; Otto 1905, 263–7, details the immense wealth of the temple at Edfu.

cities. Ptolemaic remodelling of cities may also have had a quite profound effect on the appearance of some cities, moving the topographical centre of the city away from the old Egyptian temple complex.[7] There may have been a certain separation of Greek and Egyptian, especially under the early Ptolemies, which may have encouraged the separate development of cultural institutions, so that the Egyptian temples continued to prosper alongside new and flourishing Greek temples and institutions. However, the overwhelming impression given by towns such as Hermopolis, Memphis, Edfu, and even by a centre of Greek influence such as Ptolemais Euergetis (Crocodilopolis or Arsinoe), is that Greek cultural institutions had comparatively little impact in the Ptolemaic period: the temples continued to dominate.[8]

Cleopatra VII used temple property to finance Antony's campaign against Octavian which must have weakened the economic position of the temples. Petronius, Augustus' third prefect, took all temple property into state control and financed the temples through subvention, diminishing the independence of the temples and, one presumes, their economic power.[9] Nevertheless, the temples remained powerful institutions. There was no obvious decline in the rate of construction and reconstruction of temples during the first century AD. Nero, Domitian and Trajan reigned during particularly active periods of construction.

The temples still dominated the topography of the cities. Hermopolis Magna was divided by a processional way at the northern end of which was a huge religious enclosure which may have occupied as much as a third of the area of the city. Ptolemais Euergetis contained a huge enclosure and temple to Souchos, the crocodile god. At Oxyrhynchus, the two main temples of Thoeris and Serapis were on opposite sides of the city and were almost certainly connected by a ceremonial way, passing from the complex of

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[6] See Alston forthcoming, for a survey of this issue.

[7] Excavations at Thmouis and Mendes suggest the construction of an entirely new city in the Ptolemaic period: Naville 1892–3; Hansen, *et al*. 1967.

[8] This is a highly impressionistic judgement (though not, I think, controversial) and supported by Clarysse's analysis of the Egyptian élite: Clarysse 1979.

[9] Glare 1993, 60–85 doubts whether Roman administration of temple finances was either as far-reaching as previously assumed or a radical break with Ptolemaic practice.

shrines in the Theoreum, through the main crossroads of the town (the tetrastylon of Thoeris), to the Serapeum (*P. Oxy*. i. 43^V). The avenue was probably known as the *Drumos* of Serapis.

In the early Roman period, the number of texts from urban contexts increases dramatically but the accessible material concerning the financing and role of urban temples is comparatively slight. We have the partially preserved accounts of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus in Ptolemais Euergetis for AD 215 (*BGU* ii. 326). The accounts are not preserved for the entire year but, assuming no sudden change in rate of expenditure, we can estimate that the temple would spend about 7,000 drachmas per year. This was a fairly small amount, though sufficient to have supported several families, and the temple was maintained on a less lavish scale than the great Egyptian city temples.[10] We have no information as to the expenditure of these temples in the Roman period but temple archives from the Fayum villages of Bakchias, Tebtunis, and Soknopaiou Nesos illustrate the economic activities undertaken by Egyptian village temples. At Soknopaiou Nesos in AD 138 accounted expenditure was about 11,500 drachmas of which about 2,000 was actually spent on the temple and its activities, the rest being consumed by taxes. The temple paid taxes to cover its various economic activities which included oil manufacture, fulling, brewing, and fishing. The subsistence of the ministering priests was ensured by payments in kind and the grain alone was probably sufficient to feed about 132 people for a year.[11] The god at Tebtunis was served by fifty priests who were exempt from poll tax, an immunity which was probably only granted to quite senior priests. The temple leased about 500 arouras (about 137.5 hectares and a very substantial area of land in Egyptian terms) from the state for the support of its clergy.[12] The much smaller temple at Bakchias had about twenty-six priests in AD 171, again probably excluding those of lower grade, and had probably had nearer forty in the early second century (Gilliam 1947). The temples of both Soknopaiou Nesos and Tebtunis were important centres and were probably larger and more richly endowed than the temples of villages such as

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[10] The resources of the temple were extensive and invested mainly through loans to members of the élite who borrowed at what seems to be preferential terms.

[11] *Stud. Pal.* xxii. 183; Foxhall and Forbes 1982; Rathbone 1983.

Bakchias, which was closer to the norm for Egyptian villages, but even the temples of Soknopaiou Nesos and Tebtunis must have been dwarfed, physically and economically, by the great city temples.

The temple accounts of Soknopaiou Nesos give some guide as to the frequency of religious events. Priests were paid for daily offices but there were also 154 festival days on which there were additional celebrations. This was, of course, only the activity of one cult and although the cult will have celebrated festivals in collaboration with other temples, such as the birthday of the emperor and the major festivals of Isis and Serapis, it is to be expected that other temples would perform major rituals on other days. Since there was a considerable number of smaller temples or shrines in addition to the great city temples in most cities (Whitehorne (forthcoming) identifies at least twenty temples in Oxyrhynchus), the city would be a hive of religious activities, festivals and celebrations.

The city temples exercised some authority over the villages of the nomes, though this authority is not clearly defined in our sources. *P.Merton*. ii. 63, a letter of AD 57, shows that the temple of Souchos in Arsinoe could demand pious contributions from the population of the whole nome. Herennia, the writer of the letter, notes that contributions were extracted from people of all ranks, regardless of legal or ethnic status.[13] We also have some first-century constitutions of guilds from Tebtunis which lay down regulations for the guilds' social activities, the majority of which occurred in the village itself, but some meals, for which there were slightly greater penalties for non-attendance, took place in the *metropolis*.[14] Since social occasions were very frequently associated with dining-rooms attached to the temple complex, it seems unavoidable that the guild met, possibly with similar groups from elsewhere in the nome, under the auspices of the temple.[15]

There is considerable evidence that the temples exercised some control over the principal markets of the cities (Otto 1905, 291–315). The main market at Oxyrhynchus was attached to the Serapeum and the taxes collected from the traders were religious in origin (Rea 1982). At Karnak, an inscription found in the *drumos* of the temple details the charges made on traders, suggesting that the

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[12]*P. Tebt*. ii. 298; 291; Evans 1961.

[13] D.W.Rathbone and I hope to publish a study of this archive in the near future.

[14]*P. Mich*. v. 243, 244, 245.

market was either in the *drumos* or close to it (Wagner 1972). Platforms constructed outside the main temple gates, but on the banks of the Nile, at Elephantine and Karnak in the Augustan or early Julio-Claudian periods appear to have functioned as market places (Lauffray 1971; Jaritz 1980). The market at Medinet Habu was, in Pharaonic times at least, in close proximity to the temple (Smith 1971). The association of religious and trading institutions is, of course, common to many societies.

Deriving their income from a variety of sources, agriculture, manufacturing, commerce, and through services, the temples provided an economic focus for the nome as well as fulfilling religious functions. This is not controversial. Most scholars recognize the institutional dominance of the temples from the Pharaonic period onwards. The Roman period does, however, see certain changes in this long-established urban pattern. The fragile independence of the temples did not long survive the conquest, and the financial resources of the temples were probably considerable reduced. Perhaps more threatening than supervision by the authorities in Alexandria was the gradual decline of the temples within the urban context.[16] The markets passed from the temple to the gym nasial élite and the Severan councils were given authority over the temples. By about AD 300, before the official adoption of Christianity and almost a century before the decrees enforcing the closure of pagan temples, many of the old city temples were in decline (Bagnall 1988). This can be seen most dramatically in the temple of Amun at Luxor. In AD 300 part of the central structure of the temple was remodelled and converted into a fort (el-Saghir, Golvin, Reddé, Hegazy, and Wagner 1986). The frescoes in the

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[15] A temple dining-room at Karanis is attested by *SB* viii. 10167. Montserrat 1992; Koenen 1967; Skeat 1975; Milne 1925; Youtie 1948.1 hope to discuss the location of social activity in the Egyptian city in a future article.

[16] It is important not to be too dogmatic on this issue. Some temples survived and perhaps even flourished into the fourth century. The view that traditional temples were systematically attacked by the Roman authorities and went into terminal decline from the onset of Roman administration is rightly attacked by Glare 1993. The processes were far more subtle than previously assumed. It would, however, be a mistake to over-emphasize continuity and assume that because there was no deliberate attack on the temples, in fact the Romans attempted to protect traditional temples, and there could be no decline. Glare alludes to this issue on several occasions (see especially pp. 136–40) but the later history of the temples is not the main area of her analysis.

inner sanctuary, now probably within the *principium* of the fort, were plastered over and replaced by a depiction of the *adventus* of Diocletian (Deckers 1973; 1979; Kalavrezou-Maxeiner 1975). Similar reuse of other temples points conclusively to the decline of the old temples and, therefore, a change in the balance of power in the Romano-Egyptian city.

Gymnasium and council

The administrative changes instituted by Augustus and the Julio-Claudians gradually transformed the old Egyptian city into a recognizably Classical city at the centre of the governmental system (Zucker 1961; Montevecchi 1970; 1988; Bowman and Rathbone 1992). This transformation involved the creation of a new urban élite. All metropolites enjoyed a privileged status in comparison with villagers, but the metropolites were in turn divided by the creation of an exclusive urban élite group of 'those from the gymnasium'.[17] As with the Egyptian priesthood, membership of the gymnasium was hereditary and members of the gymnasial class had to trace their ancestry back, in both the male and female line, to a final reform of the rolls in *c*. AD 72/3, though the initial registration was almost certainly under Augustus (Nelson 1979). Although cities were not given councils until *c*. AD 200, the senior liturgic officials appear to have performed many of the functions of the magistrates of more formally constituted cities.[18] The gymnasiarchs were given certain administrative roles, such as collecting the market taxes (previously probably administered by the temple) and financing civic facilities, and may have acted as the senior representatives of the city. Other important liturgic officials, such as the *Kosmetes* and the eutheniarchs, exercised administrative functions within the city and although the precise criteria for the selection of these officials are unclear, it seems likely that they were also drawn from the gymnasial group (Bowman and Rathbone 1992). The gymnasium may also have been a centre for the imperial cult, as seems to have been the case in other Greek cities such as Alexandria and Cyrene, further linking the new aristocracy with the Roman rulers (Burkhalter 1992). Political power in the city was transferred from the temple priests to

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[17] All village gymnasia were closed under Augustus.

[18] Bowman 1971 studies the administrative history of the councils.

the élite of the gymnasium and from the quintessential Egyptian institution to the most aggressively Greek.

The early second century saw the start of a rapid restructuring of the physical appearance of the Egyptian *metropoleis,* a restructuring which reflected the dominance of the new 'Greek' élite (Lukaszewicz 1986; Bowman 1992). The recent British Museum excavations at Hermopolis Magna have uncovered the remains of early second-century public buildings constructed in a straight-forwardly Classical style (Bailey 1991). The public records office at Ptolemais Euergetis was moved sometime shortly before AD 114/15 to enable the building of a theatre.[19] Oxyrhynchus had a theatre by 117.[20] A theatre was built at Apollonospolis-Heptakomia in 117/8.[21] The new city of Antinoopolis was provided with a theatre soon after its foundation.[22] At about the same period, the Capitoleum of Oxyrhynchus was refurbished.[23] A bath-house in Oxyrhynchus can be dated to the early second century, though it may have been renovated and extended in the early third.[24] The same period sees the attestation of the women's baths at Hermopolis.[25] The main bath house at Hermopolis was known as the Baths of Hadrian in the third century.[26] The Hadrianic period was further commemorated by the construction of temples to both Hadrian and Antinoos.[27] In the late second century or the early third, Oxyrhynchus received baths named after Severus[28] and a set of private baths belonging to a certain Arrius Apollinarius were transferred into the city's ownership by AD 222.[29] The establishing of councils in the first years of the third century meant that *bouleuteria* had to be built to house their meetings. In addition to these buildings, there were large numbers of temples, of uncertain date, and, of course, buildings connected with the imperial cult. Renovation of existing buildings, such as record offices and, of course, the gymnasia themselves, may

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[19]*P. Fam. Tebt.* 15.

[20]*SB* xiv. 11958.

[21]*P. Alex. Giss.* 43=*SB* x. 10651.

[22]*SB* xii. 11262.

[23]*P. Oxy.* xvii. 2128.

[24]*P. Giss.* i. 50; *P. Oxy.* i. 54; vi. 896. See also Krüger 1989.

[25]*P. Brem.* 23.

[26]*CPH=Stud. Pal* v. 66; 67.

have changed the appearance of these buildings. An account of the 270s lists the buildings on the main East-West road of Hermopolis all of which, with one possible exception (a *komasterion*), could be paralleled in most of the Greek cities of the Eastern Mediterranean. [30] The account is mainly concerned with the renovation of a *stoa* and both papyrological and archaeological evidence point to the colonnading of many of the main thorough-fares of the cities. The buildings listed in a survey of Oxyrhynchus probably from the early fourth century, with the exception of the temple of Thoeris, show similar Graeco-Roman dominance. [31]

The adoption of the new architecture was mirrored by the creation of new civic ceremonials and changes in the use of public space. A late second-century account of civic expenses lists the costs of festivals and sacrifices which took place in the theatre. [32] A late third-century text contains a summons from Aurelii Agathos (gymnasiarch and *prytanis* in office), Hermanobammon *(exegetes),* Didymus (chief priest), and Kopras *(kosmetes)* to Aurelii Euripis (actor) and Sarapas (Homericist) to come to the city to celebrate the birthday of the god Cronous with them. [33] The officials summoning these Greek entertainers were the senior figures on the council. A late second-century or early third-century account of expenses related to a festival or to games, lists payments to various musical and athletic performers, priests, and a Homeri cist. [34] In 199/200 Aurelius Horion, former *strategos* and *archidikastes* of Alexandria (and, therefore, one of the most prominent men in the whole province) petitioned the emperor to be allowed to set up a fund of 10,000 Attic drachmas, a substantial amount, to give prizes to victors at the ephebic games. [35] Horion argues that Oxyrhynchus needed this fund so that it could compete with its rival Antinoe, thus showing the familiar Greek rivalry between cities. A few years later, the ephebic games had further been honoured by the addition of the title 'sacred', an

[27]*P. Merton.* ii. 75; *P. Oxy.* vii. 1113; xvii. 2131; 2154; xliv. 3251; liv. 3764; *P.Fam.Tebt.* 41; SB x. 10299.

[28]*P. Oxy.* xvii. 2145.

[29]*P. Oxy.* xliv. 3173; 3176; 1. 3566.

[30]*SB* x. 10299.

[31]*P. Oxy.* i. 43v.

[32]*P. Oxy.* xii. 2127.

[33]*P. Oxy.* vii. 1025.

honour granted to other cities in the province (Rigsby 1977). Aurelius Horion also mentions a further city celebration in order to win over the emperor to his scheme, a festival to commemorate the defeat of the Jewish rebels in AD 115–17, a celebration which demonstrates the invention of a new civic tradition. Another list of expenses incurred at a religious festival, again seemingly funded partly through the *kosmetes* and *exegetes,* contains payments for a mime artist and Homericist.[36] The festival was probably connected with the god of the Nile. Games appear to have become very important and one of the few illustrated papyri depicts charioteers from the various factions (Gasiorowski 1931). The prefect Appius Sabinus was petitioned by an Oxyrhynchite for permission to fund games, probably in honour of Antinoos, in memory of his father.[37] Although the Egyptian gods continued to be honoured, there was a transformation of public life in the city and religious events were now organized by the council, centring on Romano-Greek religious cults (especially the imperial cult), the gymnasium, and the theatre.

From the end of the second century, the officials of the city asserted control over the supply of basic goods. In AD 116, at Oxyrhynchus, the *agoranomos* provided the bakers with 856 artabas of grain on condition that they offer the grain for sale in the normal way.[38] There is no evidence of a grain shortage. In 199, several eutheniarchs negotiated a contract whereby they took control of baking and milling facilities for the provision of cheap or free bread. [39] The civic authorities interfered in the normal workings of supply and demand in order to subsidize the bread supply of the city. Similar action ensured the supply of oil; oil-sellers were forced to sign contracts guaranteeing that they would supply a certain amount of oil at normal rates.[40] The most spectacular intervention in the workings of supply and demand was the institution of the corn dole. The dole potentially supplied 4,000 men in Oxyrhynchus with free grain. There is evidence for a dole in Hermopolis as well as Alexandria.[41] By the fourth century, the council was also acting to control, or at least supervise, the prices charged by traders and the

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[34]*P. Oxy.* vii. 1050.

[35]*P. Oxy.* v. 705=W. *Chr*. 153=*CPJ* ii. 450.

[36]*P. Oxy.* iii. 519.

[37]*P. Oxy.* xvii. 2132.

[38]*P. Oxy.* xii. 1454.

various guilds of the city had to declare their prices.[42] The council exercised control over the market and commercial activities and, through the regulatory activities of the *agoranomos,* could interfere directly in the normal workings of the market to ensure favourable prices for the urban population. As the temples had once controlled many aspects of religious and economic life within the cities, so the council was now the dominant power in all areas of city life.

The decline of the council is less easy to document. It is, of course, almost a *topos* of Roman imperial historiography that the curial class, upon which so much of the government of the early imperial period depended, was feeling the strain by the middle of the third century at the latest and evidence from Egypt has been used to support the case for a general crisis in the curial order in the third century.[43] We must, however, differentiate between more general crises and temporary or limited problems, either caused by fluctuations in economic circumstances or offices which required particularly heavy expenditure.[44] Although there may have been problems towards the end of the third century in Hermopolis, the archives of the council show varied and heavy expenditure in maintaining public buildings, supporting the victors at various games, and running the gymnasium and various bath houses, and, most impressively, that the council embarked on an expensive programme of urban renewal.[45] General reforms of city administration in the early fourth century were almost certainly designed to make the councils more accountable to central authorities and to ease the collection of taxes (Thomas 1959; 1971; 1989). There is no conclusive evidence that power was further removed from the council during the fourth century. The century did, however, see the end of the gymnasium and our evidence points to

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[39]*P. Oxy.* vi. 908.

[40]*P. Oxy.* xii. 1455.

[41]*P. Oxy.* xl, p. 2; W. *Chr.* 425; Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica,* 7. 21; Carrié 1975.

[42] See *P. Oxy.* liv, appendix 3, for a list of declarations of prices by guilds.

[43] Garasey 1974; Millar 1983. For the Egyptian material see *SB* v. 7696, discussed by Skeat and Wegener 1935.

[44]*P. Amh.* ii. 70 of 115 details an attempt to reduce the excessive expenditure forced upon the gymnasiarchs at a time when the city was supposedly enjoying an economic 'boom'.

the increasing importance of individual officials, such as the *logistes,* rather than the corporate body of the council.[46] The curial class continued to exist into the sixth century and had some tax-collecting functions, but the continued existence of the status group does not show that the council continued to function (Geremek 1990). The introduction of the pagarchy under Anastasius (491–518) marks the end of any fragile civic independence that had survived the fifth century and it seems likely that the council had ceased to function some time before.[47] The eclipse of the curial class is probably to be dated to the late fourth or fifth century, a period that is something of a 'dark age' in terms of the surviving papyri. By the sixth century, the cities were dominated by a handful of extremely wealthy families and the institutions of Christianity.

Christianity

It is notable that many of the initially popular forms of Christianity in Egypt contrasted violently with urban culture. The anchorites and monks rejected the values of the city and retreated to the desert fringes, living on the physical and symbolic margins of Egyptian society. The revival of the Egyptian language in the form of Coptic can itself be seen in part as a rejection of the Greek, literate culture of the city. This rejection of the urban has led some to see the monastic movement as being in some way a proto-nationalistic resurgence of Egyptian (rural) culture in opposition to the Greek (urban) culture outlined in the previous section.[48] This is, however, an over-simplification of the situation.

Besa's *Life of Shenoute* (Besa 1983), the head of the monastery of Atripe and a prolific writer in his own right, exemplifies some of the anti-urban tendencies of the Egyptian monastic tradition. Shenoute was brought up in a rural setting and apprenticed to a shepherd, an appropriate training considering his later career, and his holiness

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[45] See *CPH=Stud. Pal*. v.

[46]*P. Oxy.* xvii. 2110 (AD 370) is the last dated attestation of a gymnasiarch; Sijpesteijn 1989.

[47] Liebeschuetz 1973. It is possible that the councils continued to meet in the sixth or even seventh centuries but the changes in administrative structure and decline in attestation suggest that they had no administrative and probably few ceremonial functions.

was first observed when his attention wandered from his flock to his devotions. As head of his monastery, he maintained powerful emotional ties with the rural class from which he had sprung and represented their interests in economic clashes with members of the urban élite, clashes which for Shenoute involved Christian morality. Shenoute ordered his monks to take food from the storehouses of the monastery to feed the poor during a famine and although the storehouses had been empty, divine intervention ensured that Shenoute was able to save his people. By feeding the people, the monastery fulfilled a role which in earlier times would probably have been the responsibility of the municipal authorities. Shenoute's assault on the city was, however, primarily religious not economic, and he launched raids against prominent pagans within the city to destroy their books and idols. His disregard for established urban authority, willingness to use violence in support of his aims, and rural powerbase mean that Shenoute appears to stand for the Egyptian rural Christian poor in a society riven by a combination of ethnic, religious and social divisions. In Besa's *Life,* however, there is a clear tension between this strand of Shenoute's career and an attempt by Besa, perhaps representing the feelings of Shenoute himself, to integrate the rural Coptic monastery with 'mainstream' ecclesiastical authority. Shenoute himself, though treated throughout the *Life* as the equivalent in authority of an Old Testament prophet, was warned by divine messenger that he must accept his subordination to the established Church and its bishops.[49] The bishops were, of course, based in the old centres of administration, the cities. Thus, Shenoute quarrelled with only certain aspects of urbanism, those identified with pagan culture and perhaps with excessive exploitation of the rural poor, and we should interpret his activities in the light of the violence organized by bishops such as Porphyry of Gaza and Theophilus of Alexandria against pagan temples in approximately the same period.[50]

The relationship between monasticism and the city is, in fact, extremely complex. Most of the famous monks depicted in works such as Palladius' *Lausiac History* or Rufinus' *Historia Monachorum* left the valley to retreat into the desert. Some monks, however, remained within the city, either living in communities or singly (Judge 1977). Even those in the desert maintained

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[48] Davies 1951, 55; Hopkins 1991 offers a similar but more cautious approach.

connections with the city. St Antony himself is a good example of this. In the Athanasian *Life* he is depicted spending most of his career in various parts of the desert, sometimes close to valley settlements, sometimes further away. He famously spoke no Greek and avoided book-learning. Yet, Antony was sufficiently close to Alexandria to remain informed about the main developments in the city and to intervene in its religious disputes. He visited the city during the persecutions and during the Arian controversy. Perhaps more significant, however, is the stream of visitors that Antony and other Holy Men attracted to the desert. Rufinus, Palladius, and Theodoret in Syria were only some of the many pilgrims, religious and secular, powerful and powerless, who came to visit the ascetics. Antony's close relationship with Athanasius shows the blending of the two trends of Christianity, the bishop at the head of an urban ecclesiastical administration and the Holy Man, alone (theoretically), worshipping in the desert. The large monastic communities which developed on the edge of the cultivated area or in the desert must have been economically dependent upon the great cities. The monastery at Kellia probably received significant donations from Alexandrians, recruited personnel from the city, and sold the products of the monks' labour in urban markets. The monasteries in West Thebes, at a slightly later date, were closely connected to the life of the valley. The monastery at Deir el-Bahari, built across the entrance to the remains of a Pharaonic mortuary temple, not only enjoyed a dominant topographical position but also had a large tower constructed within its rather small enclosure which, whatever its practical purpose was, advertised the presence of the monastery to the villages in the valley below (Godlewski 1986). Neither this monastery nor the monastery of Epiphanius, lower down the valley, appears to have been particularly wealthy, but the number of such sites in the hills around West Thebes gives an

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[49] Besa, *The Life of Shenoute,* 3, 27, 81, 125–6; Barns 1964; Timbie 1986. In dealing with the lives of early Christian monks in Egypt, one must always be conscious of the artistic and religious licence allowed to the author(s). The tensions displayed in the biographies of Shenoute and Antony are not necessarily those which most affected the lives of these holy men, but probably do represent the concerns of the religious figures who produced the texts.

[50] For the impact of Theophilus' destruction of the Serapeum see Rufinus, *HistoriaEcclesiastica,* 2. 22–30; cf. Eunapius,*Lives of the Sophists,* 472; Theodoret, *Historia Ecclesiastica,* 5. 22.

impression of the pervasiveness of monasticism within the area. The monastery of Epiphanius exercised considerable influence over the community of Jême, intervening with the *lashane* (headman) and arbitrating in disputes.[51]

Monasticism represents a relocating of religious attention away from the cities and villages and towards the desert. It is very difficult to quantify the extent of this 'ruralization' of religious attention. There had always been rural shrines, not least at Deir el-Bahari where members of a guild of iron-workers offered sacrifice in AD 324 (Latjar 1991). The village of Soknopaiou Nesos on the north bank of Lake Moeris in the Fayum probably had a limited amount of agricultural land dotted around the Lake and some of the population could survive from fishing, but was economically dependent on the temple which probably attracted worshippers and income from the cities (Boak 1935; Hobson 1985). These temples, however, appear to have been exceptional and the major religious institutions of the Roman period were concentrated overwhelmingly in the cities. The temples of the villages remained important for the villagers, but not for the population of the cities, while in the fifth and sixth centuries, the rural centres of Christianity were important for both urban and rural Christians.

The importance of the city in the Christian period, apart from the fact that it was a major concentration of population and secular authority, was that it was the seat of the bishop. As already seen, the monks did acknowledge, though sometimes reluctantly, the authority of the bishops. The violent history of the bishops of Alexandria is well known. These men were able to mobilize their congregations to support them in their violent struggles against non-Christians and those they regarded as either challenging their authority or propagating heretical views. Congregations and those supported directly by church funds could be moulded into a rather primitive, though highly motivated, militia which allowed the more aggressive bishops of the period to dominate the streets at moments of their choosing. This political power was, of course, mirrored by social and religious authority. From the fourth century, the bishops arbitrated in disputes and began to encroach on areas which had been the preserve of magistrates. An indictment from Oxyrhynchus

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[51] Winlock and Crum 1926; Crum and Evelyn-White 1926. For other cases of priests and holy men acting as arbitrators, see Parassoglou 1987.

details the case of a woman whose violent husband had abused her and her slaves. She had taken the dispute to the elders and bishops (priests?) of the church who had forced her husband to promise to rectify her complaints. His behaviour, however, worsened and the woman was being prevented from going to church at the time of writing.[52] The Bishop of Hermopolis, Plousianos, heard cases at the gates of the church.[53] Excavations on the site of an old Ptolemaic sanctuary in the centre of Hermopolis uncovered the ancient cathedral, a basilica 55 m by 20 m. The basilica had two main approaches, from the East and North, both of which had monumental gateways, clearly demonstrating the authority of the Church. It is in this almost theatrical setting that Hermopolite bishops dispensed their judgements.[54] By the sixth century, the increased power of the bishops and clergy in the city was recognized by the emperors who gave them administrative duties.[55]

The increasing power of the Church was reflected in its growing dominance of urban topography. The main church at Hermopolis Magna was at the very centre of the city, on the corner of the junction between the main East-West road of the city (Antinoe Street) and the main North-South road (the *Drumos* of Hermes). It is more difficult to identify similar structures elsewhere. There was a 'Great church' at Ptolemais Euergetis and references to 'the Holy Catholic church' may refer to the cathedral both here and at Oxyrhynchus.[56] There are twelve probably urban churches attested in Ptolemais Euergetis in the fifth and sixth centuries.[57] However, of the thirty known district designations of the period, only seven derived their names from Christian buildings (Wessely 1902).

The best evidence for the impact of Christianity on the landscape comes from the Oxyrhynchite. The sixth- and seventh-century Oxyrhynchite is comparatively well documented, mainly due to the survival of a substantial number of texts dealing with the estates of the Apion family, the most prominent landowners in the area. There are about fifty-three churches, nineteen monastic institutions, and

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[52] *P. Oxy.* vi. 903. It is not known to whom the indictment was to be sent.

[53] *P. Lips.* i. 53.

[54] Wace, Megaw, and Skeat 1959, 74–7. The basilica is dated to the first four decades of the fifth century, though the dating is on highly disputed stylistic criteria.

[55] Rouillard 1928, 231, with further examples of bishops acting as arbitrators.

eight other Christian institutions attested.[58] Unfortunately, it is impossible to locate many of these religious institutions. Many of the village churches are, unsurprisingly, identified by the name of the village rather than their patron saint. Twenty of the churches were almost certainly rural. Rufinus was impressed that there were twelve churches in Oxyrhynchus when he visited at the end of the fourth century (Rufinus, *HistoriaMonachorum,* 5), but there were probably between twenty and thirty in the fifth and sixth centuries.

The Christianization of the city required a similar transformation of urban ceremonial and festivities. A *synaxis* from sixth-century Oxyrhynchus probably lists the services at which the bishop officiated. The calendar is preserved for almost exactly five months and lists events on fifty-five days. If there was no great change in the frequency of religious events in the missing section of the calendar, there would have been between 130 and 150 special services. These services were held in at least twenty- four separate locations which were probably nearly all either within the city or close to it.[59] Not all of these would have been public holidays and many probably passed by almost unnoticed. There is some evidence, however, that estate workers were given special allowances of wine on important festival days and these must have been days of general celebration.[60]

Although sixth-century Oxyrhynchus appears to have been financially dominated by a very small number of leading families, there is little evidence that these families left any particular mark on the topography of the city.[61] The Church itself was one of the great landowners of the area and was subsidized by the leading families. This great wealth was used to construct new churches and to support the clergy. It was also channelled to the Church's charities, the hospitals (*nosokomia* and *xenodocheia*), widows, and the impoverished, so that a significant number of people would have been directly or indirectly dependent on the Church. By the end of

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[56]*P. Prag.* i. 52; 77; *Stud. Pal* iii. 126; *SB* i. 4839; 4891; 4898; 4936; 5129; 5313; 5691; xvi. 12943; *P. Col.* viii. 244.

[57]*P. Rain. Cent.* 145; *P. Prag.* i. 74; 75; *Stud. Pal* iii. 126; 128; 164; 239; viii. 724; 743; 881; x. 168; 216; xx. 198; 243; *SB* i. 4758; 5128; 5129; 5134; *BGU* i. 311; *P.Lond.* i, p. 220, 113; *P. Grenf.* i. 68; *P. Flor.* iii. 336. See note 56.

[58]*P. Oxy.* xi. 1357; *Stud. Pal* x. 35; *P. Wash. Univ.* i. 6; 46; ii. 101; *PSI* viii. 953; 964; *P. Oxy.* vi. 941; 993; viii. 1150; xvi. 1890; 1898; 1901; 1910; 1911; 1912; 1913; 1917; 1934; 1950; 1952; 1954; 1955; 1956; 1993; 2020; 2041; xxiv. 2419; xxvii. 2478; 2480; lv. 3804; 3805; lviii. 3936; 3958; 3960.

the sixth century, the cities were dominated by the Church, as they had previously been dominated by the gymnasial and council élite and by the temples.

Change and continuity

The previous three sections have shown the decline and fall of the Egyptian temples; the rise, apogee, and decline of the gymnasial and curial élite; and the rise and triumph of Christianity within the cities of Roman and Byzantine Egypt. There were two transformations in the 'institutional culture' of the city in this period, transformations which can be imperfectly mapped onto the topography of the city. The power of the various institutions was reflected in their influence over public space, partly through the public buildings, but also through ceremonials and rituals through which the identities of the Egyptian, Graeco-Roman and Christian cities were publicly asserted.

In ancient aristocratic terms, the changes outlined were probably of sufficient importance to suggest a complete transformation of the city. One is reminded of the story of the seven sleepers of Ephesus who fell asleep in a cave during the great persecution of Decius and woke under Theodosius II. They found the city transformed beyond recognition.[62] Rufinus, famously, could find no trace of the pagan city of Oxyrhynchus in the Christian city of the late fourth and early fifth centuries *(HM5)*. If the city is measured in institutions, there can be no doubt as to the significance of the changes.

It would, however, be a mistake to discuss the three periods of the city in absolute terms, as if the cities had no connection with each other. In chronological terms alone this would be unsatisfactory. Elements of the Egyptian city continued throughout much of the Roman period, gradually being absorbed within the Graeco-Roman cultural milieu, as elements of the pagan city, slowly shorn of their pagan connotations, were retained in the Christian period. The

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[59]*P. Oxy.* xi. 1357; Delehaye 1924.

[60]*PSI* viii. 953; *P. Oxy.* vi. 993.

[61] The proportionate wealth of the Apions is demonstrated by two lists of contributions from the major landowners of the nome, *P. Oxy.* xvii. 2040 and 2020. The Apions contributed 23 per cent of the total in one and 30 per cent in the other. In both these lists, the church contributed about 10 per cent of the total.

power of the council and councillors did not end with the introduction of Christianity, nor for a considerable period afterwards, and although it is probably right to see some latent and perhaps even open hostility between the various institutions jockeying for authority within the city, it seems unlikely that contemporaries would have perceived an absolute opposition between the Egyptian and Graeco-Roman or the Graeco-Roman and Christian cities. If we were take a very cautious view of the evidence collected above, the changes in the public buildings and use of public space would represent only differences in the way in which the powerful invested their capital within the urban infrastructure. Such an interpretation minimizes the general historical significance of the changes, suggesting that we may be looking at changes in the people or institutions that had power in the city, or simply changes in the media through which power was directed, rather than any fundamental change in the nature of the city. This survey has so far stressed changes, but continuities are also important.

Modern definitions of urban settlement concentrate on broadly economic indicators of urbanism. The role of the temple ensured the religious and economic centrality of the Egyptian city. The gymnasial élite was an exclusive group and there is little evidence that the institutions of this élite acted to integrate the population of the nome. Even the theatres may have had little appeal for villagers. However, the increasing concentration of landed wealth in the hands of the urban élite and the growing administrative powers of the council would have probably compensated for any decrease in the religious centrality of the *metropolis*.[63] The subsequent decline of the urban élite and the emergence of the great families, who may have been more interested in dispensing their patronage on their estates than in the cities, together with the increased importance of non-urban religious sites, are factors which might explain any economic decline in the cities. There is, however, no good evidence of urban growth or decline in Roman or Byzantine Egypt.[64] There may have been some difficulties in the early third century, perhaps as a result of plague,[65] and also in the late sixth century.[66] The problems in the third century do, however, appear to have been temporary. There is no evidence of the beginning of the decline of

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[62] Foss 1979, 42–3.

the urban centres of Egypt that was to leave many of the sites almost deserted throughout much of the Islamic period.

A putative sleeper who missed either of the transformations outlined may not have been able to recognize the particular city after the changes, but probably would have been able to recognize the community as a city. This creates a substantial problem: if the ancient city owed its primacy to the centralization of institutions and élite within the city, we might expect that the changes outlined would have had a more dramatic effect on the social and economic structure of the city. The continuity and resilience of urbanism in Egypt are such that one perhaps ought to look to extra-institutional factors to explain the success of the city. The role of the city as a commercial and perhaps industrial centre may be of greater significance than much of the writing on the city in the last decades has suggested.[67]

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[63] For the increasing economic power of the urban élite see Bagnall 1992.

[64] Quantification of such factors as absolute population and population density is, of course, extremely difficult and this view is necessarily somewhat impressionistic, but the combination of archaeological and papyrological information from sites throughout Egypt means that this is more than an *argumentum ex silentio.*

[65]*P. Oslo.* iii. 111.

[66]*SB* i. 5128 refers to the *epoik(ion) theatrou* which may suggest that there was a separate community at the theatre and that the theatre was no longer regarded as within the limits of the city. Such an interpretation would, however, be extremely tendentious.

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8

Ideology and reception: reading symbols of Roman Cyrene

Eireann Marshall

The construction of symbols or personifications which embody a city or, indeed, a modern nation's collective identity forges an important part of the formulation of an ideology whose function it is to unite its group members. The importance attached to civic or national symbols lies in the fact that they are seen as representing or even embodying the people they represent. The campaign undertaken in recent years to make flag-burning illegal in the United States under a constitutional amendment was given impetus because the defiling of the flag was seen by some as defiling the country it embodied. One can quickly gain an idea of the importance which these symbols play in forging a national identity and in mobilizing people around this identity through the matutinal exercise undertaken by school children in the United States to salute the flag, or more perniciously through the ubiquitous swastika in Fascist Germany.

In this chapter I would like to analyse the symbols or personifications which embodied Cyrene throughout its history and in particular in the Roman period. The symbols I will consider are the personifications of Cyrene and Libya as well as the oecist Battus. What defines these as civic symbols is that they were quantifiable and that they were recognized both by those to whom they pertain and by those to whom they do not pertain as embodying that city (Sperber 1977, 48–9). A distinction has been made in this chapter between those objects which were associated with Cyrene and those which were seen as embodying it. Thus, although silphium was an important signifier of Cyrene in the Classical and Hellenistic periods, it did not embody Cyrene's collective existence because it did not form part of the exegetical narrative which explained the reason and origin of that existence. Battus, conversely, can be seen as a symbol of Cyrene because he was seen at various times as the

embodiment of the city's existence through his role as its founder. Furthermore, I have not considered in this chapter Zeus Ammon or Apollo Carneius, both of whom were associated with Cyrene and both of whom occupied an important place in the city's coinage because they were not exclusively identified with Cyrene and thus could not embody Cyrene's identity.

The aim of this chapter is to view how these personifications or symbols were expanded in narrative and material text and to analyse from this the ways in which these were forged into a collectivizing ideology. This ideology is that which united the Cyrenaean citizens by explaining Cyrene's existence and by making that existence explicit. Cyrene's existence needed to be explained because collective groups need to understand what it is that unites them.[1] The exegetical function of these symbols was undertaken by the foundation narrative constructed by the Cyrenaeans through which their existence within the Jebel Akhdar in Libya was justified. As these symbols mobilized the Cyrenaeans, they were at the same time *collective* symbols and *collectivizing* symbols.

In order to gain an understanding of these collective symbols, it is essential to understand how the Cyrenaeans could have appropriated meaning from these symbols. What I would like to do is to reject a too narrowly prescribed model of the symbol in which symbols are seen as both shaped by social values and as shaping social values. For Geertz, the symbols were 'historically created vehicles for reasoning, perception, feeling and understanding' (Geertz 1973, 123). Symbols, in his analysis, are seen as models of the world and were seen as giving meaning to existence by providing a model for the world as it is and as it ought to be (ibid., 127). To Geertz, then, symbols are shaped by society and are given meaning by reflecting that society. Society, in this conception, is seen as acting as a coherent whole i.e. it is not seen as fragmented in any way by gender or by the existence of different subgroups within that society. Thus, he ascribes the shaping of these symbols to society as a whole and not to individuals within that society; he, furthermore, does not allow symbols to be read in different ways by different individuals.

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[1] Anderson 1991, 6. 'Group identity is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow members, meet them or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.'

The construction of collective symbols in ancient cities should be seen in the light of euergetism since it was the élite who were primarily responsible for the construction and dissemination of these symbols. Veyne has defined euergetism as a contract between the élite and the lower orders, which stipulated that the élite would contribute public benefits at their own expense; in return, the lower orders adapted themselves to the rule by the élite (Veyne 1990, 10f.). In Veyne's formulation, it became an important element in mediating relations between the élite and people. The people felt entitled to the benefits bestowed on them; the élite translated these state duties into a privilege which defined them as being élite (ibid., 44). As the system of bestowing gifts to their city helped define them as élite, they exalted this duty (ibid., 44; 103 n.). In this way, they were able to identify their own personal need, that of demonstrating their éliteness, with the needs of the city. It follows, then, that they saw themselves as patriotic and as the defenders of civic morals (ibid., 44; 103 n.). Through this system of public benefaction, the élite were able to associate themselves with the collective good and thus were able to appropriate and disseminate the collective ideology of the city. This conception of euergetism, however, should not obscure the fact that the élite were not necessarily a unified group; they were, indeed, always competing with one another for supremacy. There could, therefore, be several, conflicting collective ideologies produced within the same city at the same time.

Symbols, however, do not necessarily reinforce social values but can also reject or reshape social values (Walker Bynum, Harrell, and Richman 1986, 8). Symbols, as Sperber has demonstrated, do not themselves contain the significant or interpreted message and as such are read in different ways by different individuals. To Ricoeur (1967), symbols do not quantify a pre-existing meaning but instead give rise to thought; i.e. they point to a myriad of different meanings which are dependent on the individual. Meaning, therefore, is not encoded within the symbol but is appropriated by the individual who uses the symbol. Emphasis, therefore, should not be given to the symbol itself but to the individual who appropriates meaning from it. This emphasis allows the symbol not to be seen as shaped by and for society and instead allows it to be seen as appropriated in different ways by the various individuals and subgroups who constitute a society. Therefore, while the symbols were forged by the members of the élite group, women, lower orders and minority groups gained their own meanings from them.

The personification of Cyrene

The personification of Cyrene, the eponymous nymph, is the ultimate embodiment of that city. There is, however, some debate about whether the nymph was constructed by the Cyrenaeans themselves or whether she was first introduced as a personification of the city by Pindar, some two hundred years after the foundation of the city. According to a scholiast of Pindar, the nymph was first mentioned by Hesiod in his *Ehoiai* where he wrote that she was beautiful and lived beside the Peneus.[2] Servius, in his commentary to Vergil's *Georgics* also mentioned that Hesiod wrote about Cyrene.[3] The *Ehoiai,* which was attributed to Hesiod in ancient times, has since been dated by West (1985, 136) to some time between 580 and 520 BC. In the extant remains of Hesiod's account of the nymph, Cyrene was just a beautiful Thessalian nymph who was loved by Apollo; no reference is made to Libya or the city which bore her name. It is, therefore, possible that her existence was independent of the city Cyrene and that she was not created as a personification of the city. Dougherty (1993), Duchemin (1967) and Kühnken (1985) have, indeed, all argued that Pindar, in his ninth Pythian ode, was the first to associate the nymph Cyrene with the Libyan city which bore the same name; it was, thus, Pindar who created an eponymous nymph for the city.[4] It is, however, unlikely that Pindar would have given an account of the mythical foundation of the city which did not concur with that given by the Cyrenaeans themselves. As Dougherty herself has demonstrated (1993, 103), the ninth Pythian ode was addressed to the city as a whole and was sung in the city; its function was to re-integrate the athletic victor within his native city by exalting the city through an account of its foundation (Dougherty 1994, 43). This function of re-integration and praise would, surely, have been best served through a recollection of the city's foundation as it was known to the city.[5] Furthermore, as West (1985, 87) indicates, the scholiast to Pindar wrote that the narrative *(historia)* about the nymph was taken from 'Hesiod'; it is unlikely that this did not include her union with Apollo at Cyrene since this is at the heart of this narrative. It would also be rather coincidental that a nymph

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[2] Schol. Pind 9. 6=11. 221. 12 Drachmann; M-W fr. 215.

[3] *Georg.* 1. 14; 3. 2. 203. 8 Thilohage: 'Aristaeum invocat, id est Apollonis et Cyrenes filium, quem Hesiodus dicit Apollinem pastoralem.'

and a city should share the same name whilst not bearing any relationship to each other. West (ibid., 241) has postulated that 'Hesiod' took his account of the nymph from a Cyrenaean source and bases his argument on the fact that another Hesiodic fragment seems to have been derived from Cyrenaean mythology (Hesiodic fragment=M-W fr. 87). The account of the hierogamy between Cyrene and Apollo found in Pindar's ninth Pythian ode was, thus, probably based ultimately on a Cyrenaean source; the nymph was, therefore, invented as a personification of the city.

The etymology given to the city and the iconography of the nymph, further suggest that the nymph was created as a personification of Cyrene by the Cyrenaeans themselves. While the scholiast to Pindar mentioned only that the city took its name from the nymph,[6] Stephanus of Byzantium gave the etymology of the city as deriving either from the nymph or from the spring found in the intramural sanctuary of Apollo, which was called *cyra* from the Libyan root for spring (Stephanus of Byzantium, s.v.Kyrene). These two differing etymologies are evidenced also in the early civic coinage which refers to the city as either Kyrana or Kyra (Chamoux 1953, 126). In Herodotus' account of the foundation of the city, the Libyans who brought the Therans to the site of Cyrene brought them first to the spring (4. 158. 1). The spring features prominently in the foundation legends as its source of water was seen as one of the reasons for the choice of the site. Callimachus, in his *Hymn to Apollo,* mentions that the spring was known as the *cyra* and through this reinforced the association between the spring and the city (*Hymn* 2. 88–90). Pindar, in his fourth Pythian ode, describes Damophilus, the exiled Cyrenaean who commissioned the ode, as desiring to partake of the joys of banquet near this spring (*Pyth.* 4. 294). In this passage, the *cyra* was the location which was most evocative of Cyrene. Bearing the association between the *cyra* and the city in mind, it is not difficult to see how the Cyrenaeans could have seen their city as having taken its name from the spring. Chamoux (1953, 126) has observed that it was common for cities to be named after geographical features. Whether the city truly did take its name from the spring, however, matters less than the perception by the

[4] Dougherty 1993, 147; Duchemin 1967; Kühnken 1985, 102–3.

[5] I am indebted to Richard Seaford for this point.

[6] See note 2.

Cyrenaeans themselves that it did. When one observes how the nymph was represented, one can see that she was seen as central to this perceived etymology of the city. Thus, the fact that the nymph was often constructed as part of a fountain leads one to think that the Cyrenaeans conflated the nymph, the spring, and the Doric word for spring or fountain, *krana.* This conflation between the nymph and the *cyra* matches the dual etymology of the city given by Stephanus of Byzantium; her centrality to this etymology suggests that the nymph was seen as a personification of the city or of the spring which brought the Theran settlers to the city (Goodchild 1969, 54).

Whatever the origin of the association between Cyrene and its eponymous nymph, it is clear from literary sources and material remains that the nymph served as a symbol of the city, personifying its identity. This can be seen from the ways in which the identities of the nymph and the city were blurred. In Pindar's ninth Pythian ode, for example, Telesicrates the athlete who commissioned the ode, is described as having crowned Cyrene through his victory and causing her to be proclaimed; she, in return, is described as giving him a good welcome (*Pyth.* 9. 71–5). It is unclear whether the Cyrene in question, in this passage, is the nymph or the city; this is made especially unclear by the fact that the preceding passage ends with the culmination of the hierogamy between Cyrene and Apollo. This is, in fact, exactly the point of the passage, namely that the nymph and city are interchangeable because they are one and the same. Callimachus, in his *Epigrams* (72, line 5), similarly blurred the identity of the city and the nymph when he wrote that all Cyrene bowed her head in sorrow for the deaths of Melanippus and Basilo. Callimachus also refers to the city as *to astu Kyrenes,* which could signify the city belonging to the nymph Cyrene but could also mean the city itself (*Hymn* 2. 73). A relief from the Temple of Aphrodite, which will be analysed below, represented the nymph in the act of strangling a lion and referred to the nymph as the 'metropolis Cyrene'.[7] The nymph can also be shown to have been a personification of the city's identity by the fact that she symbolized the city on monuments and coins. Pausanias, for example, mentions a bronze *quadriga* that was dedicated in the fifth century at Delphi in which Cyrene, Battus and Libya were represented (10. 15. 6). The relief on the treasury of Cyrene at Olympia likewise represented the nymph Cyrene, in the act of strangling a lion.[8] In this way, the nymph became a sort of logo for the city, in the way of all personifications.

The fact that there are several representations of the nymph which derive from the Roman period suggests that the nymph continued to serve as a representation of the city. There are no less than seven extant statues of the nymph from the Roman period, the most famous of which are a statue and a relief in the British Museum (see Figure 8.1).[9] What is most remarkable is the fact that the iconography of the nymph remained almost entirely unchanged through the Greek, Hellenistic, and Roman periods. Her depiction as a huntress on remains from the Roman period mirrors her depiction as a huntress in Apollonius Rhodius (2. 506–7), Pindar (*Pyth.* 9. 5–8), Nonnus (16. 86), Acesandrus of Cyrene (*FGH* 469=schol. Ap. Rhod. 2. 428), and Callimachus (*Hymn* 2. 206–8; 213–14). The nymph is also shown, in the two most famous representations of her in the Roman period, strangling a lion, thereby mirroring the relief from the Treasury at Olympia and more generally her legendary feats recorded in Pindar (*Pyth.* 9. 26–8), Nonnus (13. 299–302; 27. 263; 45. 21; 25. 181; 46. 237–8), Acesandrus (as above), and Phylarchus (schol. Ap. Rhod. k). It is, perhaps, more than a coincidence that Cyrene is shown strangling a male lion in the pieces from the British Museum, given that Nonnus described her mastering a male lion.[10] The nymph is also referred to as a *matropolis* (*GIBM* 1061; *SEG* xxxvii. 1675) in the British Museum relief in much the same way that Callimachus referred to his city as his mother city (fr. 602: 'Libyan nymphs make greater my flourishing mother'). Motifs brought out in the Roman remains are also reminiscent of those seen in earlier literature and material remains. Thus, in the British Museum relief, Libya is represented crowning Cyrene in much the same way as she was described by Pausanias as crowning Battus (10. 15. 6). This act of crowning Cyrene is also reminiscent of the passage in Pindar in which Libya was described as welcoming the nymph when she was brought over to Libya by Apollo (*Pyth.* 9. 51–6). The luscious flora depicted on the British Museum relief is also reminiscent of the description of Cyrene as a fertile land in Pindar (*Pyth.* 4. 6; 9. 7–8), Callimachus

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[7] BM reg. no. 61.11–27.30; Huskinson 1975, 31–2.

[8] Paus. 6. 19. 10; Malten 1911, 57; Studniczka 1890, 28f.

[9] Paribeni 1959, 75–6, nos 176–80:176 found temple C and nymphaeum 117 near temple of Apollo fountains. BM reg. nos 61.11–27.30, 61.7–25.3; Huskinson 1975, 31–2.

(*Aetia,* 112, 117 f.), Herodotus (4. 199), and Diodorus (3. 50). The retention of the main iconographical elements of the nymph into the Roman period is quite striking and suggests that the narratives concerning her, which were invented in earlier periods, continued to be invented, and along the same lines, by the Cyrenaeans of the Roman era.

The construction of a personification of the city gave the Cyrenaeans a common symbol behind which to unite. The personification is able to mobilize the people to whom it pertains because it is seen as embodying the outstanding qualities which allow those people to stand out from others. Cyrene was, thus, represented as fertile in much the same way as the Cyrenaeans saw the land they occupied as being fertile; indeed, fertile land is one of the qualities for which Cyrene was most famous. Herodotus mentioned that the Cyrenaeans had three separate harvest seasons which allowed them to have a plentiful supply of food (4.199). Diodorus, similarly, spoke of the deep soil around Cyrene which bore a multiplicity of products (3. 50). Pindar, in his fourth and ninth Pythian odes, described Cyrene as fruitful (*Pyth.* 4. 6: *karpophoros; Pyth.* 9. 7: *polukarpotatas*). Cyrene was also famous, in the late fourth century, for sending 1 million bushels of grain to forty-one different Greek cities to counter a famine in mainland Greece (*SEG* ix. 103).

The nymph could embody qualities which the Cyrenaeans themselves recognized as indicative of their city. Thus, the nymph was associated with the *cyra* and thus embodied that very essence of the city which was seen as allowing life to be carried on. The qualities embodied by the personification could also be normative; i.e. the Cyrenaeans would want to be seen as possessing those qualities which the nymph embodied. Thus, Cyrene was famed for her beauty, and Calliste, or Thera, which colonized Cyrene was, of course, seen as beautiful.[11] Pindar, in his ninth Pythian ode, described Cyrene as the city of beautiful women and thus retrojected the qualities borne by the nymph onto the city she personified (*Pyth.* 9. 75).

In addition, the users of the personification could manipulate the qualities she was seen as embodying so that she embodied the qualities which reflected them. Thus, Pindar, again in his ninth

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[10] BM reg. no. 61.11–27.30; 25.181; Huskinson 1975, 31–2.

Figure 8.1 Antonine relief representing Libya in the act of crowning Cyrene.
From Cyrene, Temple of Aphrodite.

Source: (BM reg. no. 61.11–27.30)

Pythian ode, described Cyrene as 'the land famous in athletic contests' so that her qualities could match the qualities of Telesicrates, the victor he was praising (*Pyth.* 69–70). It can, thus, be seen that Cyrene, as a personification of the city, could form part of an ideology which explained what it was to be Cyrenaean; this ideology, furthermore, could be manipulated to suit the needs of the various individuals who used her as a symbol and projected her to others as a symbol of their city. By exploring the narrative about her, one can gauge how she was incorporated into this 'collective' ideology; by examining the role she played in that ideology, one can see what meanings the Cyrenaeans appropriated when they used her as a symbol.

The nymph Cyrene, perhaps above all else, symbolized the colonizing experience of the Cyrenaeans. Thus, in the foundation legends, she was always seen as having been transplanted from Thessaly to Libya by Apollo; Pindar, in fact, referred to Cyrene as the Delian guest.[12] This experience of relocation mirrored that of the Therans, Samians, Rhodians and all others who migrated to Cyrene; through this narrative, the Cyrenaeans could relive this relocation. This relocation to Cyrene was described, in the foundation legends, in terms of appropriation of land and domination over that land. Thus, in the narrative woven by Pindar in his ninth Pythian ode, Apollo is described as making the nymph Cyrene the queen of the city: 'You (Apollo) came to this glade to be her wedded lord and you will take her over the sea to the finest garden of Zeus, where you will make her queen of a city' (*Pyth.* 9. 51–3). In the subsequent passage in the same ode, Cyrene is given a portion of the land by the *potnia* Libya to be her lawful domain (lines 56–8). The description of colonization in terms of the usurpation of land is brought out vividly by the account, in Apollonius Rhodius and Pindar, of the triton Eurypylus giving the Argonaut Euphemus a clod of earth as a token of his future colonization of Libya (Ap. Rhod. 4. 1556–61, 1731–64; Pind. *Pyth.* 4. 13–58). This clod of earth is subsequently cast overboard (4.1755) or falls overboard (Pind. *Pyth.* 4. 40) and it becomes Thera, which would become the home of Euphemus' descendants i.e. the colonists of Cyrene. In this narrative, which mirrors the Pindaric passage in which Libya gives a portion of the land to Cyrene (*Pyth.* 9. 56–8), the possession of a piece of land is

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[11] Hesiod, *Ehoiai*=schol. Pind. *Pyth*.9. 6=M-W fr. 215=Drachmann 11. 221. 12; Ap. Rhod. 4. 1731–45.

used as a metaphor for colonization. This usurpation was seen in terms of Cyrene's domination over Libya, as can be seen in the statues representing Libya crowning Battus (Paus. 10. 15. 6) and Libya crowning Cyrene (see Figure 8.2).[13]

The nymph symbolized the colonizing experiences of the Cyrenaeans through her depiction as a huntress. It is this aspect of the nymph which is most emphasized in the literary sources and material remains. Thus, Nonnus describes Cyrene as the second Artemis and depicts Apollo carrying Cyrene's hunting nets in the woods (13. 299; 16. 86). Apollonius wrote that Apollo made Cyrene into a huntress (2. 508), while Callimachus wrote that Artemis gave her two hunting dogs (*Hymn* 3. 206–8). Similarly, Pindar describes her as a huntress maiden who spent her entire time hunting fierce beasts (*Pyth*. 9. 5; 9. 18–25). The son she bore to Apollo, Aristaeus, was, equally, described as a hunter. Nonnus, in fact, described Dionysus summoning Aristaeus' hunting dogs and ankle-boots (16. 105–8); in this passage he gives Aristaeus the epithet *agreus,* which was given to him also by Diodorus (Nonnus 5. 215; Diod. 4. 81). Cyrene's feats as a huntress were, in addition, seen as awesome; her most characteristic feats entailed strangling lions, either in Thessaly or in Cyrene itself. Pindar, for example, describes Apollo as enticed by Cyrene's ability to slay a monstrous lion in Thessaly (*Pyth*. 9. 26–8). In addition, Callimachus, Phylarchus, and Acesandrus recorded a myth in which Cyrene killed a lion in Libya.[14] Nonnus refers to Cyrene generally as *leontophonos Kyrene* (13. 299; 16. 86; 27. 263; 45. 21; 46. 237–8) and views this lion-killing feat as an exemplum of physical prowess; thus, in book 46 he wrote: 'even the victory of *leontophonos Kyrene* the mother of Aristaeus was outdone' (46. 237–8). Her manner of slaying these beasts and lions is, equally, remarkable. Pindar describes her as almost frenetic; she thus gets very little sleep (*Pyth*. 9. 23–5), and has boundless strength (9. 35). Apollo, in fact, tells Cheiron to 'look in wonder at a woman's spirit and mighty power. See what a contest she is waging with undaunted head; this maiden with a heart which no toil can subdue and a mind that no fear can overwhelm' (*Pyth.* 9. 30–2). Through this strength she is able to kill lions bare-handed; thus, Pindar wrote: 'once did

[12] Pind. *Pyth.* 9. 9, 5–8; Nonnus 13. 302; Ap. Rhod. 2. 502–5; Mnaseas, schol. Ap. Rhod. 2. 498; Wendel 168=C.Müller, *FHG* iii, no. 39.

[13] BM reg. no. 61.11–27.30, 61.7–25.3; Huskinson 1975, 31–2.

Apollo, the far darting god of the widequiver find her without spears, wrestling alone with a monstrous lion' (*Pyth.* 9. 26–8). Nonnus referred to her hands as lion-killing hands (25. 181). The representations of Cyrene are, equally, expressive of the nymph's awesome power. On both British Museum pieces, she is depicted as entirely undaunted by the lion she strangles, although the lion itself is shown as suffering (Huskinson 1975, 31–2). Pindar wrote that, through the nymph's strength and hunting prowess, she secured peace for her father's cattle and later guarded and protected Cyrene (*Pyth.* 9. 18–25, 69–70). Cyrene is depicted as a guardian also in Apollonius, where she is shown guarding a flock (Ap. Rhod. 2. 502–5). In addition, her son, Aristaeus, was seen as a guardian of flocks and was given the epithet *nomios* (Nonnus 5.215; 16. 105–8; Pind. *Pyth.* 9. 64–5; Callim. *Hymn* 2. 47: the epithet is given to Apollo). It can be seen, therefore, that through this representation of the nymph as a mighty huntress who guarded the city, the Cyrenaeans saw her as securing life in Cyrene and as civilizing a previously unknown and potentially hostile land. The fact that it was Apollo, himself, who gave her the portion of Libyan land to protect underlines the centrality of this divine protectress to the foundation of a city in a foreign land (Pind. *Pyth.* 9. 51–8). Thus, the same god who gave the oracle to Battus to found Cyrene, in this instance, ensured the security of Cyrene by making the nymph its queen and protectress. In addition, by constructing a personification which civilized the countryside the Cyrenaeans could view themselves as civilizers of Libyan land.

Cyrene's gender should also be taken into consideration when examining the way in which the Cyrenaeans appropriated meaning from her as a symbol of their city. It is important to note that the personification of Cyrene was female and her gender is very strongly emphasized in the narratives surrounding her. The nymph was seen as the mother of the Cyrenaeans. Callimachus, for example, wrote that 'the Libyan nymphs make greater my flourishing mother' (fr. 602). Similarly, the inscription on the bottom of the relief from the Temple of Aphrodite referred to Cyrene as the *polion matropolis:* the mother of cities (*SEG* xxxvii. 1675; *GIBM* 1061, line 1). This maternal discourse is also evidenced by the fact that Calliste, the

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[14] Acesandrus of Cyrene *FGH* 469=schol. Ap. Rhod. 2. 428; Phylarchus, schol. Ap. Rhod.k; Callim. *Hymn* 2. 90–2.

Figure 8.2 Statue of Cyrene strangling a lion. From Cyrene, Temple of Apollo.
Source: (BM reg. no. 61. 7–25.3)

island which was later named Thera, was described by Callimachus as the mother of Cyrene (fr. 716). Similarly, Pindar wrote that Thera would become the mother of mighty cities (i.e. Cyrenaica) (*Pyth.* 4. 19–20). She was depicted as the mother of Cyrene because she guarded and protected that city; for this reason, Pindar described her as the queen of Cyrene (*Pyth.* 9. 7–8, 56–8).

The nymph was also seen as the mother of Cyrene because she personified the land on which it stood. The feminization of land is evidenced throughout ancient literature and is particularly prominent in the foundation legends of Cyrene. In the inscription from the relief on the Temple of Aphrodite, for example, the goddess Libya is referred to as the third continent (*SEG* xxxvii. 1675; *GIBM* 1061, 1. 4). Pindar, in his fourth Pythian ode, describes Libya even more graphically as the personification of land when he wrote:

> I [Medea] foretell that from this wave-washed land of Thera, the daughter of Epaphus [Libya] will in days to come find planted in her a root of cities that shall be fostered of men near the foundations of Zeus Ammon.
>
> (*Pyth.* 4. 14–16)

Perhaps the most vivid description of land being feminine can be found in the legend, recorded by Pindar and Apollonius Rhodius, in which the triton Eurypylus gave a clod of Libyan earth to one of the Argonauts, Euphemus, in recognition of the fact that Euphemus would one day colonize Libya (*Pyth.* 4. 13–58; Ap. Rhod. 4. 1556 f., 1731–64). Euphemus's clod of land fell into the sea (Pind. *Pyth.* 4. 40; Ap. Rhod. 1755) and became Calliste, the island which would later be named Thera. In Apollonius' account, Calliste's feminine persona is emphasized by the fact that she appeared to Euphemus in a dream and he became desirous of her (Ap. Rhod. 4.1731–45). Land was seen as feminine because it nourished the inhabitants who lived on it just as mothers nurture their offspring. The nymph was seen as the nurse of Cyrene, as is shown by the fact that she was described as fruitful and bountiful and by the fact that she symbolized the *cyra* which gave life to the city. The association land:mother is best evidenced by the fact that Cyrene was referred to as the 'city on a white breast' (*polin en argennoenti masto,* sc. of the swelling earth) (Pind. *Pyth.* 4. 8). Other passages in ancient literature depict land as feeding its population. In Isaiah (66:10–14) Jerusalem is described as being a woman who suckled her inhabitants:

That you may be suckled, filled, from her consoling breast,
that youmay savour with delight her glorious breasts… At her
breast will hernurslings be carried and fondled in her lap. Like
a son comforted by hismother will I comfort you. And by
Jerusalem you will be comforted.

Apollonius' description of Euphemus' encounter with Calliste
aboard the *Argo* is remarkably similar to this passage (Ap. Rhod. 4.
1731–45). Euphemus, in this passage, is said to have had a dream in
which he held the clod of Libyan earth near his breast and saw white
drips of milk wetting the land; Calliste, then, sprang forth from the
land and he slept with her. Euphemus did not know who the young
woman was and since he thought he had breast-fed the young
woman, he thought that she was his daughter. At this point, Calliste
says she is the daughter of Triton and Libya and that the milk he had
seen was, in fact, her milk which would feed his descendants. Thus,
Calliste (Thera) was 'the sacred nurse of the sons of Euphemus'
(Ap. Rhod. 4. 1755; Fraenkel 1950, 132–3). It can be postulated, on
the basis of the description of Cyrene as a white breast (Pind. *Pyth.*
4. 8), that the Cyrenaeans, too, envisaged the nymph as breast-
feeding them.

   Gender dynamics are also central to Cyrene's colonization
legends, and in particular the hierogamy between Apollo and the
nymph which served as a metaphor for the colonization of the city.
The colonization of Cyrene, in these legends, was described as the
union between Apollo and Cyrene, who came from abroad for the
consummation and who conceived Aristaeus. Apollo was central to
both this union and to Battus's foundation of Cyrene and it is
through this continuity that a parallel can be drawn between the two
legends. Thus, it was through Apollo's initiative that the union took
place and it was he who made her the protectress of the land (Pind.
Pyth. 9. 51–6; Diod. 4. 81; Ap. Rhod. 2. 500–5); this legend mirrors
Battus's foundation of Cyrene in that it was through Apollo's oracle
at Delphi that he founded the city and it was Apollo's will that the
Battiads rule Cyrene (Callim. *Hymn* 2. 68; Diod. 8. 29; Hdt. 4. 163).

   The union between Apollo and Cyrene was carried out with the
aid of Aphrodite whom Pindar described as shedding 'charming
coyness' on their union through her touch (*Pyth.* 9.12). It is clear
from other texts and inscriptions that Aphrodite was seen as having
induced the consummation of their love with a myrtle bush (*CIG*
5138; *IGRR* i. 1035; Callim. *Hymn* 2. 90–2; Ap. Rhod. 2. 505). This

conclusion is reached on the basis of a first-century AD dedication
to Apollo Myrtoös (*CIG* 5138, *IGRR* i. 1035). Furthermore, it is clear
from Callimachus and Apollonius Rhodius that the intramural
sanctuary to Apollo in Cyrene was on a hill known as the myrtle
terrace (Callim. *Hymn* 2. 90–2; Ap. Rhod. 2. 505). This myrtle
terrace was the scene of the hierogamy, the birth of Aristaeus, and
the slaying of the lion by Cyrene; and it was from here that Apollo
and Cyrene were depicted by Callimachus as watching the Theran
settlers arrive at the site of Cyrene (Ap. Rhod. 2. 506; Callim. *Hymn*
2. 90–2). The fact that the location of the hierogamy coincided with
all these events is significant in that it demonstrates how closely it
mirrored the colonization of Cyrene. Thus, when Cyrene slew the
lion, the Libyan king Eurypylus gave her possession of Cyrene;[15]
this legend was, clearly, seen as a metaphor for the foundation of
Cyrene. The act which triggered the foundation of Cyrene in this last
myth is linked to her union with Apollo by the fact that they
occurred in the same place. The hierogamy is, similarly, linked to
the foundation of the city by the fact that the Theran settlers, on their
arrival at Cyrene, were thought to have gone first to the *cyra* which
is located in the same place as the myrtle terrace (Hdt. 4. 158). This
is underlined by Callimachus, in his *Hymn toApollo,* who has the
divine couple on the myrtle terrace watching the settlers approach
(*Hymn* 2. 90–2).

This topographical coincidence is also evidenced by the material
remains of the most important intramural sanctuary in Cyrene, that of
Apollo. In the Roman period, the *propylon* to the Sanctuary of
Apollo had inscribed within it an epigram concerning the union
between the nymph and Apollo (*SEG* ix. 190; G. Oliverio, *Africa
italiana,* iii (1930), n. 20). In addition to this, the first-century AD
dedication to Apollo Myrtoös has recently been associated with a
Hellenistic sacred loggia, located in this same sanctuary, which is
thought to have housed a sacred myrtle bush. These dedications
indicate not only that the hierogamy was important to the Cyrenaeans
of the Roman period but that they resulted from a desire to
commemorate this union in the actual location in which it took place.
The fact that these dedications were made in the Sanctuary of Apollo
provides the same link between the divine union and the foundation
of the city. The Sanctuary of Apollo, thus, housed one of the most
important temples in Cyrene, the Apolloneum, which was thought to
have been first built by Battus (*SEG* ix. 189).

Hierogamy is used in other legends as a poetic metaphor for the foundation of cities. Thus, Nonnus wrote that Cadmus built one hundred cities in Libya in memory of his love for Harmonia, a love which was consummated in the same place (13. 363–5). Diodorus, in turn, wrote that Ammon lay with Amaltheia, begat a beautiful son and appointed her mistress of a region named after her, Amaltheias Keras (3. 68). Euphemus, whose descend ants would colonize Calliste/Thera, was described by Apollonius as having slept with Calliste (Ap. Rhod. 4. 1731–64). Pindar, furthermore, in his seventh Olympian ode, associated the foundation of Rhodes by Triptolemus with the marriage of Helius and Rhodes. This connection between marriage and colonization introduces gender dynamics into the conception of colonization. Thus, it is always through the initiative of the male that the union takes place. Although Mnaseas recorded that Cyrene went to Libya of her own accord, she is described by all others as having been taken there by Apollo.[16] Thus, Pindar has Cheiron tell Apollo that he 'will take Cyrene over the sea to the choicest garden of Zeus' (*Pyth.* 9. 51–6) and 'carried [her] off from the windswept glens of Pelium' (*Pyth.* 9. 5–8). Similarly, Diodorus and Apollonius Rhodius both describe Apollo as taking her away to Libya while Nonnus describes Apollo as actually kidnapping Cyrene: 'Apollo carried her overseas to sandy Libya in a bridal carriage which was a kidnapper's chariot' (13. 302). Callimachus likewise wrote in his *Hymn to Apollo* that Apollo raped or kidnapped Cyrene (*Hymn* 2. 95). Apollo's initiative in this instance is closely matched with that he took in forcing an unwilling Battus to found a city in Libya (Hdt. 4. 155–7). It is also through masculine initiative that cities are founded after the union takes place. Thus, it was Cadmus who built the hundred cities in Libya and equipped them with high walls and towers (Nonnus 13. 364–6) and it was Apollo who founded Cyrene (Diod. 4. 181 f.; Pind. *Pyth.* 9. 51–6) and was given the epithet *archegetes* (*SEG* ix. 175). Similarly, the foundation of Cyrene was attributed to Battus (Hdt. 4. 155–7).

These foundation myths can be seen as establishing social order, whereby the position of either gender is set out and understood by the Cyrenaeans, to whom they pertained. Cyrene, through these myths, symbolized the principal characteristics to which the Cyrenaean

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[15] Callim. *Hymn* 2. 90–2; Acesandrus, *FGH* 469=schol. Ap. Rhod. 4. 298; Phylarchus, schol Ap. Rhod. 4. 298.

woman should aspire: she is beautiful and, above all else, is a mother. Gender roles are also set out by the binary opposition between the female, Cyrene, and the male, Apollo. The role of the male is epitomized by Apollo, who initiates the sexual encounter and founds the city. Whilst Apollo was believed to be responsible for urban civilization in Cyrene, the nymph was metaphorically seen as the bountiful land which nourished the Cyrenaeans.

In summation, an analysis of the narratives of the mythological foundation of Cyrene suggests that the nymph was constructed by the Cyrenaeans as an embodiment of themselves. Thus, she was a guest in a foreign land and was given qualities, such as fertility, beauty and athleticism, all of which the Cyrenaeans could see as representative of themselves. Likewise, the nymph was viewed as a mother figure, who symbolized the land that nurtured them and who was a guardian who protected them. Through this representation, the nymph established appropriate roles for Cyrenaean women because she symbolized what they were or ought to be.[17] Similarly, she embodied the city's existence and thereby established the means by which the Cyrenaeans could unite.

It would, however, be simplistic to think that the nymph was constructed as such a symbol by the whole of Cyrenaean society and that she was created in an ideological vacuum. Although it is impossible to ascertain who generated the legends surrounding her, it was the élite who set up dedications to her and it is likely that it was the élite who manipulated her representation. Through the manipulation of the personification of the city, the élite could be in control of the ideology through which the Cyrenaeans imagined their collective unity. It would, furthermore, be simplistic to think that such an ideology generated by the nymph would have been received by all the Cyrenaeans in the same way. This would suggest that there was only one definite set of messages which the symbol would impart to its users and that every user appropriated the same meaning from the symbol of his city.

The gender norms expressed in the myths of the foundation of the city are more complex than has been, thus far, suggested; the ideology generated by the personification was, therefore, multifaceted. The nymph Cyrene, thus, not only upholds accepted

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[16] Mnaseas, schol. Ap. Rhod. 2. 498 Wendel 168=C.Müller, *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum,* iii, no. 39.

notions of gender but also reverses them. The nymph, for example, exhibits masculine traits. Her awesome strength aligns her with the masculine more than the feminine. Nonnus makes this gender reversal quite explicit when he wrote that 'with her lion-slaying hands, that nymph did an exploit quite as good, when she got the better of a male lion with a woman's grip which he couldn't undo' (25. 181). She is also depicted by Pindar as differing from ordinary females when he wrote that she did not 'care for pacing before the loom, nor for gay dinners with young women of her own age who preferred to stay at home' (*Pyth.* 9. 18–20). Her departure from the feminine norm can also be seen through her association with Artemis (Nonnus 13. 299–301; Callim. *Hymn* 3. 206–8, 213–14). Like Artemis, Cyrene was seen as a huntress but was also linked to motherhood. Her characterization is, therefore, complex and not simple. She cannot be seen simply as symbolizing feminine experience nor as a symbol which acted as a norm for other women. Furthermore, she would have been read in different ways by either gender. It can be postulated that her masculine characteristics would have made it easier for men to accept her as a personification of their city. The meaning which Cyrene evoked from women is, understandably, much more difficult to gauge, as we are bereft of views which they may have had. Cyrene was constructed, in the literary and material remains that we have, by men. Thus, to view her as symbolizing what the female ought to be denies that men and women have different conceptions of what constitutes female gender. Women could either have accepted or rejected the representation of the feminine as characterized by Cyrene, or have read entirely different meanings into her. Women could, furthermore, have taken different views from each other.

Closer examination of the British Museum relief indicates the different ways in which the term 'Cyrene' could be used; thus, its personification would have imparted different meanings to different individuals. The man who set up the relief has, tentatively, been identified as a Sestius Carpus recorded in an inscription from Ptolemais (*SEG* ix. 370; Catani 1986, 390 n. 44). It is clear, from the

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[17] Cf. Geertz 1973, 127: 'Such religious symbols, dramatized in rituals or related in myths, are felt somehow to sum up, for those for whom they are resonant, what is known about the way the world is, the quality of the emotional life it supports, and the way one ought to behave while in it'.

inscription, that he was not from the city of Cyrene, but that he was known to the extent that he could be identified by his *cognomen* alone. If this Carpus were, indeed, from Ptolemais, the meaning imparted to the word, Cyrene, and to the depiction of her on the frieze, would be different to him from that which would have been imparted to Cyrenaeans themselves. Cyrene was, thus, a term used not only for the city but also for Cyrenaica as a whole and its use in the relief implies either. The relief dates to the Antonine period, after the devastating Jewish Revolt, which took its toll on Cyrene and called into question its very supremacy over the other cities in Cyrenaica. We know, from an intriguing inscription, that the cities of the *pentapolis* were vying for precedence amongst each other (*SEG* xxviii. 1566). The epithet *matropolis* given to Cyrene, in this inscription, could also have imparted a range of meanings. It could have signified, to the Cyrenaeans, that someone from Ptolemais acknowledged the supremacy Cyrene had over the *pentapoleis,* both in terms of power and heritage. It could also have evoked feelings of unity amongst the Cyrenaican cities. Conversely, it could have been viewed with contempt by other Cyrenaicans.

Cyrene's colonial experience, which was evoked through the representation of the nymph, was central to defining the city and uniting the Cyrenaeans. However, in the Roman period in particular, Cyrene housed many, among them Romans and Libyans, who could not claim this colonial heritage as theirs. The ideology binding the Cyrenaeans through an appeal to their colonial past could, therefore, have been used to assert the supremacy of the dominant in-group over subgroups. The distinction between in-groups and subgroups should not, however, be made too sharply; there would have been many Cyrenaeans who had Libyan ancestry and many Romans who accommodated themselves within Cyrene and became citizens (Reynolds 1976). Nevertheless, it can also be surmised that there were groups who were excluded from this collective ideology. To these, the nymph would not have imparted the same meaning as that imparted to the dominant group.

The consistency of the representation of the nymph throughout Cyrenaean history is stunning. The dedications made to her in the Roman period demonstrate that she continued to be important to the Cyrenaeans of that period. While the iconography of the nymph suggests that the legends surrounding her remained more or less the same in the Roman period, it remains possible that she was received by the Cyrenaeans of that period in a different way. Cyrene had, after

all, become a term which not only encompassed the city, or even Cyrenaica, but a province within the Roman empire. It is possible, therefore, that, in the British Museum relief, Carpus's dedication to Cyrene could have been read by some, not the least of whom Roman residents, as a dedication to Cyrene, the Roman province. Thus, the alteration in what the term 'Cyrene' encompassed must have resulted in an alteration in the way in which personification of that term was read.

Battus the oecist

Battus, the founder of Cyrene, can be seen as a symbol of Cyrene because he was seen as representative of the city both to the Cyrenaeans themselves and to outsiders. The fact that the Cyrenaeans made a dedication in Delphi which figured Battus, along with Cyrene and Libya, demonstrates that the Cyrenaeans saw him as symbolic of their city; it also suggests that they saw him as being representative of their city to the degree that he would be recognized by others as a symbol of Cyrene (Paus. 10. 15. 6). Aristophanes, in his *Plutus* (925), refers to silphium as Battus' silphium which, likewise, suggests that Battus was closely associated with Cyrene and even used as a shorthand for Cyrene. Battus was representative of the city because he was seen, even in the Roman period, as instrumental to the city's existence and, therefore, an important part of Cyrenaean heritage. He was seen, in all senses of the word, as the founding father of Cyrene.

Battus was seen as solely in charge of the foundation of the city. It was he was who given the oracle by Apollo which told him to found Cyrene (Hdt. 4. 150, 155–7; Diod. 8. 29; Pind. *Pyth.* 4. 5–8, 63). Diodorus and Herodotus both describe the oracle given to him, and the Pythia, in both accounts, directs her advice at Battus alone. An inscription from the Antonine period refers only to Battus being sent from Thera (*SEG* ix. 189). Battus is also described by the literary and epigraphical sources as being solely responsible for the Theran expedition to Libya and for the foundation of the city (*SEG* ix. 189; Pind. *Pyth.* 4. 5–8; 5. 87–8; Hdt. 4. 154). Pindar wrote 'men… were led by Aristoteles (Battus) when with quick steps he found a deep path overseas' (*Pyth.* 5. 87–8). Pindar again refers to Battus, alone, as founding the city on the white-breasted hill (*Pyth.* 4. 8).

The two different accounts of the foundation given by Herodotus indicate the way in which Battus was manipulated, by

the Cyrenaeans, into a founding father who is entirely responsible for the establishment of a city (4. 150, 155–7). Far more attention is given to Battus in the Cyrenaean version of the foundation than in the Theran version. Thus, in the Cyrenaean version, it was Battus who went to Delphi in order to cure his stammer, while in the Theran account Battus only went to Delphi in order to accompany Grinus who wanted to make an offering to Apollo. While, in the Cyrenaean account, the Pythia gave the oracle to Battus alone, the Theran account has her giving the oracle to all of the Therans and only pointing out Battus. The Cyrenaeans believed that Battus, alone, was the cause of the drought which ravished Thera because he ignored the oracle, while the Therans believed that the drought was brought on by the city as a whole because they did not establish a colony in Libya. Finally, in the Theran account, the whole of Thera was involved in preparations for the foundation and Battus was only later chosen as the leader of the expedition. The Cyrenaean account, on the other hand, focused purely on Battus. The version ascribed to Cyrene, furthermore, concentrates on Battus' family background and on his personal defect, namely his stammer.

In classical literature, foundations were commonly attributed to the one man who founded cities often for personal reasons. Thus, Dorieus, the younger brother of Cleomenes, founded an unsuccessful colony in Libya because he did not like the idea of being Cleomenes' subject (Hdt. 5. 42). Similarly, Herodotus described Theras as founding Thera on his own initiative, out of a similar desire not to be the subject of his relations, namely Eurysthenes and Procles (4. 147). The citizens of Ialysus and Aetna attributed the foundation of their cities to one man, namely Tlepolemus (Pind. *Olympian* 7. 30) and Hieron (*Ol.* 1. 3), in precisely the same way the Cyrenaeans did with Battus. The foundations of cities were attributed to one man because this allowed a city's citizens to remember and commemorate its foundation more easily; it also allowed them to understand more readily the reason for the city's existence, since they could deflect the complex act of the foundation onto one individual. This attribution made the oecist symbolic of the foundation and, therefore, of the city's existence. This, in turn, meant that the figure of the oecist could act as a source of cohesion for the colonists because he represented their heritage and explained their unity.

The central role allocated to Battus is also evidenced by his supposed association with Apollo, the god who fostered the

colonization. The importance of Apollo in the foundation of Cyrene is emphasized by Callimachus who wrote that 'it is Phoebus that men follow when they map out cities for Phoebus is always eager to found cities; Phoebus himself weaves their foundations' (*Hymn* 2. 55–7). Callimachus also wrote that Apollo vouchsafed his native city (*Hymn* 2. 63–8). The foundation legends concerning Apollo's union with the nymph, Cyrene, themselves testify to the way in which the Cyrenaeans believed their city to have been founded through the will of Apollo. The importance given, by Herodotus at least, to the Delphic oracle in the foundation of cities is evidenced by the fact that Dorieus' colonization in Libya failed partly because he did not consult the oracle (Hdt. 5. 42). In his *Hymn to Apollo,* Callimachus described Apollo as leading the Cyrenaeans to Libya(*Hymn* 2. 63–8). The extent to which Apollo and Battus were linked to one another can be seen in the structure of Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo*. Indeed, as Williams has suggested in his commentary to this hymn, the passage dealing with the foundation of Cyrene opens and closes with an assertion of the bond which existed between Apollo and Battus (Williams 1978, 63). Apollo had named him as the oecist of Cyrene (Pind. *Pyth.* 4. 5–6; Hdt. 4. 154; Diod. 8. 29; Callim. *Hymn* 2. 63–8). Apollo was also believed to have vouchsafed Battus' foundation as is evidenced by Callimachus who described Apollo as watching the colonists arrive at the site of Cyrene (*Hymn* 2. 90–1). Apollo, furthermore, was believed to have ensured Battus' safety against the wild beasts who inhabited Libya so that his oracles would be fulfilled (Pind. *Pyth.* 5. 57–62). The association between Apollo and Battus continued into the Roman period, as is suggested by the decision by one Tiberius Claudius Battus to make a dedication to Apollo Nymphagetes (*SEG* ix. 175). Furthermore, as will be seen below, a Decimus Cascellius Aristoteles aimed to shed glory on his restoration of the Apolloneum by comparing his benefaction to Battus', which illustrates that Battus remained important to Cyrene and remained inexorably associated with Apollo.

Battus' rule and that of his descendants was also sanctioned by Apollo. According to Herodotus, the Pythia addressed Battus as a king (4. 155). Callimachus wrote that Apollo vouchsafed the city to the Battiads and that he made an oath to him guaranteeing his rule (*Hymn* 2. 68). Diodorus, similarly, described Apollo as sending Battus to Libya in order to rule over Cyrene (8. 29). Herodotus, in turn, wrote of an oath given by Delphic Apollo to Arcesilas III which

granted Battiad control over Cyrene for eight generations (4. 163). Pindar refers to the last Battiad's power as 'god given'; both he and Diodorus describe Apollo as their guide (*Pyth.* 5. 12–14; 4. 271–4; Diod. 8. 29).

Battus, in his turn, also emphasized his association with Apollo by giving him special honours. Callimachus, in his *Hymn toApollo,* wrote that the Battiads honoured no god as much as they honoured Apollo (*Hymn* 2. 96). Battus was, furthermore, attributed with the establishment of the Apolline festivals in Cyrene. Callimachus writes that he erected a shrine to Apollo, which should, presumably, be identified with the Apolloneum in the Sanctuary of Apollo (*Hymn* 2. 76–9). He also relates that Battus established the annual festival to Apollo Carneius (2. 76–9). Pindar, in turn, relates: 'he made the groves of the gods greater than in previous times and established a straight and level road paved with stone for the festivals of Apollo' (*Pyth.* 5. 89–92). Interestingly, in the Roman period, long after the demise of the Battiad dynasty, Battus was still attributed with the erection of the Apolloneum. Thus, an epigram on the wall of this temple reads: 'in old times, too, Phoebus sent Battus Aristotle, sent from Thera, to build your house and now Aristotle erected the temple thrown down to the earth by war to Apollo with reverence' (*SEG* ix. 189). His supposed establishment of these honours to Apollo emphasizes that he was inexorably linked to Apollo. The Apolline festivals, which he was supposed to have established were, furthermore, Cyrene's most important festivals. Therefore, the fact that he was believed to have set them up indicates how Battus was believed to be the heart of the city. He therefore founded not only the city but also its religious infrastructure.

This association with Apollo gave Battus a religious awe and, at the same time, gave his central role within Cyrene a divine sanction. Apollo was believed to have blessed him (Diod. 8. 29). The blessing given to Battus mirrors the blessing which, as Callimachus relates, Apollo gave to the city (*Hymn* 2. 94–6). The conflation of the blessings suggests that Battus' well-being became equated with that of the city. Pindar, furthermore, describes the Battiads as having special healing powers which mirror those of Apollo (*Pyth.* 4. 270). Pindar also relates that Battus was considered blessed by the Cyrenaeans when he was alive and that thereafter he was worshipped as a hero (*Pyth.* 5. 94–5).

The centrality of the hero to the *polis* is exemplified by many passages from Greek literature, but perhaps best by the passage in

Herodotus in which the Delphic oracle advises the Athenians to refrain from attacking Aegina for thirty years, after which they should initiate a cult of the Aeginetan hero, Ajax. The importance of this hero to the Aeginetans is evidenced by the fact that they tried to prevent the Athenians from stealing Ajax's remains, by hiding the fact that Ajax's altar was also his tomb (Hdt. 5. 89). Richard Seaford, in his recent book *Reciprocity and Ritual,* has emphasized that the importance of the hero to the *polis* lay in the fact that the hero served to give cohesion to the *polis* (1994, 111). The hero thus gave the city a shared focus both for its members and outsiders.

The cult of the hero centred around his tomb, his *heroön*. The passage from Herodotus illustrates the importance of the hero's tomb, which was usually believed to contain the remains of the hero who was considered in a sense to be alive. The hero was offered meals and was imagined as sharing feasts (Burkert 1985, 205). The bones or remains themselves were seen to contain special powers. This explains the importance of Cimon's recovery of Theseus' bones in 469 BC. The hero's service to a *polis* was dependent on the location of his remains; thus, by stealing the bones of Orestes from Tegea, the Spartans ensured the hero's change of allegiance (Hdt. 1. 67).

The importance of the *heroön* meant that it was often located in a central place in the *polis*. Pindar indicates that Battus' tomb lay within the *agora* (*Pyth.* 5. 92–3). This *heroön* was found by Italian excavators in the 1960s in the south-eastern corner underneath a later building, the East Stoa. The centrality of the location of the *heroön* emphasizes the centrality of the hero to the *polis*. Battus' centrality can be shown to have given Battus charisma, in the sense denoted by Geertz who has written that charisma is bestowed on individuals through their active involvement in centres, which are themselves defined as the arenas in which the events that most affect people's lives take place (Shils 1965; Geertz 1993). This charisma can be defined in Battus' case as a divine awe which ensured the well-being of the city and which helped to define the city. It is this divine awe which permeates a passage in Pindar in which he refers to Battus as the 'tower of Cyrene and the light which was most resplendent to strangers from afar' (*Pyth.* 5. 54–62). The charisma generated a sense of identity which bound the Cyrenaeans to one another. The fact that at least some epinician odes were sung at heroes' tombs indicates that they were *loci* around which the *polis* would congregate on important civic occasions whose function was

to generate a sense of civic cohesiveness; it also indicates that heroes, who were envisaged as existing within these tombs, helped generate this cohesiveness (Pind. *Ol.* 1. 90–3: the ode was sung at the tomb of Pelops). The extent to which Battus' tomb was perceived as central to Cyrene is brought out by a fourth-century inscription which stated that only Battus, the Tritopateres, and Onymastus (who had tombs within the *agora*) could be buried within the city limits (*SEG* ix. 72). To Seaford, hero cult functioned as a kind of death ritual, which 'promoted social cohesion to a larger group by the solidarity in lamentation of the kinship group at the funeral' (Seaford 1994, 111). This was particularly salient in the case of Battus who was also the city's founding father.

Battus can, therefore, be seen as a symbol of Cyrene because he was attributed with the establishment of the city in every sense of the word. He was believed to be the city's oecist, the founder of its religious rites and its hero. As such, Battus was constructed, by the Cyrenaeans, as a symbol through which they could forge a common identity. Battus mobilized Cyrene because he was believed to be the cause of their existence and through him they could explain why things were the way they were.

It is evident from Pindar and Callimachus, however, that Battus was not only a symbol of the city but of certain groups within that city and could be manipulated to assert the position of these groups. Battus was thus not only the founder of the city but the founder of a dynasty. The way in which Battus could be manipulated into a symbol which justified the Battiad monarchy is evidenced in Pindar's fourth and fifth Pythian odes, which were written in honour of Arcesilas' chariot victory at Delphi. In his fifth Pythian, for example, he evokes Battus in order to reassert Battiad control over Cyrene in a time of crisis: 'in spite of wavering fortune, there is still alive the ancient prosperity of Battus' (*Pyth.* 5. 54–5). Pindar, furthermore, relates the oracle given to Battus not in an attempt to shed glory on the city but on his descendant, Arcesilas; thus, after relating that the Pythia declared him king of Cyrene, he writes: 'even now…eighth in line of those descendants Arcesilas flowers' (*Pyth.* 4. 64–5). Battus' association with Apollo was not emphasized in order to reiterate that the city was founded with divine approval, but was emphasized in order to buttress Arcesilas' position by asserting that his power was divinely bestowed (*Pyth.* 5. 12–14; 4. 270). Similarly, Battus' tomb was mentioned not in an effort to mobilize the Cyrenaeans as much as to emphasize his connection with Arcesilas,

who shed glory on him and his other descendants (*Pyth.* 5. 89–103). Arcesilas' position within Cyrene, at the time of his Delphic victory, was precarious and it thus was Pindar's goal to describe him as 'the king of mighty cities' whose noble ancestors looked on with favour (*Pyth.* 5. 15–19).

Callimachus, several generations after the demise of the Battiad monarchy, asserted his descent from Battus not in order to assert his bond with other Cyrenaeans as much as to assert his own élite status. His association with Battus, reiterated by Catullus in his sixty-fifth *carmen,* is asserted in his *Hymn to Apollo* when he writes that he worships Apollo Carneius because such was the manner of his fathers (*Hymn* 2. 71). Williams has, lucidly, illustrated that the word used by Callimachus, *patroios,* was ordinarily used for something inherited from one's ancestors (Williams 1978, 75ff.). Callimachus, thus, stressed his devotion to Carneian Apollo not so much because it was important to Cyrene but because Battus had introduced it; his devotion to this deity would, thus, underline his noble ancestry. This same assertion of Battiad ancestry was underlined in the same hymn, when Callimachus said that Apollo would vouchsafe a walled city 'to our kings' (*Hymn* 2. 68). An epigram written by Callimachus relates: 'this is the tomb of Battus' son you are passing: one very skilled in poetry and very skilled in merriment over wine' (*Epigram* 37). Callimachus is presumed to have been a member of the élite who underwent difficult financial times; his self-proclaimed association with Battus could have served as a means to reassert his lost status. Battus, in any case, was used by him not as a symbol of Cyrene but a symbol of status. It is possible that the emulation of Battus, in the Roman period, served as a similar kind of élite symbol. The Tiberius Claudius Battus who made a dedication to Apollo Nymphagetes could either have been an actual descendant of Battus or could have used his name in order to emphasize his position within society (*SEG* ix. 175). His dedication to Apollo Nymphagetes could, similarly, have been made in order to associate himself to Battus.

Battus, furthermore, could be used as a symbol of the superiority of Theran descendants over other Cyrenaeans who came from other Greek cities such as Samos and Rhodes, particularly after Battus II offered grants of land to all Greek *poleis* (Hdt. 4. 159). Battus' association with Thera has been shown to have been emphasized throughout literary and epigraphical remains. Battus' descent from Euphemus, underlined in Herodotus and Pindar, emphasized his

Theran connections and made Thera's, and thus his, foundation of Cyrene divinely fated (Hdt. 4. 150; Pind. *Pyth.* 4. 169–71, 50–3). Therans could see themselves as possessing a right to Libyan land since Thera sprang from the clod of Libyan land given to Euphemus by Poseidon's son, Eurypylus. Cyrene's descent from Sparta was also emphasized through Thera's connection with Sparta. Herodotus writes that the Minyae, the descendants of Euphemus, went to Sparta and thence colonized Thera with Theras (4. 148). Pindar, likewise, underlines Spartan connections with Thera when he describes the Spartan Aegeidae colonizing Thera and giving them the Carneian festival (*Pyth.* 5. 45–6). It was through Apollo Carneius that Cyrene's Dorian connections were most remembered. Callimachus thus writes that Carneius went from Sparta to Thera and lastly to Cyrene (*Hymn* 2. 72 f.). The role which the Carneian festivals played in asserting Spartan descent is emphasized by Pindar whose reiteration of the Spartan derivation of Carneian Apollo is followed by an assertion that it was in his festivals that the Cyrenaeans remembered 'their nobly built city' (*Pyth.* 5. 81). Battus' association with Dorians is underlined not only through his descent from the Minyae, but also by the fact that he was seen as having founded the Carneian festival (Callim. *Hymn* 2. 76–9). Callimachus' self-proclaimed association with Battus thus also entailed an association with Thera and Sparta. It can also be surmised that other Cyrenaeans would have wanted to trace back their descent to Theran settlers in order to assert ancestral supremacy and would have used Battus as their symbol. Battus, thus, was not only the father of Cyrene but was also the father of its Theran section in particular.

Certain discrepancies arising from legends surrounding Battus suggest that groups who were not Theran or descended from the Battiads constructed legends about Battus which did not show him in a good light. There are two extant myths concerning an encounter between Battus and a lion. Pausanias describes Battus as yelling out in fear when he saw the lion, while Pindar describes the lion fleeing in terror when Battus, aided by Apollo, yelled out in a foreign tongue (Paus. 10. 15. 7; Pind. *Pyth.* 5. 57–62). Pausanias' account, quite clearly, makes Battus look cowardly. Pindar, on the other hand, wrote the fifth Pythian for Arcesilas IV, and would not have wanted Battus to be so depicted. It is interesting that Pindar strengthens his assertion, that it was the lion who retreated, by saying that Apollo Archegetes made sure of the lion's retreat so that his oracle would be fulfilled. It is possible, therefore, that Pindar was

rebutting the characterization of Battus as weak. The way in which myths about Battus could be manipulated is evidenced, also, by the assertion that he stammered. Herodotus, Diodorus, and Pindar all describe him as having a stammer, although Herodotus says that the name Battus did not derive from the verb *battarizein,* but from the Libyan word for King (Hdt. 4. 155; Diod. 8. 19; Pind. *Pyth.* 4. 63). Although Pindar did not write his fourth Pythian for Arcesilas IV, the man who commissioned it, Damophilus, was an exile who was trying to return to Cyrene by showing goodwill towards the king. It is, thus, not feasible that Pindar would have described Battus as a stammerer if he thought that such would offend the king. It is, however, also known that at least some thought that this personal defect made Battus look bad. Menocles of Barca, writing in the second century BC, rejects the assertion that Battus stammered saying it was *muthikos* (Menocles of Barca, *FGH* 270 F 6). This suggests that opposing groups within Cyrene used Battus in their struggle against each other, constructing opposing versions of myths about Battus in order for him to appear glorious or inglorious.

Battus, therefore, was a multifaceted symbol which could be manipulated for personal or civic reasons. While Cyrenaeans, in certain contexts, could use him to define their city and could see him as their founding father, others, in different circumstances, could use him to define their éliteness. Diverging myths about him indicate, furthermore, that he was not a static symbol, but, rather, one which was constantly being reconstructed. His reception in the Roman period emphasizes the moveable quality of collective symbols. While some continued to use them as a symbol defining their city or of their éliteness, not least the owner of the House of Jason Magnus, whose edifice contained a column capital depicting Battus, others clearly did not. This is shown by the fact that his *heroön* inexplicably went into disuse, as is evidenced by the fact that it was covered over by the East Stoa (Stucchi 1965, 111f.; 1967, 55; Goodchild 1969, 95). Thus, in the same period as Decimus Cascellius recalled Battus' construction of the Apolloneum and roughly the same period as Tiberius Claudius Battus made a dedication to Apollo Archegetes, veneration of the hero ceased. The only apparent explanation for this contradiction is that symbols are not read or manipulated in the same way by all participants.

The goddess Libya

The personification of Libya is a more difficult symbol to analyse than Cyrene or Battus. She is depicted less often in literary sources but is represented on coins,[18] terracotta votive figurines (Pensabene 1986), reliefs (Fabricotti 1986), and statues. It is difficult to know whether her cult originated with the Cyrenaeans out of a desire to construct a concept of 'Libyanness' or whether the Cyrenaeans adopted her and readapted her from the local population (Catani 1986, 386). It is also difficult to know whether the Cyrenaeans recognized her as a representation of themselves, thereby acknowledging her as a symbol of their ties with indigenous populations, or whether they recognized her as a symbol of the Cyrenaean defeat of the indigenous population.

The goddess was the personification of Libya, the third continent, as is evident from the British Museum relief discussed earlier in which she was described as 'having the glory of being the third continent' (*SEG* xxxvii. 1675; Pind. *Pyth.* 9. 8; Hdt. 2. 16). The term 'Libya', which she personified is, however, used ambiguously; thus, it is difficult to know how the Cyrenaeans saw the term as encompassing themselves. Libya was defined, throughout ancient literature, as the whole of the north African region; Libyans were, therefore, defined as all of those who lived in this region. Thus, Pausanias relates that Hannibal was told by the oracle of Zeus Ammon that he would be buried in Libya, which made him happy since he wanted to retire in his homeland (8. 11. 11). Carthaginians, elsewhere, are described as Libyan; thus, Gelon had captured so many Carthaginians that Diodorus says it looked as if he had made the whole of Libya captive (Diod. 2. 24). Diodorus, furthermore, refers to Masinissa as 'the king of Libya' (32. 15), thereby illustrating that Numidians were considered Libyan. Callimachus, in an effort to forge ties between Egypt and Libya, even uses to word 'Libyan' to encompass the Egyptians, as is evidenced from a fragment in which Philotera, the sister of Arsinoe, worries that her Libya is being harmed (fr. 228). The Cyrenaeans themselves were referred to as Libyans. Pausanias records a treasury at Olympia which was erected by 'the Libyans of Cyrene' (6. 19. 10). Sophocles,

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[18] Robinson *BMC Cyrenaica* pl. **XXXXIX,** n. 5; pl. XLII n. 1, 12; XLIII n. 6, 10; p. ccxi. pl. **XXXIX,** n. 5, 6; p. 117, pl. XLII, 11, 12; 78, pl. 119, n. 35 pl. XLIII n. 6; p. 120, n. 43 pl. XLII.

likewise, refers to a chariot race at Delphi, in which Orestes took part, and describes two Libyan chariots; the fact that only the Greeks were allowed to take part in Panhellenic games means that the Libyans referred to were Cyrenaean (*Electra,* 702). Pausanias, furthermore, describes a statue of Mnaseus of Cyrene whom he says was surnamed 'the Libyan' (6. 13. 7; 6. 18. 1). Although the term 'Libyan' was used for all of the populations—Carthaginians, Greeks and indigenous Libyans—who inhabited what the ancients termed Libya, these were not necessarily seen as the same people. Distinctions were therefore made between the Carthaginians and the Libyan population living in their region and between the Cyrenaeans and the Libyans living near them (Diod. 13. 44). The distinction between Cyrenaeans and Libyans is made by Herodotus who relates that Libyans, Cyrenaeans and people from Barca all fear Cambyses and send him gifts (3. 13). In an earlier passage, Herodotus writes that nobody who talked to him knew the source of the Nile, neither Egyptians, Libyans nor Greeks (2. 28).

It is clear, then, that the term 'Libyan' was used both in a geographical sense and in an ethnic sense, in that it was used, in some contexts, to describe all inhabitants of Libya and also, in others, to describe the indigenous populations of Libya. This means that although the Cyrenaeans may have called themselves Libyan because they lived in Libya, this does not necessarily mean that they would have seen themselves as Libyan in an ethnic sense (Callim. 2. 76).[19]

The term 'Libyan' was also used differently in different contexts. When the Cyrenaeans were referred to in a Greek context, such as in Panhellenic games, they were called Libyan; when they were discussed in a local context, they were called Cyrenaean, or Greek as opposed to Libyan. The Cyrenaeans, thus, could have read the personification of Libya as symbolic of the land which they inhabited. She could, likewise, have been seen by the Cyrenaeans as symbolic of their Libyanness, since the occupation of Libyan land is what qualified them as Libyans.

The goddess, however, blurs the distinction between Libyan in the ethnic and geographical sense, since she can be seen to have been symbolic of both Libyan land and Libyan people. This is evidenced by the fact her outstanding iconographical features are Libyan. Her most identifiable features are, indeed, her somatic features. She is depicted as having high cheekbones, fleshy lips, a broad nose and curly hair. These features are very similar to those which appear in

Cyrenaican portraiture and their similarity to modern Berbers has resulted in a general consensus that the goddess Libya's features are, indeed, Libyan. The clothes she is depicted as wearing are also Libyan. She is always portrayed wearing a heavy, leather mantle. Both Libyan nymphs, referred to by Apollonius, and Libyan tribes are described as wearing goatskins. Diodorus, therefore, describes Libyans in general and the Garamantes as wearing goatskins (8. 29; 3. 49). Such indicates that Libya was constructed as wearing what would be appropriate to Libyans. The fact that she was depicted as looking like a Libyan suggests that she would have been read by Cyrenaeans as symbolic of Libya in an ethnic sense, that she was symbolic of its indigenous population.

It can, therefore, be postulated that the Cyrenaeans read Libya as symbolic of who they were, in that they saw themselves as ethnically Libyan. This is supported by the fact that her somatic features are shared by Cyrenaican portraits, the most famous of which are the so-called Libyan boy and Libyan prince in the British Museum. Cyrenaeans, using her as a symbol, could, therefore, see her as representing themselves.

Literary evidence also indicates that close ties were forged between the Cyrenaeans and the local tribes neighbouring them, which could have resulted in the Cyrenaeans developing Libyan identity. Horse-breeding and chariot-racing, for which Cyrene was famous, are, for example, described as favourite pastimes of Libyans who are described as very skilled horsemen. Strabo writes that horse-breeding was followed eagerly by kings of all Libyan tribes (17. 3. 19) and Callimachus describes Sosibius' victory in the Isthmian games as having been won with Asbystian horses (fr. 384). The way in which Cyrene could be conflated with Libyan tribes is evidenced by the fact that the term 'Asbystian', taken from a Libyan tribe neighbouring Cyrene, could signify either Cyrenaean or Libyan.[20] When Callimachus writes that his father-land is famous for its good horses (fr. 716), it is not clear whether he means Cyrene or Libya. The way in which the Cyrenaeans intermingled with the Libyans is shown in mythology about the goddess. Pindar describes Libya welcoming Cyrene in a way which suggests that Cyrene was envisaged as cohabiting with her (*Pyth.* 5. 5–7). This is suggested

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[19] Callimachus uses the term 'Asbystian': Battus brought Apollo Carneius to Asbystian land.

even more strongly by Apollonius when he writes that Apollo placed Cyrene to live among the Libyan nymphs who lived near the myrtle terrace (2. 502–5). The interaction between Libya and Cyrene is also emphasized in a Callimachean fragment which describes Libya as making his flourishing mother (Cyrene) greater (fr. 602). The interaction between Cyrenaeans and Libyans is brought out in Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo* in which he describes Libyan women admiring the dance of the newly arrived Cyrenaean settlers (*Hymn* 2. 85–6).

The fact that Libya can be seen to have been symbolic of Libyans in an ethnic sense does not, however, necessarily mean that the Cyrenaeans used her to symbolize their Libyanness. Indeed, in two of the most famous representations of her, she is depicted as crowning Cyrene and Battus.[21] This act suggests that Libya could have been read by Cyrenaeans as symbolic of the populations they conquered rather than symbolic of themselves.

Libya is, like Cyrene and Battus, a multifaceted symbol which could have been symbolic of a variety of meanings. Libya would, like Cyrene and Battus, have been read in different ways by different Cyrenaeans. Epigraphical evidence suggests that there were many Libyans who lived in Cyrene and doubtless they would have read Libya in their own way.[22] Epigraphical evidence, likewise, suggests that Romans used Libya in a different way, as the personification of a Roman province (Catani 1986, 394–5).

Conclusion

It can be seen, in conclusion, that symbols such as Cyrene, Battus and Libya form part of a collective ideology which binds groups. These symbols make the collective identity which unites the members of societies visible and part of the everyday life of the society. These symbols therefore serve to mobilize the members of a group and allow them to see that their group is distinct from every other group. The way in which these symbols form part of this collective ideology is, however, complex because societies are themselves complex. This ideology is not constructed by societies as a whole but is appropriated by the dominant groups within that

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[20] Hdt. 4. 170 describes the Asbystians as living inland from Cyrene and as imitating Cyrenaean customs.

society. Furthermore, as has been shown in the case of the Battus, several different competing ideologies can be constructed by factions competing against each other for power. A group's collective ideology, moreover, will be interpreted in different ways by members of a group. Collective symbols, thus, do not encapsulate a definite meaning but impart meaning to the participants who use them. The meanings which these users grasp depends on their gender, their social status and their ethnicity.

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[21] Paus. 10. 15; BM reg. nos. 61.11–27.30, 61.7–25.3, Huskinson 1975, 31–2.

[22]*SEG* ix. 348: lists of names from a village in the territory of Cyrene, El Gubba, indicate that a large number of Libyans lived alongside Cyrenaicans.

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9

Beyond belief? Drawing a line beneath the consumer city
David J.Mattingly

Some problems

The ideal type of the 'consumer city', adopted and improved by
Moses Finley, has dominated theoretical thinking about Greek and
Roman cities in the late twentieth century.[1] This has been an
astonishing late renaissance for Weber's sociological models first
outlined in 1909.[2] Many historians have followed the consensus
view that with a few rare exceptions (Rome, Athens, Alexandria,
Carthage, etc.), the cities of the ancient world depended on the
exploitation of their hinterlands through rents and taxes for their
sustenance and that they aimed for a large measure of regional self-
sufficiency.[3] The corollary of this, it has been argued, was that there
was little need for, or actual development of, urban manufacturing
and inter-regional trade.

   The idea of the 'consumer city' has not lacked opponents and
revisionists, of course, but has proved amazingly durable as the
dominant stereotype in debate on the ancient city. Yet the problems
with the model are considerable. Archaeologists in particular, but
many ancient historians also, have found it difficult in practice to
apply and test it.[4] The close identification of the model with the
'minimalist' approach to the ancient economy (indeed, it is a central
plank thereof) has served to intensify the significance of the

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[1] Finley 1981, 3–23; 1985a; 1985b, esp. 123–41, 191–6.

[2] Weber 1909 (trans. 1976); 1921 (trans. 1958 and 1978).

[3] Note the extensive discussion of Finley's œuvre in *La cité antique? A partir
del'œuvre de M.Finley, Opus* (special issue) 6–9 (1987–9); Capogrossi
Colognesi 1995.

argument, especially as influential figures have started to voice different views.[5] Supporters of the model have in their own way contributed to its current vulnerability. For instance, Jongman's unashamedly minimalist analysis of Pompeii as a 'consumer city' was a powerful restatement of the argument, but his weak handling of the archaeological evidence exposed greater problems.[6] Similarly, when in a recent paper Dick Whittaker (1995) posed the radical question 'Do theories of the ancient city matter?' he brought more into the open the growing *ennui* within the subject for the Weber-Finley vision of the 'consumer city'. Although, after reviewing the problems associated with several distinct theoretical approaches to ancient urbanism, he reaffirmed his own adherence to the consumer city model (ibid., 22), like many others, I was more struck by his admission that the consumer city model was seriously flawed than reassured by his insistence that it remains the best one available.

On this evidence, one would judge it unlikely that the impasse in the debate will be turned to consensus, especially as the differing interpretations of the model often turn on questions of semantics, rather than on quantified (or quantifiable) data. Yet ironically, the 'consumer city' model might have been a good deal more serviceable to many scholars had it been employed in a proper manner. An 'ideal type' is not intended to reflect a unvaried norm, rather, it is a notional standard with which to compare empirical data. The single greatest problem with the 'consumer city' model is that it has too often been assumed to be (or been presented as) an all-embracing archetype. There has been a failure to explore and analyse the degree of variance from the ideal type, perhaps in part because there are too few ancient cities offering the sort of data needed for a full assessment. Or because too few people have been interested to collect the necessary data.[7]

Another potential problem with the consumer city model is that its adherents seem overly preoccupied with nineteenth- and early twentieth-century socio-economic theory. Is ancient history out of

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[4] Some of the alternative views are usefully summarized by Whittaker 1990; Leveau and Goudineau 1983.

[5] Hopkins 1978; 1980; Wallace-Hadrill 1991a, b.

[6] Jongman 1988; cf. reviews by J.Banaji, *JRS* 79 (1989), 229–31; B.W.Frier, *Journal of Roman Archaeology,* 4 (1991), 243–7; N.Purcell, *Classical Review*, n.s. 40 (1990), 111–16.

step with other disciplines here? Can we not offer some new theoretical frameworks in the late twentieth century? For comparison, sociology and urban history have both moved on and developed dramatically in the interim and, whilst Weber's works remain classic texts, it is fair to say that he is no longer central to discussions of any other period of urban history. Moreover, the bald fact is that the consumer city model is much more about perceived economic functions of the city than it is a general theory of urbanism. That we currently lack for the ancient world. Seen from this perspective, if the consumer city model remains the best available, is this not a severe indictment on the intellectual state of our subject?

As an archaeologist, I confess myself frustrated by the ossification of theoretical and historical approaches to the ancient city. Meanwhile, archaeological evidence relating to the structures, economies and lifestyles of Roman cities has been accumulated in impressive volume. Yet, to the extent that I can call myself an ancient historian, I despair of the current state of the archaeological debate. Between the two communities of scholars there is a certain amount of buck-passing and a degree of complacency about the situation. In the meantime, the interpretation of this material has proceeded like a rudderless ship on an erratic course, largely following the prevailing wind of the consumer city model, but buffeted by occasional contrary blasts.

Archaeology and the Roman city

As already mentioned, the volume of archaeological studies of towns in various provinces has increased massively.[8] But one may reasonably query just what it amounts to, beyond the accumu lation of facts. Let us consider the situation in Romano-British studies, where there has been a plethora of recent major studies on towns, both major and minor.[9] Here of course, Romano-British research is part of a broader tradition of urban historical studies.[10] The volume of work on Romano-British towns is undoubtedly impressive, yet the drive to accumulate structural detail has at times exercised a stranglehold on the intellectual direction of the subject. The main

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[7] Mattingly 1992, 92–105, suggests some approaches.

[8] See e.g. *Proceedings of the British Academy,* 86 (1995), dedicated to urbanism in Spain; Mattingly and Hitchner 1995, esp. 179–87.

effort tends towards description rather than analysis, notably of the most prominent physical features such as defences.[11] Some Romano-British scholars have also fallen into the trap of national chauvinism in seemingly extolling the typicality of the British towns in the urban mainstream of the Roman empire (a confusion of periphery with core). That is to miss the essential importance of Romano-British urbanism. It was carried out very much at the frontiers of the Roman empire and its development and characteristics reflect that liminality. The differences between the British towns and their continental and Mediterranean counterparts merit a good deal more attention, as does the apparent decline of the town in the fourth century.[12]

In the absence of adequate textual sources for a province such as Britain, we are all the more dependent on developing sophisticated models and theoretical frameworks of analysis. At present this is either simply not happening at all, or else it is the 'consumer city' model that yet again gets pressed inadvisably into service. Britain was an unusual province, the level of urbanization well below that of most other regions, and there are signs that the links between the towns and the Romano-British élite were also underdeveloped and fragile. A more thematic approach to urban history is desirable, perhaps concentrating on issues such as urban function, demography, economy and romanization.[13] This must be coupled with a more explicit interest in theoretical   analyses of archaeological and historical data.[14] Similar revisions to the preoccupations of Roman urban specialists in other provinces would do much to revitalize Roman studies in general.

[9] Brown 1995; Burnham and Wacher 1990; Greep 1993; Grew and Hobley 1985; R.F.J.Jones, in Jones 1991, 53–66; Mattingly 1994, 13–58; M.Todd 1989a, in Todd (ed.) 1989b, 75–89; Wacher 1989, in Todd (ed.), 91–114; 1995.

[10] Carver 1987; Clack and Haselgrove 1981; Heighway 1972; Ottaway 1992; Schofield and Leech 1987; Schofield and Palliser 1981.

[11] Crickmore 1984; Maloney and Hobley 1983, 77–84.

[12] Jones 1987, 47–57; Reece 1980, 77–92; Reece 1988 (for a particularly iconoclastic vision).

[13] On Romanization, see *inter alia* Blagg and Millett (eds) 1990; Millett 1990.

New approaches

Despite my gloomy prognostications in the previous section, it is patently unfair to imply that nothing new or worthwhile has been achieved recently in studies of the ancient city. In the last few years there has been something of a reorientation in studies of Roman urbanism, in particular with a string of important works on Pompeii and other Italian towns.[15] Rome's exceptional status as imperial metropolis is emphasized in new and accessible student texts.[16] The studies in this book follow on this new wave.

The most exciting aspect of much of the new work in this book is that it reveals a new generation of scholars who are looking beyond the current state of debate and exploring new lines of enquiry. The phrase 'Beyond the Consumer City' could suggest varying degrees of engagement (or indeed non-engagement) with the Weber-Finley ideal type, and this indeed appears to be the case. The diversity of interpretation of the phrase in these chapters is undoubtedly a strength of the collection. First, because it marks intellectual advance on several fronts, yet second, because at various points the discussion manages to inform and reshape the consumer city debate. The theoretical approaches offered here are frequently very novel and if the analyses are occasionally still raw, their potential value is amply demonstrated.

Several chapters seek to contextualize the character of the town in élite behaviour and economic interests (Lomas, Morley, Mouritsen, Parkins). Another characteristic of these chapters is their emphasis on change over time and the possibility for some familiar evidence to be read in radically different ways. The latter tendency is also to the fore in Ray Laurence's typically robust argument with the increasingly conventional view of Rome as a dystopia. Similarly,

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[14] In Britain there has been an increasing engagement with theoretical approaches in Roman archaeology, drawing on the experience and impact of the Theoretical Archaeology Group (TAG) in prehistoric archaeology. Three volumes of papers are published to date: Cotham *et al*. (eds) 1995; Rush 1995; Scott (ed.) 1993.

[15] Of which see, *inter alia,* Cornell and Lomas (eds) 1995; Laurence 1994; Rich and Wallace-Hadrill (eds) 1991; Wallace-Hadrill 1994.

[16] See Patterson 1992, 186–215, for a masterly summary of recent research; Thébert (ed.) 1987; note also the fairly traditional, but accessible, textbook, Robinson 1992.

Henrik Mouritsen observes how the apparent turnover in names in the curial class at large could yet disguise a long-term stability of power for a core of élite families, rather than being the evidence for the inexorable rise of freedman families that it has sometimes been taken for. In the same way, Helen Parkins makes a strong case for seeing many aspects of the urban economy as being inextricably linked to the household economies of the richer families. That in some respects might be seen as a Finleyite position, but the twist is that she demonstrates that the range and scale of economic activity of these households would appear to be out of sympathy with the minimalist model. Such an analysis is simply not feasible within the strait-jacket of the consumer city model. Neville Morley is perhaps even more revisionist in his references to the model, pointing to the regional, as opposed to purely local, relations of cities and their élites. Kathryn Lomas is more focused on temporal issues, emphasizing changed attitudes towards urban monumentalization from the late Republic to early empire. She emphasizes the importance of élite ideology in shaping the physical appearance of Italian cities under Roman rule and implicit in her analysis (as in Morley's) is the acceptance of Roman urbanism being part of a specific discourse of imperialism.[17] That in itself raises further questions about the appropriateness for the study of Roman urbanism of a primarily socio-economic model such as the consumer city. The power networks of the Roman empire were particularly routed through the city and merit much more theoretical analysis.

The term 'household' resurfaces with a different resonance in Penelope Allison's paper on houses and their contents at Pompeii. Archaeology is central to her examination and the point is well made here that the reality of the Pompeian evidence rarely comes close to the supposed normative model derived from study of the literary sources. Allison's path-breaking studies of artefact assemblages, involving the painstaking reconstruction of lists of finds from the original excavation notebooks, have thus far been most successful at demonstrating the frailty of perceived wisdom. As she acknowledges, the next stage must be to develop a much more explicit body of theory both about the use of space in the Roman

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[17] Some interesting new approaches to Roman imperialism/colonialism can be found in Webster and Cooper (eds) 1996; Mattingly (ed.), forthcoming.

house and about the taphonomic processes at work in determining the survival/recovery of artefacts in the archaeological record.

Archaeology also features at a significant level in Eireann Marshall's work on the semiotics of monumental urban art. Here again, we are also looking at issues of personal and collective local identity operating within a colonial discourse. This is in part an issue of representation, but in part it once again links with broader issues of imperial power. The study of Roman provincial art as a facet of imperialism has as yet been little studied from a post-colonial perspective and Marshall points to some important possibilities for future work to follow up, most notably her recognition that multiple interpretation was possible of the same artworks or monuments, reflecting discrepant experiences within society.

What these studies show individually, collectively and emphatically is that drawing a line beneath the 'consumer city' debate can only be a liberating and defining moment for the subject. By moving the debate on in new directions we may after all be able to capitalize on the many strengths inherent in Roman urban history and archaeology. Whilst the authors of the chapters in this book would not claim to have provided fully articulated alternative theories, they have laid down some radical alternatives to the traditional approaches. We should embrace such new approaches and seek to move the subject on.

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INDEXES

Compiled by Graham Shipley

The terms *bis* and *ter* indicate, respectively, two and three occurrences of a topic on one page (or in one or more footnotes indexed together).

The following abbreviation is used: 'R'=Roman.

1
GENERAL INDEX

Passing mentions of topics, and contributors to this volume, are not listed. A few general references to ancient authors are included, but specific citations are in Index 2. Modern authors are indexed if their views are the focus of a discussion.

For headings, 'word-by-word' alphabetization is used (e.g. 'urban systems' before 'urbanization'). Subheadings are arranged alphabetically, including any prepositions.

Illustrations are selectively indexed by page number in italics (e.g. 52=figure on page 52). Where three or more consecutive pages are indexed, a full-page illustration interrupting the sequence is ignored.

2
INDEX OF ANCIENT AUTHORS

References to books, chapters, sections, and lines are in parentheses; page numbers of this volume are outside the parentheses; but **bold** numerals (outside the parentheses) replace book or poem numbers when they would otherwise be frequently repeated.

Abbreviations follow *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (3rd edn, ed. S. Horablower and A. Spawforth, 1996).

An asterisk (*) indicates a quotation, usually an extended extract.

3
INDEX OF INSCRIPTIONS

'n.'=a single (or, where two or more items are indexed together, the same) footnote; 'nn.'=two (or the same two) footnotes on the same page (i.e. *bis* is normally to be understood).

4
INDEX OF PAPYRI

'n.'=a single (or, where two or more items are indexed together, the same) footnote; 'nn.'=two (or the same two) footnotes on the same page (i.e. *bis* is normally to be understood).