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[Authors and titles are listed at the end of the review.]

The fourteen papers contained in this volume approach a wide range of topics related to continuity, rupture, and change between the Hellenistic and Roman ages. The collection opens with an introduction by Foraboschi and includes two reviews of a previous book by Bussi whose topic is related to the conference.

The paper by Virgilio stands out as it provides a much improved edition of a royal letter from the Carian temple of Sinuri,¹ dating to Antiochos III's campaign in 203-201 BC. Virgilio has worked on the dossiers collected at the Fonds Louis Robert and thanks to digital tools has been able to reconstruct portions of text that were hitherto unreadable. The new document confirms the dossiers from Amyzon and Labraunda about the problems caused by the activities of Antiochos' troops during his western campaign.

With reference to the expedition in Lower Nubia recorded in the stela of Cornelius Gallus, Bussi reviews the story of the encounters between Egypt and the Meroitic Kingdom in the region of the Dodekaschoinos, from the eighth century BC to the early Roman age (a map of the region would have been useful). Bussi provides a convincing portrait of the economic and strategical relevance of the region. On the other hand, she might have focused more on the ideological aspects of control over Nubia, which emerge through the pharaonic and Ptolemaic documentation. For example, one would expect a reference to the procession held by Ptolemy II in Alexandria where Nubian captives are displayed bringing a tribute of ivory, gold, silver, and gold powder (Athen. V.200 F – 201 C), the same products appearing on the decoration of a Ramesside temple in Beit el-Uali, Nubia.²

Miedico investigates the role of Demetrios' propaganda in shaping a message of victory and aspiration to universal power through coins and statuary. In particular, she focuses on the motifs of Nike and the sea, which hint at the victory against Ptolemy I at Salamis in Cyprus (306 BC), and of Poseidon stepping either on a rock (after the conquest of Athens in 294) or on a globe, alluding to universal power (probably late in Demetrios' career, before his fall in 287). Both symbols reappear in the late first century BC, in Sextus Pompeius' and Octavian's coinage. Miedico also intriguingly reevaluates an early dating of the Nike of Samothrace to the period when Demetrios was king of Macedon (294-288

BC).

Savio and Cavagna explore Augustan coinage in Egypt by focusing on the iconography of Augustus' six bronze series. The presence of typical Roman elements is meant to mark the beginning of a new rule by portraying some crucial points of Augustan ideology; on the other hand, the preservation of Ptolemaic emblems, such as the cornucopia, the eagle, and the Dioscuri's stars or *pilei* clearly hint at the appropriation of legitimating motifs that could also be understood in the Roman iconographic tradition.

Desideri considers the different treatments of Alexander in the works of Plutarch and Dio of Prusa against the background of the relationship between intellectuals and imperial power in the first and second centuries AD. Plutarch, whose *Alexander* gives more space to some negative aspects of Alexander's character than his earlier *De Fortuna*, follows a different evolution from Dio's thought, Desideri argues. The latter seems to move from the diatribic dialogue *On Kingship IV*, where Diogenes stands against an arrogant Alexander playing the violent ruler of Domitian's times, to the revised portrait of *On Kingship II*, probably dating to Trajan's reign, where Alexander is portrayed as a legitimate king modeled on Homeric tradition.

Asmonti focuses on the evolution in Hellenistic and Roman times of the remembered link between Athens and the invention of democracy by focusing on the portrait that Cicero's Brutus gives of Demochares' committed style, a model of the orator as a politically involved man. Asmonti points to a discrepancy between the concept of democracy as it appears in second century decrees and official letters and in the work of Demochares of Leukonoe. In the first case, the granting of freedom and autonomy to cities belongs to a well established Hellenistic procedure, which was adopted by the Romans while spreading their rule over Greece.³ On the other hand, Demochares ideologically recalls an uninterrupted link between democracy, Athens' past *grandeur* and its present struggle for freedom. Asmonti thus recognizes in Demochares an intellectual who resisted the "process of normalization" carried out by the Hellenistic monarchies "by reasserting the irrenouncable link between Athens and its democratic heritage" (p. 139). However, the contrast could be explained rather by the different contexts and pragmatics of the texts discussed: an Athenian nationalist, Demochares gives his city's past a value that would be out of place in the language of a pacific international exchange.

Marcone's paper offers an up-to-date discussion of the links between Hellenistic ruler cults and the imperial cults of the Roman age. The thorough combination of epigraphic and literary texts allows Marcone to reconsider the patterns of acculturation that accompanied the granting of cultic honours to Roman leaders. Marcone investigates the introduction and reception of ruler cults in the West from the most recent perspectives developed by studies in Hellenistic religion: 1) the 'deus praesens' pattern responds to the aim of confirming the legitimacy of a leader whose efficacy in granting peace and wealth is depicted in terms of a divine epiphany; 2) the political relevance of the cults cannot be separated from their religious importance; 3) the religious experience related to the new cults must be sought not in senatorial literature, but in documentary texts, which provide a direct description of the cults and their meaning for the large majority of the population;⁴ 4) the moral discourse employed by the senatorial elite must be read against the background of the political strife they express.

Bejor returns to the link between Pergamene baroque and Attalid propaganda, both

internal and external, by raising the question of which Pergamene art was actually related to this style and to what extent its pathos and dynamism were expressly meant to mark the works related to the self-representation of dynastic power.

In Coppola's paper, iconography is a part of a broader perspective investigating the ideological link between art, the place it is displayed, and the community that displays it. Through a large number of cases in which Greek statues were removed, returned, or re-used by Romans, Coppola convincingly argues that the meaning of such initiatives can be fully grasped only when we approach them as the confirmation of communicative acts: the interaction between those responsible for removing the statue, the community where the statue was originally located, and the one that receives it can be read as a diplomatic exchange stating the relationships between central power and local identities.

Troiani discusses Flavius Josephus' quotation of a passage in Polybios where reference is made to an epiphany in the temple in Jerusalem (Flav. Jos., *Ant. Jud.* XII.135-136 = Pol. 16.39.1-5) by associating it with the story of Heliodoros in II *Maccabees* 3.3. According to this narrative, Heliodoros was inspecting the temple to prepare for withdrawal of royal funds when a divine epiphany prevented him from depriving the temple of its grant. Troiani links the episode in II *Macc.* with an epigraphic dossier attesting a general inspection of the sanctuaries of Coelestria and Phoenicia ordered by Seleukos in 178 BC and concludes that the episode, mentioned by Polybios, disappeared in the later Jewish tradition as it reflected an excessively Hellenized depiction of God's intervention.

Capponi deals with the identification of the Chrestus who, according to Suet. *Claud.* 25.4, instigated the Jews to the revolt that resulted in Claudius' expulsion decree of 49 AD. By considering the documentation on imperial freedmen named Chrēstos or Chrestianus, Capponi rejects the identification with Christ in favour of a figure who must have been still living during the revolt. This Chrestus might be an influential imperial freedman, possibly the owner of an *ousia* in Egypt (*P. Thmouis* 1). The confusion with Christ was generated by Orosius (*Adv. Pag.* 7.6.15-16), Capponi argues, who was the first to interpret Suetonius' passage as a reference to the Christians in Rome.

Foraboschi proposes a long-term assessment of the relations between centralized *dirigisme* and the development of a 'market' economy in Hellenistic kingdoms and the Empire. Borders and interactions between the two trends are discussed in the fields of monetary policy, agrarian economy, and professional associations. A composite portrait emerges in which planning responds to varied aims and shows different levels of fulfilment or failure in relation to the social and economic background where it is implemented.

Brizzi reconsiders the casualty numbers given by ancient sources regarding the first battles between Roman and Hellenistic armies. Although exaggeration can sometimes be taken as certain, a new evaluation is proposed, considering not only the different fighting strategies employed by the Romans, but also a more general change in mentality, which occurred, Brizzi argues, during the third-century wars against Carthage. A significant increase in the human costs of wars, which can be detected in Rome through the census documentation, had already accustomed the Romans to evaluate massacres as a revealing measure of field victories, a change that had not taken place in the Orient, despite the enlargement of Hellenistic mercenary armies.

After a theoretical discussion of the concepts of 'Romanization' and '*transfert culturel*', Legras studies the implementation of Roman principles in the family law of the *peregrini* in Egypt. By concentrating on the status of children born inside or outside marriage as well as on adoptions and successions, Legras shows that the '*transfert de droit*' was not uniform and did not lead to a mixture of systems of law; rather, it implied an "interchange of borrowings or of influences" that added a new stratum to the already complex coexistence of Greek and Egyptian legal traditions in the Ptolemaic period.

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Notes:

- [1.](#) A longer version of the paper is forthcoming in B. Virgilio, *Studi EllenisticiXXV*, Pisa 2011.
- [2.](#) Cf. K.A. Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant. The Life and Times of Ramesses II, King of Egypt*, Warminster 1982.
- [3.](#) On the rhetoric of decrees and letters, cf. J. Ma, *Antiochos III and the cities of Western Asia Minor*, Oxford 1999. On the lexicon of democracy in Hellenistic cities, cf. V. Grieb, *Hellenistische Demokratie. Politische Organisation und Struktur in freien griechischen Poleis nach Alexander dem Großen*, Historia Einz. 199, Stuttgart 2008.
- [4.](#) For the social spread of ruler cults in Hellenistic times, L. Robert, *Sur un décret d'Ilion et un papyrus concernant des cultes royaux*, *Op.Min.Sel.* VII, 599-635; A. Chaniotis, *La divinité mortelle d'Antiochos III à Téos*, *Kernos* 20 (2007) 153-171.