9 (b)
The Creation and Expression of Identity

The Roman World

Andrew Wallace-Hadrill

This chapter follows on from the concerns of the previous part by turning its attention to the forging not of individual but of social identities. It is concerned with issues of ethnicity and political identity and with the material ways in which these were signaled, for example, by choosing clothes (or nudity), by constructing or frequenting the *gymnasium*, the military camp, the necropolis, or the sanctuary, and so on.

The epic poet Ennius, whose *Annales* of the early second century B.C. did so much to give expression to a national Roman identity, defined himself as having *tria corda*, "three hearts": for he spoke Greek, Oscan, and Latin. Born in the heel of Italy at Rudiae (near Lecce), he belonged to the Hellenized Magna Graecia, and thus was "Greek." The native tongue of the area was Messapic, though his family defined itself as belonging to the broader group of dialects, stretching southwards from "Samnite" central Italy, known to the Greeks generically as "Oscan" (Skutsch 1985:749). But he spent the larger part of his career in the company of the leading Roman generals of the day, including Cato (who brought him to Rome), Fulvius Nobilior, whose Aetolian campaigns he followed and described in his epic, and the Scipios, on whose sepulchral monument he was commemorated. What made this Greek/Oscan "Roman"? Later generations attributed to him a prophetic status in defining Roman character. Cicero, and later St Augustine, were to quote as emblematic his line:

> moribus antiquis res stat Romana virisque
> (by ancient customs and by men stands the Roman state). (*Annales* 5.156)]

Ennius put these words in the mouth of Manlius Torquatus Imperiosus, that model of ancient Roman severity, discipline, and paternal authority, who executed his own son on the battlefield for stepping out of line (Skutsch 1985:317). Adherence to traditional ways, however grim and uncouth, was one potent way of defining Roman identity. But of course what made Ennius undeniably Roman was neither his friendship with the elite, nor his articulation of their morality, but the legal fact that he was a Roman citizen.

The attempts, associated with Gordon Childe and his generation of archaeologists, to use patterns of assemblages of material culture to pin down boundaries of cultural groups with some ethnic (let alone linguistic) identity, relied on a concept of identity that was unitary: if a people had only one identity, it must reveal or express that identity in its distinctive ways and hence its distinctive pattern of material culture (Shennan 1989; Graves-Brown et al. 1996; Hall 1997). Such assumptions to some extent underlie the old model of "Romanization" which has recently undergone radical questioning (Metzler et al. 1995; Webster and Cooper 1996; Mattingly 1997; 2002; Woolf 1998; Keay and Terrenato 2001; Wallace-Hadrill 2008, esp. ch.1). That Roman conquest spread Roman ways is obvious. But to read into the progressive adoption of Latin language, Roman dress, Roman law and customs, and hence Roman material culture an expression of the abandonment of one identity and the adoption of another, is to assume that only one identity is possible. Just as post-colonial approaches question the "Hellenization" of the native peoples of Sicily, substituting the idea of "hybrid" or "creole" identities (Antonaccio 2003), so they deconstruct the "Romanization" of the Roman world, and expose its complexities and "creole" mixes (Webster 2001; 2003). We must leave room for Ennius to be a model Roman without excising either his Greek or his Oscan hearts.

This brief chapter traverses a vast territory, and can do so only by exemplification. It aims not to offer a theory of cultural transformation, but an exploration of multiple identities. In examining how the "Roman" positioned itself in relation to the "Greek," the local Italian, the provincial and the barbarian, it will question the view that the outcome of Roman empire was a progressive homogenization of material (or other) culture.

Clothes and Language: What Is "Hellenization"?

In recounting the final days of Augustus' life, the biographer Suetonius gives an anecdote set on the Bay of Naples, that mixing bowl of Greek and Roman. He distributed new clothes to his companions, the Roman *toga* to the Greeks, the Greek *pallium* to the Romans, on the condition that the Romans speak Greek and the Greeks Latin (Suetonius, *Augustus* 98). Clothes are the material correlate to language, an expression of identity that depends on choice: you speak Latin or Greek, you wear the toga or the pallium (Figure 9.5). Augustus' game underlines distinction and difference. But it also reveals the possibility of interchangeability. Identities can be swapped, put on and off as easily as a set of clothes (Wallace-Hadrill 2008

Figure 9.5 Augustus wearing a toga Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen

ch. 2). Speaking one language does not imply incapacity in another: the codes, as the linguists put it, can be switched (Adams et al. 2002; Adams 2003). What we call "identity," in a language redolent of twentieth-century psychology and politics (Gleason 1983; Niethammer 2000), was for a Roman something more like a theatrical mask, a *persona* to be put on and off as circumstances demanded (Hölscher 2008). The skill lay in understanding which *persona* was suitable to the occasion.

There were dangers in getting it wrong. Cicero defended Rabirius Postumus, among other charges, on the count that when working at the royal court at Alexandria, he was frequently seen in Greek dress, the pallium. Cicero can cite precedent for appropriate behavior (wearing the pallium in Alexandria, the toga at Rome): the dictator Sulla wore the *chlamys* in Naples, and Scipio Asiaticus was actually represented in Greek chlamys and boots in a statue on the Capitoline (Cicero, *pro Rabirio Postumo* 25–27). Not wearing "proper" Roman clothing was a relative, not absolute, charge: Roman dress could vary according to occasion, at home or outside, morning or evening, relaxed or formal. In the end, Augustus himself reinforced the definition of the toga as the required formal wear of the Roman citizen for appearance on business in the Forum, lamenting that the Forum was full of people in lower-class working dress, *pullati*, at variance with Vergil's definition of the imperial people:

Romanos, rerum dominos, gentemque togatam
(Romans, lords of the world, and people of the toga). (ap. Suetonius, *Augustus* 40)

With this sort of emotive charge, the toga could be taken to symbolize the core of Roman identity, the possession of citizenship, and as such is represented in thousands of portrait statues of Romans (Zanker 1975; 1983; Kleiner 1977). The potency of the material object in constructing identity lay in its relationship to the alternatives: in opposition to the military garb donned on service (so indicating civil activity in the forum), to the *pulli* of the poor and slaves, to the *stola* of the matron, to the pallium of the Greeks, to the *bracae* of the barbarian Gauls. That did not mean that to put on a pallium was to cease to be Roman. But to put on a toga, if not a Roman citizen, could be construed as passing yourself falsely as a citizen. The emperor Claudius made a defendant on the charge of false claim to citizenship wear his toga when speaking in his own defense, but change it for the pallium when being accused (Suetonius, *Claudius* 15).

Ironically, there is little sign that the Greeks themselves regarded the pallium as a critical sign of Hellenic identity. Even the word is purely Latin (for the Greek *himation*), as alien as the Roman naming of Hellenes as *Graeci*. It is a Roman construction of Greekness, exemplified by the labeling of Latin comedies adapted from the Greek as *fabulae palliatae*. Stage dress for Greeks offered up an image of alterity, a difference to reassure Romans of their own sameness.

Choice of language too carried different charges for Greek and Roman. Latin was always a language the Romans shared with neighboring peoples, and its use could not define the Roman. Only possession of Roman citizenship could do that. Hellenes, by contrast, never had a national identity definable by citizenship (which was linked rather to individual *poleis*): their identity was from the first a cultural

one, defined by common language, common usages, and common gods (Herodotus 8.144.2). Anyone might opt, culturally, to "become" a Hellene, by speaking Greek, following Greek ways. It is precisely in the colonial situation of the multiplication of Greek cities in the eastern kingdoms, Egypt and south Italy, that the need for clear signifiers of Hellenic identity grew: above all the gymnasium with its complex of athletic practices and education, *paideia*. Those Jews who spoke Greek and attended the gymnasium, exercising naked, and even imitating the tied foreskin of the Greek athlete, were "Hellenizing" in the way required by Hellenic culture (Hengel 1980:55–66; Wallace-Hadrill 2008:169–90).

This leaves the relationship of Greek and Roman significantly lopsided. For a Roman to learn and speak Greek was already "Hellenizing" from the viewpoint of Greek culture. From a Roman viewpoint, it in no sense diminished Roman identity. Cicero defended Archias, a Greek poet born in Syrian Antioch, who through being granted the citizenship of south Italian Heraclea consequently acquired Roman citizenship after the Social War. He wrote poems in praise of Roman generals in Greek. Did the prosecution regard that as a problem? Latin was a language of limited usage, whereas Greek was understood throughout the world: it was surely a good thing for Romans to be celebrated in the world language (Cicero, *pro Archia* 23).

A principle of Roman citizenship under the Republic was that it was not compatible with that of any other city. Cornelius Balbus of Gades, so Cicero emphasizes, ceased to be a citizen of Gades at the moment of his grant of Roman citizenship by Pompey. He earned his citizenship by putting his life at risk in the cause of Roman arms: exercise of "virtue" on Rome's behalf was the crucial requirement of the citizen. He could at any point return to Gades and resume his local citizenship (so abandoning that of Rome); and by the principle of *postliminium*, a right of recovery of citizenship originally given to protect war captives, he could at any moment return to Rome and resume Roman citizenship (Cicero, *pro Balbo* 27–29, Sherwin-White 1973:301–303). Thus you could both become, and unbecome, a Roman: it was a legal status, unaffected by cultural choices. On the other hand, in learning Greek culture, you Hellenized forever.

These contrasts are essential to grasp if we are to interpret the innumerable examples, in material and non-material culture, of the spread of "Hellenic" styles and ways in Roman Italy, particularly in the last two centuries B.C. Roman literature, Roman art, and Roman architecture were profoundly, and gloriously, transformed in this period into direct, continuous, and open imitation of Greek models, and frequently through the agency of Greek writers and artists. There was, and could be, no sense of the progressive elimination of the Roman: on the contrary, each successful imitation conquered new territory for Rome, as Cicero and others boasted.

The relationship can be better illustrated by looking at some limiting cases and exceptions, rather than by listing the endless positive examples. In the third quarter of the first century B.C., Cornelius Nepos prefaces his lives of Greeks and Romans by saying that Roman readers must understand some deep contrasts between their ways and those of the Greeks. When they read that the Theban hero Epaminondas

excelled in dancing and singing to the pipes, they must not be shocked: for musical skill was a fundamental accomplishment for a Greek gentleman, though to a Roman it might be disgraceful. In Roman eyes, singing and dancing were for professional entertainers, slaves, and prostitutes. At this point, perceived "ancestral customs" were seemingly antithetical and irreconcilable. This helps to explain the Roman failure to "conquer" the field of music. It also explains why the emperor Nero's performances in public as a *citharoedus* were held shocking by many (not all) Romans, especially those of old-fashioned ways from the provincial colonies. Nero was indeed "Hellenizing" enthusiastically. It might shock, but it might also set a fashion (the future emperor Titus was a skilled musician). Each experiment in Hellenization was a gamble, which might take or not. Roman *mores* were constantly subject to change, and that change was only represented as a loss of identity by the enemies of the innovator. The elite were simultaneously guardians of ancestral ways, and the most vigorous innovators.

A second example of a limiting case is the Roman construction of theaters. Stone-built theaters were among the most conspicuous elements of the self-presentation of the Greek city, the focus of ritual, shared culture, and communal self-definition. Republican Rome followed a tradition which was articulated in a particularly aggressive form in the last century of the Republic, of avoiding any form of permanent theater building. This "tradition" was advertised in the conspicuous demolition of such a theater in the 150s, and a century later in the special pleading attached to Pompey's construction of the first stone theater on the Campus Martius, presented as a "temple with steps." The reasons for this refusal may be analyzed as "political": on the one hand, a desire to protect the competitive elite tradition of the erection of temporary wooden theaters (each bringing ephemeral credit to its builder), on the other, the fear of the theater as a place of popular sedition (literally, "sitting down"), illustrated by the uses of theaters in the east as places of riotous political assembly (Gruen 1992:205–210).

Whatever the reasons, the effect was to place a limitation on what was otherwise a wholesale example of "Hellenizing." Rome had a long tradition of drama, going back to the Archaic period (Wiseman 1998:17–19). When, in the second century, the process of Roman "conquest" of Greek literature begins, drama plays a central role: the *fabulae palliatae* of Plautus and others were vigorously promoted by the elite, for their own political benefit. The Republican theater was a key location for the definition of Roman social order: the equestrian upper class was defined by the reservation of the front 14 rows in the theater (Rawson 1991:508–545). There was no resistance to drama on the grounds of being Greek or alien. Permanent theaters were constructed in numerous cities of central Italy, including the sanctuary of Praeneste (Figure 9.6; Rawson 1991:468–487).

Moreover, a new architectural form was developed in the amphitheater, designed for the distinctively Roman practices of gladiatorial fights and beast hunts, but while examples were put up in Roman colonies like Pompeii or Capua in the early first century B.C., the same ban on permanent theaters meant that Rome was late in acquiring the archetypally "Roman" architectural form, which occurred only under Augustus (Welch 1994).
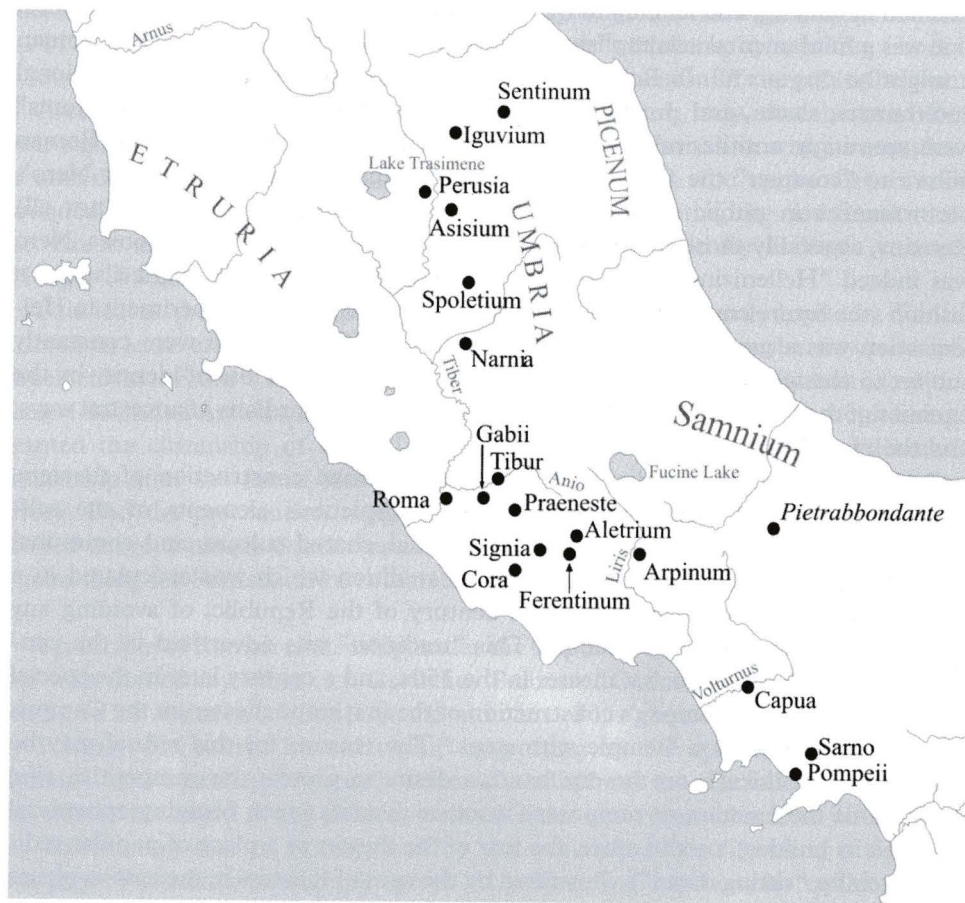
Figure 9.6 Map of central Italy. Drawing: Amy Richardson

The result is an extremely revealing misfit between the record of material culture and of the literary sources. The archaeological record of Roman theater building would suggest that it was a practice limited under the Republic to south Italian (i.e. Greek) cities and some central Italian cities under their influence, which only reaches Rome at the very end of the Republic, and subsequently flourishes there under the empire. The literary record enables us to say that this is because earlier Roman theaters were built in wood; and that the period of the greatest popularity of drama in its classic Hellenic forms of tragedy and comedy was under the Republic, and effectively died out under the empire. More stone theaters do not mean that Rome has become more Hellenized.

How to build a theater was set out in the late first century B.C. by Vitruvius (*de Architectura* 5.6–7). His account is eloquent of the constructed distances between Greek and Roman. In successive chapters, he provides alternative sets of rules for Greek and what he calls "Latin" theaters (acknowledging that in Rome they are

only built of wood—5.5.7). He argues that the underlying mathematical logic is different: the Latin layout being based on four triangles, the Greek on three squares. He underlines different usage of space: the Greeks use the orchestra for performance (he leaves it to his readers to know that in Italy it was for elite seating). We can perhaps see this as a classic of cultural hybridization. The Latin theater may be a derivative of the Greek, but its variants guarantee its diverse identity.

The Romans themselves encouraged an image of the cultural development of Rome from the "uncouth," "rustic" autochthonous Latium to the newly won civilization (*cultus*) owed to the Greeks. Its most epigrammatic, and so most quoted, expression was by Horace:

> Graecia capta ferum cepit victorem, et artes/intulit agresti Latio
> (Captive Greece captured the wild victor, and brought the arts into rustic Latium).
>   (Horace, *Epistles* 2.1.156–157)

That was partly a myth serving their own ideological agenda, projecting a fantasy of the "real Roman" into a primitivized past, and maintaining an alibi, where it served, from the cultural forms so enthusiastically embraced. Cultural expressions of Roman identity were indeed very different by the end of the first century B.C. from two hundred years before, vastly richer and more complex. But rather than thinking of this as an effacement of Roman identity by the superior culture of the Greeks, we should surely regard it, as the Romans themselves did, as the acquisition of more ways of expressing, more forcefully and to a Mediterranean-wide audience, what being Roman was about. The more they learnt about being Greek, the more clearly they could explain why being Roman was different.

Romanizing Italy

It is scarcely surprising to conclude that in "Hellenizing," Romans suffered no loss of identity. On the normal model, culture spreads from the dominant power to the subject: for the Romans to take on Greek ways is no more a sign of subordination than for the British to eat chicken tikka massala, though they played ironically with the notion of the cultural subordination of the imperialist (Gallini 1973). Indeed, the adoption of a sort of dominant bilingualism of Latin and Greek was an essential device of the Roman control of the Mediterranean (Momigliano 1975; Adams 2003). The bilingualism was broadly cultural, not simply linguistic. The ambidextrous command of two traditions, kept notionally distinct from each other, produced a degree of interconnection between east and west Mediterranean that has never been paralleled since.

Similar arguments are much harder to apply to the relationship between Rome and the peoples of the Italian peninsula. The enormous variety of the area that only later was characterized as "Italy" is reflected in the extraordinary diversity of its languages: the "Italic" group alone comprised at least three distinct languages in the centre of Italy, Latin, Oscan, and Umbrian, which in turn had local subvariants,

in addition to the Venetic of the north, the Illyrian-related Messapic of the south, the Greek of Magna Graecia, the Punic of Sardinia and western Sicily, and the non-Indo–European language of the Etruscans. The progressive elimination of the local variants, and the spread (or imposition) of Latin as *the* language of Italy, with Greek as its only permissible alternative, are widely taken as symbolic of the elimination of local identities and the spread of a central "Roman" model.

Conquest transforms cultures, and there is no point in pretending that Romans were not conquerors set upon the total subordination of Italy to their control. Without either a triumphalist celebration of the "success" of Roman imperialism, or a nostalgic sympathy for the loss of autonomous local cultures, we can observe in the longer term a substantial transformation in the archaeological record between the late fourth century, at the beginning of the process, and the end of the first B.C. which marks the moment, in a sense, of "unification" (David 1994; Wallace-Hadrill 2008). But the story is a great deal more complex than one of merciless and deliberate suppression of local identities; at the very least, it must allow room for a negotiation and dialogue between central and local, and an acknowledgment that the price paid for the "universalization" of the central identity is its own transformation.

Umbria is a test case that has provoked sharp debate (Bradley 2000; Sisani 2002). Roman conquest, between 310 and the battle of Sentinum in 295, was swift and decisive. Subjection was maintained by the classic instruments of Roman colonialism: the confiscation of territory, the founding of colonies at strategic points, Narnia and Spoletium, and the building of a trunk road, the via Flaminia, traversing the territory. These instruments decisively changed Umbria, as at the same time Etruria (Harris 1971).

But there are evident limits on the determination to "Romanize." In theory, Rome might have imposed from the start the solution which emerged two centuries later: to make all Umbrian towns "Roman," to make all Umbrians Roman citizens, imposing the use of Latin and of Roman law. Not only was that solution inconceivable in the early third century: it was one that could only be achieved after a bitter war which transformed the very concept of Roman citizenship. In 295, citizenship was still closely allied with active and exclusive participation in the affairs of the city of Rome. Even the Roman citizens given land in the new colonies of Narnia or Spoletium sacrificed their Roman citizenship for a new colonial identity, enjoying the privileges of the towns of Latium to exchange and intermarry with Romans.

Citizenship was (and always remained) a privilege, not a sign of subjection, except indeed for those whose lower status was marked by the lack of right to vote (*suffragium*). The subjection of the Umbrians lay in the fact that they did not become Romans, but were compelled as allies to supply troops to support Rome's campaigns. Rome at this stage had no interest in suppressing local identity or local language, only in ensuring the Umbrians loyally served the Roman cause, or in the standard language of their treaties, "gave friendly support to the majesty of the Roman people."

Significant cultural changes can be traced in Umbria over these two centuries. Urban centers develop, in size, sophistication, and monumental expression. But

urbanism is not a Roman importation into Umbria, and it has its roots much earlier (Bradley 2000). Nor, as the development of the Sabine and the Samnite heartlands shows, did Romans impose urban development in all areas (Patterson 1991). It is much more plausible to argue that urban growth was a result of the requirement to supply troops on a regular basis, so promoting the sort of centralized institutions of taxation that were linked to urbanism.

We can speak convincingly of "self-Romanization." At Asisium, probably in the early second century, in close parallel to neighboring Perusia, the local magistrates built an imposing circuit of walls and gates, together with a system of terracing, that is the basis for the future urban layout of Assisi. This example of monumental planning, and the possibility of a conscious imitation of contemporary Rome with its colonnaded streets and circus, are read as pointing to a willing act of cultural borrowing (Coarelli 1996). The prestige and influence of the larger Roman colonial settlement of Spoletium, coupled with intimate knowledge of Roman ways and the Latin language through constant service in the army, provide a plausible context in which Roman ways might be voluntarily taken on by Umbrians, and specifically by local elites, whom the Romans typically encouraged as their local supporters.

That leaves room for a very considerable cultural bilingualism, which can be traced most clearly in the language of inscriptions. Because we are only dealing with a few dozen surviving examples, it is impossible to give reliable statistics or a definite chronology. What is evident is that Umbrian and Latin have a parallel existence in the course of the second century, with Latin coming to displace Umbrian, but gradually and seemingly voluntarily (Bradley 2000:203–217; Sisani 2002). The spectacular Iguvine tablets from Gubbio, the key text for the Umbrian language, are written in Umbrian language and Umbrian script at the beginning of that century, in Umbrian language but Latin script towards the end (Sisani 2001). Latin language as well as Latin script become quite common in Umbria, as in Etruria, before the Social War. That the languages sit for a while alongside each other is seen in the fact that the same Ner. Babrius, who as one of six local magistrates, *marones*, in Asisium celebrated the work on the wall circuit with an inscription in Latin, was also responsible for a boundary stone, probably on the border with Perusia, in Latin script but Umbrian language (Bradley 2000:210). At least for a period, scripts and languages are interchangeable. So too are institutions. *Maro* is the classic Umbrian title for a magistrate, but the Roman office of *quaestor* is met in this period, as the *cvestur* of the Iguvine tablets, or of the elegant late second-/early first-century sundial inscribed in Umbrian script and language by the *cvestur* (Bradley 2000:210).

We do not need to resort to the hypothesis of a deliberate imposition of Roman ways to explain this phenomenon. Where one language enjoys a position of dominance and wider diffusion, as was the case with the language in which Roman generals gave commands to Umbrian contingents, but also in which Umbrian officers and troops could communicate with their Oscan- or Messapic-speaking fellow soldiers, it is normal for its use to spread at the expense of the language of subordination. That does not mean that Latin-speaking Umbrians ceased to feel Umbrian,

or indeed ceased to resent their subaltern status: it has been justly observed that in modern colonialist situations, rebellion often comes from the most "westernized" elements (Sherwin-White 1973:149).

The Social War of 91–89 B.C., led indeed by many of the most "Romanized" elements of the local elites of the allied states, produced radical changes in the cultural record. Public inscriptions in Umbrian (whether language or script), cease, as do inscriptions across Italy in virtually all non-Latin languages except Greek (Crawford 1996:425, 983–985). To judge by the epigraphic record alone, the Social War was a turning point in the story of local identities, though there are no clean breaks, and there is enormous variation from area to area (Benelli 2001). Does this mean that the war was to some extent about local identities, a reassertion of local autonomy and pride, followed by its final suppression? It is extraordinarily hard to read the archaeological record as supporting this argument. However, it is relevant to observe a phenomenon which is notably widespread in the cities of central Italy, the outbreak of major building schemes in the last part of the second century. In them we can certainly see some of the advantages of participation in Roman conquest, and probably see an assertion of local pride.

A particularly striking group is that of the allied cities with "Latin" status to the east and south of Rome, along the Sacco valley (Wallace-Hadrill 2008:116–128). The patchwork of statuses left by the history of Roman relations divided central Italy into areas fully incorporated into the Roman state, with *municipia* of Roman citizens (no issue of dual loyalty here, since the only citizenship was Roman, in that the *municipium* though self-governing was part of the Roman state), "Latin" (including Hernican) cities which were not part of the citizen body, but enjoyed certain privileges, "Latin" colonies, which like Latin cities were independent, and *socii* or allies which had neither Roman citizenship nor the privileges of the Latins, but the obligation to supply troops. It is impossible for us to tell whether it felt "better" to be from a Roman municipium, like Arpinum, the home of both Marius and Cicero, or from a Latin city like Tibur or Praeneste, which did not convey citizenship except possibly for magistrates (who often became part of the Roman elite), or to be an independent "ally," with all the obligations but none of the privileges of citizenship.

But in this context, it is interesting to see that the cities most active in major building schemes in the late second and early first centuries include a group of "Latin" cities not incorporated in the Roman state. At Tibur, both the magnificent sanctuary complex of Hercules Victor that straddled the approach road from Rome, and the smaller temples of the acropolis (Tiburnus and the Sibyl Albunea), belong to this period (Coarelli 1987; Giuliani 2004:87–89). At Praeneste, one of the most impressive sanctuary complexes of the Mediterranean world was constructed, in an architectural language steeped in Hellenistic models, by members of the same elite families that seem to have been virtually eliminated in the civil wars of the 80s (Coarelli 1992). To the south of the Alban hills, Latin Cora embellished its citadel with an elegant Doric temple (Figure 9.7), while the Latin colony of Signia rebuilt its acropolis, on its high point commanding the Sacco valley, in the best Hellenistic style (Zevi 1994; Cifarelli 2003). Across the valley, the Hernican towns

Figure 9.7 Doric temple at Cora, traditionally called the 'Temple of Hercules' but more plausibly a temple of Juno Moneta. Photo by Andrew Wallace-Hadrill.

of Ferentinum and Aletrium monumentalized their own wall circuits and acropoleis; the fine inscription of Lucius Betilienus Vaarus, who endowed his town with walls, promenades, a sundial, a pool, cistern and siphon that raised the water supply 340 ft, verbally expresses the local pride implicit in the buildings (Zevi 1976, Wallace-Hadrill 2008:117–119).

What sort of statement of identity do they constitute? The architectural language employed belongs to a recognizable *koine* or common tongue with models in the east Mediterranean which we refer to as "Hellenistic." They were surely "Hellenizing" in the Greek sense of consciously adopting a Greek cultural language; and the fact that many elite families from these towns are recorded as having members active in the great market of Delos and in other eastern cities makes it likely that this "Hellenizing" was conscious and deliberate (Coarelli et al. 1982). Cicero twice claimed that in his boyhood, before the Social War, Greek literary studies flourished more in the Italian towns than at Rome (Cicero, *De oratore* 3.43, *Pro Archia* 5; cf. Rawson 1991:474). At the same time, there can be no sense of deletion of local identity. All these sites have circuits of "polygonal" or "Cyclopean" walling, which typically go back to the fourth century. They deliberately revived and emphasized this building technique, despite the availability and simultaneous use of construction techniques in *opus caementicium* ("concrete") which were pioneered by Roman architects. It is hard to escape the impression that their main concern was to compete with each other in investing the profits of campaigning in enhancing the pride of their own particular town.

Such efforts were by no means limited to Latin cities. We may look finally at two examples of Oscan allies. In Campania, Pompeii was already an impressive city with its ample later wall-circuit in the archaic period, under Etruscan influence. The period of Samnite domination, from the late fifth century to the end of the fourth, leaves hardly any archaeological trace, and it is almost certain that the city underwent significant decline (Guzzo 2000). Recovery and new building start in the third century, with Pompeii's new status as a Roman ally (and the obligation to supply troops). But it is only in the second century that a major boom starts. New housing rapidly spreads, and in the second half of the century there is a significant program of public works: houses on the main streets are given new and grandiose façades in dressed stone ("Nocera tufo"), and the buildings round the Forum are transformed, a new basilica built, and the temple of Apollo rebuilt with a surrounding colonnade. A recently discovered inscription in that colonnade provides a clear historical context: a dedication in Oscan lettering to "Lucius Mummius son of Lucius, consul," the commander who sacked Corinth in 146 B.C. (Martelli 2002). It is not hard to imagine that a Pompeian contingent took part in the Achaean campaign, and that this and other service provided a major injection of capital invested in the "modernization" of the city.

Pompeians continued to use Oscan for their public inscriptions down to the Social War. Latin was a rarity, though the most magnificent house in town, that of the Faun, built in the second half of the second century, perhaps by the local elite family of the Satrii (Pesando 1996), greeted its visitors with a Latin HAVE, before exposing them to the astonishing Greek masterpiece of the Alexander mosaic (Cohen 1997 ch. 7; Zevi 2000). Why not envisage a Satrius as trilingual like Ennius? But the Bay of Naples was exactly a point at which cultures met: where the Oscans came down to the sea, and met Greeks and Romans (D'Arms 1970). What of a site in the Samnite heartland like Pietrabbondante? (Wallace-Hadrill 2008:137–143)
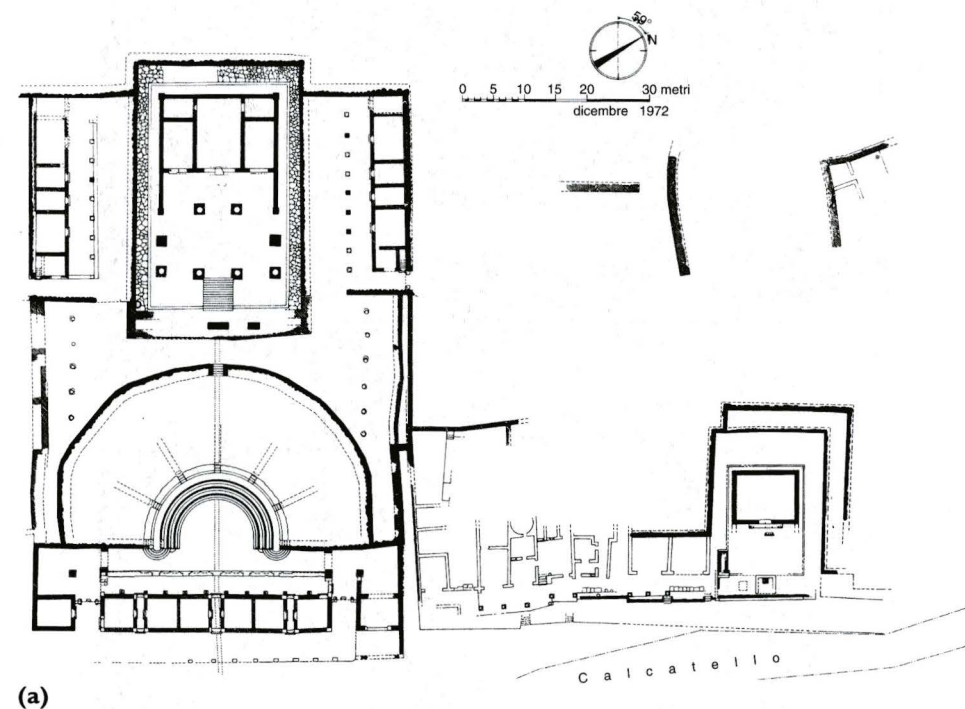

(a)

Figure 9.8 (a) Theater at Pietrabbondante. La Regina 1976; (b) Figure of Atlas at Pietrabbondante. Plan by Andrew Wallace-Hadrill

Few sites convey so strongly a sense of autonomy and difference: the physical location high in the mountains, the absence of the standard urban formulae of the coast cities, and the expressiveness of a sanctuary complex which served as periodic gathering point of a scattered rural population. In fact, the format of the sanctuary, combining temple and theater, is a widespread formula, met at Latin Gabii, Praeneste and Tibur (Figure 9.8 [a, b]). The architectural language of the theater is deeply Hellenistic, with specific features like the use of giant figures ("Telamones") as supports, and the elegant double curves of the bottom row of seats, that are close to the theaters of Pompeii and Sarno (Strazzulla and Di Marco 1972). Numerous dedications in Oscan by local magistrates create a more aggressively independent impression than the half-Latin Umbria (La Regina 1976; Tagliamonte 1996:221–234). Yet bilingualism is eloquently illustrated here too, by a roof-tile from the temple, upon which two female slave workers (unless it is just one playing games) had impressed their footprints, signing their names in mirror image, one in Oscan, the other in Latin (Figure 9.9; Adams 2003:124–126).

There are variations from site to site, but the impression of the century preceding the Social War is not of conflict or competition between cultures, but coexistence and interpenetration. The Italic cities are using both the profits and the knowledge that resulted from participation in conquest to innovate culturally, competitively
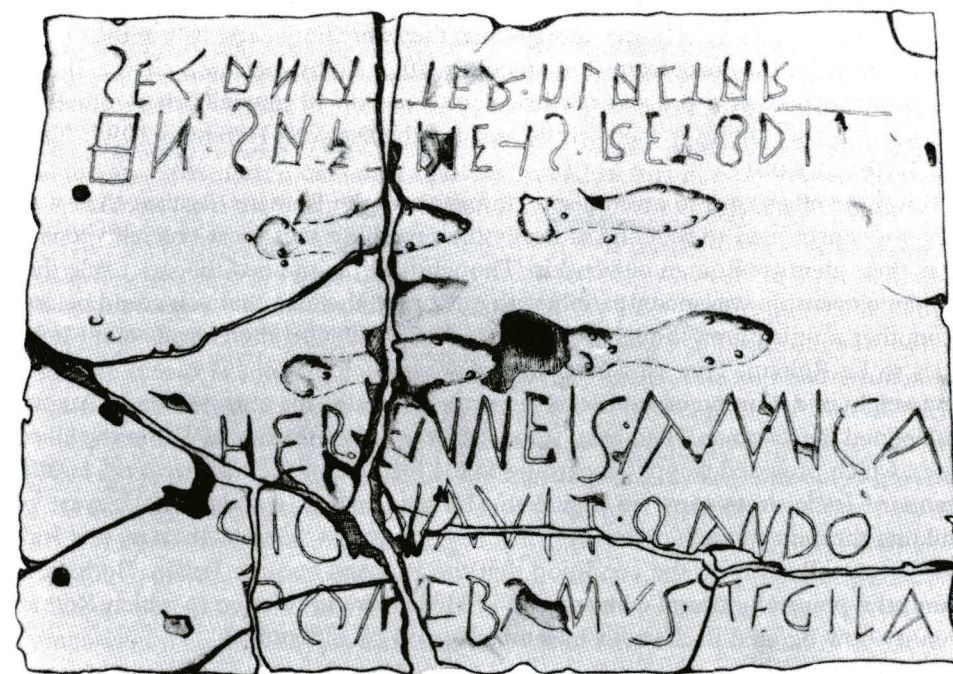
(b)

Figure 9.8 *Continued*

Figure 9.9 Tile from Pietrabbondante with inscribed names and footprints. *Studi Etruschi* **44** 1976:285. With the permission of The National Institute of Etruscan and Italic Studies.

taking on the architectural language of the Greek east (Zanker 1976; Wallace-Hadrill 2008 ch. 3). The handsome temple B at Pietrabbondante replaces an earlier shrine characterized by a specific shape associated with the oath of resistance to Rome taken during the Roman conquest of the fourth century B.C., and with ample dedications of captured armor (Coarelli and La Regina 1984:234–239). The rebuilt, modern temple is undoubtedly a Place of Memory of Independence, but these Hellenized Samnites are not fastidious about sharing the profits and pleasures of empire.

From this perspective, the Social War cannot be about an unwillingness of the allies to be part of a Roman empire. The sources state with some clarity that their demand was full citizenship (Brunt 1988:93–143). It has been urged that this cannot have been the motive since Roman citizenship as conceived at the time up to the Social War would not have been beneficial or desirable (Mouritsen 1998). Of course, the model of citizenship sought by the allies was that which was obtained *after*, not before, the war: its effect was to make the allies full and equal partners in the imperial enterprise, with their rights guaranteed by the vote.

It is surely at this point that the reciprocity of the historical compromise and the cultural deal lies. By becoming citizens, the allies sacrificed many signs of cultural diversity. By definition, all their public business must be conducted in Latin, under Roman law. The inscriptions documenting the collapse of local languages in public

life reflect this, but do not prove that local languages died out (we hear of Oscan farces continuing, even in Rome, though then they were not necessarily in the Oscan language). What they take from Roman culture, they do by their own choice. If that can be described as a process of "bricolage," or "do it yourself," it is precisely because they are doing it themselves, and for themselves (Terrenato 1998; Keay and Terrenato 2001).

But if the allies have to give up something, so do the Romans. Against their will, they are constrained to redefine radically the one thing that most crucially constitutes their identity: Roman citizenship. Though they maintained the strict rule that Roman citizenship was incompatible with any other, the idea that you could belong to another municipium, though not another *civitas*, allowed the citizens of all Italic cities to be Roman. That vast extension of what "being Roman" means throws a new weight of definition on non-legal features. Ironically, the toga, which for Augustus defined the "Roman," had been standard wear before the Social War in the allied cities, which provided troops "according to the formula of the toga-wearers, *togati*." Standard Italic dress came to define the Roman, just as standard Italic ways of building theaters came to define the "Roman" as against "Greek" theater. The Italians became Roman on the condition that the Romans became Italian. Both sides found the point of cultural convergence in Hellenism, in relation to which Roman identity now defined itself, both by similarity and by difference.

Romanizing the Barbarian: Baths and Seduction

From this viewpoint, the "Romanization" of Italy is not a process by which the Romans deliberately turned the Italians into Romans. It is the process by which the Italians, resisting the Roman desire to hold them in subjection and in a culturally subaltern position, asserted their right to be taken as Romans too. Any loss of local identity is the sacrifice paid for a preferred and more potent identity. The loss of local languages is a familiar effect of centralization (Gaelic, Welsh, Cornish . . .), but it is not true that this results in the extinction of the sense of local identity. We may contrast Umbrian Plautus, born in Sarsina in the late third century, whose Latin plays betray nothing of his local origins, with Umbrian Propertius, born at Asisium in the mid first, who asserts with some vigor the local pride of the "Umbrian Callimachus," and remembered too well the bitter local wounds of the siege of Perusia. The sense of pride in local origins is typical of the Augustan age, and evidently encouraged by the emperor himself, who made play of his Italian credentials (Syme 1939).

What follows for the "Romanization" of the provinces? It could be argued that by the time of Augustus, the Roman-ness of Roman culture had been better defined (Vergil's epic provided an even better founding charter than Ennius', while Varro and other antiquarians had defined "the Roman way" and Vitruvius had defined Roman architecture [Wallace-Hadrill 2008 chs 4 and 5]). It was now an exportable culture in a way unthinkable even a century before. Augustan ideology and propaganda set models that diffuse spectacularly (Zanker 1988).

But to assume the Romans simply set about exporting their culture is to assume the Romans wished to make full Romans of all barbarians—which meant necessarily sharing with them citizenship, access to power, influence, office, and profit. That, to some extent, is what happened, and we watch in awe the ripples by which citizenship, membership of the Senate, access to imperial power, and domination of the lucrative Mediterranean-wide markets spread to Spain, North Africa, the Illyrian provinces, and the East (Syme 1958). But though the enlightened Claudius may have grasped that this was in a sense Rome's historic tradition and mission, the credit for extension of power must go as much to those who fought for it as to those who conceded it. "Romanization" is above all the *claim* by the provincials themselves to belong, the *demand* to participate, the *release* not the extinction of local energies. It is consequently forever a dialectic, by which central identity makes its necessary compromises with the latest claimants to participation (Millett 1990).

The starting point for those who see Romanization as a conscious instrument of a Roman *mission civilisatrice* is Tacitus' description of Agricola's conduct as governor of Roman Britain (*Agricola* 21). He wishes to convert a people who are scattered (i.e. not city-based) and uncivilized and hence prone to fighting, and pacify them through "pleasures," and hence encourages in private, and supports in public, the building of temples, *fora*, and houses. The sons of the leading men are urged by the comparison with the Gauls to be educated, so not only mastering Latin, but acquiring the higher communication skills of eloquence. Roman ways spread, and the toga becomes common; so do the luxurious appurtenances of porticoes, baths and elegant dinners.

What has fed the idea of centre-driven Romanization is Tacitus' ironic coda: "The inexperienced called it 'humanity', when in truth it was a part of slavery" (Tacitus, *Agricola* 21.2). Here are the chains of cultural imperialism. Yet what is notable in his entire account is his emphasis on the voluntary participation of the natives. Agricola works by encouragement, specifically to members of the local elites: "by praising the keen, and castigating the sluggish, so that competition for prestige became a virtual necessity" (Tacitus, *Agricola* 21.1). There is no compulsion here, only incitement, and the entire point is that the process can only work if the elite itself actively plays the game. *Honoris aemulatio* is a key phrase: it is a competition for prestige between members of existing elites that is redefined in Roman terms. Agricola understands that if the elites compete for Roman, not native, status symbols, they enter the Roman stream. Hence the vital emphasis on pleasure and seduction. The natives need to be seduced by the pleasures of baths and dinners, and come to regard these typically Roman elite behavior patterns as natural.

All of this, it should be noted, is for Agricola only a sideshow: just one chapter covering the activities of his second winter, amidst so many chapters of campaigning. The active Roman contribution to Romanization is conquest: it is up to the locals to decide (or not) whether to turn themselves into Romans. Two hundred years after the Italian Social War, the Romans are fully alert to the processes which help to assimilate the conquered to themselves, and have a clearer (if somewhat ironical) grasp of what the Roman way is. But they also know that it only works so long as, and to the degree to which, the conquered actively wish to become Roman.

The success and limitations of the Romanization of Britain, it has been urged, are defined by the compatibility of the Roman model with the structures and needs of the old Iron-Age elites (Millett 1990). They do not wholeheartedly embrace the Mediterranean model of urban euergetism, the investment by elite families in conspicuous urban monuments. That observation surely forms the flip-side of another observation, the relative failure of the British elites to penetrate the central Roman system, by supplying officers, senators, emperors to the center. It is those elites who want most actively to participate in the central Roman state (e.g. those of North Africa), who are also most vigorous in local euergetism. There is a loop: the elites which Romanize most vigorously, promoting urban growth and its capacity to convert agricultural surplus into cash, raise most resources to carry them to the center, and bring back from the center the greatest profits to reinvest locally. Britons seem half-hearted players in this game.

Nevertheless, the cultural impact on Britain was enormous. Sometimes such changes are seen best in small details. Agricola was right about the seduction of bathing (Fagan 1999). Not only did heated baths become common, in military camps, towns, and rural villas, but also the bodily regimes that go with bathing spread. We catch them archaeologically in the finds of toilet instruments, especially for depilation: tweezers, probes, razors, and nail-cleaners (Hill 1997). Hairiness was a key feature of the Roman depiction of the barbarian, while the bathed, groomed, and perfumed body spelled *cultus*, cultivation. Just as is suggested by the spread of such tell-tale signs of cultural choices in Gaul, it is hard to believe that the participants are not "internalizing" the values implicit in such practices, that make them feel akin to the conqueror, and distant from barbarians (Woolf 1998; 2001).

The same example of baths allows a link to Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean. The vocabulary of Romanization is not generally applied to discussion of this area, since Hellenization is felt to have functioned as an equally valid alternative. From the viewpoint of cultural identity here proposed, it is not enough to say that Rome did not feel the need to "Romanize" Greek areas; it should rather be the case that Hellenes felt no need to Romanize in order to secure such benefits and participation that they sought. But in fact the collusion between Greek elites and Roman rule was profound, and it made a significant impact on their landscape, concentrating settlements and wealth (Alcock 1993). The pleasures of bathing similarly seem to have exercised some seduction. The physical aspect of the *gymnasion*, long a key feature of a Greek city, changes significantly in the Roman period, in the direction of developing elaborate heated bath suites on the Roman model (Delorme 1960; Ginouvès 1962). A mark of this on the countryside is the construction of aqueducts to supply the water. Only part of the story is the "musealization" by which Greeks reclassicize their culture and parade its "superior" credentials (Bowie 1970; Swain 1996). Another part of the story is compromise and energetic participation in the perceived advantages of empire. Agricola's formula of "porticoes, baths and mansions" is no less applicable to the eastern cities.

The material culture of the Roman empire does, in conclusion, tell a story about changing and multiple identities. Whether in its large, distinctive structures, like baths or amphitheaters, or in the "small things forgotten" of everyday life, like
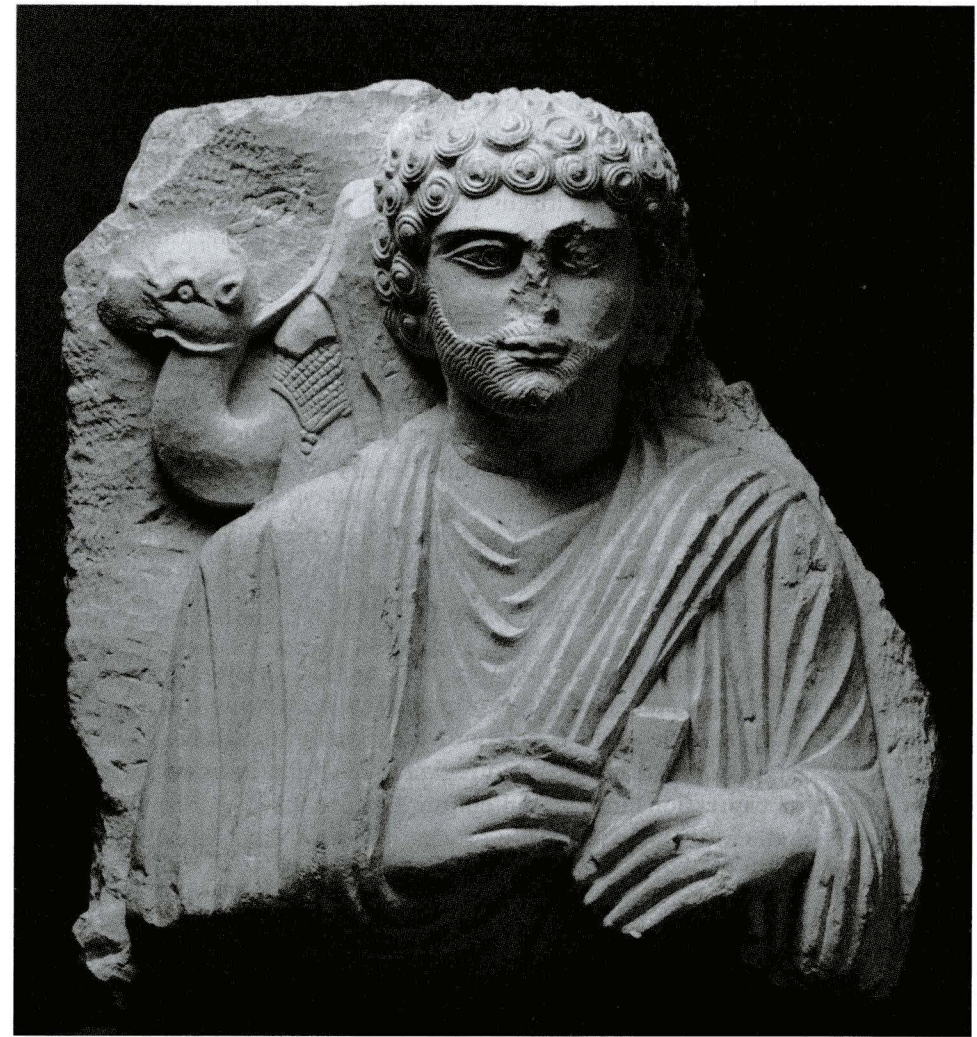
Figure 9.10 Portrait from Palmyra. Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen

tweezers for removing body hair, it tells of the advantages, in places widely separated in distance and cultural background, of presenting oneself as Roman. *Civis Romanus sum*. Greeks referred to those from a non-Hellenic background who learned the Greek language and embraced Hellenic culture as "Hellenizing." It is perhaps in this intransitive usage that "Romanization" can carry greatest conviction: to "Romanize" was not what the Romans did to others, but what those who wished to be taken as Romans did themselves. Even to speak of "self-Romanization" or "autoromanizzazione" is to imply that the normal and natural phenomenon is for cultural change to be wished on you from above. But not even Tacitus' *Agricola*, the only text which explicitly discusses the process, claims this.

From this perspective, "Hellenization" and "Romanization" cease to appear in conflict. Romans Hellenized with enthusiasm, above all to gain advantage over each other in a highly competitive system. Non-Roman Italians also "Hellenized" for the same motives. Neither experienced a "loss of identity" in so doing: enhancing and embellishing their cities boosted local pride rather than the opposite. At the same time, non-Roman Italians Romanized. In the course of the second century, they developed the desire to be Roman citizens, one which the existing citizen body long resisted. To Romanize was to lay claim to full participation in the Roman system of power.

That "the Romans" (that is, those already in power in the system) continued to allow ever wider circles of the conquered access to power at the centre remains a remarkable exception among imperial systems. There might be those like the emperor Claudius (Tacitus *Annals* 11.24) who thought that it had always been the Roman way to welcome in new blood (Wallace-Hadrill 2008:445–447): that was certainly not obvious to the majority of Romans in 91 B.C. And though it may appear that it was Roman generosity that spread power to the provinces, it is not clear in practice that those at the center welcomed the competition of newcomers. Only the emperors themselves can be said to have an interest in promoting "new men," precisely to destabilize the embedded interests of the existing elite (Hopkins 1983:171–175).

The possibilities of multiple identities were endless (Dench 2005). Those on the Syrian border of Roman control could express many identities in many languages (Millar 1993). A Palmyrene in his toga asserts his rights in the Roman system; his camel and the style of execution point to regional ties. Identity is not a zero-sum game, nor are its expressions in material culture (Figure 9.10). Across the empire, the record is eloquent of the complexity of what those who could call themselves "Roman" wished to claim for themselves.

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