

Roman Traders in Greek Cities

1 Introduction

When I started research on a dissertation on professional associations (*collegia*) in the Roman world, in Cambridge and later in Amsterdam, the terms of my project were totally set within the debate on the nature of the ancient economy.¹ I was particularly in disagreement with the then orthodoxy (formulated by Moses Finley) that professional *collegia* did not develop into protective agencies of their trade, that they did not have any economic functions, and that they were -so to speak – marginal to the cities in which they practiced their trades. In his view *collegia* were totally unlike medieval guilds.²

My research into the activities of *collegia* in the Roman East – originally intended as a first chapter of a much larger work! – made clear to me that there was good reason to doubt the first notion: Although it is obviously the case that this aspect of associations was not a major concern in their epigraphic self presentation, there is enough evidence to suggest that associations were able to act in their members' economic interests. Honorific and funerary monuments are perhaps not the best place to look, but as soon as we take in other types of documents, or if we look hard enough, we find evidence that these interests were firmly on their mind.

We have discovered for example that the salt merchants of Tebtynis in Roman Egypt were marking out various trading areas.³

“The seventh year of Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus Imperator, the twenty-fifth of the month Kaisareios. The undersigned men, salt-dealers of Tebtunis, meeting together have decided by common consent to elect one of their number, a good man, Apunchis, son of Orseus, both supervisor and collector of the public taxes for the coming eighth year of Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus Imperator, the said Apunchis to pay in all the public taxes for the same trade coming year, and [they have decided] that all alike shall sell salt in the aforesaid village of Tebtunis, and that Orseus alone has obtained by lot the sole right to sell gypsum in the aforesaid village of Tebtunis and in the adjacent villages, for which he shall pay, apart from the share of the public taxes which falls to him, an additional sixty-six *drachmas* in silver; and that the said Orseus has likewise obtained by lot Kerkesis, alone to sell salt therein, for which he shall likewise pay an additional eight *drachmas* in silver. And that Harmiusis also called Belles, son of Harmiusis, has obtained by lot the sole right to sell salt and gypsum in the village of Tristomou also called Boukolou, for which he shall contribute, apart from the share of the public taxes which falls to him, five additional *drachmas* in silver; upon condition that they shall sell the good salt at the rate of two and one-half obols, the light salt at two obols, and the lighter salt at one and one-half obols, by our measure or that of the warehouse. And if anyone shall sell at a lower price than these, let him be fined eight *drachmas* in silver for the common fund and the same for the public treasury; and if anyone of them shall be found to have sold more than a stater's worth of salt to a merchant, let him be fined

¹ {van Nijf, 1997 #2382}

² {Finley, 1985 #3415} {Finley, 1981 #560}

³ P.Mich 5, 245

eight *drachmas* in silver for the common fund and the same for the public treasury; but if the merchant shall intend to buy more than four *drachmas* worth, all must sell to him jointly. And if anyone shall bring in gypsum and shall intend to sell it outside, it must be left on the premises of Orseus, son of Harmiusis, until he takes it outside and sells it. It is a condition that they shall drink regularly on the twenty-fifth of each month each one *chous* of beer ... in the village one *drachma*, outside four *drachmas*, and in the metropolis eight *drachmas*. But if anyone is in default and fails to satisfy any of the public obligations, or any of the claims that shall be made against him, it shall be permissible for the same Apunchis to arrest him in the main street or in his house or in the field, and to hand him over as aforesaid.”

We also know that associations in late Roman Oxyrhynchus were involved in fixing prices, which sounds very much like a cartel.⁴ Even honorific inscriptions, when studied carefully, may reveal something of the economic interests of the professional associations, as is shown by an inscription from Chios. The ferrymen between this island and the mainland honoured a number of *xenophylakes* (customs officials)- for their ‘*arete*’ (virtue).⁵

“The ferrymen to Erythrae crown the *xenophylakes* who were in office in the year of Decimos: Aphrodisios son of Sarapion, Dionysios, Seleucus, Parasios and Heraiskos, for their virtue towards themselves”.

It looks as if setting up an honorific inscription was a the price to pay for being allowed to do business: honorific language is often used to mask economic realities, including corruption of officials.

Yet, these economic activities did not become my main line of interest. I realised that Finley’s second proposition was more interesting – and possibly more wrong- when he suggests that *collegia* were marginal to civic life. My investigations of the largely epigraphic material suggested that this could not be the case. *Collegia* presented themselves as integral parts of urban society: they seemed to have operated as structures of integration in the city, at a time when the political culture of these cities was changing in fundamental ways. In my dissertation I argued strongly for the integration of professional association in the civic world, but by focusing on their place in the world of the Greek city, I may have overlooked a bigger question: the role of the *collegia* in the Roman empire. In this paper I intend to deal with this issue. What was the role of private association the process of Romanization, or if we want to avoid a term that has come under attack recently, what was their role in the integration of the Greek cities in the Roman empire?

Here I want to argue that private –professional- associations played a fundamental part in a crucial phase of Roman imperial history. It is my view however, that other types of association also had an important role to play in this process. I have recently discussed the role of associations of artists and especially athletes, who had a special position as the agents of Roman imperialism. I believe to have demonstrated that they should be seen as the beneficiaries of, and a major factor in, the growth of what I would like to call ancient globalization - but they were also an integral part of

⁴ E.g. P.Oxy. 1454.

⁵ IK 1, 74.

of a wider transformation of the political culture, which came to depend more and more on cultural representation.⁶

In this paper I shall focus on other types of association. I shall first consider the associations of '*Romaioi*', i.e. Roman traders and settlers who were active in the Greek cities. We shall see that these associations appear in the Hellenistic period, and they disappear from sight again after the second century AD. In the Hellenistic period these associations seem to have remained relatively marginal to the concerns of the city, even though there were some important developments towards integration. But in the imperial period they got closer involved in their host communities, and they even started to play a role of ideological importance as promoters of the imperial cult. Associations of Roman traders played an important part in the communication between Rome and the local populations.

In the final pages I shall briefly return to the role of local professional associations in this process. These clubs had a less outspoken role, but we shall see that they also operated as a channel of communication between Rome and the Greek populations. I shall not discuss separately associations with a predominantly religious character, although I am convinced that they were an important part of the picture. It seemed to me that the topic was already going to be big enough for today's proceedings. However, I shall mention them as well where and when needed to supplement the picture. But this is a topic that I want to develop further, so I hope to return to these issues later. Today I can present only first thoughts after a relatively long absence from the field of ancient associations. This is work in progress, and I shall be very interested in your comments and suggestions, even more so than usual.

⁶ van Nijf, O. M. (2006). Global players: Athletes and performers in the Hellenistic and Roman World. Between Cult and Society. The cosmopolitan centres of the ancient Mediterranean as setting for activities of religious associations and religious communities. I. Nielsen. Hamburg, van Nijf, O. M. (2006). "'Global players': Griekse atleten, artiesten en de 'oikoumene' in de Romeinse keizertijd." Leidschrift..

2: *Romaioi*.

So, let me begin with the *Romaioi* (Romans): With the arrival of the Roman legions, *Romaioi* started to make an appearance in the Greek cities: in Latin texts they are known as the *cives romani qui in Asia Negotiantur* or as the *Romani consistentes*. In the Greek inscriptions we find them under names as *hoi Romaioi*; *hoi Romaioi pragmateuomenoi* and *hoi Romaioi katoikountes*. But other expressions are also used: the terminology clearly varied. There has been some scholarly interest in the fact that some texts talk about Romans and other about Italians, but I don't think that we need to worry too much about these differences in terminology. First, because I think that terminological precision was rarely a major concern in the world of ancient associations. But also because it has become clear that these subtle differences were of no interest to the Greek cities, who would lump all Italians and Romans together as *Romaioi*. And thirdly, after the Social Wars of the first century BC this distinction would lose its force anyway.

However they were styled, these *Romaioi* are a good starting point for my main question, as they were by definition an important part of the process of Romanization. I shall discuss briefly who these *Romaioi* were, and what their activities were, but my main question is what we can tell about their relation to their Greek host cities. Were they integrated into civic life, or did they remain outsiders? I am also interested in their collective status. I shall argue that over the last two centuries BCE they developed some degree of a corporate identity and a certain collective status in the Greek cities. It was only in the Imperial period however, that their collective position became fully enshrined in urban life.

Fiscal and commercial interests

Even though Roman foreign policy was not mercantilistic in the sense that it was shaped by the commercial interests; it is still obvious that the presence of *Romaioi* was closely connected with the growth of empire, even though it was more a case of trade following the flag, than the other way around. They were active in a range of economic activities: they appeared as shippers (*naukleroi*) traders (*mercatores* or *negotiatores*),⁷ but equally as moneylenders (*trapezitai*). "In fact they seem to have turned a hand to anything that could bring in a handsome profit, and appear almost anywhere where reasonably ordered commercial conditions could be found."⁸ As all entrepreneurs in pre-industrial economies, they would invest their money as soon as possible in the only stable source of income, land. So quite a few *Romaioi* were in fact (colonial) landowners.

Tensions

Romaioi were clearly among the main beneficiaries of the growing empire, but they had an active function in this process as well. It is probably redundant to add that the

⁷ The term *negotiator* seems to have conveyed the idea of trade and commerce on a wider scale, and may have given them an air of respectability

⁸ Errington, R. M. (1988). Aspects of Roman acculturation in the East under the Republic. Alte geschichte und Wissenschaftsgeschichte. Festschrift für K. Christ zum 65. Geburtstag. P. K. a. V. Losemann. Darmstadt: 140-157., 143

economic activities of these *Romaioi* would have included tax farming: the Roman state practiced what we now call “outsourcing” or “privatisation”, by farming the provincial taxes to companies of *publicani*, that were based in Rome, but had a large network in the provinces. In Greek cities you would, therefore, also encounter Roman tax farmers, ranging from high ranking *negotiatores* who had a stake in a tax-farming company, to the more humble *telonai*, who were had the job of actually extracting the money from the Greek cities, or from traders and travellers who passed by the toll-stations.⁹ The reputation of these publicans for rapacity and corruption is well-known, not to say notorious. Tax-farmers and moneylenders colluded, and all *negotiatores* were fully implicated in the exploitation of the Greek provinces. Together with the Roman soldier such men would have represented the (ugly) face of Roman imperialism.

To the Greeks there may have been simply not too much difference, as became in fact clear in the early first century BC. Roman *negotiatores* and *publicani* – the usual villains- were so closely associated, that they were massacred together during one of the most terrible events of the first Mithridatic the so-called ‘Ephesian Vespers’ in the spring of 88 BC. The eighty thousand Romans or more that are reputed that were massacred were surely not only tax farmers.

Romans in the Greek cities of the Hellenistic period

So at first sight these Romans do not seem to constitute a promising group for my purposes: yes they had a role to play in the provincialisation of the East, but it was not a very positive role, although it one that fits the unfortunate pattern of nasty imperialism throughout the ages. But I do not want to focus on these – relatively well studied events- nor do I want to focus too much on the tensions and difficulties that arose between the *Romaioi* and the Greek cities, and which come out so clearly from the correspondence of Cicero.

It is worth pointing out, however, that the stories about the thousands of Roman victims of the Mithridatic Wars prove at least that the Romans must have had a sizeable presence in the Greek cities. It is a fact of Roman imperial history, that many Romans had settled in the Greek cities, and that they had a role to play there. Is it possible to come to a more positive appreciation of the nature of their involvement in these communities? It has been argued (by Ferrary among others) that it is very difficult to appreciate the relationships between the *Romaioi* and the Greek city in the Republican period, but it is worth making the attempt.¹⁰

Greek cities

First, We should differentiate between the different types of cities: the integration of the Romans did not happen everywhere in the same pace or along the same lines. It has been pointed out, for example, that the Roman traders at Delos were hardly integrated into local life: they seem to have succeeded in maintaining a fairly separate

⁹ See Van Nijf (Forthcoming) The social world of Roman Tax farmers.

¹⁰ Ferrary, J.-L. (2001). Rome et la géographie de l'hellénisme: réflexions sur les "hellènes" et "panhellènes" dans les inscriptions d'époque romaine. The Greek East in Roman context. Proceedings of a colloquium organised by the Finnish Institute at Athens, May 21-and 22 , 1999. O. Salomies. Helsinki, Finnish Institute at Athens: 19-36.

existence or identity and participated only superficially in Greek life. In comparison with other -Eastern- residents of the island, they seem to have taken relatively little part in the life of the gymnasium, and they may have had their own social centres. This will have been due to the exceptional status as Delos as an international trading centre, which was a place where large numbers of immigrants could easily find their compatriots outnumbering any remaining resident Delians. There were large numbers of Romans, who will have found that they were numerous enough to stick together as a large expat community, and consider themselves as a dominant force in the host community. Although there are signs that the Romans of Delos may have gradually 'opened up', they remained relatively distant. For these reasons I shall leave Delos largely aside.

But Romans also settled outside Delos. Jean Louis Ferrary has recently argued that Roman business men would have been particularly attracted to cities where Roman magistrates and promagistrates were based.¹¹ The absence of a system of international law wouldn't have made it attractive for Roman traders to have easy access to a Roman official with '*imperium*' or '*iuris dictio*', who could guarantee the security of personnel and property, and intervene when transactions went wrong.

Yet, Roman traders were not limited to provincial capitals: Romans did not only stick together in isolated compounds of foreign nationals; small islands in a sea of Hellenism. In fact they were to be found – in smaller or larger numbers- in many different cities, where they had to accommodate themselves to their new environment and way of life. We find evidence for the presence of associations and groups of *Romaioi* in many cities, including as Pagai, Amorgos, Adramyteion, Priene, Abydos, Ilion Erythrae and many others, but the number of cities in which individual *Romaioi* are attested is many times greater.

What was the place in the cities of these settlers? Were they all (hated) outsiders, or do we find evidence of their integration within the *kosmos* of the polis?

Romans and other foreigners

Foreign traders had existed before, of course: the major Greek harbours had always hosted larger or smaller groups of foreigners, who banded together, developed a collective identity on the joint basis of shared cult or occupation. Such groups were sometimes allowed privileges: temples, headquarters and burial places. If they had acquired a proper space in the community, they could be seen taking part in the rituals of the community: in civic rituals such as festivals, processions and banquets. Sometimes they even had the right to conduct their own religious rituals in a public setting, as was granted to the Thracian Bendis worshippers in Athens, who were allowed to conduct their own rituals from the late fifth century BCE onwards – and they were still celebrating these in the third century BCE. This was more a case of toleration than of integration, however: even though the Bendis worshippers were

¹¹ Ferrary, J.-L. (2001). Rome et la géographie de l'hellénisme: réflexions sur les "hellènes" et "panhellènes" dans les inscriptions d'époque romaine. The Greek East in Roman context. Proceedings of a colloquium organised by the Finnish Institute at Athens, May 21-and 22 , 1999. O. Salomies. Helsinki, Finnish Institute at Athens: 19-36.

often closely connected to aspects city life, these men and their associations remained outsiders, marginal to the concerns of the Greek city.

As I said, much of the scholarly interest in these groups has focused on the tensions that they caused. However, in an interesting article of 1988, Robert Malcolm Errington has taken a different perspective: he investigated aspects of Roman acculturation in the East, focusing on the (mainly epigraphic) evidence for Roman settlers and traders.¹²

Errington shows that there is evidence that right from the start Romans were actively participating in many aspects of the life of the city. He identifies a number of important areas : such as their role as benefactors to their host cities, but he directs most of his attention to the integration of Romans in the world of gymnasia and festivals.

Romans as athletes and ephebes

Individual *Romaioi* are as participants in and ,not infrequently, as victors of athletic competitions throughout Greece. In fact the first attested Roman victories at traditional Greek Games go back to the end of 3rd century, when Roman athletes took part in (and won) the great Panhellenic Games of the Isthmia of 228. Cassius Dio reports the name of the victor as 'Plautus', and many modern historians have their suspicions about his identity. Yet, Roman participation in Greek games appears plausible enough. In later years *Romaioi* became frequent players at a growing number of lesser games and festivals as well. From the mid 2nd century this became quite common: in 142 BC a long list of victors at the Athenian *Theseia* list a Roman as the victor of the *hoplomachia* (armed fight) (IG II.2, 960); around the same time we find that in Chalkis in one single year no less than 5 Romans won at the local *Herakleia*. And there are many other examples: SEG 28, 28, which is a list of victors of the *Romaia* of Xanthos: which has appropriately also a Roman victor in the major horse race. Incidentally, this text shows that many of these games had their part to play in the symbolic integration of Greek cities in the Roman imperial system. From the third onwards we also find games in traditional Greek style that were celebrated in honour of Rome – the *Romaia*- that were celebrated separately or joined with existing festivals, as for example in Xanthos where the *Koinon* (league) of the Lycian cities organised 'Roman Games'. Among the victors in the chariot race we find the Roman 'Caius Octavius Pollio, who had himself announced as a citizen of Telmessos'.¹³

The success of these festivals, and the increasing participation and athletic successes of Romans in all kinds of games are indeed an indication of the successful integration of Romans in Greek cities and certainly in their gymnasia. For, in order to succeed at these games in against the best full-time Greek athletes, the *Romaioi* must have been frequenting the Greek gymnasia for some time. Errington identifies in fact quite a number of Romans among the ephebes who trained in the gymnasia, that were gradually opening up to foreigners: from big centres like Athens and Pergamon to smaller ports as Naxos and Larissa.

¹² {Errington, 1988 #537}.

¹³ {Robert, 1978 #2637}. Is a list of

I have argued elsewhere that there were close links -even a certain equivalence- between physical and literary culture, and it must rank as a sign of the thorough cultural integration of the Roman expats that they were also able to win in literary contests as well: A Quintus Ocrius Quinti Filius is on record as the victor in a competition for the *Egkomion logikon* (contest in laudatory rhetoric) at Tanagra in Boetia. A man called Publius Romaïos won the second prize in the dramatic competition of *Sarapeia* in the same place at the turn of the second to first century BCE.

Roman traders may have had a modest social status in their home country, but whatever their status in Italy, in the East young Romans were able to join the *jeunesse dorée* of the Greek cities who were spending their time in the gymnasia and share in their athletic and intellectual pursuits. This can only have promoted their successful integration into their host communities.

Romans as benefactors

Another sign of integration is the willingness of *Romaïoi* to invest in their host communities: from the third century Roman benefactors are on record who were rewarded for their generosity with *proxenia* (appointment as an official ‘friend of the city’ i. a kind of honorary consul), *proedria* (the right to reserved seats in the front rows at games) *ateleia* (exemption from import/export duties), *ges enktesis* (the right to own property)– in sum by all the traditional Greek rewards for public generosity – and of course by monumental inscriptions that recorded these honours forever.

This may imply as Errington suggests, a ‘basic identity of interest between the Greek communities and the Roman traders’, but let us not be overoptimistic about the civic spirit of these benefactors and magistrates.

One inscription offers for example honours to Romans who were proclaimed *euergetai* and benefactors of the city; but it turns out that they were also among the major moneylenders to the city.

Euergetism, like patronage, is often a myth used to dress up fundamentally schewed relationships. We have no way of telling how often a honorific monument was used to present a respectable façade to a relationship that turned around extortion and fear.

Collective presence of Romans in civic festivals:

But my discussion has focused so far mainly on the evidence for individual *Romaïoi*, who were often identified on the basis of their names. Such men may have been integrated in their cities, but in the end they were (albeit important, wealthy or powerful) often treated not fundamentally differently from other foreign individuals. What we like to see, however, is evidence for collective action, evidence of a collective representation of Romans as a recognisable group with a special status in the city. Recognition would be visible, for example, in civic rituals that were a dominant feature of civic life in the Hellenistic period.

One of the first areas to investigate is that of the public banquets, that were organised by priests, magistrates or benefactors in the Greek cities of the Hellenistic period.

Banquets (and especially sacrificial banquets) had always been a major event in Greek cities. The distribution of sacrificial meat, which is at the core of banquets had always been one an important collective activity. In the words of Pauline Schmitt-Pantel who has studied public comensality in the Greek city “ la participation aux sacrifices et

aux banquets est de même nature que l'intégration au group civique."¹⁴ Participation in the civic sacrifices and the civic banquets is of the same nature as integration into the civic group: public dining is an activity that is crucial part of civic life or Oeffentlichkeit

Rules about participation to Greek civic banquets had always been strict. In the third part of her study Schmitt-Pantel investigates the development of public commensality in the Hellenistic period. She shows how the organisation of public banquets responded to, and was a factor in, the structural transformation of Greek polis society in this period. Just as Greek cities were gradually taking on a more cosmopolitan character there was also (490), "une ouverture plus grande du groupe des ayants droit et la participations fréquente des étrangers, qu'ils soient domiciliés dans la cité ou de passage."¹⁵ A gradual widening of the groups that were entitled to participate, and an increasing participation of strangers in these quintessential civic rituals.

From the second century BC onwards we find that Roman citizens were invited to as a separate category to these banquets. The earliest examples are found in Eretria (IG 12.9, 234)¹⁶ and Aigiale on Amorgos (IG 12, 7, 515)¹⁷, but they are also found in Priene, Pergamon, Kyme, Eresos (Lesbos), et Pagai (Megaris). What is important is that in these case the Roman were not singled out individually, but listed collectively as *hoi Romaioi* (The Romans). This is clearly an indication that they had developed a corporate status, a collective identity that was now being recognised by the organisers of the banquets, This also ranked them above the other foreigners, who were normally simply referred to collectively as *xenoi* (foreigners), but rarely identified by their individual place of origin. This lifted the Romans to a level somewhat between foreigners and citizens. Yet, a certain ambiguity remained: the *Romaioi* were invited as a recognisable group, above other foreigner, but in the end, they remained and were listed as foreigners, outsiders to the city.

There are some caveats here: the numbers of cities where this happened was relatively small, and their inclusion may often have been a personal choice of the benefactor who paid for the banquets. This was so in the case of Kritolaos, the benefactor from Aigiale who was one of the first to invite the Romans (2BC), but this appears to have been still the case at the end of the first century BC when the benefactor Kleanax

¹⁴ Schmitt-Pantel, P. (1992). La cité au banquet. Histoire des repas publics dans les cités grecques. Rome., Collection de l'école française de Rome, 157., 294.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ "...at the sacred gathering of the Artemisia he met the expenses of the unguents out of his own pocket; accepting this expense not only for the citizens but for the rest of those who attended the gathering and shared common privileges, and, in undertaking the sacrifice to Hermes, he invited by public proclamation both the citizens and those Romans who were resident, and on the fourth day he banqueted those who shared the common privileges and on the fifth others of the citizens and many of the strangers..."

¹⁷ ... he provided a deipnon (meal) to all citizen who happened to be in Aigiale and the residents and the foreigners and those of the Romans who happened to be present and their sons (or wives)...

invited Romans to a number of banquets in Kyme (SEG 32, 1243)¹⁸. Yet, as we shall see in a minute by that time things were in many cities already changing.

Romans on the margins

So there are clear signs that Romans were getting integrated in the social, cultural and religious world of the Greek polis, but most references were still to individual Romans. However, we find an growing number of texts that refer to them as a group, as a collective with a certain status in the city. The Romans were certainly visible collectively: they had their own associations, and they could be invited to take part in festivals and ritual occasions that were organised in the polis, they were a specially recognised group of foreigners, that could occupy a position between citizens and other foreigners. But Roman traders, and even Roman residents, were still relatively marginal to the Greek cities. They lived *in* the cities, but they were not a fully integral part *of* the cities.

Yet, an important step had been made which had repercussion throughout the Greek. Epigraphic material from Delos illustrates this from an other perspective: early Delian inscriptions often refer to Athenians, Roman and other *xenoi* (foreigners), but from the first century inscriptions on the island start refer to Athenians, Romans and other *Greeks*, which was clearly a major upgrade. A process of integration had apparently been set into motion, that would continue well into the Imperial period.

Romans in Greek cities of the Principate

So far I have been discussing the *Romaioi* of the Hellenistic (or Republican) era, but now I shall discuss the developments in the imperial period. At the end of the first century BC the epigraphical record of Roman traders and settlers shows two fundamental changes. First a quantitative change: It is clear that the number of texts that refer to associations of Romans of various types are on the increase. In Asia Minor alone we know about 20 inscriptions from the Republican period, but in the first centuries AD their number rises to about 80. I haven't done the numbers yet for all the areas, but it is my impression that they rose as well in Greece and the islands.

But a more important development is qualitative. During the late Hellenistic period *Romaioi* had appeared largely in the inscriptions that were set up by natives of the Greek cities in which they were active as guests to public banquets and other festivities, as a privileged category, as benefactors or as victors in games. But from the late first century onwards the situation seems to be reversed. Romans start to appear in their own right, as the collective *authors* of public inscriptions in the Greek cities, thereby using monumental language actively to claim a place in the civic world. It is important to emphasise that these texts were set up by Romans as a group, as a community. They appear as a clearly demarcated group with a corporate identity, and capable of taking collective action, like making decisions, passing decrees, sending out envoys or setting up buildings. It would appear that the Romans started to play a different role in their host communities.

¹⁸ “..As the first and only person he hosted in the prytaneion (town hall) the citizens and the Romans and the foreigners and after a proclamation he gave a treat in the market place to the Hellenes by Phyle (district) and to the Romans, and the residents and the foreigners ...”

The status of *Romaioi*: *conventus*?

There has been some interest in the exact legal status of Romans in Greek cities. Unfortunately it is not always easy to understand the exact nature of the relationship between these associations and the cities. Traditionally it has been suggested – by Kornemann and Schulten – that they operated in the form of a *conventus* – which was supposedly a formal body instituted in each city by the Roman state under a kind of state appointed direction: *curatores*, (Kornemann). There are some texts that support this view, such as an inscription from Hierapolis in Phrygia (Judeich 32) where the Romans honour a conventarch.

“The most shining boule (council) and the most shining demos (people) of Hierapolis and the gerousia (council of elders) and the synedrion of the *Romaioi* and the neoi (young men) and the associations have repeatedly honoured Ageleius Apollonides from Ania, a man who belonged to (a family of) excellent councillors, who was a strategos of the city and agoranomos (market supervisor) and dekaprotos (one of the ten rich men who were responsible for the payment of central taxes) and 'conventarch' (Greek for official responsible for the *conventus*) of the Romans, and responsible for the oil distributions, and formerly auditor, and supervisor of public building, who had shown himself most useful on matters to do with the emperor (?)”

and from Thyateira in Lydia (TAM 5.2, 1002)

“The leather workers honour T. Flavius Alexander of the tribus Quirina son of Metrophanes, having been with vigour agoranomos for 6 months and with many expenses, having been curator of the Roman *conventus*, having been 3 times ambassador to the emperor in Rome, and having succeeded in his missions concerning large sums of money, having been priest of Artemis at his own expense, piously and generously, and who has dedicated... on behalf of Flavia Alexandra and Flavia Glycima his daughters.”

But there are some problems: the term *conventus* for a group of traders is awkward, as these *conventus* would have to have been distinguished from the juridical *conventus*, which had a precise and recognisable meaning of court districts, as well as the court assemblies that were held there on fixed days with the governor presiding. Moreover, it is not clear to that the term *conventus* of traders was universally adopted – and even less that it was promoted by the Roman state. This view was, therefore, discredited, i.a. by Hatzfeld, but in an unpublished Leiden thesis, Hermann Roozenbeek has argued that we need to reconsider our views, as these groups of Roman residents and traders *must* have had a kind of more formal status. He suggests that these *conventus* were linked to the cities in a kind of *sympoliteia* (joined citizenship), which would have given them a separate status and a close link to the city at the same time: again an expression that is found in the epigraphical record.

“[Ἰσα]υρέων ἡ βούλη καὶ ὁ δῆμος οἱ τε συμπολιτευόμενοι Ῥωμαῖοι (IGR 3, 294)
The Boule and the Demos of the Isaurians and the Romans who are in joined citizenship with us (have decided etc)”

Again, I am not sure that this solution can be employed in all cases. Surely not all Romans would have established a settlement that could be described in terms of

sympoliteia. In some cases groups of Romans seem to have an identity that exceeded the limits of an individual city: various inscriptions refer to the Romans that were active in a region or an entire province, which suggests that these associations could have a 'translocal' character, which would preclude any idea of *sympoliteia*.

We find, for example:

in Ephesos:

“Οἱ κατὰ τῆς Ἀσίας πραγματευόμενοι Ῥωμαῖοι: (IEphesos 5, 1517)

The Roman businessmen throughout Asia”

And In Smyrna

“Οἱ ἐπὶ ἐπὶ τῆς Ἀσίας πραγματευόμενοι Ῥωμαῖοι. (IK 24.1, 642)

The Roman businessmen in Asia”

For the purpose of this paper I suggest that we leave this matter open: I for one am ready to accept that the precise legal installation of these groups could differ from city to city, and that it was a matter of local conditions and local preferences.

Civic identity

Yet it is obvious that these groups had – or claimed - a fixed place in what I have called in my book the 'civic world.' Associations of Roman *negotiatores* were often seen as belonging to the cities where they were active, as is clear from their titles, which could vary:

They could be known as

- “Οἱ τε παρ’ αὐτοῖς ὄντες Ῥωμαῖοι (Chios 5-14 AD SEG 22, 507)
The Romans who are with them”
- “[οἱ κατοικοῦντες ἐν] Ἰλίου Ῥωμαῖοι.) (Ilion IK 3, 230)
The Romans who are living in Ilion”
- τοῖς πραγματευομένοις παρ’ ἡμῖν Ῥωμαίοις in Assos (IK 4, 26)
The Romans who do business amongst us
- οἱ πραγματευόμενοι ἐν τῇ πόλει Ῥωμαῖοι (Kyzikos, SEG 28, 953)
The Romans who do business in the city
- Οἱ ἐν Εφέσῳ πραγματευόμενοι ἔμποροι Ἰταλικοὶ or Ῥωμαῖοι (Ephesos, IEphesos 3, 800) The Roman (or Italian) traders who do business in Ephesos.
- Οἱ ἐν Τράλλεσι κατοικοῦντες Ῥωμαῖοι, in Tralleis, ITralleis, 77 The Romans who live in Tralleis
- οἱ Ῥωμαῖοι οἱ ἐν Ἰασῶι πραγματευόμενοι Iasos 90 The Romans who do business in Iasos

And such examples could easily be multiplied.

Another and I think stronger argument for their increasing identification with the interests of the city – and hence of their integration into the city- is to be found on honorific monuments and dedications that were set up by the Romans for local priests, magistrates and benefactors of the city as a whole. So, integration into the city is not, as Errington thought, indicated by Romans appearing as the *recipients* of civic honour, but as the *authors* of inscriptions for civic benefactors.

The first instances are to be found on funerary monuments that simply represented the various honorific crowns that the deceased had received from the city and from groups such as the Romans

I Erythrae 2, 405:

“in corona: *dēmos*

[---- son of Krateas , *χρῆστέ χαῖρε* (greetings – good man)

in corona Romans”

But later texts were much more detailed. Such inscriptions highlighted the essential solidarity of the *Romaioi* with the city, and by adopting the discourse of public praise the *Romaioi* could show that they had effectively internalised the core values of the host community. Initially the Roman associations acted still as a separate group, but it became increasingly common that *Romaioi* appeared as the (joint) authors of inscriptions and even decrees, alongside cities, or alongside political institutions of cities, suggesting that they were fully integrated in the decision making process. This phenomenon, which we encounter also in the case of artisanal *collegia* associated the Romans even closer to the core interests of the city in which they were active.

A text from Apameia in Phrygia shows that the Romans were even allowed to take part in a *pandemos ekklesia* – a general assembly- which a clear sign of a near full social and political integration in the city.

IGR 4 791;

[Ἡ βουλὴ καὶ ὁ δῆμος καὶ οἱ κατοικοῦντες] Ῥωμαῖοι ἐτείμησαν Π(όπλιον) Μαννήιον Ποπλίου Ῥωμιλία Ῥουσωνα, ἀγομένης πανδήμου ἐκκλησίας, ἄνδρα ἀγαθὸν καὶ μεγαλόφ[ρο]να δι(ά) τε τὰς ἐκ προγόνων αὐτοῦ καὶ τὰς ἰδίας εἰς τὴν πατρίδα συνκρίτους εὐεργεσίας, θρέψαντά τε τὴν πόλιν ἐν δυσχρήστοις πολλάκις καιροῖς καὶ πρεσβεύσαντα πρὸς τοὺς Σεβαστοὺς περὶ τῶν συμφερόντων πραγμάτων καὶ ἐπιτυχόντα τὰς παρὰ τῶν ἀρχιερέων φιλοδοσίας, [ὑπὲρ] τε τῆς πόλεως ἐν παντὶ [καί]ρῳ δημοφελ[ῆ] –ὡς γενομε[νο]ν καὶ συναυξήσαντα τὰς [δημ]οσίας προσόδους, ἀνασ[τη]σάντων τὸν ἀνδριάντα τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς Θερμαίας πλατείας ἐργαστῶν ὑπὸ ἐπιμέλειαν Εὐμένου[ς] Διονυσίου καὶ Ἰουλ. Δουβασσίωνο[ς] κατὰ τῆς πόλεως ψήφισμα.

“The boule and the demos and the resident Romans, at a plenary meeting of the assembly, honour Publius Manneius Ruso, son of Publius, of the tribe Romilia, a good and high-minded man for the benefactions of his ancestors and his own comparable benefactions towards the fatherland. He frequently nourished the city in difficult circumstances and he led embassies to the emperors concerning many useful matters, and he obtained generosity from the imperial priests, and he was a friend of the people at every occasion and he increased the income of the people. The statue was set up by the tradesmen (*ergastai*) of the *Thermaia Plateia*. Eumenes son of Dionysios and Iulius son of Doubassion were responsible. In accordance with a decree of the city.”

I should also point out here that civic honours in this case were the outcome of a process that involved not only the association of Romans but also another association, that was organised on the basis of common trade and neighbourhood.

Imperial cult as ideological basis

Finally, it is important to note that Romans seem to have played an important ideological role, in connexion with the representation of imperial power, as well. About half the number of inscriptions set up by associations of Romans in Asia Minor (that is to say 40 out of 80) were used to convey loyalty to the city of Rome and most of all to the emperors. Some examples:

- IK 4. 240 : Thea Rome, benefactress of the world
- IK 4, 13: Gaius Caesar *hègemon* of the *neotes* (*princeps juventutis*) by the *dèmos* and the Roman traders
- IK4, 19 to Livia Hera
- IEphesos 2, 409 To Claudius
- IGR 4, 684 To Domitian and the *Demos Romaiôn*

These close links between associations of Romans and the cities, and their importance for the representation of Roman rule to the provinces, is perhaps best illustrated by another inscription of Assos.

IK 4.26

“In the consulship of Gnaeus Acerronius Proculus and Gaius Pontius Petronius Nigrinus. The Assians on motion of the people.

Whereas the rule of Gaius Caesar Germanicus Augustus, hoped and prayed for by all men, has been proclaimed and the world has found unended joy and every city and every people has been eager for the sight of the god since the happiest age for mankind has now begun, it was decreed by the council and the Roman businessmen among us and the people of Assos to appoint an embassy chosen from the foremost most distinguished Romans and Greeks to seek an audience and congratulate him, and beg him to remember the city with solicitude, as he personally promised when together with his father Germanicus he first set foot in our city's province.

Oath of the Assians:

We swear by Zeus the Savior and by the deified Caesar Augustus and by the ancestral Holy Maiden, to be loyal to Caius Caesar Augustus and all his house and to regard as friends whomever he chooses and as enemies whomever he censures. If we remain faithful to our oath may it go well with us; if we swear falsely the opposite.

The envoys proposed themselves voluntarily at their own expense

Caius Varius C.F. Voltinia Castus

Hermophanes son of Zoïlos

Ktêtos so. Pisistratos”

We are dealing here with a decree of the city of Assos referring to a joint decision of the city and the Romans to send envoys to Caligula at the occasion of his elevation to the imperial purple. The envoys conveyed the city's congratulations, but also the text of a public oath of loyalty. Please note that the *Romaioi* had a pole position: they were even mentioned before the *demos* which is another sign of their relatively high status. The importance of the Roman traders in this kind of ceremony is confirmed by a text of 3BC that records the oath of loyalty sworn to Augustus by the inhabitants of Paphlagonia. The Romans from Assos were clearly not exceptional.

It would appear, therefore, that the associations of *Romaioi* had a particular role to play in negotiating the symbolic relationship between the Greek cities and their Roman sovereigns that was expressed in the imperial cult. It is not easy to establish whether these Romans took the initiative, or whether they merely responded to local demands or pressures. These associations served so to speak as a *trait d'union* between city and empire. This suggest to me that the Romans – and associations of Romans- had a greater role to play in the proliferation of the imperial cult, than people have suggested. At any rate this survey shows that the *Romaioi*, and their associations of the imperial period were much more fully integrated into the Greek cities than their predecessors of the Republican period had been. Moreover I have suggested that the Romans, as a kind of agents of the imperial cult, also played a significant part in the symbolic integration of the city into the empire. In the final part of this paper I want to investigate the role of other asociations in this process.

3: Professional associations and their relationship with Rome

I want to conclude with a few comments on the relationship of other associations- professional *collegia* in particular- with Rome? Did they have a part to play in the representation of the emperor to a provincial audience? Was their orientation primarily local, or were they also part of the wider development by which Greek cities were getting symbolically integrated in the empire at large? My focus will be on the role of *collegia* in the representation of the imperial image, and in the imperial cult. An important, but difficult question is what exactly the imperial cult meant for the *collegia*. The scholarly literature on associations has emphasised –going back to Poland- that “ the cult of the emperors appear relatively seldom [within associations] and, where it does occur, has little independent meaning, and they had little significance for an associations’ self-understanding or self-definition.

It is interesting to note here that a very recent German PhD dissertation on professional associations in the Roman East by Stefan Sommer – that came to my attention only recently- came to almost the same conclusion.¹⁹ Yet there is room for doubt.

I shall explore this as follows: I begin with focusing on associations that had a clear and recogniseable function in the imperial cult itself, and on associations that expressed their loyalty through the adoption of an imperial title. I shall then try to establish what role purely professional *collegia* played in imperial rituals: looking at imperial *triumphus*, and funerals, as well as at the seating arrangements in stadia and theatres. I shall round off with a brief discussion of dedications and monuments that these associations dedicated to the emperors. Although the numbers of texts are not so large as in the case of the Roman residents, I think that this discussion will demonstrate the close links between private associations and the imperial cult, and hence the imporatnce of these association in this context.

Hymnodoi and other cult associations

Let us begin with associations that had a clear ritual function within the context of the cult. Most significant among these were probably the various associations of *hymnoidoi* – singers of hymns- who stood in a century old tradition, as many Greek cults involved the singing of hymns. During the imperial period these *hymnoidoi* –or

¹⁹ Poland, F. (1909). Geschichte des griechisches Vereinwesen. Leipzig.,

at least some- *hymnoidoi* seem to have developed a special connection with the more prominent civic cults, and most of all with the imperial cult. This would account for an imperial dedication set up by an association of hymn singers from Nikopolis ad Istrum

(IG Bulg. 2 666)

ἀγαθῇ τύχῃ.
 Διὲ καὶ Ἥρᾳ καὶ
 Ἀθηνᾷ ὑπὲρ τῆς τῶν
 Αὐτοκρατόρων τύ-
 5
 χης καὶ διαμονῆς ὑ-
 μνωδοὶ πρεσβύτε-
 ροι χοροστατοῦντος
 Θεαγένου ἐκ τῶν ἰδ-
 ων ἀνέστησαν.
 10
 vac. νησ vac.

“With Good Fortune. To Zeus and Hera and Athena, on account of the fortune and the continuance of the emperors. The elder hymnsingers erected this at their own expense when Theagenes was choros leader”.

The social status of these hymnsingers could vary: although some of them undoubtedly belonged to the highest echelons of provincial society, many of them did not. We thus find an Ephesian linen weaver who was a *hymnoidos*, a *lampadarch*, and a member of the *gerousia*; in Myrina, in Aiolis the owner of a pottery workshop identifies himself as a *hymnoidos*, and the *hymnoidoi* who are listed among the beneficiaries of a foundation in Histria also appear to have been of middling rank. None of these men can have been poor, to be sure, but they seem overwhelmingly to have been recruited from among the circles of successful businessmen, who also populated the professional *collegia*.

Other *collegia* performed different services: civic and imperial festivals employed a number of minor cult officials like the special *collegia* of *sebastophoroi* (carriers of imperial images), and *hieraphoroi* (carriers of sacred objects) who carried imperial statues in the numerous imperial and civic festivals, as in the famous festivals of Vibius Salutaris in Ephesos, or of C. Julius Demosthenes in Oinoanda. These ‘lower cult officials’ were also recruited from among the successful craftsmen and traders. A text from Anazarbus shows that they could be recruited among the association of fullers and the porters of the agora on the temple area. They were happy to advertise their involvement with the imperial cult- but they did not forget to mention their professional activity as well.

IANazarbus 4

Αὐτοκράτ[ορα Κα]ίσαρα Μ(ᾶρκον)
 Αὐγῆλιον Ἀντωνεῖνον Εὐσ[ε]-
 βῆ Σεβ(αστὸν) ἀρχιερέα μέγιστον, δημαρ-

[χι]κῆς ἐξουσίας τὸ ι´, αὐτοκράτορα τὸ
 5
 β´, ὑπατον τὸ β´, υἱὸν τοῦ θεοτάτου
 Αὐτοκράτορος Σεουήρου, καὶ κύ-
 [ρ]ιον καὶ εὐεργέτην τῆς οἰκουμένης,
 οἱ περὶ Μάρκελλον Ἡλείου καὶ Ἑρμο-
 γένην Δείου καὶ Σωκράτην Γερμανοῦ
 10
 καὶ Ἑρμογ[έν]ην Τιβερίου ἱεραφόροι
 καὶ οἱ ἱεραφό[ροι ξ]αντικῆς καὶ δι’ αὐτῶν
 οἱ λοιποὶ ἱε[ραφ]όροι καὶ ὀστειάριοι τῆς
 κτητικῆς Ἀναζα[ρβην]ῆς μητροπόλεως
 [τ]ῶν τριῶν ἐπαρχειῶν Κιλικίας
 15
 [Ἰ]σαυρίας Λυκαονίας προκαθεζομένης
 [κ]αὶ δις νεωκόρου, καθ’ ἃ ὑπέσχοντο.

“[This statue of] Emperor Caesar M. Aurelius Antoninus Pius, Pontifex Maximus, consul for the 10th time, son of the God Emperor Severus, Lord and Benefactor of the Oikoumene (the inhabited world). [was set up by] The hieraphoroi led by Marcellus son of Eleias and Socrates son of Germanus and Hermogenes, son of Tiberious, as well as the hierphoroi of the bleachery and through them also the other hieraphoroi and the porters of the foodmarket of the Anazarbos presiding metropolis of the three provinces Cilicia, Isuaria and Lycaonia, and twice *neokoros* (see of an imperial temple), as they had promised.”

Imperial nomenclature

A special case is provided by those associations that adopted imperial names and adjectives in their own titles. The establishment of the Principate – and the introduction of the imperial cult led to many different associations of ‘emperor lovers’: *Kaisariastai* are on record in Lydian Mostenai (IGR 4, 1348) a Caesar loving brotherhood appears to have been active in Ilion ((*fratra filokaisareôn*) Ileiden 4. A similar title was *filosebastos* (Augustus-loving) that was particularly popular: the Packard-humanities site of Greek inscriptions gives nearly 600 attestations of the term, the great majority on inscriptions from Asia Minor. This title could be attached to cities, and individuals, but they could also be linked to professional associations, as is shown by the *filaugoustoi aurarioi* (emperor-loving goldsmiths) in Miletos (IMiletos 124). Individual emperors also had their supporters, as for instance the *Tibereioi* (Tiberius-men) that were active in Didyma (IDidyma 50)

Such groups seem to stand in a tradition going back to the Hellenistic period, when we find associations of *Lysimachioi* (On Rhodes) *Attalistai* or *Basilistai*- (king-men). We also find associations dedicated to Roman magnates: a synod of *Pompeiastai* was active on Delos ID 1797) ; supporters of Agrippa (*Agrippiastai*) were found in Sparta and also *filagrippai symbiotai* (Agrippa-loving companions) who were perhaps active in Smyrna (Ileiden 5) But these clubs did not necessarily engage in cult acts. Yet their presence was clearly appreciated.

Professional Associations in imperial rituals:

Even without proper cult the presence of associations could be important for the communication of the imperial message. There is sufficient evidence for example that professional *collegia* played a key-role in imperial ceremonies. At least they tended to be present when the Roman emperor confronted his subjects. The imperial *adventus*, like the *joyeuse entrée* of late medieval and early modern Europe was such a key-moment. It was an essential meeting point between rulers and ruled, and it seems to have been a carefully scripted set piece of the rhetoric of imperial power. It was apparently crucial that the professional associations took part. When the emperor Constantine visited Autun, (in 311 AD) the panegyricist states:

“we decorated the streets leading to the palace, although only with poor ornaments [they wanted a tax rebate after all!] yet we carried forth for your welcoming all the standard of the *collegia*, and all the images of our gods”

Other imperial ceremonies, such as triumphal parades and imperial funerals also included professional associations: as for example when Gallienus entered Rome triumphantly (SHA Gallieni 7.4.9.1), or when Septimius Severus staged the funeral of his predecessor Pertinax in an attempt to legitimate his own position. In situations like this, the ordinary Romans were represented by the professional *collegia*.

Seats

In the Hellenistic period the civic banquet may have represented the highlight of the ritual calendar, but it can be argued that in the imperial period this place was taken by the games and festivals – that were often organised in the context of the Roman imperial cult- these festivals were celebrated in such numbers that Louis Robert could speak of an ‘*explosion agonistique*’ a recent study counted at least 500 of them in Asia Minor, and the counter is still running.

All over the Greek East we can find the monumental theatres and stadia that were set up in this context. A striking feature of these venues was that the seating order in the auditoria was strictly regulated. The central positions were taken of course by the emperors or imperial representatives and the urban elites. The rest of the population was watching the games also as members of status-groups, among which we find many professional associations. Seating inscriptions were found in Saittai, Didyma, Bostra Ephesos, Miletos, Termessos and Aphrodisias. I have argued elsewhere that these seating arrangements served as a symbolic expression of a new world order that was based on a hierarchy of status groups, that was effectively and symbolically integrated into an imperial framework.²⁰ The hierarchical nature of these orders is clear, I think, but it is a striking illustration of the second point that the auditoria had room for associations that explicitly claimed their place in an imperial order, such as the *Tibereioi* of Didyma, and the *Filaugoustoi Aurarioi* of Miletos: their position must have resembled that of the *Seviri Augustales* (collegium of 6 men, usually freedmen responsible for the imperial cult) who enjoyed reserved seats in the amphitheatre of Arelate- Arles.

²⁰ {van Nijf, 1997 #2382}.

Imperial dedications

Finally it would be interesting to know whether ‘ordinary professional associations’ were actively promoting the imperial image or even the imperial cult. When we look though the epigraphic record we find several public attestations of loyalty or imperial patriotism:

-Building dedications

The dedication of a building or clubhouse to the emperor was – or can be interpreted- as an external sign of loyalty: for instance: the associations of shippers at Nikomedia, dedicated their temenos to Vespasian (TAM 4. 22)

[Αὐτοκράτορι Οὐ]εσπασια[ν]ῷ Καίσαρι Σε[βαστῷ]
[— — — — τέ]με[ν]ος καὶ οἶκον ναυκλη[ρικὸν οἶ]
[— — — — ναύ]κληροι,

“[To emperor V]espasianus Caesar A[ugustus]
another example is group of businessmen in Thyateira who dedicated a gatebuilding, some stoas and a landing to the Imperial gods. (TAM 5 2 862)”

<θε>οῖς Σεβαστοῖς
<οἱ προ>ματευόμενοι
τὸ τρίπυλον καὶ τὰς
στοὰς, τὰς τε καταγωγ[ὰς]
5
καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐταῖς ἐργα[σ]-
τῶν οἰκητήρια, κατεσ[κεύασαν]
ἐκ τῶν <π>ερ<ισσ>ῶν <τῆς> ἀ<ρχ>ῆς
Παμφί<ί>λου τοῦ Υἱα
ΤΟΥΜΗΝΟΦΑΝΤΟΥ ΑΝ
10
ΧΡΥ.ΣΩ.ΚΑΛΙΝΟΣ.

“For the Augusti, the [business]men/ traders have constructed the tripylon and the porticoes and the landings (katagogas) and the dwellings of the workers therein, out of the revenues of their work and their own expenses Pamphilos (son of Hypates son of Menophantes has put this up ...

Such buildings were already a token of the deep seated respect for the emperor, but the dedication of special public monuments was an even more emphatic expression of loyalty. The linenweavers of Salamis on Cyprus provide us with a striking example:

Salamis Mitford and Nikolaou (1974), 28-29, nr 13

[Αὐ]τοκράτορι Καίσαρι θεοῦ
Τραϊανοῦ Παρ[θικοῦ υἱῷ, θεοῦ Νερούα
υἱὸν, Τραϊα[νῷ Ἀδριανῷ Σεβα]στῷ,
ἀρχιερεῖ με[γίστῳ, δημαρχιχῆς] ἐξουσίας
5
τὸ ἰδ' ἔτος, ὑπά[τῳ τὸ γ', πατ[ρί] πατρίδος,

τῷ σωτῆρι καὶ εὐεργέτῃ τοῦ κόσμου
παντός, οἱ κατὰ Σαλαμεῖνα
λίνοφοι.

To the Emperor Caesar Trajan Hadrian Augustus -son of the god Trajan Parthicus and grandson of the god Nerva- pontifex maximus, tribune of the people for the fourteenth time, consul for the third. Father of the fatherland, saviour and benefactor of the entire world. The linenweavers of Salamis.

Imperial cult

Finally, whether these declarations of loyalty represented ‘real’ religious feelings is another matter. This is an old chestnut, and a favourite subject of discussion for students of the Roman imperial cult. In this context it has i.a. been argued that people prayed *for* the emperor, but not directly *to* the emperor. However my final examples indicate that this at least needs to be nuanced. Some collegia seem to have internalised the imperial cult, to the extent that they prayed and sacrificed *to* the imperial gods on a regular basis. We saw above that the *naukleroi* of Nikomedia dedicated a *temenos* to the emperors, and it would be hypercritical to assume that this was not used for worshipping the emperor. TAM 4.1, 22. But even better evidence comes from Ephesos finally where an inscription was found that records a group of physicians who customarily sacrificed to Askepios and the Theoi Sebastoi IEphesos 719.

[οἱ] θύοντες τῷ προπά-
τορι Ἀσκληπιῷ καὶ τοῖς
Σεβαστοῖς ἰατροῖς

“The association of Physicians who habitually sacrifice to Ancestral Asklepios and the Emperors”

We have reason to expect that they were not unique: in his study of the collegia of Ostia Russell Meiggs mentions the finds of all kinds of imperial objects (Busts, portraits, statues of emperors) which suggest to him that ‘some form of imperial cult was common to all guilds.’²¹ There seems to be little reason to reject a priori the possibility that this was also the case in the Roman East.

To conclude this section. I believe that there is some compelling evidence that the emperors and the imperial cult played an important role in the life of the *collegia*. They may not have been as active in this respect as the associations of *Romaioi* that I discussed earlier, but it is clear that they also had a part to play in the symbolic integration of the Greek cities in the empire. Associations of craftsmen and traders were among the institutions that channeled individual loyalty, not only to the city, but to the imperial centre of Rome as well.

²¹ Meiggs, R. (1973). Roman Ostia Oxford (2; first ed. 1960).

4: Conclusions:

It is time to sum up. I have discussed today some ways in which associations had a role in the way that provinces got integrated into the Roman empire. I have focused today on two types of associations: I have first discussed associations of Roman traders and residents that we find in the Greek cities from the third century BC onwards. I argued that we find here an ambivalent picture: the Roman presence in the East, and in the Greek cities remained relatively marginal for a long time. To be sure they were important and a force to be reckoned with, but their presence lacked an ideological basis: they were simply there, because there were opportunities for enrichment. When these Romans got integrated in the Greek cities, this may simply have been a case of individual Romans 'going native'. However, the gradual inclusion of associations of Romans in civic rituals and key institutions of civic life suggests that slowly but surely they obtained a collective status with permanent rights in the city.

By the imperial period, these associations seem to have penetrated civic life deeper – both on a social and on a political level. But the epigraphic evidence suggests that they also became the agents of Rome on a cultural and a religious level. Their efforts for the imperial cult suggests that their presence now had an ideological basis as well. In this sense they acted as a crucial *trait-d'union* between the imperial centre and the cities. Closely associated with them – or perhaps following in their footsteps – were the 'ordinary professional *collegia*'. While they were primarily oriented towards the city and towards civic life, they were nevertheless involved in imperial rituals and the imperial cult. In this sense they were likewise an important factor in the dissemination of the imperial ideology among the (working) population of the Greek provinces.

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