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My Neighbor the Barbarian:
Immigrant Neighborhoods in Classical Athens, Imperial Rome, and Tang Chang'an

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in History

by

Ryan Russell Abrecht

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June 2014

The dissertation of Ryan Russell Abrecht is approved.

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June 2014

My Neighbor the Barbarian:
Immigrant Neighborhoods in Classical Athens, Imperial Rome, and Tang Chang'an

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To my parents,

who make everything possible.

VITA OF RYAN RUSSELL ABRECHT
June 2014

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ABSTRACT

My Neighbor the Barbarian:
Immigrant Neighborhoods in Classical Athens, Imperial Rome, and Tang Chang'an

by

Ryan Russell Abrecht

How does gaining an empire change the conqueror? Why is the assimilation

of new populations, goods, and ideas sometimes seen as a marker of a people's

greatness, and at other times as a dangerous threat from within? This project analyzes

immigration to three capital cities: Athens (5th-4th centuries BCE), Rome (1st-4th

centuries CE), and Chang'an, capital of Tang dynasty China (7th-10th centuries CE).

It analyzes ancient textual and archaeological evidence through the lens of borderland

theory to argue that the boundaries surrounding immigrant neighborhoods

transformed each of these iconic cities into urban borderlands where ideas of social

otherness had physical analogues. It was in these urban borderlands that the problem

of how to accommodate new populations into existing structures of imperial

domination was worked out.

In their respective heydays, Athens, Rome, and Chang'an functioned as

centers of government, economic powerhouses, global schools, sites of religious

pilgrimage, and tourist attractions. Many of the diverse immigrants they attracted

settled in the neighborhoods at the center of this analysis: Athens' port of Piraeus, Rome's Trans Tiberim district, and Northwest Chang'an. These communities stood out as "small worlds" within their cities at large, where ethnic, linguistic, and cultural differences overlapped with physical boundaries such as rivers, roads, and walls. Residents carved out places for themselves in their new homes by learning how to skillfully navigate these boundaries. Whether by traversing the urban landscape during their daily commute, participating in civic or religious ceremonies, or attending festivals and entertainments, newcomers came into contact with locals on a daily basis. These interactions blurred lines between "us" and "them" in ways that called into question the limits of national identity and, depending on the circumstances, could either fan the flames of xenophobia or nurture new cultural syntheses. In this sense, life at the center of the Athenian, Roman, and Tang empires resembled that on their outer frontiers, where "civilized" insiders and "barbarian" outsiders lived poised between intimate coexistence and violent rejection. Assessing these imperial capitals as urban borderlands allows us see that this tension was not an aberration or strictly a regional phenomenon. It was quite literally built into the heart of all three empires.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CIL   *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*. 17 vols. Berlin: Berolini, apud G. Reimerum, 1862-.

IG   *Inscriptiones Graecae*. 14. vols. Berolini: G. de Gruyter, 1913-.

IGR   *Inscriptiones Graecae ad res Romanas pertinentes*. 4 vols. Roma: L'Erma, 1906–27.

IGUR   *Inscriptiones Graecae Urbis Romae*. 4 vols in 5 parts. Rome: Instituto italiano per la storia antica, 1968-.

ILS   *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*. 3 vols in 5 parts, 1892–1916. Berolini: Weidmann, 1974.

PIR   *Prosopographia imperii Romani saeculi*. 3 vols. Berolini: De Gruyter, 1933.

P. Mich.   *Michigan papyri*. Chico, CA: Scholar's Press, 1931-.

P. Oxy   *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*. London: British Academy, 1898-.

Introduction: Centering Empire

Like waves hitting a beach, imperial projects produce wide landscapes that are changed beyond recognition and often strewn with debris. Empires are, after all, born from expansion and exploitation. Their histories inevitably entail one community gaining control over others, settling among them, and absorbing them into a larger political and socioeconomic entity through a combination of coercive military, economic, and cultural mechanisms.[1] Empires vary considerably in organization and levels of formality, ranging from highly centralized territorial states to flexible nomadic confederations to mercantile hegemonies whose trade networks stretch around the globe.[2] Yet they always have a center: a heartland that produces the institutions of hierarchical control that allow one people to dominate others, and the national myths that grant them a mandate to rule.[3] This centers is often metropolitan in nature. At the heart of most empires, we find an imperial city.[4]

After the tides of empire recede, it becomes possible to more clearly see the profound changes they have wrought on conquered peoples and territories alike.

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[1] Alejandro Colás, *Empire* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), 6.

[2] Gregory E. Areshian, "Introduction: Variability and Complexity in Multidisciplinary and Interdisciplinary Studies of Empires," in *Empires and Diversity: On the Crossroads of Archaeology, Anthropology, and History*, ed. Gregory E. Areshian (Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, 2013), 1-20; Barbara Bush, *Imperialism and Postcolonialism* (London: Pearson Education Limited, 2006), 22-42.

[3] Colás, *Empire*, 7, 117.

[4] There are, of course, exceptions. Nomadic empires such as the Mongol or Turkic confederations, for example, do not typically expand from core cities and may lack native traditions of urbanism entirely. It is interesting to note, however, that this tends to change after empire has been achieved, either through new urban development in the heartland (such as that which occurred at the Mongol Empire's capital at Karakorum) or through conquest of preexisting cities (for example, Seljuk Baghdad or Ottoman Istanbul).

Since the dismantling of the modern European empires in the middle of the twentieth century, a host of thinkers and artists have devoted themselves in earnest to this task. This "postcolonial turn" in scholarship and literature has produced a heightened sensitivity to the ways that empires complicate and destabilize the histories, customs, and identities of subject peoples living across their colonized hinterlands.[5] Imperialism, however, also changes the imperialist in profound and lasting ways; the debris of empire is not only found at the high-water mark. Rather, just as waves pull sand away from the shore, empires set in motion processes of migration and interaction that affect the imperial center as dramatically as they do those of the periphery.

Empires are by nature extractive, pulling in the resources of distant hinterlands to enrich and aggrandize their dominant cores. At the same time, the social groups at the top of their hierarchies seek to impose political and cultural changes on others while remaining unchanged themselves, establishing forms of domination that exploit conquered peoples while holding them at a distance.[6] Yet in practice this is never really possible. Imperial cities that project their political, economic, and cultural power outward into the wider world inevitably become destinations for generations of diverse immigrants who are drawn to them out of

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[5] Bush, *Imperialism and Postcolonialism*, 55; Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London: Routledge, 1998), 185. While originating from a critique of interactions between European nations and the societies they colonized in the modern period, postcolonialism's focus on imperialism's effects on marginalized peoples has also influenced studies of the premodern world. See, for example, Irad Malkin, "Postcolonial Concepts and Ancient Greek Colonization," *Modern Language Quarterly* 65, no. 3 (2004), 341-64.

[6] Pekka Hämäläinen and Samuel Truett, "On Borderlands," *Journal of American History* 98, no. 2 (2011): 348.

necessity or ambition. These newcomers jostle for room and recognition, driving

growth in unexpected directions and altering the capital's character and appearance.[7]

As new populations seek housing, new goods demand markets, and new religions

reshape sacred topographies, the social and spatial landscapes of the imperial center

inevitably begin to change.[8]

As anyone who has spent time in a major city can attest, bringing together

previously distinct peoples, languages, ideas, commodities, and customs into an

intimate urban environment sparks the kind of unpredictable cross-fertilizations that

resist sharp distinctions.[9] Unremarkable acts such as visiting the marketplace,

walking to work, participating in civic or religious festivals, or attending games and

processions expose residents of bustling capitals to different sights, sounds, smells,

tastes, and ideas on a regular basis. Over time, these everyday encounters between

natives and newcomers can begin to blur the lines between them.[10] While differences

between various ethnic, religious, or socio-economic groups are never fully effaced,

frequent contacts encourage exchanges of goods, ideas, and, perhaps most

importantly, genetic material among them.[11] Encounters in the urban landscape have

the potential to significantly change the demographic makeup, material culture, local

[7] Ananya Roy, "The Reverse Side of the World: Identity, Space, and Power," in *Hybrid Urbanism*, ed. Nezar AlSayyad (Westport, CT and London: Praeger, 2001), 234.

[8] Catherine Edwards and Greg Woolf, "Cosmopolis: Rome as World City," in *Rome the Cosmopolis*, ed. Catherine Edwards and Greg Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 8-9.

[9] Colás, *Empire*, 120.

[10] Bush, *Imperialism and Colonialism*, 123.

[11] Doreen Massey, John Allen and Steve Pile. *City Worlds* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 17, 26; Monica L. Smith, "Introduction: The Social Construciton of Ancient Cities," in *The Social Construction of Ancient Cities*, ed. Monica L. Smith (Washington and London: Smithsonian Books, 2003). 1-2.

customs, and symbolic meaning of the city as a whole. Cultural forms imposed by a

conquering metropole and exported to its subject peripheries are imported back to the

center, where they end up challenging the status quo that produced them in the first

place.[12]

Thus, at the risk of mixing metaphors, we might imagine the imperial project

as a feedback loop in which outward expansion from a metropolitan core is matched

by a countervailing pull of migration back to it. In European history, one of the most

famous examples of this phenomenon is Rome, the city that conquered much of the

known world and before becoming the place to which all roads lead. Yet the

feedback loop of empire has recurred many times throughout the ages, in places as

diverse as Constantinople, Baghdad, Timbuktu, and London. Under the influence of

processes of migration that play out over generations, capital cities such as these

evolve into microcosms whose customs, demography, architecture, and markets

showcase the breadth of the empires under their sway.[13] Some admirers enthuse

about this fact. Writers such as Aelius Aristides (117–181 CE), a Greek rhetorician

who delivered a panegyric to the city of Rome in the middle of the second century

CE, saw the city's cosmopolitanism a sign of its greatness and waxed poetic its

dizzying diversity to convey a sense of its sophistication and power.[14] Yet at the

same time, other residents of the imperial center find the presence of outsiders to be

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[12] Colás, *Empire*, 121; Bush, *Imperialism and Colonialism*, 120.

[13] Colás, *Empire*, 7, 62; Mark Lewis, *The Construction of Space in Early China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 169. In this sense, Mark Lewis notes, "an empire's metropolitan core can serve as a model in which the structure and organizing principles of its entire state can be grasped."

[14] Aelius Aristides, 26.61-2.

profoundly unsettling. The historian Tacitus, the poet Lucan, and the satirist Juvenal,

for example, saw Rome's diverse population as a threat to its Romanness and a sign

of decline.[15] This tension between cosmopolitanism and xenophobia, what Greg

Woolf and Catherine Edwards call "the perennial paradox of the imperial metropolis"

reminds us that feedback loops are inherently unstable.[16] Residents of the imperial

city live poised between the desire to accommodate diverse populations into a larger

community and the impulse to exclude or eradicate those who are different. How do

we explain this apparent disconnect? What effect does it have on the appearance,

character, and meaning of an empire's metropolitan core? In short, how does

imperialism change the imperialist?

To grapple with these questions, this project analyzes immigrant communities

in three iconic cities – classical Athens, imperial Rome, and Tang dynasty Chang'an.

Each of these cities has a complex history that spans many centuries. The goal of this

project, however, is not to conduct a survey from start to finish but to analyze them at

the height of their political, economic, and cultural powers. Therefore, my analysis

will focus on Athens in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, when its political and

economic influence extended throughout the Aegean Sea and Eastern Mediterranean;

Rome during the height of its power in Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East in

the first three centuries CE; and Chang'an in the seventh through tenth centuries CE,

when it was the capital of a multicultural empire that penetrated deep into Central and

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[15] Tacitus, *Annals* 14.44; Lucan, *Pharsalia* 7.400-6, 7.535-43; Juvenal, 3.58-60.
[16] Edwards and Woolf, "Cosmopolis: Rome as World City," 1-2. My thanks to Tony Barbieri-Low for this observation.

Southeast Asia. Although their geographical and historical contexts differ, these cities were all major centers of political control, commerce, and communication. They were also all destinations for generations of immigrants and focal points for intimate and sustained contact between diverse populations. By comparing reactions to immigration in Athens, Rome, and Chang'an, I will analyze how these societies coped with the changes that their empires created at home and attempt to better understand how migrant populations carved out places for themselves in each city's social and spatial landscapes.

To do this, I will analyze Athens, Rome, and Chang'an as urban borderlands at the centers of the empires under their control. At first blush this seems counterintuitive. Borderlands are often imagined as peripheral regions at the edges of empires or nation states, situated around militarized political boundaries or natural features such as rivers and mountain ranges.[17] An increasing number of historians, sociologists, anthropologists, and political scientists have devoted themselves to studying these complex and contested spaces in recent decades, focusing on regions such as the US-Mexico border or the post-Soviet nations of Eastern Europe. Many of these scholars have noted that borders serve both practical and symbolic functions, restricting movement across physical space while also reinforcing mental categories

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[17] Bradley J. Parker, "Toward an Understanding of Borderland Processes." *American Antiquity* 71, no. 1 (2006): 78-9; Bradley J. Parker and Lars Rodseth, eds., *Untaming the Frontier in Anthropology, Archaeology, and History* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2005), 9-10, 28. For a criticism of the concept of "natural frontiers," see Lucian Febvre, *La terre et l'evolution humaine* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1970).

of difference.[18] Their work has shown that in borderland, mental and physical landscapes tend to mirror each other, and social and spatial boundaries are often closely entangled.[19]

Moreover, borders themselves present something of a paradox: although they are assumed to separate what they distinguish, they also encourage interaction between people on either side because of the unique affordances for escape, profit, or reinvention that they provide.[20] In the Roman Empire, for example, extensive military fortifications along the western and southern banks of the Rhine and Danube Rivers protected the empire from the depredations of "barbarian" Germanic tribes. Nevertheless, literary and material evidence also suggests that the rivers facilitated communication, trade, and occasional partnerships between Romans and Germans in times of peace.[21] A similar situation prevailed on the other end of the Eurasian continent, where the Great Wall of China divided the settled lands of China from the North Asian steppe. Although the Great Wall is the most extensive and imposing border ever created by human hands, the lands surrounding it were also the site of productive interactions and economic exchanges between agriculturalists and nomads

[18] Hämäläinen and Truett, "On Borderlands," 342; Michèle Lamont and Virág Molnár, "The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences," *Annual Review of Sociology* 28 (2002): 181; Kent G. Lightfoot and Antoinette Martinez, "Frontiers and Boundaries in Archaeological Perspective," *Annual Review of Anthropology*, no. 24 (1995): 472.

[19] Hämäläinen and Truett, "On Borderlands," 342; Lamont and Molnár, "Study of Boundaries," 181; Lightfoot and Martinez, "Frontiers and Boundaries," 472; Stephen Cornell and Douglas Hartmann, *Ethnicity and Race: Making Identities in a Changing World* (Thousand Oaks, London, and New Delhi: Pine Forge Press, 1998), 160.

[20] Fredrik Barth, "Boundaries and Connections," in *Signifying Identities: Anthropological Perspectives on Boundaries and Contested Values*, ed. Anthony Cohen (London: 2000), 27; Michiel Baud and Willem Van Schendel, "Toward a Comparative History of Borderlands," *Journal of World History* 8, no. 2 (1997): 216.

[21] Ammianus Marcellinus, 21.4.3; Tacitus, *Germania* 5, 23, 28-9.

for centuries.[22] More contemporarily, any visitor to the US-Mexico borderlands can

attest to bonds of kinship, language, culture, and religion that tie many of its residents

together despite the closely policed international border that separates them.[23]

As these examples indicate, borderlands are sites of transcultural exchanges

that have the potential to contribute to the evolution of new modes of communication,

styles of art and architecture, regional customs, and networks of friendship and

kinship.[24] At the same time, borderlands are also places from which the threat of

violence never departs. The Roman and Chinese empires clashed constantly with

their northern neighbors, and peaceful trading settlements could quickly become sites

of battles or massacres. In the modern context, Amnesty International reports that

Latinos, Native Americans, and people of color trying to illegally cross the border

from Mexico into the United States are often the victims of discriminatory profiling,

harassment, and physical violence.[25] Borderlands, in other words, are sites of both

accommodation *and* violence. Life within them is defined by close contacts between

diverse populations across socio-spatial boundaries, and the pressing need to come to

terms with their consequences.

Similar dynamics play out in great cities. Like life in a borderland, urban life

is paradoxical because it embodies elements that are seemingly opposed but also

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[22] For a survey of these interactions over two millennia, see Jagchid and Symons, *Peace, War, and Trade along the Great Wall* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989).
[23] Oscar J. Martinez, *Border People: Life and Society in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands* (Tucson and London: University of Arizone Press, 1994), 311.
[24] Baud and Van Schendel, "Toward a Comparative History of Borderlands," 234; James G. Cusick, "Creolization and the Borderlands," *Historical Archaeology* 34, no. 3 (2010): 48.
[25] "In Hostile Terrain: Human Rights Violations in Immigration Enforcement in the US Southwest" (New York: Amnesty International USA, 2012).

brings them together, intensifying and concentrating them into a single community.[26]

Social and spatial boundaries are often closely entangled. As the following chapters

will show, when ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and economic differences overlap with

rivers, walls, or other physical boundaries in city space, they encourage the growth of

enclaves and neighborhoods with distinctive local cultures.[27] Both on the level of the

neighborhood and of the city as a whole, bonds of geography, locality, commerce,

and community link urbanites to each other. Simply going about their daily lives

exposes them to difference on a regular basis. Over time, interactions between

diverse populations begin to change the social and spatial landscapes of the imperial

center, even as processes of conquest and colonization initiated by the center produce

changes on the periphery.

It is for these reasons that the imperial core and the imperial periphery have,

since antiquity, been the two key places where the problem of how to accommodate

new territories and populations into existing structures of imperial domination is

worked out.[28] As the historian Jerry Bentley noted, "Frontier regions and large,

cosmopolitan cities have always provided venues where people mingled and became

acquainted with different cultural traditions.[29] Immigration, however, brings the

periphery to the core, transforming an empire's metropolitan center into a contested

space where conqueror and conquered are forced to confront each other on a daily

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[26] Massey et al., *City Worlds*, 45.
[27] Mark Abrahamson, *Urban Enclaves: Identity and Place in America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 1-12.
[28] Colás, *Empire*, 36.
[29] Jerry Bentley, *Old World Encounters: Cross-Cultural Contacts and Exchanges in Pre-Modern Times* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993), 33.

basis.[30] The imperial city becomes saturated with possibilities for the destabilization

of imperial arrangements.[31] By assessing these iconic cities as urban borderlands, I

aim show how this collapsing distance between center and periphery played out on

the ground. Beyond that, I will argue that the tension between coexistence and

conflict that shaped the history of all three cities was not an aberration or simply a

regional phenomenon, but a defining characteristic of life in the urban borderlands at

the center of the Athenian, Roman, and Tang Empires.

Scope of Work and Methodology

To begin to show how borderlands theory can improve our understanding of

the unique social dynamics that take place in urban environments, Chapter One

provides a brief history of Border Studies and an assessment of major contributions to

the field. After analyzing key terms and identifying some points of agreement in this

highly interdisciplinary and rapidly growing branch of scholarship, I illustrate how

the borderlands paradigm can help reorient our understanding of culture contact

situations in the ancient as well as the modern world. By applying it to the Rhine and

Danube frontiers of the Roman Empire – areas long dominated by acculturative

models of culture contact that pit "civilized" Romans against "barbarian" Germans – I

show how this new paradigm prompts us to reconsider some long-held assumptions

about the ways that Romans and Germans interacted with each other at the edge of

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[30] Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, "Beyond "Culture:" Space, Identity, and the Politics of
Difference," *Cultural Anthropology* 7, no. 1 (1992): 10.
[31] Jane Jacobs, *Edge of Empire: Postcolonialism and the City* (London and New York: Routledge,
1996), 4.

empire. In addition advocating for the application of borderlands theory to a range of premodern culture contact situations in the premodern world, this chapter lays out a theoretical framework that informs the project as a whole.

Chapter Two turns the focus inward and expands the range of inquiry beyond the Roman world, assessing evidence for immigration to Athens, Rome, Chang'an to illustrate how each of these imperial capitals evolved into microcosms of the empires under their control. Phoenician businessmen who set up shop in Athens, Syrian laborers who put down roots in Rome, and Zoroastrian missionaries built temples in Chang'an all differed in their reasons for migrating to each city, and many other migrants did not come of their own free will but as prisoners or slaves. Nevertheless, the political, economic, and cultural factors that fueled immigration to these three cities broadly overlap. In each case, migration made the metropolis, bringing diverse groups into contact and transforming each capital into a zone of sustained and intense transcultural contacts.

Chapter Three narrows the focus to analyze an immigrant neighborhood in each city, highlighting the entanglement of social and spatial boundaries in the urban landscape and sketching out a picture of immigrant life at the center of the Athenian, Roman, and Tang Empires. Athens' port of Piraeus, Rome's Trastevere district, and Northwest Chang'an all stood out as "small worlds" within their cities at large, where ethnic, linguistic, and cultural differences overlapped with topographical barriers such as rivers, roads, and walls. Rather than simply assimilating into their host populations, residents of these neighborhoods carved out places for themselves and

contributed to their broader urban communities by skillfully navigating the socio-spatial boundaries that surrounded them. These neighborhoods remind us that the transcultural interactions that took place in Athens, Rome, and Chang'an did not occur abstractly, but also manifested spatially in the urban landscape, much as they do in external borderland regions.

Chapter Four pulls these threads together to argue for a new understanding of Athens, Rome, and Chang'an as urban borderlands at heart of the empires they controlled. On the streets and in the neighborhoods of each city, contacts between individuals of different classes, ethnicities, cultures, and linguistic backgrounds were inevitable, whether or not they were desired. While these contacts played out differently in different historical and geographical contexts, in each case encounters with "the other" did not only take place at the geographical limits of Athenian, Roman, or Tang power. Rather, in each case the imperial project transformed center *and* periphery into places where contacts took place between diverse groups across overlapping social and spatial boundaries. The borderlands paradigm makes it clear that, in spite of the ideologies of dominance and control that they produced, none of these cities were "pure" centers of power where one social group exerted uncontestable hegemony over others. Rather, they were heterogeneous zones of transcultural contact that anticipated political, economic, social, and cultural changes to come even as they responded to those that had already occurred.

This is clearly an ambitious agenda, involving three different regions, historical periods, and cultural contexts. Some concepts do not transfer easily across

my three case studies. Premodern China, for example, had no concept of citizenship

comparable with the one that developed in the Greek city-states and was advanced by

the Roman Republic. Care must be taken to avoid garbling ideas in translation; in

this sense, comparative analyses are always fraught with danger.[32] Yet I believe their

benefits far outweigh their risks so long as one takes care, as one of my mentors put

it, "to compare apples to oranges and not apples to patio furniture."[33] I have tried to

follow this sound advice by selecting three imperial capitals that were clear foci of

political, economic, and cultural power within their world regions, as well as

celebrated destinations for generations of immigrants. As the urban theorist Lewis

Mumford observed, such places bring people together like nowhere else, intensifying

and focusing interpersonal interactions in a way that fosters innovation and sets

trends.[34] Furthermore, Athens, Rome, and Chang'an carry a great deal of symbolic

power. These cities loom large in world history because in many ways they represent

the quintessence of their societies and provide some of our best evidence for how they

functioned. They have become, for better or worse, part of the world's

consciousness.[35]

　　　Certainly they are not the same. Rome and Chang'an were true metropolises,

in their respective heydays the largest and most populous cities on Earth. Hailed as

caput mundi ("head of the world") by its ancient admirers such as Aelius Aristides

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[32] Anthony Black, *A World History of Ancient Political Thought* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 99; Armstrong, John A., *Nations before Nationalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982),10.
[33] This one belongs to Paul Spickard.
[34] Massey, *City Worlds*, 17.
[35] Mike Jenkins, Daniel Kozak, and Pattaranan Takkanon, eds., *World Cities and Urban Form: Fragmented, Polycentric, Sustainable?* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 4.

and the poet Ovid, imperial Rome was the unrivaled center of an empire that touched

three continents and boasted a populace of perhaps one million people in the second

century CE.[36] Similarly, Chang'an was the political and symbolic heart of China for

centuries during the Han (206 BCE–220 CE), Sui (581–618 CE), and Tang (618–907

CE) dynasties, with a population well exceeding one million and walls that enclosed

seventy square kilometers in the eighth century CE.[37] Athens, on the other hand, is

the runt of the litter, smaller and less powerful than the other two. Its population in

the fifth century BCE reached perhaps 150,000 and its military and economic power

was confined to the eastern Mediterranean.[38] Moreover, the Athenian Empire was not

long lived, weakening after Athens' loss to Sparta in the Peloponnesian War (431–

404 BCE) and coming to a definitive end after the Macedonian forces of Philip II

defeated an alliance of Greek states at the Battle of Chaeronea in 338. In some ways,

the city represents a "might have been" that cannot compete with Rome and

Chang'an in terms of raw numbers. Yet, as Paul Cartledge notes, Athens' size,

degree of urbanization, and great wealth during the fifth and fourth centuries made it

an unusually heterogeneous, complex, and progressive community among the Greek

states.[39] By the standards of its time, the city was "a global village in and of itself,"

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[36] Ovid, *Fasti* 2.684; Keith Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves: Sociological Studies in Roman History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 68-9.
[37] Mark Edward Lewis, *China's Cosmopolitan Empire: The Tang Dynasty* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2009), 86; Arthur Cotterell, *The Imperial Capitals of China: A Dynastic History of the Celestial Empire* (Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 2008), 111.
[38] A. W. Gomme, *The Population of Athens in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C.* (Chicago: Argonaut, Inc., 1967), 13.
[39] Paul Cartledge, "Introduction: Defining a Kosmos," in *Kosmos: Essays in Order, Conflict and Community in Classical Athens*, ed. Paul Cartledge, Paul Millett, and Sitta von Reden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 2.

and should be considered world class within the context of the Classical Aegean world.[40] I include it in this study to stress that it is not a city's *size* that makes it into an urban borderland, but its role as a focal point of political, economic, and cultural power. In the end, the connecting thread between all three case studies is that each city's success created new boundaries within it, as well as new opportunities for transgressing those boundaries. While Athens, Rome, and Chang'an differ in size and context, the similar social dynamics that shaped them make them compelling subjects for comparison. In all three cases, imperialism changed the imperialist.

It should be noted at the start that this project reflects my training as Roman historian and a specialist in ancient Mediterranean history more broadly. Although Chapters Two and Three adopt a chronological approach and begin with Athens, my primary focus is on Rome, the other two cities functioning as comparative case studies. By including Chang'an in particular, I hope to narrow the gap between Mediterranean and East Asian studies and to contribute in a small way to the growing field of World History. Borderlands theory, a branch of scholarship that has been both praised and criticized for its versatility, is to my mind an ideal vehicle for doing this. Therefore, this project is in part an exercise in, as the borderland historians Pekka Hämäläinen and Samuel Truett put it, "thinking about the places where borderlands history enters the history of the world."[41] I believe strongly that looking outside our areas of specialty can sometimes help us see them in a fresh light;

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[40] Cartledge, "Defining a *Kosmos*," 5; Darko Radovic, "The World City Hypothesis Revised: Export and Import of Urbanity Is a Dangerous Business," in *World Cities and Urban Form: Fragmented, Polycentric, Sustainable?*, ed. Mike Jenkins, Daniel Kozak, and Pattaranan Takkanon (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 43.

[41] Hämäläinen and Truett, "On Borderlands," 341. For some reservations, see pp. 339, 344.

however, it would also take decades to master all of the ancient and modern languages required to assess every piece of evidence involved in a project of this scope in its original form. I have therefore relied on translations of Chinese sources and the guidance of friends and mentors working in the field. All translations from Greek and Latin sources, on the other hand, are my own unless otherwise noted.

Finally, in addition to taking a step in the direction of World History while maintaining a firm footing in Ancient Mediterranean Studies, I hope this project will help bring students of modern and premodern history into closer partnership. Just as there is much to be gained by crossing the academic boundary between "western" and "eastern" history, I believe there are benefits in bridging the distance between studies of the premodern and modern world. As with comparisons between global regions, it is important to acknowledge differences the past and present. It is undeniable, for instance, that the technological changes ushered in by the Industrial Revolution have greatly accelerated a city's ability to pull in goods and people from across vast hinterlands and have made cities like New York, London, or Hong Kong truly global in a sense that even the greatest premodern cities could never match.

Yet although the speed of transportation and communication has accelerated, the social role of cities has changed very little.[42] Great cities have always been centers of authority that concentrate political opportunities, economic exchanges, and social networks in a locus of relatively dense population. They have always held a powerful attraction for individuals from all walks of life, and although textual

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[42] Smith, "The Social Construction of Ancient Cities," 7.

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evidence for marginal groups in antiquity is limited, ancient peoples' motives for

migration were in many ways similar to those of their modern heirs.[43] Within their

limits, the rhythms of daily life take place in a physical landscape that both forms and

is formed by a negotiated consensus between diverse groups.[44] The tension between

coexistence and conflict has defined urban life since ancient Mesopotamia and

continues to do so today. In short, while modern and premodern cities differ in many

significant ways, the boundary between past and present may be more permeable than

it at first appears.

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[43] Smith, "The Social Construction of Ancient Cities," 6.
[44] Smith, "The Social Construction of Ancient Cities," 1-2.

Chapter One: Living on the Edge

"There are no clear borders,
Only merging invisible to the sight."[1]

In recent decades, a number of very creative people have gone to the limits to find their muse. The novelists Cormac McCarthy and Salman Rushdie, the poets of the Welsh Border Project and *The Texas Poetry Review*, and a host of painters, photographers, sculptors, musicians, and performance artists from around the world have found inspiration by thinking about the ways that borders shape the identities of individuals and communities.[2] Despite working in diverse geographical regions and using different media, many of these artists are asking similar questions. What does it mean to live in "places in between" such as Northwest India, Eastern Europe, or the American Southwest? Why do borders seem to limit people's freedom of movement and choice in some cases, and in others provide unique opportunities for creativity and innovation? Is the borderland strictly a physical place, or can it be a state of mind?

At the same time, members of the academic community have been asking similar questions. Many have recognized that, as lines that separate different political or cultural entities, borders play a fundamental role in struggles for recognition, security, and rights as well as processes of identity formation at both the individual

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[1] Dejan Stojanovic, *Circling: 1978-1987* (New Avenue, 2012).

[2] Cormac McCarty, *The Border Trilogy* (New York: Everyman's Library, 1999); Salman Rushdie, *Shalimar the Clown* (New York: Random House, 2005); "Border Poets: Poetry in the Marches," accessed 2/21/14, www.borderpoets.org.uk; "Borderlands: Texas Poetry Review," accessed 2/21/14, http://www.borderlands.org; "*La Frontera*: Artists Along the US Mexican Border," accessed 2/21/14, www.borderartists.com; "*Pogranicze*: The Polish Borderland Foundation," accessed 2/21/14, http://pogranicze.sejny.pl.

and the communal level.[3] Historians, anthropologists, sociologists, political

scientists, and geographers have also realized that borderlands – regions surrounding

the borders between two or more nations where different cultures abut each other and

people of diverse ethnicities, classes, linguistic backgrounds, or religious traditions

occupy the same territory – are places where environmental factors play a

fundamental role in shaping people's lives. In these regions, high levels of mobility

among populations and between cultural milieus shape the development of

communities over time.[4] These insights have contributed to the emergence of Border

Studies as a promising new field of interdisciplinary research. They make it clear that

the study of borderlands can help us fruitfully reevaluate longstanding concepts of

interstate relations, community, identity, and belonging.[5]

At the same time, the field's interdisciplinary nature and rapid growth have

made it difficult to reach a consensus about what characteristics borderlands share

and how they should be defined. In part, this difficulty emerges from what the

anthropologist Bradley Parker has called "the Pandora's Box of interdisciplinary

study" as different types of sources, methodologies, theoretical frameworks, and

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[3] Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 2012), preface; Sally Feldman, "Looking across the Horizon," in *Understanding Life in the Borderlands*, ed. I. William Zartman (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2010), 236, 241.

[4] Martinez, *Border People*, xvii, 306.

[5] Even a very quick survey of some recent publications attests to the field's broad appeal and rapid growth. See, for example: Lamont and Molnár, "The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences," *Annual Review of Sociology* 28 (2002); Gil Stein, editor, *The Archaeology of Colonial Encounters* (Santa Fe and London: School of American Research Press, 2005); Bradley Parker, "Toward an Understanding of Borderland Processes," *American Antiquity* 71 (2006); I. William Zartman, *Understanding Life in the Borderlands* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010); Pekka Hämäläinen and Samuel Truett, "On Borderlands," *Journal of American History* 98 (2011); Linda Darling, "The Mediterranean as a Borderland," *Review of Middle East Studies* 46 (2012).

goals are applied to similar sets of questions.[6] In addition, the study of borderlands is burdened by a blurred relationship in English between the words "boundary," "border," "frontier," and "borderland," and a corresponding tendency to use them interchangeably.[7] This confusion has been magnified by the fact that scholars from different disciplines tend to favor certain terms over others. Furthermore, the meaning of those terms has changed over time.

For example, European historians of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries rarely used the word "borderland." Rather, they wrote about "frontiers," typically describing them as the outer limits of a state's territory. Whether taking the shape of manmade fortifications such as walls or of topographical features such as rivers or mountain ranges, frontiers acted as fences protecting "civilization" from "barbarism." Shaped as they were by an educational system that focused on study of the Greco-Roman classics and the zeitgeist of nineteenth-century imperialism, it is not surprising that most European historians conceived of frontiers along these lines.[8] For instance, Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India from 1899 to 1905, drew upon his knowledge of ancient history when he compared the borders of the British Raj to those of the Roman Empire in a lecture delivered at Oxford in 1907.[9] A few decades

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[6] Parker, "Toward and Understanding of Borderland Processes," 78.

[7] Parker, "Toward and Understanding of Borderland Processes," 79.

[8] Michael Dietler, "The Archaeology of Colonization and the Colonization of Archaeology: Theoretical Challenges from an Ancient Mediterranean Colonial Encounter," in *The Archaeology of Colonial Encounters*, ed. Gil J. Stein (Santa Fe: School of Advanced Research Press, 2010), 33-51.

[9] Curzon, Lord. *Frontiers*. Romanes Lecture, Oxford: 1907; C. R. Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 2. Curzon later became the namesake of the ill-fated "Curzon Line," a demarcation line between the Second Polish Republic and Bolshevik Russia that was proposed by the Allied Supreme Council in the aftermath of World War I.

later, in 1939, the French historian Julien Guey suggested that the defensive trenches

of Roman North Africa (*fossata*) resembled an ancient Maginot Line protecting the

fertile Mediterranean littoral from Bedouin raids out of the hostile Sahara.[10] A few

scholars such as Lucien Febvre, co-founder of the French *Annales* school, criticized

concepts of "natural frontiers" (in which geographical features such as rivers or

mountain ranges were considered to represent the natural limits of a given state's

territory) as thinly-veiled justifications for territorial expansion (one could always

find a more distant river to serve as a border, after all). Yet they left an impression on

the historiography of frontiers, particularly ancient ones.[11]

American historians of the same period took their cue from Frederick Jackson

Turner's seminal paper "The Significance of the Frontier in American History,"

delivered at the 1894 meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago. In

it, Turner argued that American civilization owed its unique vitality to the movement

of the United States' western frontier across the North American continent. Rather

than a fence or a line in the sand, Turner's frontier served as a meeting place of

civilization (personified by the rugged, resourceful, white settler) and savagery,

(represented by Native Americans, wild animals, and an untamed landscape).

Geographically imprecise, more zonal than linear, the American frontier was a setting

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[10] Guey, Julien. "Note sur le *limes* de Numidie et le Sahara au IV siècle. *MEFR* 56: 178-248. 1939;
Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 4.
[11] Lucien Febvre, *La terre et l'evolution humaine* (Paris: 1922), 28-30, 53. Consider, for example, the
popularity of Edward Luttwak's *Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins,
1979), which focused exclusively on the military significance of Rome's nature and manmade
frontiers.

for interactions that played out over decades and even centuries.[12] These interactions, Turner argued, were what gave birth to the American character. His thesis was highly ethnocentric, excluding Native Americans from any active contribution to frontier society and portraying them, rather, as parts of the landscape to be either assimilated or cleared away. Nevertheless, Turner's work made it possible to conceive of the frontier as a place where the coming together of different worlds gave birth to a new type of society, with its own customs, ethos, and identity.

This idea influenced the work of later historians such as Owen Lattimore, an American who studied the northern frontiers of China: an area symbolized above all by its famous Great Wall. In a series of works published in the 1950s, Lattimore argued that, while the Great Wall stands as evidence of a centuries-long effort by several Chinese dynasties to build a fence between the terrain ruled by the emperor (天下 *tianxia*, "under Heaven") and the barbarian "outer darkness," in reality there was never a clear boundary between Chinese civilization and the nomadic societies of the North Asian steppe. Despite the impressive fortifications of the Great Wall, China's northern frontier always proved, "when studied on the ground, to be a zone rather than a line."[13] Within this zone, economies based on Chinese-style agriculture and North Asian pastoralism interpenetrated each other, as did social customs,

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[12] Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," in *The Frontier in American History* (New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1920), pp. 1-38; Baud and van Schendel, "Toward a Comparative History of Borderlands," 212; Whitaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 5.

[13] Owen Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers of China* (New York: Capitol Publishing, 1951), 21, 238; *Studies in Frontier History: Collected Papers, 1928-1958* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), 469-70. The fact that there are many variant and supplementary lines of Great Wall fortification, which represent the tidemarks of different historical periods, also proves that an absolute, linear boundary could never be fully established.

language traditions, and other lifeways. Beginning his study with the first

consolidation of the Great Wall frontier during the Han dynasty (202 BCE–220 CE),

Lattimore detected evidence of traders, settlers, soldiers, and other ambitious

individuals crossing the border in search of opportunity in virtually every period of

Chinese history.[14] Over time, he argued, these individuals built networks of social

contacts and joint interests that made the loyalties and identities of the people living

in the frontier zone ambivalent and at times set them at odds with the interests of the

Chinese government.[15] China's northern frontier, in other words, developed a local

character and agenda that was built from contributions from *both sides* of the

borderline.

Living in a time when decolonization was erasing or rewriting borders around

the world, many historians working in the later twentieth century began to advocate

for a more nuanced understanding of frontier processes. Taking a cue from

Lattimore, more scholars began to see frontiers as places where political, economic,

and cultural spheres of influence overlapped in ways that could be innovative as well

as confrontational.[16] Rather than just the edges of empires or nation states, frontiers

became "zones of interpenetration between two or more previously distinct peoples"

that were "based as much on cultural contact as on political boundaries."[17] Residents

of these dynamic and often unstable regions could "fashion new worlds" by drawing

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[14] Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers*, 20.

[15] Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers* 224.

[16] Parker, "Toward and Understanding of Borderland Processes," 77.

[17] Hugh Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1996), 4; Parker, "Toward and Understanding of Borderland Processes," 79-80; Piper Rae Gaubatz, *Beyond the Great Wall: Urban Form and Transformations on the Chinese Frontiers* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 27.

upon traditions and ideas from both sides of the borderline.[18] Writing as the fall of

the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Union were redrawing the map of

Europe, the Roman historian C. R. Whittaker captured the spirit of the times by

asserting that "the myth of frontiers of iron curtains must be abandoned."[19]

Yet despite the efforts of scholars like Lattimore and Whittaker, the term

"frontier" still came with baggage. While some historians had begun to characterize

frontiers as "crucibles of change" and "regions of intercultural diffusion," the word

still invoked ideas of "empty" lands waiting to be tamed, or of fixed bureaucratic and

administrative limits between civilized insiders and uncivilized outsiders.[20] Frontiers

remained associated with processes of acculturation, in which a dominant group from

one side of the border subjugated or assimilated those on the other side.[21] In this way,

the term retained its association with Turner's disregard for Native American agency

and the idea of Manifest Destiny that informed his frontier thesis.[22]

The borderland paradigm developed out of a desire to shed some of this

baggage. Although Herbert Eugene Bolton, a historian of the American Southwest,

had first used the term "borderland" in his 1921 book *The Spanish Borderlands*, his

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[18] Gaubatz, "Beyond the Great Wall," 14; Prudence Rice, "Contexts of Contact and Change: Peripheries, Frontiers, and Boundaries," in *The Archaeology of Colonial Encounters*, ed. Gil Stein (Santa Fe and London: School of American Research Press and James Currey, 2005), 50.
[19] Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 91.
[20] Linda T. Darling, "The Mediterranean as a Borderland," *Review of Middle East Studies* 46, no. 1 (2012): 44-5.
[21] Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 72.
[22] As noted above, the tendency to see frontiers as sites of acculturation has been especially persistent in studies of the premodern world, due to the scattered and biased nature of the surviving evidence about "barbarian" peoples such as the ancient Germans or Xiongnu. See, for example: Tacitus, *Germania*; Sima Qian, *Shiji* 110.

efforts to integrate the term into the historiography of his day were not successful.[23]

Not until the 1990s did historians began to use the term regularly, thanks in part to a

spate of conferences and publications commemorating the 500th anniversary of

Columbus' arrival in North America.[24] Later-day historians of the American

Southwest, recognizing the important role that local and regional interactions play in

shaping the cultural configuration of contact zones, focused their attention on the

daily lives and identities of people living in borderland regions.[25] Works such as

Oscar Martinez' *Border People* highlighted the connective function of the US-

Mexico border, the similarities and interactions between people who lived near it, and

the social diversity that those interactions generated.[26] In addition, Martinez and his

contemporaries also recognized that borderland history, by its very nature, had to be

interdisciplinary. To do justice to their complex subjects, historians of borderlands

needed to draw upon the work of anthropologists, sociologists, geographers, and

others who also studied the meaning and function of borders.[27]

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[23] Herbert Eugene Bolton, *The Spanish Borderlands: A Chronicle of Old Florida and the Southwest* (Albequerque: 1991).
[24] It did, however, retain a close association with the region surrounding the US-Mexico border. See also: Kelly Lytle Hernandez, "Borderlands and the Future History of the American West," *The Western Historical Quarterly* 42, no. 3 (2011): 325; David J. Weber, "The Spanish Borderlands, Historiography Redux," *The History Teacher* 39, no. 1 (2005): 44-5; "The Spanish Borderlands of North America: A Historiography," *OAH Magazine of History* 14, no. 4 (2000): 5; Hämäläinen and Truett, "On Borderlands," 341; Darling, "The Mediterranean as a Borderland," 55-6.
[25] Martinez, *Border People*, 53, 63, 314; Hernandez, "Borderlands and the History of the American West," 325. See also: Sara Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge: Culture, Class, and Gender on an Anglo-Hispanic Frontier in the American Southwest* (New York: 1987); David J. Weber, *The Spanish Frontier in North America* (New Haven: 1992); Richard White, *The Middle Ground*: *Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great lakes Region* (New York: 1991).
[26] Darling, "The Mediterranean as a Borderland," 56.
[27] Martinez, *Border People*, xvii.

For example, the Norwegian anthropologist Frederik's Barth's introduction to *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, published in 1969, had already inspired decades of work on the techniques that individuals and communities employ to maintain their identities under challenge, or manipulate them in response to changing circumstances.[28] Barth's observation that, like cell membranes, the boundaries between groups are both persistent and permeable, inspired a generation of anthropologists and had obvious bearing on historical studies of borderland regions.[29] Moreover, a generation of scholars in the social sciences and humanities had followed his lead in focusing on processes of boundary definition and maintenance. Sociologists such as Michèle Lamont and Virág Molnár argued for a need to better understand how boundaries emerge in the first place, how they are redrawn to include new groups of people or exclude hitherto accepted ones and why they might become blurred and porous in certain contexts or remain stable and persist in others.[30] Archaeologists such as Kent Lightfoot and Antoinette Martinez looked for the ethnic and cultural boundaries between groups living in contact zones by analyzing the material culture associated with everyday activities such as building houses, preparing food, and exchanging goods.[31] Gloria Anzaldúa, a Chicana scholar of feminism and queer theory, even toyed with the possibility of dismissing with

[28] Barth, "Introduction," 21, 31; William. Zartman, "Introduction: Identity, Movement, and Response." In *Understanding Life in the Borderlands*, ed. I. William Zartman (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2010), 2.

[29] Fredrik Barth, "Introduction," in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*, ed. Fredrik Barth (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1969), 25, 29.

[30] Lamont and Molnár, "The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences," 180-81; Andreas Wimmer, *Ethnic Boundary Making: Institutions, Power, Networks* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 4.

[31] Lightfoot and Martinez, "Frontiers and Boundaries in Archaeological Perspective,"485.

geography altogether.   While her most famous work, *Borderlands/La Frontera*

focused primarily on life on the US-Mexican border, Anzaldúa also asserted that

borderlands exist "wherever two or more cultures edge each other, where people of

different races occupy the same territory, where under, lower, middle, and upper

classes touch, where the space between two individuals shrinks with intimacy."[32] In

her experience, the borderland was not just a physical place, but a form of identity

and a state of mind.

Such a diversity of perspectives has made the borderlands paradigm rich,

complex, and versatile. Yet if the breadth of the field is its virtue, it is also its chief

vulnerability.[33] If, as Anzaldúa suggests, every place can become a borderland, how

can historians and their colleagues pin down the factors that make borderlands

unique?[34] Like any interdisciplinary field, Border Studies runs the risk of being

interpreted and applied so widely that it loses any sense of cohesion. What, then, are

some points of consensus?

First, it is clear that the primary purpose of borders is to separate and

distinguish between different groups of people.[35] In a borderland, this process of

distinguishing has both physical and mental aspects. Physical borders that divide

political territories "on the ground," such as the fence currently being erected between

the United States and Mexico or the Roman Empire's riverine frontier with Germany,

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[32] Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, preface.
[33] Hämäläinen and Truett, "On Borderlands," 348.
[34] Hämäläinen and Truett, "On Borderlands," 344.
[35] Barth, "Boundaries and Connections," 20; Parker, "Toward and Understanding of Borderland Processes," 78-9; Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, 3.

often also function as social boundaries that distinguish between various groups.[36] In

effect, the physical and mental landscapes of a borderland mirror each other, creating

a world where social and spatial relations are closely entangled.[37] As a result of this

entanglement, residents of borderland regions tend to construct their identities both in

relation to their physical location "on the ground" as well as their linguistic, ethnic,

religious, class, or cultural characteristics.[38] This intimate, almost deterministic

relationship between geography and identity is a key aspect of borderland culture.[39]

Second, every border invites a crossing. Some borders are closely guarded,

watched over by individuals or institutions that are determined to prevent crossing or

intermingling between the populations they divide. Indeed, this desire to impose new

boundaries or defend existing ones has been a cause of violence in a number of

borderlands throughout history.[40] Yet on the other hand, there is often a gap between

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[36] Barth, "Boundaries and Connections," 17.

[37] Anna Lucille Boozer, "Frontiers and Borderlands in Imperial Perspective: Exploring Rome's Egyptian Frontier," *American Journal of Archaeology* 117 (2013): 278; Mark W. Graham, *News and Frontier Consciousness in the Late Roman Empire* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 13. See also Henri Lefebvre, *The Survival of Capitalism*. Translated by F. Bryant (London: Allison and Busby, 1976); *Critique of Everyday Life. Vol. 1, Introduction*. Translated by J. Moore (London: Verso, 1991); *The Production of Space*. Translated by D. Nicholson-Smith. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).

[38] For a discussion of the uses and abuses of the term "identity," see Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, "Beyond 'Identity,'" *Theory and Society* 29 (2000): 1-2, 10, 15, 34; Smith, "Introduction," 7-11. For a discussion of term "ethnicity" as applied to the ancient world, see Benjamin Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 1; Stephen Mitchell and Geoffrey Greatrex, ed. *Ethnicity and Culture in Late Antiquity* (London and Oakland, CT: Duckworth, 2000), xiii; Smith, "Introduction," 35-7. In this study, I follow Smith's conclusion that "ultimately, the relevant point to stress is that ethnicity is nothing more than a special form of social (group) identity."

[39] Bradley J. Parker and Lars Rodseth, "Introduction," in *Untaming the Frontier in Anthropology, Archaeology, and History*, ed. Bradley Parker and Lars Rodseth (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2005), 13.

[40] For a just few examples of recent works on borderland violence, see: Alexander V. Pruskin, *The Lands Between: Conflict in the East European Borderlands, 1870-1992* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Lance Blyth, *Chiricahua and Janos: Communities of Violence in the Southwestern Borderlands, 1680-1880* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2012); Omer Bartov and Eric D. Weitz, eds, *Shatterzone of Empires: Coexistence and Violence in the German, Habsburg, Russian, and*

the rhetoric of border maintenance and the rhythms of daily life in borderland

regions.[41] For every individual that seeks to impose a new boundary or defend an

existing one, there is another who looks for loopholes. Traders, artisans, holy, men,

smugglers, spies, fugitives, slaves, and others seeking escape or opportunity find

ways across even the most imposing boundaries, precisely because of the unique

affordances that crossing them can provide.[42]

The activities of such individuals illustrate an intriguing paradox: although

borders ostensibly exist for purposes separation and exclusion, they also have the

potential to encourage processes of communication, exchange, bridging, and

inclusion.[43] As Oscar Martinez put it, "the border is predictable and unpredictable; it

divides and unites; it repels and attracts; it obstructs and facilitates."[44] Connections in

borderland regions emerge as people respond selectively and pragmatically to the

opportunities that crossing can provide, leading to the development of cross-border

networks of communication and exchange. Over time, such networks transform

borderlands into unique spaces where different elements encounter each other and are

changed as a result of their interactions.[45] This tension between boundary

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Ottoman Borderlands (Indianapolis: University of Indiana Press, 2013); Benedict Korf and Timothy
Raeymaekers, eds, *Violence on the Margins: States, Conflict, and Borderlands* (Palgrave Series in
African Borderland Studies, 2013).
[41] Baud and van Schendel, "Toward a Comparative World History of Borderlands," 220.
[42] Barth, "Boundaries and Connections," 27-31; Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 229;
Brooks, *Captives and Cousins*, 17-8, 31.
[43] Lamont and Molnár, "The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences," 181; Baud and van
Schendel, "Toward a Comparative World History of Borderlands," 216; Parker, "Toward and
Understanding of Borderland Processes," 80; Schryver, "Colonialism or Conviviencia?," 133.
[44] Martinez, *Border People*, 305.
[45] This phenomenon is related to Homi Bhabha's concept of a "third space" where the negotiation of
differences creates new individual and communal identities by incorporating and fusing diverse
traditions in unexpected ways. See Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge,

maintenance and transgression (or between exclusive and inclusive identity) is another important characteristic of borderland culture, observable in contexts as diverse as ancient China, the medieval Baltic, and the modern Southwest.[46]

Third, as a result of these interactions, borderland culture often draws upon the traditions of diverse groups in ways that encourage the evolution of new forms of political, economic, and social accommodation. Michiel Baud and Willem van Schendel describe this phenomenon as follows:

> Many borderlands develop a "creole" or "syncretic" border culture. When two or more languages meet, a border lingua franca often comes into existence. Where different religions prevail on both sides of the border, people may visit each other's religious festivals, as well as festivities marking national holidays. Cross-border (and often interethnic) networks of friendship, courtship, and kinship are as much part of the border culture as cross-border economic and political partnerships.[47]

In addition to "creole" and "syncretic," scholars from various disciplines employ terms such "hybrid," "blended," or "mixed" to describe the heterogeneous nature of borderland culture.[48] While each of these have their use, it may be more fruitful to describe borderlands as sites of *transculturation*, where negotiations between different societies encourage processes of adaptation, appropriation,

1994), 55, 218; Barth, "Boundaries and Connections," 30-1; Baud and van Schendel, "Toward a Comparative World History of Borderlands," 216.

[46] Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers*, 244; Alexander Drost, "Historical Borderlands in the Black Sea Area," *Journal of History for hte Public* 7 (2010): 22; Martinez, *Border People*, 56; Rice, "Contexts of Contact and Change," 51.

[47] Baud and van Schendel, "Toward a Comparative World History of Borderlands," 234. See also Cusick, "Creolization and the Borderlands," 48.

[48] Homi Bhabha, for example, uses the term "hybridity" throughout his work. Yet although the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines a hybrid simply as "anything derived from heterogeneous sources, or composed of different or incongruous elements," the word's historical association with ideas of scientific racism means that it should be applied with caution. See AlSayyad, *Hybrid Urbanism*, 5-8; Osborne, "Language Maintenance," 326.

selection, and reinvention that give rise to new cultural forms.[49] An emphasis on

transculturation distinguishes the borderlands paradigm from acculturative frontier

models that tend to assume the dominance of one social group over other weaker ones

as a foregone conclusion. In a borderland, rather, no one cultural or political force

exercises uncontested hegemony. One is likely to encounter discursive economies

that *incorporate but do not necessarily assimilate* the influences of various cultural

traditions and political interests.[50] In such an environment, an individual actor might

manipulate his or her identity by choosing how to dress, what language to speak,

where to live or work, and which segment of the population to identify with.[51]

Fourth, the versatility of borderlands stems from the fact that they are subject

to the periodic effects of political turnover and the constant effects of migration.[52] As

borders shift in response to changing political circumstances, they cross communities

that may not have moved for generations. In addition, they encourage the influx of

new populations because of the unique affordances they provide. Whether those

newcomers are American retirees relocating to southern Arizona, medieval Chinese

peasants sent to farm the lands near the Great Wall, or Roman veterans settled in

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[49] Priscilla Archibald, "Urban Transculturations," *Social Text* 25, no. 4 (2007): 94. This concept is
closely related to the idea of *entanglement*, a process of cultural intertwining that impacts the historical
trajectories of colonizers as well as colonized peoples. See Michael Dietler, *Archaeologies of
Colonialism: Consumption, Entanglement, and Violence in Ancient Mediterranean France* (Berkeley:
UC Press, 2010); Stuart Tyson Smith and Michele R. Buzon. "Colonial Entanglements:
"Egyptianization" in Egypt's Nubian Empire and the Nubian Dynastyi" in *Proceedings of the 12th
International Conference for Nubian Studies, 01.–06., August 2010*, ed. Julie R. Anderson and Derek
Welsby (London: British Museum Press, in press), 1.

[50] Baud and van Schendel, "Toward a Comparative History of Borderlands," 216; Sizgorich,
"Narrative and Community in Islamic Late Antiquity," 16 (italics mine).

[51] Lightfoot and Martinez, "Frontiers and Boundaries in Archaeological Perpsective," 477; Cusick,
"Creolization and the Borderlands," 48.

[52] Cusick, "Creolization and the Borderlands," 48.

towns along the Rhine and Danube Rivers, encounters between them and local

populations create a multicultural environment in which people are exposed to

foreign values and attitudes on a regular basis. These transcultural contacts can, and

often do, lead to xenophobia, distrust, and violence. Yet they can also foster a spirit

of tolerance and even cosmopolitanism, as people are compelled to accommodate

their neighbors to establish stable daily routines of life and work.[53] In this sense,

borderlands prepare for the next move at the same time as they respond to the last

one.[54] Responding to changes on the ground requires their residents to adapt and lay

the foundations of a new status quo.

For these reasons and others, the borderlands paradigm is a versatile tool for

interpreting social interactions between diverse groups in a wide range of

geographical and historical contexts.[55] By calling attention to the entanglement of

physical and mental space, the paradoxical nature of borders themselves, and the

processes of transculturation that give rise to new forms of accommodation and social

organization, this mode of analysis offers a way of compensating for the distortions

inherent in state-centered national histories.[56] Studying borderlands makes it difficult

to interpret the idea that cultures are discrete, object-like phenomena occupying

discrete spaces as anything but a distorting fiction.[57] Rather, it makes it clear that

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[53] Martinez, *Border People*, 19
[54] Zartman, "Border Policy," 245.
[55] Parker and Rodseth, "Introduction," 9; Brooks, *Captives and Cousins*, 38.
[56] Baud, "Toward a Comparative History of Borderlands," 242. As Pekka Hämäläinen and Samuel Truett, both scholars of the American Southwest, eloquently put it: "If frontiers were the places where we once told our master American narratives, then borderlands are the places where those narratives come unraveled." See Hämäläinen and Truett, "On Borderlands," 338.
[57] Gupta and Ferguson, "Beyond 'Culture,'" 7-10.

they are constantly communicating, borrowing, and changing over time. Such an

awareness is particularly relevant for twenty-first century scholars living and working

at a time when, in spite of decades of decolonization and globalization (or perhaps

because it), calls for cultural and ethnic purity have become more strident in several

parts of the world.[58] In such an age, an analytical lens that asks us to reevaluate our

assumptions about how individuals and societies meet the challenge of difference is

not only salient, but also deeply necessary.

Ancient Borderlands

Until very recently, most borderland historians have focused their attention on

the modern world. This is unsurprising since, as noted above, borderlands history

originally developed out a desire to reassess interactions between Europeans and

Native Americans that began with Columbus' arrival in the Americas. Yet the

borderlands paradigm can also do much to expand our understanding of culture

contact situations in the premodern world. Like their latter-day counterparts (and, in

some cases, heirs), ancient borderlands were places where geographical and social

boundaries overlapped, impulses to exclude and include often warred with each other,

and processes of transculturation between diverse peoples both encouraged and

anticipated the development of new forms of political, economic, and cultural

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[58] Gupta and Ferguson, "Beyond 'Culture,'" 10. The current standoff between Ukraine and Russia is
just the latest manifestation of a renewed desire to establish sharp national, ethnic, and linguistic
boundaries as an alternative to transnational pluralism. See Timothy Snyder, "What is Means when
the Wolf Cries Wolf," interview by Robert Siegel, *All Things Considered*, February 21, 2014:
www.npr.org.

accommodation.[59]

For example, the borderlands paradigm can help reorient our understanding of interactions between "Romans" and "barbarians" on the margins of the Roman Empire.[60] At the height of its power in the second century of the Common Era, this empire stretched from Scotland to the Sahara and from the coasts of the Atlantic to the banks of the Euphrates (Figure One). Its borders (*limites*, singular *limes*) varied considerably across this wide terrain, including a heavily militarized front with the Parthian and Sassanid Persian Empires in the East and wide stretches of relatively open land at the edge of the Sahara in the South. The empire's borders were most clearly defined on its northern side, where they encompassed monumental fortifications such as Hadrian's Wall in northern England and topographical features such as the Rhine and Danube Rivers in continental Europe. The Rhine and Danube *limes* in particular have drawn the attention of a host of European and American scholars, serving as the subject of a plethora of articles, monographs, and conference proceedings. Since the publication of Edward Gibbon's seminal *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* in the late eighteenth century, these borders have played a leading

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[59] Scholars of the ancient world are just beginning to realize this fact. For two successful applications of the borderlands paradigm to the late antique Mediterranean East, see Thomas Sizgorich, *Violence and Belief in Late Antiquity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 4-7, 19-22, 37, 54, 274-5; Greg Fisher, *Between Empires: Arabs, Romans, and Sasanians in Late Antiquity* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 24-9, 130.

[60] The Greek word "barbarian" (βάρβαρος, pl. βάρβαροι)) initially referred simply to individuals or communities who spoke non-Greek languages. By the Roman period, the term – and its Latin equivalent (*barbarus,* pl. *barbari*) – had come to be widely applied to foreign peoples deemed to be outside the sphere of Greco-Roman culture by means of various ethnocentric value judgments. By the imperial period, the idea of "the barbarian" as the negative antithesis of the civilized Greco-Roman man had become a trope that was widely applied in art and literature. Although the term is still used widely in Greek and Roman historiography, I avoid it in this paper unless specifically attempting to call attention to its value-laden connotations.

role in narratives that pit Romans against Germans, civilization against savagery, and
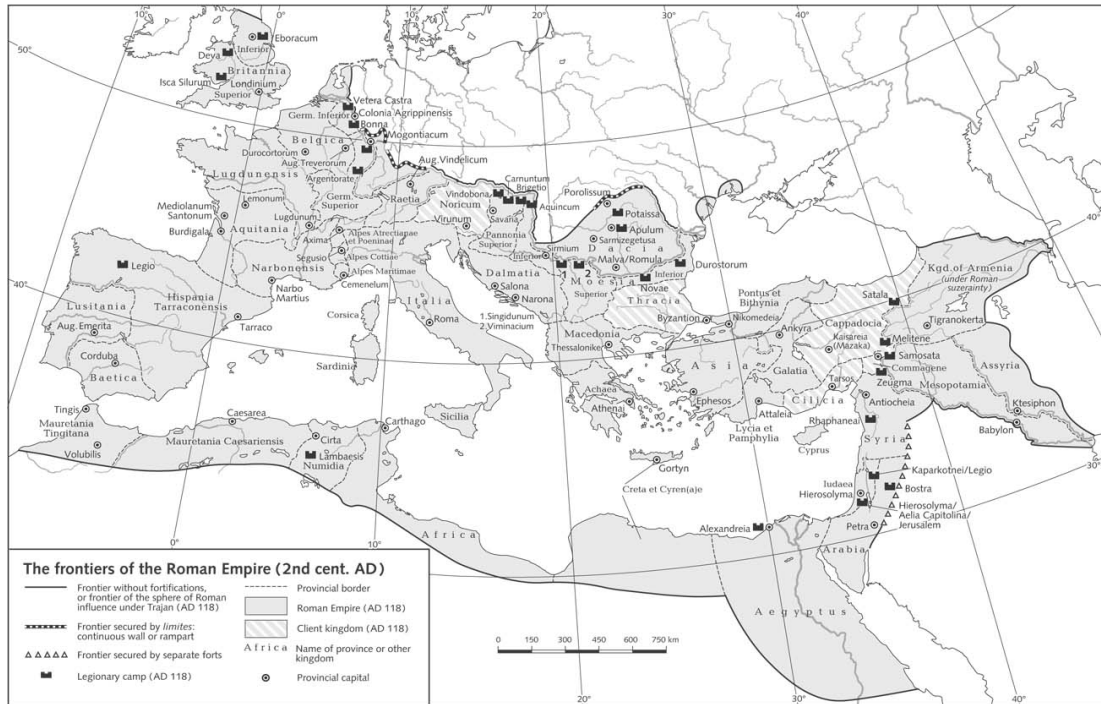
order against chaos.[61]

Figure One: The Roman Empire and its Borders.[62]

Such readings are not entirely off base. Rome first established its military

presence on the Rhine and Danube Rivers in the first century BCE, during and after

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[61] A number of Roman historians have convincingly argued that our understanding of Roman/barbarian interactions is both shaped and distorted by the static conventions of Greco-Roman ethnography, which remained stubbornly unchanging for centuries. Some have attempted to compensate for this source bias. Greg Woolf, for example, uses Richard White's concept of the "middle ground" to demonstrate the dissonance he detects between the claims of later ethnographic writers such as Ammianus Marcellinus (4th century CE), who recycled stereotypes that predated the writings of Polybius (2nd century BCE), and the realities of frontier life in the provinces of the Roman West. He does not manage, however, to completely escape the rhetorical trap, and continues to use the term "barbarian" to collectively refer to the various peoples living beyond Rome's borders, despite the fact that the ancient authors whose work he critiques used a variety of terms (*gens*, *populi*, *nationes*) to describe them. See Greg Woolf, *Tales of the Barbarians*: *Ethnography and Empire in the Roman* West (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011).

[62] Image from "Limes." *Brill's New Pauly.* Brill Online, 2014. Accessed 14 March 2014.

Julius Caesar's conquest of Gaul, and consolidated its hold in the first century CE.[63]

By the second century, the empire's footprint along the rivers was substantial. From

the reign of Trajan (r. 98–117) forward, four legions were stationed in permanent

camps in the imperial provinces east of the Rhine, each comprised of approximately

5,000 soldiers supported by an equal number of auxiliary troops.[64] The infrastructure

built to support these soldiers grew more elaborate over time. By the end of the

second century, in addition to the river itself, the Rhine *limes* consisted of a military

road protected by a palisade, rampart, and ditch and punctuated by a regular series of

stone watchtowers and signal beacons (Figure Two).[65] A similar situation prevailed

on the Danube, which boasted no less than ten legions based in camps linked by a

military highway and a chain of stone forts.[66] In addition to these land defenses,

fleets of ships patrolled both rivers.[67] By the third century, the troops who manned

these defenses (*limitanei*) were a permanent feature of the landscape, having been

granted the right to farm lands allotted to them by the Roman government in addition

to their military duties, which included maintaining order within their districts and

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[63] Caesar, *Gallic War* 4; Suetonius, *Augustus* 21.

[64] Jonathan Roth, "The Size and Organization of the Roman Imperial Legion," *Historia: Zeitschrift fur Alte Geschichte* 43, no. 3 (1994): 361-2; Sara Elise Phang, *The Marriage of Roman Soldiers (13 B.C.-A.D. 235)* (Leiden, Boston, Koln: Brill, 2001), 5.

[65] Tacitus, *Annals* 2.7; *Germania* 29.4; *Agicola* 41.2; Frontinus, *Strategems* 1.3.10; Scriptores Historiae Augustae, *Hadrian* 12; *CIL* 3.3157; 3.3385 3.12483; *Panegyrici Latini* 6(7).11.

[66] Cassius Dio 55.23; Steven Drummond and Lynn Nelson. *The Western Frontiers of Imperial Rome* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, Inc., 1994), 30. Nine of the Danubian legions were stationed on the southern bank of the river: three in Upper Pannonia, one in Lower Pannonia, two in Upper Moesia, and three in Lower Moesia). The tenth legion was stationed in Dacia, originally a kingdom opposed to Rome and later a Roman province from 106 to 274 CE, at which point it was abandoned.

[67] Drummon and Nelson, *Western Frontiers of Imperial Rome*, 32.

monitoring the activities of the Germanic tribes that lived north of the rivers.[68]
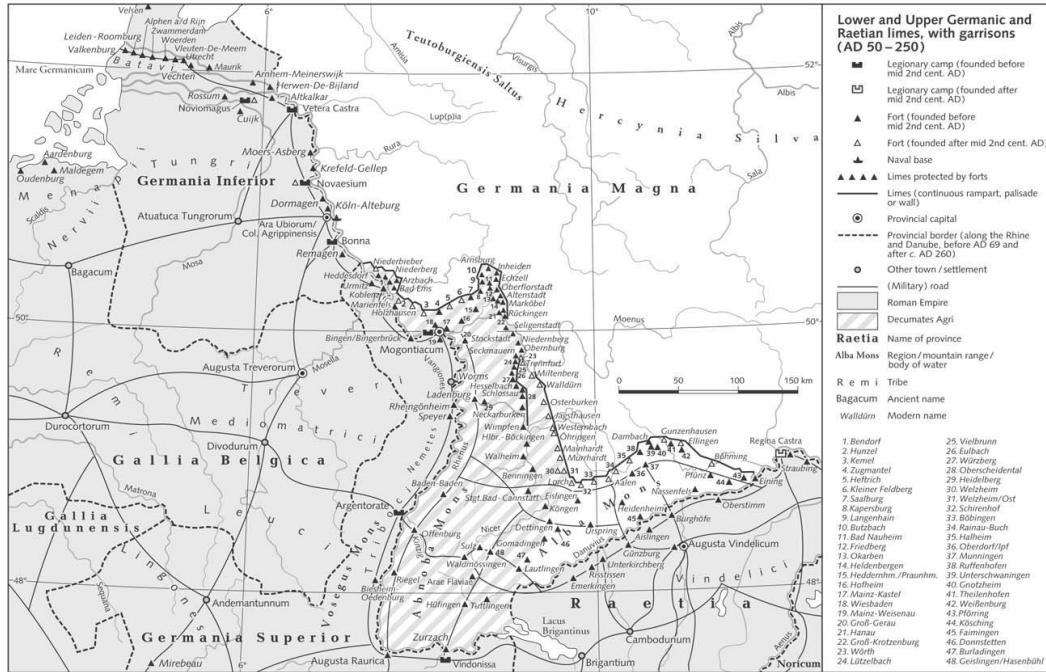

Figure Two: The German *Limes*[69]

Considering the scope of the Romans' investments it is not surprising that a

number of modern historians have studied the military significance of these borders in

great depth.[70] Their works have expanded our knowledge of the Romans' military

tactics, fortification systems, and strategies for responding to raids and invasions. Yet

a fixation on the Rhine and Danube *limes* as bulwarks against the depredations of

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[68] *Codex Theodosianus* 8.1.8; *Notitia* 14.1.4 = *Codex Justianus* 1.60.3. They were also called
ripeneses after *ripa* ("riverbank"). For a discussion of some difficulties with the terms *limes* and
limitanei, see Benjamin Isaac, "The Meaning of the Terms Limes and Limitanei," *The Journal of
Roman Studies* 78 (1988): 146-7.
[69] Image from "Limes." *Brill's New Pauly.* Brill Online, 2014. Accessed 14 March 2014.
[70] For example: Edward Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire* (Baltimore: Johns
Hopkins, 1979); Edward Hanson, ed., *The Army and Frontiers of Rome* (Portsmouth, R.I.: Journal of
Roman Archaeology, 2009).

savage barbarians also reflects the rhetoric of ancient writers, who for centuries

recycled literary tropes that portrayed the Roman Empire as a bastion of civilization

protected by the valor of its soldiers and its natural and manmade borders.[71] This

view comes across clearly in the anonymous fourth-century treatise *de Rebus Bellicis*

("On Military Matters"), written at a time when the *limes* were perceived to be under

increasing threat:

> It must be recognized that wild nations are pressing upon the Roman
> Empire and howling about it everywhere, and that treacherous
> barbarians, from the cover of natural places, are assailing every
> border...

> A proper concern for the borders that surround the empire is to the
> advantage of the state. An unbroken chain of forts, built at intervals of
> one mile, with strong walls and very strong towers, will best guarantee
> their protection...[72]

In addition to locking Roman history into the classic narrative of decline and

fall, uncritically adopting this sort of mentality makes it difficult to consider any

possibility of rapprochement between the Romans and their neighbors. Indeed, the

idea of "an empire besieged" has become so well entrenched that it is standard

procedure for modern historians to follow their ancient counterparts in collectively

referring to the wide range of Germanic peoples that lived north of the Rhine and

Danube Rivers (not to mention the diverse groups that bordered the empire on its

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[71] Aelius Aristides, *To Rome* 80-4; Herodian 2.11.5, 3.14, 4.10.2; Tacitus, *Annals* 1.9, 2.58, 15.17; Appian, Preface 4; Josephus, *Jewish War* 2.371; Strabo 16.1.28; Ammianus Marcellinus 15.10.2; Velleius Paterculus 2.101; Caesar, *Gallic War* 4.16; Pliny, *Natural History* 3.30; Scriptores Historiae Augustae, *Hadrian* 11.2.

[72] *De Rebus Bellicis* 6, 20 (*In primis sciendum est quod imperium Romanum circumlatrantium ubique nationum perstringat insania et omne latus limitum tecta naturalibus locis appetat dolosa barbaries… Est praeterea inter commoda rei publicae utilis limitum cura ambientium ubique latus imperii, quorum tutelae assidua melius castella prospicient, ita ut millenis interiecta passibus stabili muro et firmissimis turribus erigantur…*).

southern and eastern fronts) as "barbarians."[73] This mentality also affects the way the

empire is portrayed visually. Even on maps designed to highlight their regional

differences, Rome's borders are typically pictured as crisp lines separating the empire

from the wider world. On the other hand, lands beyond the *limes* are either left empty

or filled with the names of potentially hostile tribes (Figure One).

Yet appearances can be deceiving. More than just fences built to separate

insiders from outsiders and protect the empire from invasion, the Roman *limes* were

places where social and economic ties developed between trans- and cis-border

populations over the course of centuries. Ironically, Rome's permanent military

presence along the Rhine and Danube and the infrastructure that grew up to support it

actually encouraged a variety of interactions between communities on both sides of

the rivers.[74] The Rhine and Danube functioned not only as boundaries between

Roman and non-Roman territory and but also as lines of communication and supply

that knit the two sides together.[75] The Germanic peoples who come across as alien

and threatening in many of our surviving literary texts did not live in isolation in the

forests of central Europe, but peacefully interacted and even cooperated with Romans

living along the *limes* on a regular basis.[76]

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[73] See note 61 above.
[74] This connective function of the border is, in fact, implicit in the etymology of the word *limes*, which took on connotations of a fortified frontier line in the late empire but originally simply signified a military road built to facilitate access to new territory. Velleius 2.120 ; Frontinus, *Strat.* 1.3.10; Tacitus, *Annals* 1.50, 2.7, Germania 29.4; Isaac, "The Meaning of the Terms *Limes* and *Limitanei*," 126-8.
[75] Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 56.
[76] Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 38; Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 165-7.

For example, the Roman army recruited its soldiers from populations living on both sides of the rivers. While Roman citizens filled the ranks of the legions, a mix of non-citizen provincials and indigenous populations manned the auxiliary units that fought beside them. These auxiliary troops were granted citizenship after twenty-five years of service, and several of their units named after Germanic tribes (such as those of the Canninefates, Frisii, and Batavians) were stationed on the Roman side of the Rhine in the first century.[77] In addition to ordinary fighters, Germanic leaders also enlisted in the Rhine and Danube armies, benefitting from the military experience, wealth, and prestige that could be gained through service to Rome. At times, serving in the Roman army could lead these Germanic recruits onto rather nebulous ground, blurring loyalties and creating trouble for the Romans. One famous example involved the Germanic leader Arminius, a chief of the Cherusci who served in the Roman army for twenty-five years, became a citizen, and achieved equestrian status before returning to his people, turning against his former allies, and destroying three Roman legions in the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest in 9 CE.[78]

Nevertheless, interactions between Roman commanders and native leaders remained common, since such partnerships were necessary to maintain peace in the

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[77] Tacitus, *Annals* 2.17, 4.73; *Histories* 4.15; Suetonius, *Gaius* 45; *ILS* 1992, 1720-1 (*custodes corporis Germanici*); Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 50; A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire (284-602)*, Vol. 1 (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1964), 22. 620; G. R. Watson, *The Roman Soldier* (London: 1969), 15-6, 24-5; G. Webster, *The Roman Imperial Army of the First and Second Centuries A.D.* (Norman, OK, 1998), 141-56. Although it was initially the Romans' policy to send new recruits to serve in provinces far from their homelands to weaken their regional loyalties and strengthen their commitment to Rome, by the third century it had become increasingly common for army units to draw their manpower chiefly from the populations of the districts in which they were stationed.
[78] Tacitus, *Annals* 4.73, 11.8.

border zone.[79] Indeed, Germanic military men could be found on the Roman side of

the Rhine and Danube *limes* for the duration of their existence. The historian

Ammianus Marcellinus described one episode of trans-border communication that

took place in 360, when an Alamannic king named Vadomarius crossed the Rhine,

"fearing nothing in a time of deep peace" to conduct business on the Roman side of

the river. Upon disembarking, Ammianus reported, Vadomarius caught sight of an

officer he recognized, "talked with him briefly as usual…and promised to come to

dinner with him" when time permitted.[80] Moments such as these hint at a degree of

familiarity that belies readings of the rivers as uncrossable lines separating civilized

Romans from savage Germans.[81] In reality, Germanic warriors were assets to the

Roman army in various capacities for centuries, and in increasing numbers as time

went on. Recruits from beyond the rivers became more common in Roman forces

stationed along the *limes* in the fourth century, as the army struggled with manpower

shortages and growing pressure from hostile tribes. By the fifth century, many of the

soldiers serving in the northern armies were as fluent in Germanic languages as they

were in Latin.[82] On the one hand this increased enrollment of Germanic troops in the

Roman army. Yet on the other, it was simply a more dramatic expression of the

permeable border policy that had been established in the first and second centuries.

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[79] It is significant that even after Arminius' betrayal the Romans maintained their alliance with his brother Segestes, who had remained loyal. Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 50; Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, 611.

[80] Ammianus Marcellinus 21.4.3 (*…transgressus Vadomarius flumen, ut nihil in profunda metuens pace nihilque secus gestorum simulans scire, viso praeposito militum ibi degentium, pauca locutus ex more, ultro semet, ut suspicionis nihil relinqueret abiturus, ad convivium eius venire promisit, ad quod erat etiam Philagrius invitatus...*)

[81] Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 38.

[82] Ammianus Marcellinus 18.2.2-7; Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, 612, 622.

In addition to border crossings undertaken for military purposes, commercial exchanges also took place across the rivers on a regular basis. A swarm of private merchants followed and supported the Roman army, trading staples such as pottery, wine, livestock, hides, clothing, and soap as well as higher-end items such as bronze, glass, amber, and gold and silver coinage.[83] In the process, they built economic networks that knit together both sides of the rivers. The historian Tacitus conveyed a sense of the number of non-military personnel that could be found around Roman army camps while describing an incident in 69 CE (a turbulent year on the northern *limes* and across the Roman Empire in which four candidates vied for the purple), in which a leader of the Canaefates named Brinno joined forces with the Frisians to attack Roman forces stationed on the lower Rhine. As he approached the river, Brinno and his allies found the area packed with "camp followers (*lixae*) and traders (*negotiatores*), who were wandering about in every direction," Tacitus noted, "as they would in a time of peace."[84]

The historian went on to add that Brinno's attack was successful because Vitellius, the Roman commander of the Rhine armies, had withdrawn his crack troops from the site and replaced them with "a bunch of idlers from the neighboring villages of the Nervii and the Germans" to whom he had given weapons.[85] This episode is noteworthy for a number of reasons. In the first place, it is interesting that Vitellius appears to have thought little of distributing weapons to Germanic villagers who lived

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[83] Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 77, 81; Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 122-4.
[84] Tacitus, *Histories* 4.15 (*...dein vagos et pacis modo effusos lixas negotiatoresque Romanos invadunt. simul excidiis castellorum imminebant...*).
[85] *Ibid.* (*quippe viribus cohortium abductis Vitellius e proximis Nerviorum Germanorumque pagis segnem numerum armis oneraverat*).

along the *limes*, effectively co-opting them into the province's border defenses. In the second, Tacitus' reference to camp followers and traders is a reminder that the army's presence encouraged the growth of commercial infrastructures in the border zone in addition to military ones. Garrisons of Roman troops provided an economic stimulus to communities on both sides of the borderline and attracted a range of individuals looking to profit by supplying them with supplies, entertainments, and occasional luxuries.

In fact, because of the opportunities they provided, many Roman traders saw the *limes* not as the limits of the empire but as a jumping-off point, usually via the rivers, into central and northern Europe.[86] Textual references and pieces of material culture from the Rhine and Danube vicinities hint at their activities in the border zone. For example, a writing tablet discovered from the German side of the lower Rhine records the purchase of a cow for 115 pieces of silver by a Roman named Gargilius Secundus from a Frisian farmer named Stellus in 29 CE.[87] The tablet also attests that Cesdius, first centurion of the Fifth Legion, and Mutus Admetus, first centurion of the First Legion, stood as witnesses to the purchase, while a veteran named Lilus Duerretus vouched for safe delivery of the cow. Notably, the contract takes the presence of four Romans in Frisian territory for granted, suggesting that it was unremarkable for Roman soldiers to cross the river to do business with individual Germans. Furthermore, the cow's Roman buyer, Gargilius Secundus, must have been

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[86] Drummond and Nelson, *The Western Frontiers of Imperial Rome*, 107; Olwen Brogan, "Trade between the Roman Empire and the Free Germans," *Journal of Roman Studies* 26, no. 2 (1936): 195.
[87] *Fontes Iuris Romani Anteiustiniani* 3.137; Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 69; Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers of Imperial Rome*, 114.

familiar enough with the Frisian community to know where to make a good purchase,

while the veteran in charge of delivering the cow back across the river, Lilus

Duerretus, was confident enough on the German side to vouch for its safe passage.

This familiarity may have stemmed from the fact that these Roman soldiers were

themselves of Frisian extraction, as their names display a Germanic rather than a

Latinate etymology.

Another first-century inscription calls attention to the relationship between

trade and multilingualism in the border zone. Discovered at Boldog near the

legionary base at Carnuntum (on the Danube in modern Slovakia), it records the

activities of an individual named Quintus Atilius Primus, who described himself as a

"merchant, interpreter, and centurion of the Fifteenth Legion."[88]   Since soldiers were

not permitted to conduct private business ventures while enlisted in the army, Primus

was most likely a retired centurion who spent his later years working as a trader in the

border zone.[89] As a former interpreter for the army, he would have been familiar with

the customs and courtesies of a number of Germanic tribes: experience would have

helped him build business relationships with those same tribes as a private citizen.[90]

Since language choice is often bound up with the persona an individual seeks to

project on a particular occasion, men like Primus would have used their linguistic

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[88] *L'Année épigraphique* 1978, 685 (*...inter[p]rex leg[ionis] XV idem [centurio] negotiator...*)

[89] Daniel Peretz, "The Roman Interpreter and His Diplomatic and Military Roles," *Historia: Zeitschrift fur Alte Geschichte* 55, no. 4 (2006): 460-1; T. Kolník, "Q. Atilius Primus - Interprex Centurio Und Negotiator," *AArch-Hung* 30 (1978), 66; Whittaker, *Rome and its Frontiers* 92.

[90] Though fragmentary, a second interpretation from the same site mentions a Sarmatian interpreter serving on the staff of a provincial governor. Such individuals, who were often new Roman citizens of foreign origins, acted simultaneously as messengers, mediators, and diplomatic envoys throughout the border zone. See *CIL* III 14349(5) (*…interprex S(armatorum) e[x o]fffici[o] co(n)sularis*)....); Peretz, "The Roman Interpreter," 451-2.

abilities to serve as intermediaries between Romans and their Germanic neighbors, moving between social worlds as they crossed the rivers.[91] This ability to communicate across linguistic and cultural boundaries would have been highly valued on the Rhine and Danube *limes*, as it has been in border regions in many other geographic and historical contexts, because without it military alliances, business deals, or any other significant relationships between Romans and Germans would not have been possible.

To establish these connections, interpreters, merchants, and travelers in the border zone may have spoken a form of pidgin, as individuals from different language backgrounds and levels of skill borrowed words from each other to communicate and do business.[92] Such pidgins and "creole" languages are rarely attested for the Roman world. Yet based on the nature of the evidence and our knowledge of these language forms in more recent contexts, we should not in fact expect to find direct evidence of them.[93] Border argot would not have been used to write inscriptions or recorded the works of elite authors like Tacitus. Nevertheless, there are some hints that the blurring of linguistic boundaries was an inevitable part of life on the *limes*. The poet Ovid, for instance, lamented that one of the worst consequences of his exile to the distant outpost of Tomis on the Black Sea (modern Constanța in Bulgaria) in 8 CE was that foreign words were creeping into his pure Latin. In a letter to a friend back

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[91] J. N. Adams and Simon Swain, "Introduction," in *Bilingualism in Ancient Society*, ed. J. N. Adams, Mark Janse, and Simon Swain (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 2.
[92] Adams and Swain, "Introduction," 16.
[93] Alex Mullen, "Introduction: Multiple Languages, Multiple Identities," in *Multilingualism in the Graeco-Roman Worlds*, ed. Alex and Patrick James Mullen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 30-1.

at Rome, he admitted: "Often, when I try to speak – I am ashamed to say it – words fail me, and I have forgotten how to speak Latin. I am surrounded by the sounds of Thracian and Scythian, and seem to be able to write in Getic measures. I am afraid, believe me, that Pontic words have been mixed with Latin and that you are now reading them in my writings!"[94] Even allowing for rhetorical exaggeration, it is interesting to note that the poet portrayed himself as unable to resist the imposition of Thracian, Scythian, and Getic words into his thoughts, speech, and writing, in spite of an ardent desire to do so. If even an unwilling, unabashedly ethnocentric exile such as Ovid developed a degree of familiarity with foreign speech by living in the border zone, it is that much more likely that interpreters, merchants, slave dealers and others who sought out contact with non-Roman peoples would have actively worked to develop ways to communicate with them.[95]

There was, after all, money to be made on the *limes*. The interpreter-turned-merchant Quintus Atilius Primus may have been involved in the amber trade, a profitable business for Romans and Germans on the upper Danube. Beginning in the vicinity of the Baltic Sea, the amber route wound its way south through central Europe before passing through the Roman province of Pannonia and ending in the northern Italian city of Aquilea. Pliny the Elder recorded an expedition funded by a Roman businessman named Julianus that traveled along this route during the reign of

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[94] Ovid, *Tristia* 3.14.46-9 (*Dicere saepe conanti - turpe fateri - verba mihi desunt, dedici loqui. Threicio Scythicoque fere circumsonor ore, et videor Geticis scribere posse modis. Crede mihi, timeo ne sint immixta Latinis inque meis scriptis Pontica verba legas.*). See also Ovid, *Tristia* 5.2.67-7, 5.7.51-2; Frédérique Biville, "The Graeco-Romans and Graeco-Latin: A Terminological Framework for Cases of Bilingualism," in *Bilingualism in Ancient Society*, ed. J. N. Adams, Mark Janse, and Simon Swain (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 99-100.

[95] Mullen, "Multiple Languages, Multiple Identities," 30-1.

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Nero (r. 54–68 CE), reaching the Baltic coast and returning with a large supply of amber.[96] While Pliny doesn't comment on the expedition leader's linguistic abilities, we can safely assume that he enlisted the services of individuals like Primus to support his expedition. Just as no German could gain acceptance into the auxiliary forces without a rudimentary knowledge of Latin and Roman social mores, no Roman trader could succeed north of the rivers without becoming familiar with the languages and customs of the Germanic tribes with which he wished to deal, or enlisting the services of someone who was. Commerce was not possible without at least some level of cultural détente.

German traders were also at work on both sides of the rivers, although the Romans imposed restrictions on which tribes were permitted to do business within the empire at certain times.[97] Tacitus described the special case of the Hermunduri, a group that gained permission "to trade not only on the banks of the river, but also far inland and in the most distinguished colony of the province of Raetia," at the end of the first century. The historian went on to note the Hermunduri's high level of access to Roman territory: "they cross everywhere at their own discretion and without a guard, and while to other tribes we show only our arms and camps, to them we have

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[96] Pliny, *Natural History* 37.45; Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers of Imperial Rome*, 101; Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 83-4; Brogan, "Trade between the Roman Empire and the Free Germans," 200. The journey was over 600 miles, and the largest piece of amber the expedition brought back weighed over 13 lbs.

[97] Several treaties mandate the parameters of trade across the Danube, such as several made with the Marcomanni, Quadi, Iazyges, and Goths between the second and the fourth centuries. See Cassius Dio 71.15-9; *ILS* 395, 775; Themistius, Oration 10.135; Ammianus Marcellinus 32.5-7; Brogan, "Trade between the Roman Empire and the Free Germans," 202.

thrown open our houses and villas."[98] Around a century later, Cassius Dio reported

that the Marcomanni, Quadi, and Iazyges living on the great Hungarian plain were

granted permission to trade in Roman markets on the Danube in 175 CE.[99] The

picture we gain from anecdotes such as these is one of controlled access, not absolute

restriction. As Owen Lattimore argued for the Chinese context, the watchtowers and

walls on Rome's northern *limes* were not built to block commercial exchanges across

the Rhine and Danube Rivers, but to control them and maximize their profitability.[100]

An inscription from Pannonia (in the vicinity of Esztergom in modern Hungary),

underscores this fact nicely. Originally part of a fort (*burgus*), it states that the

building to which it was attached "was named 'Trading Post' (*commercium*) *because

it was constructed for that purpose*."[101] In times of peace, Roman fortresses such as

this would have stimulated trade on the *limes* rather than stymied it.

Visitors to trading posts such as the one at Esztergom would have primarily

traded commodities required for the maintenance of the garrison, such as grain,

livestock, furs, and timber. They likely also sold human beings, since the slave trade

was another form of commercial exchange that brought people from across the rivers

into Roman territory. Although the Dacian Wars (101–102, 105–106 CE) were the

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[98] Tacitus, *Germania* 41 (*Hermundurorum civitas, fida Romanis; eoque solis Germanorum non in ripa commercium, sed penitus atque in splendidissima Raetiae provinciae colonia. passim sine custode transeunt; et cum ceteris gentibus arma modo castraque nostra ostendamus, his domos villasque patefecimus non concupiscentibus…*).
[99] Cassius Dio 71.15-9.
[100] Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers*, 244; Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 121; Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers of Imperial Rome*, 31, 105; Brogan, "Trade between the Roman Empire and the Free Germans," 196.
[101] *CIL* 3.3653 (*…burgus cui nomen commercium qua causa et factus est…*) (italics mine); Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 121; Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 87.

last major conflict to bring slaves across the northern borders *en masse*, the region

was always important to the slave trade because even the most unsophisticated

Germanic tribes could turn a profit by selling prisoners of war across the Rhine and

Danube.[102] Tacitus reported an incident in the early second century in which a group

of shipwrecked auxiliaries from the Roman army in Britain washed up on the coast of

the North Sea, were captured by the Suevi and the Frisians, and eventually found their

way back to Roman territory by being sold as slaves across the Rhine River.[103] Even

in the late fourth century, the Roman statesman Symmachus could still write his agent

in Illyricum with instructions to buy twenty slaves, knowing they could be easily

found along the *limes* for reasonable prices.[104] As Symmachus' letter indicates, many

slaves acquired cheaply near the border ended up working in the empire's inner

provinces, where their value was greater.[105] Yet some would have remained in the

border zone, especially women who could work as domestic servants or

concubines.[106]

Indeed, women of varied backgrounds and legal statuses could always be

found around Roman military bases, as they have been around military bases

throughout history. In addition to slaves, manumitted and freeborn women would

have found work as washerwomen, seamstresses, cooks, nurses, and confidants for

the wives of Roman officers who were cut off from their extended families and

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[102] Tacitus, *Annals* 2.24, 12.27, 13.56; *Germania* 24; Cassius Dio 6.22.4, 71.13; Brogan, "Trade between the Roman Empire and the Free Germans," 219; Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers of Imperial Rome*, 11-2.
[103] Tacitus, *Agricola* 28.
[104] Symmachus, *Epistle* 2.78.
[105] Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers of Imperial Rome*, 118-9.
[106] Phang, *Marriage of Roman Soldiers*, 4, 231-240.

friends back home.[107] Relationships between military men and local women, some of them purely sexual in nature, are known in all periods of Roman history.[108] In one famous episode repeated by a number of ancient authors, the general Scipio Aemilianus was said to have expelled two thousand prostitutes from the environs of his army's camp at Numantia in 134 BCE.[109] The Canninefatean chieftain Brinno's encounter with the crowds of camp followers (*lixae*) surrounding the army of Vitellius in 69 CE has already been mentioned above; to it Tacitus added an episode from the following year in which a Roman garrison on the lower Rhine was caught unawares during an attack because the soldiers were afraid to disturb their commander while he was bedded down in his tent with an Ubian woman.[110] This last detail is noteworthy, as it indicates that even commanding officers sometimes fraternized with local women, not all of them from the Roman side of the border.

Rank and file soldiers were not permitted to marry until 197 CE, and the evidence for long-term relationships between Roman soldiers and local women in the first century is scanty.[111] Yet such relationships surely existed, and as the Roman presence along the Rhine and Danube became more firmly established, deeper attachments between military men and local women became increasingly common.[112] Regardless of regulations, informal "marriages" wove networks of interrelationships

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[107] Herodian 3.8.5; Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers of Imperial Rome*, 129.
[108] Phang, *Marriage of Roman Soldiers*, 229-231.
[109] Livy, *Periochae* 57 (...*duo milia scortorum a castris eiecit...*); Appian, *Iber.* 85; Valerius Maximus 2.7.1; Plutarch, *Moralia* 201b; Tacitus, *Histories* 4.15; Phang, *Marriage of Roman Soldiers*, 245-7.
[110] Tacitus, *Histories* 2.87, 3.33, 3.40, 5.22.
[111] Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 129; Campbell, "Marriage of Soldiers under the Empire," 153-166; Garnsey, "Septimius Severus and the Marriage of Roman Soldiers," 45.
[112] Phang, *Marriage of Roman Soldiers*, 321-2.

between Roman soldiers and local populations, especially when they resulted in children.[113] Soldiers' wives would have played an important role in making the hard life of a border posting more endurable for their husbands. Furthermore, their relationships with the men of the garrisons, regardless of their legitimacy, meant what when those men fought to defend the *limes* from attack, they were also often fighting to protect their families.[114] In fact, attachments between Roman soldiers and local populations sometimes became so strong that armies mutinied at the news of a transfer to another part of the empire. Such an event took place in Syria in 69 CE, when a mob gathered to protest against the army's relocation to the Rhine because "the provincials were used to the companionship of the soldiers, to whom many of them were connected by friendship or relationship, and the soldiers loved the well-known and familiar camp as a home because of the long duration of their service there."[115] A similar situation took place fourth-century Gaul, when soldiers "who had left their homes beyond the Rhine and come to the army under the promise that they should never be led to regions beyond the Alps," were threatened with a transfer to the eastern front.[116]

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[113] For a discussion of the legal status of these relationships, and of the children of enlisted men, see Phang, *Marriage of Roman Soldiers*, 197-228.

[114] Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers of Imperial Rome*, 130.

[115] Tacitus, *Histories* 2.80 (*...nihil aeque provinciam exercitumque accendit quam quod adseverabat Mucianus statuisse Vitellium ut Germanicas legiones in Syriam ad militiam opulentam quietamque transferret, contra Syriacis legionibus Germanica hiberna caelo ac laboribus dura mutarentur; quippe et provinciales sueto militum contubernio gaudebant, plerique necessitudinibus et propinquitatibus mixti, et militibus vetustate stipendiorum nota et familiaria castra in modum penatium diligebantur.*)

[116] Ammianus Marcellinus 20.4.4 (*...ut illi nullas paterentur molestias, qui relictis laribus transrhenanis, sub hoc venerant pacto, ne ducerentur ad partes umquam transalpinas, verendum esse affirmans, ne voluntarii barbari militares, saepe sub eius modi legibus assueti transire ad nostra, hoc cognito deinceps arcerentur.*)

Since soldiers were only allotted living quarters for themselves, the women and children attached to them lived in the ad-hoc settlements that grew up around the legionary camps and forts that stretched along the *limes* from Belgium to the Black Sea. Called *canabae* ("huts, hovels"), these unplanned communities, which fanned out in various directions from the fortress gates, built without provision for drainage or sewage. As their name indicates, they were not pretty. Nevertheless, they were often the first communities to form in the border zone.[117] In addition to the wives and children of soldiers, the first residents of the *canabae* would have been prostitutes, traders, wine sellers, and other opportunists who followed the legions: the sort of people Tacitus described as "restless nobodies out of Gaul, emboldened by poverty, who occupied the land."[118] To be sure, these unplanned settlements no doubt had their fair share of taverns, gambling dens, and brothels catering to enlisted men.[119] Yet since Roman soldiers were required to purchase much of their own equipment, the *canabae* also attracted clothing merchants, blacksmiths, leather workers, and other skilled artisans. Entrepreneuring individuals imported fine clothes, perfumes, and cosmetics to target the women of the fort. Young men from both sides of the border came to the *canabae* to find work, offer their services as guides or interpreters, sell local products or game, or simply see the sites.

In short, because of the commercial market that the garrisons generated, sustained interactions between Roman soldiers, ordinary civilians, and their Germanic

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[117] Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 81; Drummond and Nelson, 129-133; Peter Salway, *The Frontier People of Roman Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), 10.
[118] Tacitus, *Germania* 29 (Levissimus quisque Gallorum et inopia audax dubiae possessionis solum occupavere…); Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers*, 129.
[119] Phang, *Marriage of Roman Soldiers*, 260.

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neighbors shaped life in the *canabae*.[120] Over time, the most successful of these

rough settlements evolved into proper towns, replacing wooden buildings with stone

ones, establishing public amenities, and adopting administrative frameworks.[121] By

expanding beyond their limited military markets and integrating with local native

economies, the most prosperous of these border settlements developed a vitality that

carried them through the departure of the garrisons that had given them life, and even

through the fall of the empire itself.[122] Several modern cities of the Rhine-Danube

region, such as Mainz (Mogontiacum), Strasbourg (Argentoratum), Bonn (Bonna),

Vienna (Vindobona), Belgrade (Singidunum), and Budapest (Aquincum), began their

lives in this way, as clusters of huts outside the gates of Roman forts.[123]

    In addition to the *canabae* that sprouted up on their own, the Roman

government also established purely civilian settlements called *vici* ("villages") near,

though not adjacent to, military outposts on the *limes*. These small villages were

often located on roads built by Roman soldiers, where they functioned as collection

points for the produce of the surrounding countryside and manufacturing centers for

military tools and equipment.[124] *Vici* were planned communities, either built from

scratch or constructed on the sites of pre-conquest native settlements. Their

demographics were comparable to those of the *canabae*, with some residents

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[120] Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers*, 130-1.
[121] Phang, *Marriage of Roman Soldiers*, 382.
[122] Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers*, 135, 141, 147.
[123] For the use of the word *canabae* to describe these several of these sites in inscriptions, see *CIL* 13.6730 (Mainz), *CIL* 13.5967 (Strasbourg), *ILS* 9450 (Bonn), *CIL* 3.10548 (Budapest).
[124] Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers*, 132-3; Salway, *Frontier People*, 11, 24-7. The army's help in their construction reflected Roman commanders' desire to improve transportation and communication to better defend against attacks. Building these villages (and the roads that permitted access to them) was also a to keep the men busy in peacetime.

migrating from the empire's interior, drawn by the promise of the nearby military

market, and others drawn from the local population. Thus, while the origins of *vici*

and *canabae* differed, both settlement types came to include people of Roman,

Germanic, and mixed heritage. Both types of border town acted as focal points for

the integration of an intrusive Roman population and the local inhabitants of the

Rhine and Danube regions.[125]

The final form of urban community found along the northern borders was the

colonia ("colony"). Built with considerable investment from the Roman government,

these were planned cities, founded to serve as homes for veterans, who were granted a

piece of property inside the town and a plot of land in the surrounding countryside

upon retirement from the army in addition to other privileges.[126] *Coloniae* contained

many of the amenities found in the older and more established cities of the empire's

interior, such as theaters, baths, forums, and basilicas. In addition to accommodating

veterans, the purpose of these cities, each a "mini Rome" in design if not in reality,

was to expand Roman influence over recently annexed lands in the border zone. As

with the *canabae*, many went on to become important cities that have survived to the

present day, such as York (Eboracum), Trier (Colonia Augusta Treverorum), and

Cologne (Colonia Agrippinensium).

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[125] Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers*, 133; Salway, *Frontier People*, 12-3.

[126] These land assignments tapered off over the course of the first century and are attested for the last time under Hadrian (r. 117-138), after which point discharged veterans received cash payments in addition to military diplomas that served as proof of citizenship and granted privileges such as exemption from certain taxes and services. See *Digest* 3.2.2.2, 49.16.13.3; *Codex Theodosianus* 7.20.2, 7.20.3, 7.20.2.4, 7.20.8.

Nevertheless, it was the *canabae* and *vici* that were the most characteristic forms of urban organization on the Rhine and Danube *limes*. *Coloniae*, like the legionary camps themselves, were the products of a top-down government policy intended to pacify and control the border region. *Canabae* and *vici*, on the other hand, were built from the bottom up. Rather than artificial models of Roman life established by the government to impress and control populations living near the northern borders, they were focal points of interaction that represented an empirical response to the realities of frontier life.[127] In these border towns, people from both sides of the rivers exchanged news, services, and goods. Slave dealers, too, set up shop where they could easily replenish their stock and had access to a range of buyers.[128] Roman soldiers spent time with local women and sometimes had children with them. Veterans settled there after leaving the army, preferring to reside close to the forts and units in which they had served in the places where their social bonds were strongest.[129]

The ties that bound these communities together are difficult to trace, but glimpses of them can be seen through inscriptions. Two second-century examples from Aquincum (Budapest), for instance, mention the "veterans, Roman citizens, and

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[127] Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers*, 134, 140-1.
[128] Tacitus, *Agricola* 28, 39; Ammianus Marcellinus 22.7.8; *CIL* 3.11301; Whittaker, *Rome and its Frontiers*, 138; Brogan, "Trade between the Roman Empire and the Free Germans," 219. As Brogan notes, it is significant that the old German word for "merchant" (*mangon*) derives from the Latin world for "slave trader" (*mango*).
[129] Tacitus, *Histories* 2.80; Salway, *Frontier People*, 29. Veterans were not required to settle in *coloniae* (or any particular place) and many chose to live where their social ties were strongest. This was especially the case after the foundation of new *coloniae* ceased in the second century.

those residing together in the *canabae*" around the legionary base.[130] A third

inscription from the same site – a tombstone recording the life of a Roman citizen

who listed the *canabis* as his place of birth as well as the site of his death –

demonstrates that, to some residents at least, these rough-and-tumble towns were the

only homes they ever knew.[131] Further down the river, a number of second-century

inscriptions from Moesia Inferior (modern Dobrudja, near the shore of the Black Sea)

illustrate this phenomenon by attesting that Roman veterans, non-military civilians,

and members of the Thracian tribe of the Bessi resided together along this part of the

Danube *limes*.[132] The social world of border communities such as these was neither

wholly Roman nor wholly native, but an amalgamation of both and adapted to the

peculiar circumstances of the frontier.[133] In addition to the catalyzing presence of the

Roman army, the complex web of business and personal relations that gave these

communities life stimulated contacts between diverse groups from both sides of the

rivers. We might even consider the possibility that the Rhine and Danube linked

together the various peoples who lived along their banks into a single far-flung

community, similar to the way the Mississippi-Missouri river system, as depicted by

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[130] *CIL* 3.3505 (*…vet(erani) et (cives) Romani consistentes…*); *ILS* 2475 (*…c.R. et consisstentibus in cannabis Aelis leg. XI Cl...*); Salway, *Frontier People*, 12.

[131] *CIL* 3.10548; Salway, *Frontier People*, 12.

[132] *ILS* 7180 (*…c(ives) R(omani) et Bessi consistentes vico…*); *L'Année épigraphique* 1924, 142-6 (*...veterani et c.R. et Bessi consistentes…*); Salway, *Frontier People*. 12. It is also possible to interpret these inscriptions as attesting that the residents of the district were both Roman citizens *and* members of the tribe of the Bessi.

[133] Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers*, 218-9.

Mark Twain in *Huckleberry Finn*, united the different peoples who lived along its shores.[134]

Such a view stands in opposition to models that analyze culture contact on the borders of the Roman Empire exclusively through the lens of "Romanization," a process by which newly-incorporated peripheral peoples are thought to have assimilated into Roman society through use of the Latin language, compliance with Roman law, and the adoption of customs such as public bathing, attending gladiatorial games, and participating in the imperial cult. The term evokes traditional readings of frontier inactions as acculturative processes in which a dominant culture assimilates one or more weaker or less sophisticated ones; it is, in short, the classic "civilizing the barbarians" model. Furthermore, as noted above, the concept of Romanization reflects ideas about the superiority of Greco-Roman culture transmitted through the writings of ancient authors. In the eyes of elites like Tacitus or Cassius Dio, it was inevitable that the barbarians would adapt to mimic the ways of their more sophisticated neighbors because any other possibility was unthinkable. The supremacy of classical civilization was simply taken for granted. Cassius Dio, writing from his experience as a governor on the Danube in the early third century, described this process as follows:

> The barbarians were adapting themselves to the Roman world. They were setting up markets and peaceful meetings, although they had not forgotten their ancestral habits, their tribal customs, their independent life, and the freedom that came with weapons. However, as long as they learned these different habits gradually and under some sort of

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[134] Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers*, 32, 70; Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 130

supervision, they did not find it difficult to change their life, and they were becoming different without realizing it.[135]

There is no question that the consolidation of the empire's northern borders caused dramatic changes to the lives of indigenous populations, altering the physical lay of their lands and transforming the economic, social, and political structures of their communities. Often those changes were painful, leading to the loss of ancestral traditions.[136] Yet the situation on the ground was more complex than traditional acculturation models suggest. The Germanic tribes living along the *limes* certainly adopted aspects of Roman culture, but it is a mistake to say that their own traditions were simply washed out and forgotten as a result. For instance, while Tacitus may have attested that the Germans living nearest to the Rhine River had learned to drink wine like Romans and used gold and silver rather than relying on barter like the more primitive tribes further north, he also admitted that they rejected other Roman customs.[137] For that matter, Dio himself stated that the tribes he observed across the Danube in the third century, while somewhat acclimated to Roman ways, still remembered their ancestral habits and customs.

He also failed to note that the Romans, too, "were becoming different without realizing it." Indeed, it is possible to speak of the "Germanization," rather than the

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[135] Cassius Dio 56.18.2 (διὸ οὐδὲ ἐς ἱστορίας μνήμην ἀφίκετο· καὶ στρατιῶταί τε αὐτῶν ἐκεῖ ἐχείμαζον καὶ πόλεις συνῳκίζοντο, ἔς τε τὸν κόσμον σφῶν οἱ βάρβαροι μετερρυθμίζοντο καὶ ἀγορὰς ἐνόμιζον συνόδους τε εἰρηνικὰς ἐποιοῦντο. οὐ μέντοι καὶ τῶν πατρίων ἠθῶν τῶν τε συμφύτων τρόπων καὶ τῆς αὐτονόμου διαίτης τῆς τε ἐκ τῶν ὅπλων ἐξουσίας ἐκλελησμένοι); Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 131.

[136] Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers*, 216-7.

[137] Tacitus, *Germania* 23, 5 (*quamquam proximi ob usum commerciorum aurum et argentum in pretio habent formasque quasdam nostrae pecuniae agnoscunt atque eligunt: interiores simplicius et antiquius permutatione mercium utuntur.*)

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Romanization, of the Rhine and Danube *limes* over the five centuries of their existence. Although harder to detect due to the nature of the source record, this process began with the border's very inception. As early as the first century CE, Tacitus reported that a community of Roman traders living among the Marcomanni in the region of Bohemia in the first century "went native" after spending a number of years with the tribe. Rediscovered by Roman forces making an incursion into the area during a border conflict, these Romans had been "attracted to an enemy's land, each from their various homes, first by the freedom of commerce, next by the desire of amassing wealth, finally by forgetfulness of their fatherland."[138] While we cannot say for sure whether these merchants had truly forgotten everything about their homes and the customs of the Roman world, it is clear that they recognized the commercial and social advantages of adopting Germanic customs. In fact, immersing themselves in Germanic culture evidently proved so advantageous that these Roman merchants were willing to throw in their lot with the Marcomanni, a tribe that went to war against the Romans on several occasions.

Excavations in the Upper Rhine indicate that merchant colonies such as this one were quite active. Distribution patterns of Roman wares (mostly discovered as grave goods) serve as a reminder that there was a high level of commerce between Romans and Germans across the border, and that this regional economy was

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[138] Tacitus, *Annals* 2.62 (*Veteres illic Sueborum praedae et nostris e provinciis lixae ac negotiatores reperti quos ius commercii, dein cupido augendi pecuniam, postremo oblivio patriae suis quemque ab sedibus hostilem in agrum transtulerat.*)

connected to trade routes that extended further inland.[139] Roman goods have also

been discovered as far north as the base of Jutland and the Danish inlands.[140] Some

artisans working in the Roman provinces that bordered the Rhine River even appear

to have adopted Germanic styles, either under the general influence of the northern

trade or specifically to appeal to buyers north of the Rhine. Excavations at the

military camp at Vindonissa (near Basel in modern Switzerland) indicate that the

traditional "Samian ware" oil lamps of Italian manufacture that were widely used in

the border zone were phased out over the course of the first century, to be replaced by

locally made lamps produced at several sites in Gaul and along the *limes* that were

based on Gallic and German patterns.[141] In addition to oil lamps, several examples of

late first century Roman glassware that mimicked the shape of Germanic drinking

horns have been found in archaeological sites in the Rhineland. The product

evidently proved popular, as finds from the empire's interior provinces indicate that it

was being exported to domestic markets by the third century.[142]

Of course, we must be careful not to read too much into the material record.

Just as it would be a mistake to argue that Roman artifacts turned Germans living

across the rivers into Romans, so too must we avoid saying that the appearance of

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[139] Brogan, "Trade between the Roman Empire and the Free Germans," 200-1.
[140] Drumond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers*, 103; Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 90; L.
Hedeager, "A Quantitative Analysis of Roman Imports in Europe North of the Limes (0-400 AD)," ed.
K. Kristiansen and C. Paludan-Muller (Copenhagen, 1978), 191-216; M. G. Fulford, "Roman Material
in Barbarian Society, c. 200 BD-AD 400," in *Settlement and Society*, ed. T. C. Champion and J. V. S.
Megaw (Leicester, 1985), 91-108.
[141] Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers*, 160; William V. Harris, "Roman Terracotta Lamps:
The Organization of an Industry," *Journal of Roman Studies* 70 (1980): 140-1; R. J. Forbes, *Studies in
Ancient Technology*, Vol. 6 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1966), 159-161.
[142] Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers*, 112, 161; Brogan, "Trade Between the Roman Empire
and the Free Germans," 217-8.

Germanic motifs in Roman goods produced in the border zone meant that Roman

provincials were ready to throw off their togas and trek into the primeval forests.

Rather, these pieces of evidence are signs of the processes of transculturation that

made the culture of Rome's northern borderlands unique. They show that the

empire's borders were permeable, and that the cultural contacts that went hand in

hand with trade on the *limes* had an impact on the choices, behaviors, and identities of

the people who lived there.[143] It is even possible to detect hints of the influence that

Germanic heritage had on some communities on the Roman side of the rivers in the

textual record in spite of the biases of our elite Roman authors. Tacitus, for instance,

noted in passing that people living in Augusta Treverorum (Trier) and Bagacum

(Bavay, in northern France) in the late first century had a habit of boasting publicly

about their descent from Germanic tribesmen. They did this, the historian tells us, to

make themselves seem tougher than other residents of the province, whose Gallic

blood they considered a mark of effeminacy.[144] Such a remark strongly suggests that,

at least in some communities of the northern *limes*, social worlds emerged that were

neither completely Roman nor entirely Germanic but rather amalgamated both

traditions in ways that reflected the unique circumstances of the border zone.[145]

Without a doubt, many Romans heaped scorn on "the barbarians" and viewed them

with fear and distrust. Yet others found aspects of Germanic culture to admire and

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[143] Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 125.

[144] Tacitus, *Germania* 28 (*Treveri et Nervii circa adfectationem Germanicae originis ultro ambitiosi sunt, tamquam per hanc gloriam sanguinis a similitudine et inertia Gallorum separentur.*); Drummond and Nelson (*Western Frontiers*, 134) draw a comparison with residents of the American frontier who claimed to have "Indian blood."

[145] Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers*, 218-9.

even imitate. Though the ancient authors on whom we rely were loath to admit it, it is undeniable that Germanic peoples contributed to the demographic and cultural diversity of Rome's northern borderlands.

This contribution was possible because neither the Romans nor the Germans exercised uncontested hegemony over the Rhine and Danube *limes*. At first blush, such a statement seems counterintuitive. In the first and second centuries in particular, the Roman military was in a dominant position on the rivers (and at times beyond them, in the case of Dacia). Bolstered by abundant manpower and an impressive string of fortifications, the Roman military position was indeed dominant. Yet it was never unassailable. In addition to suffering period losses in battle, the Roman authorities did not have the ability to dictate the loyalties and choices of people living in the border zone, especially when they had personal ties to Germanic communities across the rivers. As noted above, there are several examples from the early empire of Germanic military men who served in the Roman army, learned Latin, and acquired citizenship before returning to their homes and deciding to wreak havoc on their former allies. In addition to Arminius, the architect of the Roman disaster in the Teutoburg Forest, there is the prominent example Caius Julius Civilis, a Batavian of royal blood who had a successful career in the Roman army before leaving to lead his people in a revolt against the empire in 69 CE.[146]

The reality is that, even in the first centuries of the Common Era, Romans and Germans were always engaged in tug-of-war across the empire's northern borders. In

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[146] Tacitus, *Histories* 2.22, 4.33, 4.63, 4.70, 5.20-1; Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 49.

addition to recruiting Germanic warriors into the auxiliary forces, Roman

commanders were also periodically compelled to settle large numbers of Germans

within Roman territory to keep dangerous tribes divided and limit their potential to

stage future attacks. According to Strabo, 50,000 Getae from across the Danube were

settled in Thrace as early as 4 CE; a century and a half later, in the aftermath of the

Marcomannic Wars (166–180 CE), large groups of Sarmatians were settled in Dacia,

Pannonia, Moaesia, and Germany.[147] This trend accelerated in the fourth century, as

population pressure on the Danube defenses in particular compelled the Romans to

permit semi-autonomous tribal contingents (*foederati*) to settle south of the rivers.

The admission of these "allies," who served under their own leaders rather than

Roman commanders and at times had only tenuous allegiance to Rome, considerably

accelerated the Germanization of the northern *limes*, so much so that by the fifth

century there was little difference between Germanic federates and the regular field

units of the Roman army.[148]

In this context, the distinction between Roman and Germans became

increasingly blurry.[149] Figures such as Charietto, a German who crossed the Rhine to

live in the vicinity of Trier in 350, illustrate the ease with which individuals of

Germanic heritage from across the border could pass from "outsider" to "insider"

status in the later empire. Charietto was originally an equal-opportunity bandit who

robbed Roman settlements in Gaul and maximized his profits by killing other

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[147] Strabo 7.3.10, 13, 17; Casius Dio 72.11.4-5, 12.1, 16.2, 21; Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 109.
[148] Jones, *Later Roman Empire*, 612.
[149] Whittaker, *Rome and its Frontiers*, 13.

Germanic raiders who were entering the province during a period of crisis for the Roman military. Recognizing his talent for killing, the future emperor Julian enlisted him and his band of followers into an auxiliary unit of Salian Franks he had organized to help restore order in the province. Successful in this task, Charietto went on to hold a high command as a Roman general on the Rhine.[150] Other military men of Germanic heritage would follow him, most notably the half-Roman, half-Vandal general Flavius Stilicho, who for a time was the most influential man in the Roman Empire before falling prey to a court conspiracy that formed against him 408 CE.

In this sense, the political, social, and cultural innovations that shaped the culture of the northern borderlands anticipated changes in Roman society writ large. While the Romans initially occupied a dominant position on the northern *limes*, they were never able to completely shut out Germanic influence. Indeed, there is no reason to believe that they wished to do so. Though guarded by an imposing series of fortifications, the empire's borders were always permeable. Travel across them in both directions for diplomatic, commercial, or personal reasons was not uncommon.[151] Within the towns and settlements of the border region, local societies emerged that were neither wholly Roman nor entirely native. Germanic peoples acquired a taste for Roman goods, a familiarity with Roman customs, and the ability to communicate in Latin. For their part, at least some Roman citizens claimed German heritage, produced goods inspired by Germanic designs, and acquainted

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[150] Zosimus 3.7; Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 193.
[151] Elton, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire*, 109.

themselves with the languages of their northern neighbors to forge alliances and make business deals.

After the balance of power on the *limes* shifted in favor of the Germans in the fourth century, the mixed culture of the northern borderlands began to spread beyond them to the empire's inner provinces. The Roman short sword (*gladius*), which had previously influenced the form of German weapons, was increasingly eclipsed by the Germanic long sword.[152] German-style trousers, a type of clothing suitable to colder northern climates that had long been considered a marker of "barbarian" identity, became popular enough for the emperor Honorius (r. 395–423) to issue a law banning them within the city of Rome.[153] After the collapse of the *limes* in the late fourth century, functional bilingualism among speakers of Latin and Greek and Germanic languages such as Frankish or Gothic spread beyond the border zone, eventually becoming the new status quo after the evaporation of Roman authority in Western Europe at the end of the fifth.[154] In the end, of course, this exposure to Germanic languages would hasten Latin's evolution into the Romance languages.[155] Most significantly, as Germans and Romans came to live side-by-side in the Germanic kingdoms that were the heirs to the Western Roman Empire, they eventually mingled to the extent that the distinctions between them ceased to have any significant

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[152] Brogan, "Free Trade between the Romans and the Free Germans," 213; Drummond and Nelson, *Western Frontiers*, 111.
[153] *Codex Theodosianus* 14.10.2–3
[154] Philip Burton, "Assessing Latin-Gothic Interaction," in *Bilingualism in Ancient Society*, ed. J. N. Adams, Mark Janse, and Simon Swain (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 393-4; Pierre Flobert, "Latin-Frankish Bilingualism in Sixth-Century Gaul: The Latin of Clovis," in *Bilingualism in Ancient Society*, ed. J. N. Adams, Mark Janse, and Simon Swain (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 419-28; Ausonius, *Epistle* 6.2; Cassiodorus, *Variae* 5.40.5.
[155] Adams and Swain, "Introduction," 12; Biville, "Graeco-Romans and Graeco-Latin," 98-9.

meaning. While this process admittedly took centuries to play out, it began on the Rhine and Danube *limes*. The long period of contact and exchange on the Roman Empire's northern borderlands not only anticipated the transformation of the later empire into the early medieval world but also, in a sense, laid the groundwork for it.[156]

Turning Inward

Similar processes of interaction and exchange took place on other peripheries of the Roman world, most notably in the eastern provinces that abutted the Parthian and Sassanid Persian Empires. They also occurred in other ancient borderlands where sustained contacts between different groups gave rise to local cultures that amalgamated diverse methods of political, economic, and social accommodation. The "debatable margin" of China's northern frontier, where people blended Chinese agricultural techniques with steppe herding practices and frontier markets linked Chinese Empire to its northern neighbors, was one such place.[157] We might also apply the borderlands paradigm to the Ionian cities of Anatolia, communities whose history and culture were shaped by their position in the middle ground between the Classical Greek and the Achaemenid Persian worlds.[158] In these and other regions, processes of transculturation produced local societies that were heterogeneous, innovative, and at times predictive of future trends.

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[156] Whittaker, *Rome and its Frontiers*, 16.
[157] Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers*, 470; Gaubatz, *Beyond the Great Wall*, 104.
[158] Margaret C. Miller, ""Manners Makyth Man:" Diacritical Drinking in Achaemenid Anatolia," in *Cultural Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, ed. Erich S. Gruen (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2011), 113.

Borderlands, however, are not only found on the distant margins of empires or at the edges of cultural spheres. Counterintuitive as it may at first seem, the same processes of interaction and exchange that shaped local societies on the edges of ancient empires also played a decisive role in molding the cultures of their capital cities. Transculturative processes played a decisive role in the history of Rome, Chang'an, and Athens, the metropolises at the center of the Roman, Chinese, and Athenian Empires. As these cities attracted generations of diverse immigrants from across the lands that had come under their control, they evolved into *urban* borderlands where transcultural exchanges shaped local cultures and helped create new forms of political, economic, and social accommodation. To understand this processes, we must first examine the factors that compelled immigrants to come to each of these iconic cities.

Chapter Two: Centripetal Forces

"Great cities are not like towns, only larger. They are not like suburbs, only denser. They differ from towns and suburbs in basic ways, and one of these is that cities are, by definition, full of strangers."[1]

Although it was the modern American metropolis that inspired Jane Jacobs to comment on the "strangeness" of great cities, her observation describes the past as neatly as the present. Great cities have *always* been full of strangers. Since the very beginnings of urban life in ancient Mesopotamia, the most influential cities in history have been enmeshed in wide networks of communication and economic exchange. Most have functioned as focal points of political or cultural power, or both. All have been home to diverse populations that embodied the full range of human expertise, from bricklaying to songwriting. Yet abstract ideas of "greatness" do not adequately describe the way imperial cities in particular drive innovation and become focal points for historical change. Rather, great cities bring about the creation of the new because they intensify personal and social interactions between people who are, at least initially, strangers to each other.[2] To articulate the relationship between people and power, we must look to immigration, analyzing the forces that brought generations of immigrations to the metropolitan centers of the Athenian, Roman, and Tang states.

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[1] Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), 30.
[2] Massey, et al., *City Worlds*, 17; Anthony Sutcliffe, "Introduction: The Giant City as a Historical Phenomenon," in *Megalopolis: The Giant City in History*, ed. Theo Barker and Anthony Sutcliffe (London: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 2.

In their respective heydays, each of these cities was the capital of an empire that projected its political power and culture onto the wider world. At the same time, each city also became a destination for generations of migrants who moved to the imperial center and, by so doing, changed its social landscape. While the migrants in question obviously varied by region and precise historical context, in each case imperialism and immigration went hand in hand. As Athens, Rome, and Chang'an colonized the outside world with their people and culture, they were in turn colonized by outsiders who helped redefine their cosmopolitan urban cultures and made them microcosms of the empires under their control. After briefly sketching each city's history, this chapter will assess the "pull factors" that drew immigrants to them by examining textual, epigraphic, and archaeological evidence from each site.[3]

Athens: Brief History

Situated in central Greece on the Pedion plain facing the Saronic Gulf of the Aegean Sea, Athens and its environs (called Attica in antiquity) were inhabited from at least the late Neolithic period. The area was an important center of Mycenaean civilization during the Bronze Age (ca. 1900–1200 BCE) and continued to be inhabited even after widespread disruptions in the eastern Mediterranean in the 13th century destroyed Mycenaean civilization, although it experienced a significant population decline. Athens began to reemerge as an influential city-state (πόλις/*polis*) by the eighth century, and over the course of several generations succeeded in

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[3] For a discussion of "push" and "pull" factors, see Boyle, P. J. Boyle, Keith Halfacree and Vaughan Robinson, *Exploring Copntemporary Migration* (Harlow: Longman, 1998), 67.

bringing all of Attica under its control.[4] By the early fifth century, the city had grown

into one of the largest and wealthiest of the Greek states, prosperous and powerful

enough to aid the Ionian Greeks of Asia Minor in their failed revolt against the

Achaemenid Persian Empire in 499, and by so doing to provoke a Persian invasion of

mainland Greece in retaliation. In the Persian Wars that followed (490–479 BCE),

Athens was sacked and burned, but its citizen body evacuated the city and survived.[5]

The Athenian army and navy in particular went on to play a decisive role in defeating

the Persians at Marathon in 490 BCE, Salamis in 480, and Plataea in 479 as part of an

allied force under Spartan leadership.[6]

Thanks to their sacrifice and prominent role in the fighting, the Athenians

emerged from the Persian Wars imbued with prestige and a desire to rebuild their

city. Quickly recovering from the Persian sack, Athens went on to establish an

alliance (συμμαχία/symmachía) called the Delian League in order to continue to fight

against the Persians in Asia Minor while safeguarding against another invasion of the

Greek mainland. Member states provided ships, soldiers, and money to a common

treasury first located on the sacred island of Delos but later relocated to Athens itself

in 454. This relocation was significant, as the League quickly morphed from a

coalition of the willing into an instrument of Athenian hegemonic politics.[7] Under

the leadership of the charismatic statesman Pericles, Athens' democratic government

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[4] This process, by which the Athenians peacefully incorporated all the residents of Attica into their own social and civic community, was known as συνοικισμός/synoikismós (literally "dwelling together in the same house").

[5] Herodotus, 8.41; Plutarch, *Themistocles* 10.

[6] Herodotus 6.103-131, 8.59-96, 9.1-89 Aeschylus, *Persians* 249-531; Diodorus Siculus, 11.17-19.

[7] Pseudo-Aristotle, *Constitution of the Athenians* 23.5; Plutarch, *Cimon* 6.

pursued an aggressive foreign policy and initiated an elaborate domestic building

program that reflected its increasingly imperialistic ambitions.[8] The Athenians soon

prohibited League members from withdrawing from the alliance, imposed their own

civic assembly as the decision-making body for the entire group, requiring criminal

trials to take place in their own courts, and mandating that allies contribute cash

payments (φόρος/*phóros*) in place of ships or soldiers.[9] This money, ostensibly for

the common defense, paid for expansions to the fleet as well as the construction of the

Parthenon and other temples on the Acropolis. The city's physical appearance began

to change in other ways as it became more overtly imperialistic, through the

expansion of its port of Piraeus and the construction of impressive fortifications (the

"Long Walls") that encircled both the harbor district and the upper city (ἄστυ/*ásty*).[10]

By the 440s, the Delian League had effectively morphed into an Athenian empire

(ἀρχή/*arché*).[11]

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[8] Thucydides, 23.77-95.

[9] Thucydides 1.101; Pseudo-Aristotle, *Constitution of the Athenians*, 24.2.

[10] Thucydides 1.10.2; Plutarch, *Pericles* 12; Low, "Athenian Empire," 67.

[11] Thucydides 1.96-7, 99; Russell Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1972), 152, 171. Beginning in the 440s, the term "allies" (συμμαχοί; *symmachoi*) was increasingly replaced by variations on the phrase "the cities which Athens controls" (τον πόλεον ὅσον Ἀθεναῖοι κρατοσιν) in Athenian inscriptions. See IG I³ 19, 27, 28, 91, 156, 161, 162, 164, 179, 228); Mattingly, Harold B. Mattingly, *The Athenian Empire Restored: Epigraphic and Historical Studies* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 523.
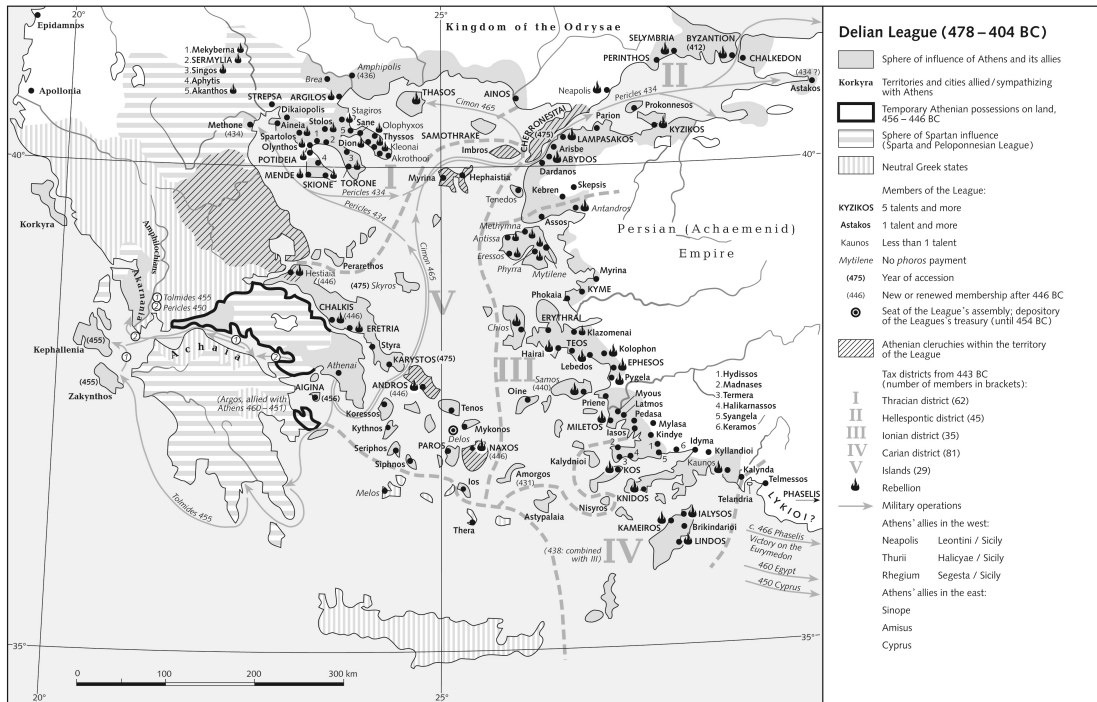
Figure Three: The Athenian Empire

    This empire was large by classical Greek standards, encompassing 190 cities at the most conservative estimate (Figure Three).[12] Its maritime and commercial focus encouraged an influx of people and goods through the Piraeus that caused significant changes in Athens' social landscape.[13] The city's social landscape evolved in tandem with this imperial policy. By the 450s imperial Athens had become the trade metropolis of the eastern Mediterranean and the intellectual center of the Greek world. The singular achievements in politics, philosophy, and the arts that the city produced in this period have given it unique significance in world history

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[12] Polly Low, "The Athenian Empire," in *The Oxford Handbook of Hellenic Studies*, ed. George Boys-Stones, Barbara Graziosi, and Phiroze Vasunia (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 65.

[13] Low, "Athenian Empire," 71-2; Meiggs and Lewis, *Greek Inscriptions*, 111-121. Fragments of the famous Coinage Decree, which mandated that all subject cities use Athenian coinage, weights, and measures, have been found in at least six locations in the Aegean, Asia Minor, and the Black Sea.

and led scholars to label the fifth and fourth centuries BCE as Greece's classical age. Such glittering achievements cannot be fully understood, however, outside the context of Athenian imperialism. The Athenians saw their city's excellence (ἀρετή/*areté*) as both a sign of and a justification for its expanding empire, and prided themselves upon their superiority over outsiders, whether from other *poleis* or places further afield. The historian Thucydides captured this spirit of defiant exceptionalism in the speeches he composed for Pericles, who asserted: "It will be remembered that we held rule over more Greeks than any other Greek state, that we sustained the greatest wars against their united or separate powers, and inhabited a city unrivaled by any other in resources and magnitude."[14]

Tensions, however, were mounting between Athens and Sparta, its biggest rival. These ultimately erupted in the protracted and destructive Peloponnesian War (431–404 BCE), which ended with Athens' defeat at the hands of Sparta and its allies. This disaster dealt a severe blow to the Athenians' imperial ambitions, shattering its political hegemony over the Aegean world. Although the city regained some of its strength in the fourth century and attempted to create a new coalition of *poleis* under its banner, the rising power of the kingdom of Macedon eclipsed this Second Athenian League. Under its dynamic king Philip II and his son Alexander, the Greek world was finally united at the point of a Macedonian spear. After superior

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[14] Thucydides 2.64 (γνῶτε δὲ ὄνομα μέγιστον αὐτὴν ἔχουσαν ἐν ἅπασιν ἀνθρώποις διὰ τὸ ταῖς ξυμφοραῖς μὴ εἴκειν, πλεῖστα δὲ σώματα καὶ πόνους ἀνηλωκέναι πολέμῳ, καὶ δύναμιν μεγίστην δὴ μέχρι τοῦδε κεκτημένην, ἧς ἐς ἀίδιον τοῖς ἐπιγιγνομένοις, ἢν καὶ νῦν ὑπενδῶμέν ποτε πάντα γὰρ πέφυκε καὶ ἐλασσοῦσθαι, μνήμη καταλελείψεται, Ἑλλήνων τε ὅτι Ἕλληνες πλείστων δὴ ἤρξαμεν, καὶ πολέμοις μεγίστοις ἀντέσχομεν πρός τε ξύμπαντας καὶ καθ᾽ ἑκάστους, πόλιν τε τοῖς πᾶσιν εὐπορωτάτην καὶ μεγίστην ᾠκήσαμεν).

Macedonian forces defeated a coalition of allied *poleis* at Chaeronea in 338, Athens' political independence (and that of all the Greek city-states) came to an end. However, by this time the city's reputation for greatness was firmly established, and it continued to be the economic, intellectual, and cultural heart of Greece for nearly a thousand years.

Immigration to Athens

At its height in the fifth century BCE, Athens was by far the largest of the Greek city-states, with a population of perhaps 150,000–200,000 people.[15] As its political, economic, and cultural influence grew, the city increasingly became a destination for unprecedented numbers of immigrants from across and beyond the Aegean world. This growth in part resulted from local migration from across Attica, particularly during the Peloponnesian War when much of the population of Attica took shelter within the Long Walls that encircled the city and its port of Piraeus. It continued after the war ended as immigrants and short-term visitors came from other regions of Greece and more distant lands such as the lands surrounding the Black Sea, Asia Minor, the Levant, and Egypt.[16] Even after being defeated by Sparta and losing its political hegemony, Athens' high population, level of urbanization, wealth, and

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[15] A. W. Gomme, *The Population of Athens in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C* (Chicago: Argonaut, Inc., 1967), 47. Although the numbers are impossible to pin down, Gomme estimates the low end of this figure, around 155,000.

[16] Gomme, *Population of Athens*, 47. In 430, one third of the population of Attica was concentrated in Athens and its immediate environs. One hundred years later, it was nearly half.

preeminent position among the Greek poleis made it an unusually heterogeneous and complex community.[17]

Most immigrants came in chains rather than by choice. Chattel slavery, extensive and deeply ingrained in all ancient Mediterranean societies, inarguably brought the largest numbers of outsiders to Athens.[18] A number of influential thinkers endorsed the institution's "naturalness." Plato, for instance, believed that slavery was a crucial component of the ideal state.[19] Aristotle argued that the master-slave relationship was one of the three most basic features of the household.[20] Later thinkers using his name (collectively dubbed "Pseudo-Aristotle" by modern scholars but accepted as Aristotle in antiquity) wrote that slaves were the best and most necessary property a man could possess.[21] Slavery had a profound impact on Athenian demographics. Based on his survey of texts, voter registrations, building inscriptions, manumission records, and tombstones, A.W. Gomme estimates that 60,000 free citizens lived in Athens and the Piraeus in 430 BCE, alongside 70,000 slaves and 25,000 free foreigners. The striking ratio of outsiders to citizens appears to have widened over time. Gomme estimates that one hundred years later, in 330,

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[17] Paul Cartledge, "Introduction: Defining a Kosmos," in *Kosmos: Essays in Order, Conflict and Community in Classical Athens*, ed. Paul Cartledge, Paul Millett, and Sitta von Reden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 2.

[18] Michael Grant, *A Social History of Greece and Rome* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1992), 92.

[19] Plato, *Republic* 4.433d.

[20] Aristotle, *Politics* 1.1253b.

[21] Pseudo-Aristotle, *Oeconomica* 1344a.22. The first pseudo-Aristotelian works were produced by members of the Peripatetic school of philosophy that he founded in the Lyceum of Athens in the late fourth century. Later European and Arab scholars expanded the corpus considerably during the Middle Ages. See Thomas F. Glick, Steven Livesey, and Faith Wallis, *Medieval Science, Technology, and Medicine: An Encyclopedia* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 423-4.

Athens and the Piraeus housed 50,000 citizens, 82,000 slaves, and 36,000 resident foreigners.[22] Athenians, it seems, were a minority in their own city.

Slaves were obtained by capture in war, sale in slave markets, and by birth.[23] They were almost always foreigners, since it was considered distasteful for one Greek to own another, especially after the statesman Solon abolished debt-slavery in the early sixth century.[24] Conveniently, it was also a widely accepted truism that non-Greeks were inherently servile, either because of the intemperate climates of their homelands or their intrinsically inferior natures.[25] Many slaves therefore came from the lands that bordered the Greek world, especially Scythia, Thrace, the Black Sea and northern Aegean, Caria in Asia Minor, Lydia, and Cappadocia.[26] Uprooted from their native communities, given new names, and forced to speak the Attic Greek dialect, they were reduced to the status of nonperson and became socially dead. In this sense slaves were the absolute outsiders within Athens, despite their ubiquity in Athenian life.[27]

Many spent their lives toiling in the fields of Attica or the silver mines at Laurion, an assignment that amounted to a slow death sentence. Those who came to the city had more varied responsibilities. Many domestic slaves (οἰκέται/*oiketai*)

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[22] Gomme, *Population of Athens*, 47.
[23] Grant, *A Social History of Greece and Rome*, 93.
[24] Solon, *Fragment* 30.8-15; Plutarch, *Solon* 15.
[25] Ancient writers vascillated between these two perspectives. Aristotle, *Politics* 1.1252b5-9, 1285a18-23; Herodotus 9.122; Pseudo-Hippocrates, *Airs, Waters, Places* 12; Plato, *Republic* 4.435a-436a; Garlan, *Slavery in Ancient Greece*, 45; Isaac, *Invention of Racism*, 56-65.
[26] Yvon Garlan, *Slavery in Ancient Greece*, trans. Janet Lloyd (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 46-7; Cynthia Patterson, "Other Sorts: Slaves, Foreigners, and Women in Periclean Athens," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Pericles*, ed. Loren J. II Samons (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 155.
[27] Garlan, *Slavery in Ancient Greece*, 41.

worked as housekeepers, cooks, guards, or personal attendants, while others became

nursemaids or teachers (παιδαγωγόι/*paidagogoi*). A lucky and educated few were

tasked with overseeing household accounts, such as Pericles' slave Evangelos, who

"surpassed everyone else in the science of domestic economy."[28] A wide range of

evidence shows how integral domestic slaves were to the Athenian household, from

the chorus of slave women who advise Clytemnestra in Aeschylus' tragedy *The*

Libation Bearers, to the paintings of slave nurses tending children found on vases, to

the commemorations that former wards and students sometimes inscribed on the

graves of beloved nannies or teachers.[29]

Slaves were equally common outside the household. Enslaved artisans

working in large workshops (ἐργαστύρια/*ergasteria*) produced goods that ranged

from weapons to furniture. The father of the famous orator Demosthenes (384–332

BCE) owned a sword factory staffed by thirty-three slaves, and a couch factory that

employed twenty.[30] The banker Pasion, a former slave himself, owned a shield

factory with an income of one talent per annum (twice the profit of Demosthenes'

father's factory).[31] Nine or ten slave shoemakers worked for the accused traitor

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[28] Plutarch, *Pericles* 16 (ὁ δὲ πᾶσαν αὐτοῦ τὴν τοιαύτην συνέχων ἀκρίβειαν εἰς ἦν οἰκέτης, Εὐάγγελος, ὡς ἕτερος οὐδεὶς εὖ πεφυκὼς ἢ κατεσκευασμένος ὑπὸ τοῦ Περικλέους πρὸς οἰκονομίαν); Patterson, "Other Sorts," 158.
[29] Aeschylus, *Libation Bearers* 84-7; Garlan, *Slavery in Ancient Greece,* 62; Patterson, "Other Sorts," 153, 160-1; Babler, B. Babler, *Fleissige Thrakerinnen Und Wehrhafte Skythen. Nichtgriechen Im Klassischen Athen Und Ihre Archaeologische Hinterlassenschaft (*Stuttgart and Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1998)*,* 282-95; Seth D. Pevnick, "Loaded Names, Artistic Identity, and Reading an Athenian Vase," *Classical Antiquity* 29, no. 2 (2010): 224. Slaves can be identified in inscriptions by the inclusion of ethnic signifiers indicating their background, such as Σκύθης/*Skythes* ("Scythian") or Λυδός/*Lydos* ("Lydian"), in addition to or in place of their personal names.
[30] Demosthenes 27.9-11, 36.11.
[31] Demosthenes 36.11

Timarchus, as well as a woman skilled in flax weaving and a man with a talent for embroidery.[32]   In addition to producing goods such as these for the Athenian market, slaves also worked on the monumental building program that coincided with the high tide of Athenian imperialism. The inscribed construction records of the Erechtheion, the temple of Athena and Erechtheus on the Acropolis completed ca. 408, lists twenty slave laborers working alongside twenty-four citizens and forty-two resident foreigners. Although he wrote centuries after it was completed, Plutarch described carpenters, masons, bronze-smiths, stonecutters, dyers, workers in gold and ivory, painters, embroiderers, embossers at work on the Parthenon and went on to assert that every master craftsman had, "like a general leading an army, a corps of laborers at his disposal that obeyed him as an instrument obeys the hand, or the body the soul."[33]

In short, foreign slaves were active in all areas of Athenian life, from the wet nurses depicted on pottery to the state-owned police force of three hundred Scythians that patrolled the city streets.[34] These individuals laid the foundation upon which imperial Athens was built, and the continued need for their labor swelled the city's population in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. As in all slave societies, this need was a dangerous Achilles' heel. Thucydides' report of the desertion of twenty thousand slaves to the Spartan camp at Decelea in central Attica in 413, toward the

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[32] Aeschines 1.97.

[33] Plutarch, *Pericles* 12 (…τέκτονες, πλάσται, χαλκοτύποι, λιθουργοί, βαφεῖς, χρυσοῦ μαλακτῆρες καὶ ἐλέφαντος, ζωγράφοι, ποικιλταί, τορευταί…καθάπερ στρατηγὸς ἴδιον στράτευμα, τὸν θητικὸν ὄχλον καὶ ἰδιώτην συντεταγμένον εἶχεν, ὄργανον καὶ σῶμα τῆς ὑπηρεσίας…); Patterson, "Other Sorts," 159.

[34] Aeschines 2.173; Andocides 3.5; Arisophanes, *Thesmophoriazousai* 1002; Kallet, "The Athenian Economy," 84. In Aristophanes' comedy, the Scythians' inability to properly pronounce Greek names makes them the butt of a joke.

end of the Peloponnesian War, foreshadows Athens' impending defeat.[35] Perhaps because they were at once indispensible, ubiquitous, and dangerous, slaves were kept apart. They could not actively contribute to Athenian political or social life, and even those who were manumitted were almost never admitted into the citizen body.[36] As a result, their voices have been largely silenced and their individual histories are difficult to reconstruct. They appear in our sources as a backdrop, furnishings to everyday life with little or no agency of their own.

Although slaves in imperial Athens were by definition foreigners, not all foreigners were slaves.[37] Many free foreigners decided to stay in Athens for extended periods of time and became immigrants in the full sense of the word. Known as metics (μέτοικοι/*métoikoi*) these individuals could remain in the city for years, decades, or their entire lives. Metics could not own property, were required to pay a special tax (the μετοίκιον/*metoíkion*), and needed a legal protector (προστάτης/*prostátēs*) from the citizen body to vouch for their character and stand for them in legal trials.[38] Like slaves, they can be identified in texts and inscriptions by the use of an ethnic signifier to identify their country of origin or the phrase "residing in" (οίκιον εν/*oikon en*) identifying the township of Attica in which they lived.[39] Metics were, however, free men and women who came to Athens to take advantage

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[35] Thucydides 7.27; Patterson, "Other Sorts," 160.
[36] The freedman Pasion mentioned above is a rare exception.
[37] Patterson, "Other Sorts," 162.
[38] Aristophanes of Byzantium, *Fragment* 38; Meyer, *Metics*, 9; Whitehead, *Ideology of the Athenian Metic*, 7; Patterson, "Other Sorts," 163-4.
[39] Nicholas Jones, *The Associations of Classical Athens* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 66. The names of Athenian citizens, on the other hand, included a *demotikon* that indicated the township of Attica in which they were born (known as their *deme*).

of the unique opportunities that the imperial city offered. There were perhaps twenty-

five thousand metics living in Athens and its immediate environs in 430 BCE, and

thirty-six thousand by 330.[40] Although these figures are educated guesses (it is

impossible, for example, to account for individuals who failed to register or pay the

metoíkion tax), it is clear that metics made up a large and important part of Athens'

population.

Most came to Athens for economic reasons, looking to profit from the unique

affordance the largest city and most active port in the Aegean provided.[41] This

motivation for immigration mirrors the character and scope of Athenian imperialism,

which sought to exploit the resources of the Aegean and Black Sea for the city's

benefit and treated the eastern Mediterranean as a whole as an extension of Athens'

economic hinterland.[42] The "Old Oligarch" of Pseudo-Xenophon's *Constitution of*

the Athenians noted this commercial focus, asserting that "the Athenians alone of

Greeks and foreigners can be wealthy," since no city rich in iron, copper, or flax

could sell its goods "without the permission of the rulers of the sea."[43] Indeed,

controlling resources such as grain or timber was crucial for Athens' burgeoning

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[40] Gomme, *Population of Athens*, 47; T. R. B. Dicks, "Piraeus - the Port of Athens." *The Town Planning Review* 39, no. 2 (1968): 146. T. R. B. Dicks estimates a rough population of 20,000 metics in Attica under Pericles.

[41] Lisa Kallet, "The Athenian Economy," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Pericles*, edited by Loren J. Samons II (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 87-91; David Whitehead, *The Ideology of the Athenian Metic* (Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1977), 18.

[42] Kallet, "The Athenian Economy," 71-2.

[43] Pseudo-Xenophon, *Constitution of the Athenians* 2.2 (ὁπόσαι δ᾽ ἐν τῇ ἠπείρῳ εἰσὶ πόλεις ὑπὸ τῶν Ἀθηναίων ἀρχόμεναι, αἱ μὲν μεγάλαι διὰ δέος ἄρχονται, αἱ δὲ μικραὶ πάνυ διὰ χρείαν· οὐ γὰρ ἔστι πόλις οὐδεμία ἥτις οὐ δεῖται εἰσάγεσθαί τι ἢ ἐξάγεσθαι. ταῦτα τοίνυν οὐκ ἔσται αὐτῇ, ἐὰν μὴ ὑπήκοος ᾖ τῶν ἀρχόντων τῆς θαλάττης).

population and large navy, especially during the Peloponnesian War.[44] Yet many luxury items were also imported. A fragment of the fifth-century comic poet Hermippus listing products brought into the city by the ship owner Dionysus includes ox-hides and silphion (a medicinal herb) from Cyrene; fish from the Hellespont; powder from Sparta; pork and cheese from Syracuse; sails, rigging, and papyrus from Egypt; incense from Syria; cypress wood from Crete; ivory from Libya; raisins and dried figs from Rhodes; pears and sheep from Euboea; slaves from Phrygia and Pagasae; mercenaries from Arcadia; acorns and almonds from Paphlagonia; palm-fruit and high quality flour from Phoenicia; and carpets and pillows from Carthage.[45] The Athenians' pride in this bounty (or their hubris, perhaps) comes across in Pericles' boast that "our city's greatness draws the products of the world into our harbor, so that to the Athenian the fruits of other countries are as familiar a luxury as those of his own."[46]

Foreign importers played a major role in bringing both staples and luxury goods into Athens. Some of these businessmen only stayed long enough to sell their cargoes before moving on, but others resided permanently in the city. Metics are frequently associated with long-distance trading ventures in surviving texts, as well as individuals who can be reasonably identified as resident aliens without being specifically named as such. For example, one of the legal speeches of Demosthenes

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[44] Herodotus 7.147 on grain shipments from the Black Sea and northern Aegean; Kallet, "The Athenian Economy," 83.

[45] Hermippus, *Fragment* 63 quoted in epitome of Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 1.27e-28a; Kallet, "The Athenian Economy," 82.

[46] Thucydides 2.38 (ἐπεσέρχεται δὲ διὰ μέγεθος τῆς πόλεως ἐκ πάσης γῆς τὰ πάντα, καὶ ξυμβαίνει ἡμῖν μηδὲν οἰκειοτέρᾳ τῇ ἀπολαύσει τὰ αὐτοῦ ἀγαθὰ γιγνόμενα καρποῦσθαι ἢ καὶ τὰ τῶν ἄλλων ἀνθρώπων); Kallet, "The Athenian Economy," 81.

describes the troubles of a man named Zenothemis, who came from Massilia (modern

Marseille), served as first mate on a ship based at Athens, and got into trouble over a

debt while importing grain by way of Syracuse in Sicily.[47] Since Zenothemis' ship

docked in the Piraeus when not at sea, we can presume that he spent enough time in

Athens to register as a metic. Other foreigners appear in our sources as financial

backers of trading expeditions. Another speech of Demosthenes names Theodorus

the Phoenician as an investor in a trading voyage to the Bosphorus that was led by a

man named Phormio. As the expedition's financier, Theodorus evidently stayed at

Athens while Phormio put out to sea. Things did not turn out very well, however, and

Theodorus ended up testifying against Phormio in court after the expedition ran into

trouble and his money went missing.[48]

Metics also pursued economic opportunities at Athens outside the realm of

maritime shipping. Some were entrepreneurs who owned the workshops that

produced goods for the Athenian market. The best example of this sort of immigrant

businessman is Cephalus of Syracuse, a metic who ran a shield-making business in

the Piraeus for thirty years that employed no less than one hundred twenty slaves.[49]

Metic craftsmen were prominent in the construction business, as we know from the

names of forty-two foreign stonecutters, carpenters, sculptors, and painters inscribed

in the construction records of the Erechtheion.[50] We might also count Hippodamus of

Miletus, whom Pericles invited to Athens to design a new urban plan for the Piraeus,

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[47] Demosthenes 32.5-9; Michel Clerc, *Les Métèques Athéniens* (New York: Arno Press, 1979), 398.
[48] Demosthenes 34.6; Clerc, *Les Métèques Athéniens*, 398, 407.
[49] Lysias 30.12.4; Clerc, *Les Métèques Athéniens*, 391.
[50] *IG* I^3 476; Clerc, *Les Métèques Athéniens*, 391. The number of metics working on the Erechtheion was equal to the number of Athenian citizens and slaves combined.

among metics who were active in the Athenian construction industry.[51] Other skilled

immigrants worked as artisans (βάναυσοι/*bánausoi*) in trades such as metalworking,

shipbuilding, gilding, or vase painting.[52] Metics made much of the high-quality

pottery that the Athenians exported throughout the Mediterranean in the fifth and

fourth centuries. We know this from the foreign names vase-painters signed on their

finished products, such as Kachrylion, Brygos, Douris, and Amasis.[53] In addition to

pottery, metic artisans were also prominent enough in the lamp-making business for

the orator Andocides to blandly declare that making lamps was the work of foreigners

and barbarians.[54]

Still others came to sell services rather than goods. Many of the musicians

and actors who worked in what we might call the Athenian entertainment industry

came from outside the city. Performers from families of modest means were drawn

to Athens by the prizes, honors, and payments that they win at festivals such as the

Festival of Dionysus, at which comedies and tragedies were performed.[55] Although

they ranked low on the social scale, foreign actors, dancers, flute-players, and

acrobats could thus play a prominent role in Athenian social life. Entertainers

sometimes also worked as prostitutes, especially when hired to entertain at

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[51] Aristotle, *Politics* 1267b.22; Clerc, *Les Métèques Athéniens*, 412.

[52] Aristotle, *Politics* 3.1278: "In the past, *banausoi* were recruited from among slaves and foreigners; and it is the same today among the most part of them."

[53] Clerc, *Les Métèques Athéniens*, 393. None of these names are common among Athenians, and the last is Egyptian. Many of these ceramicists likely lived near the Keramaikos district of the city, where most Athenian pottery was produced.

[54] Scholia Aristophane, *Wasps* 1007; Clerc, *Les Métèques Athéniens*, 393.

[55] David Kawalko Roselli, *Theater of the People: Spectators and Society in Ancient Athens* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 136-7.

aristocratic symposia.[56] Some of these were courtesans (ἐταῖραι/*hetairai*) hired to

entertain guests with music and clever conversation. Demetria of Miletus, noted for

her skill as a cithara player, was one such individual, and Aspasia of Miletus, the

intelligent and charming mistress of Pericles, may have been another.[57] Other,

foreign women, less fortunate and lacking elite connections, became sex workers

(πόρναι/*pornai*) that worked in the city's brothels, such as the hapless former slave

Nearea of Corinth.[58]

In addition to the performers who moved to the city to make a living, many

tourists and short-term visitors came to Athens to attend its musical and athletic

competitions, watch plays, and participate in festivals such as Dionysia and the

Greater Panathenaia.[59] Not everyone could rely upon personal connections for places

to stay (ξενία/*xenia*), so an infrastructure of lodging and entertainment developed to

accommodate visitors to the city. Recognizing the boost these visitors could provide

to the Athenian economy, the historian Xenophon advised the Athenians to invest in

more inns for ship owners, places of exchange for merchants, and hotels to

accommodate visitors.[60] The inns and hotels he describes formed part of a tourist

industry more fully described in a scene from Aristophanes' *Frogs*, in which

Dionysus asks Heracles for tips about making a trip to Athens: "Tell me all about the

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[56] Lysias 4.7, Isocrates 7.48, Aeschines 1.42. They were of both sexes, though women predominated.
[57] Demosthenes 59.49; Plutarch, *Pericles* 24.2-7; Aristophanes, *Acharnians* 523; Clerc, *Les Métèques Athéniens*, 388. Although Aspasia was labeled a *hetaira* by Pericles' enemies, this may simply have been an attempt to slander her husband.
[58] Demosthenes 59.29-33.
[59] Aristophanes, *Acharnians* 496-504; Pausanias 1.29. Pausanias notes that the ship that carried Athena's sacred robe up the Panathenaic way during the festival was kept on display for tourists to admire.
[60] Xenophon, *Ways and Means* 3.12

harbors, bakeries, brothels, rest areas, directions, springs, roads, cities, places to stay,

and the landladies with the fewest bedbugs."[61] By the late fifth century, Athens'

reputation as the cultural center of Greece was firmly established enough for the

comic poet Lysippus to quip that only a fool would pass up a chance to visit the city:

> If you've never seen Athens, your brain's a morass,
> If you've seen it and weren't entranced, you're an ass,
> If you left without regrets, your head's solid brass![62]

Some privileged travelers came simply to nurture personal relationships and

visit friends. The life of the playwright and philosopher Ion of Chios shows how the

imperial city became a meeting-place for well-connected notables from across the

Greek world. Born on the island of Chios off the coast of Asia Minor in the 480s, Ion

visited Athens on numerous occasions to spend time with the politician Cimon and

the philosophers Socrates and Archelaus, enter in competitions for best tragic

playwright at the Dionysia (he won third prize in 428), and write a work about his

travels which, although fragmentary, paints a picture of Athens as the most

fashionable place in Greece for encounters among literary and political elites. We

know of many other well-connected travelers who passed through the city, including

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[61] Aristophanes, *Frogs* 112-15 (τούτους φράσον μοι, λιμένας ἀρτοπώλια πορνεῖ᾽ ἀναπαύλας ἐκτροπὰς κρήνας ὁδοὺς πόλεις διαίτας πανδοκευτρίας, ὅπου κόρεις ὀλίγιστοι).

[62] Lysippus 8 (εἰ μὴ τεθέασαι τὰς Ἀθήνας, στέλεχος εἶ, εἰ δὲ τεθέασαι μὴ τεθήρευσαι δ᾽, ὄνος, εἰ δ᾽ εὐαρεστῶν ἀποτρέχεις, κανθήλιος). Translation by Crasson in Kassel and Austin (eds.), *Poetae Comici Graeci* (New York: 1983-); Carol Dougherty, "Just Visiting: The Mobile World of Classical Athens," in *The Oxford Handbook of Hellenic Studies*, ed, George Boys-Stones, Barbara Graziosi, and Phiroze Vasunia (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 395.

the lyric poets Bacchylides and Simonides of Ceos and the famous historian

Herodotus of Halicarnassus.[63]

Opportunities for profit and pleasure, then, drew both immigrants and short-term visitors to Athens. The other major motivation was education, a field that, then as now, blends business, entertainment, and pure intellectualism. As the self-proclaimed "school of Hellas," Athens surpassed all other Greek cities as the prime destination for intellectuals from all over the eastern Mediterranean who came seeking knowledge and students to share it with.[64] Some of these were traveling teachers skilled in the art of rhetoric that Plato called sophists (σοφισταί/*sophistai*). Sophists charged for training in expository and argumentative techniques that helped orators make effective speeches and win the public debates that were so important to Athenian political life. These skills were highly attractive to citizens seeking to become power players in the Athenian democracy. Sophists shared their lessons through lectures, seminars, and public speeches that could make them both wealthy and famous.[65] Plato, for instance, remarked that the sophist Prodikos staged a fifty-drachma display of his rhetorical skills (ἐπίδειξις/*epídeixis*) to stir up business, and that Hippias earned fifteen thousand drachmas on a lecture tour through Sicily.[66] By

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[63] Dougherty, "Just Visiting," 393.

[64] Thucydides 2.41.4.

[65] Plato, *Sophista* 268b-c; Robert W. Wallace, "Plato's Sophists, Intellectual History after 450, and Sokrates," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Pericles*, ed. Loren J. Samons II (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 222.

[66] Plato, *Crateras* 384b; Plato, *Hippias Major* 282d-e; T. E. Rihill, "Teaching and Learning in Classical Athens," *Greece and Rome, Second Series* 50, no. 2 (2003): 172-184; Wallace, "Plato's Sophists," 222. If Plato is correct that drachma was roughly equivalent to a worker's day wage, it seems that teaching could be a very profitable business. However, a as source hostile to the sophists, his statements must be taken with a large grain of salt.

investing in the right teacher, a student could acquire "the power to speak and persuade multitudes…making the doctor and the trainer into slaves, and proving the businessman not to be making money for himself, but another."[67]

Because they charged for their lessons, sophists earned the scorn of intellectuals who considered them inferior to *bona fide* philosophers who investigated metaphysical, political, and ethical questions in search of ultimate truth.[68] Plato called them "paid hunters of the young and wealthy," Xenophon complained that they "would sell wisdom for anyone for money," and Aristotle flatly characterized them as "just like prostitutes."[69] However, despite the hostility of our sources, it appears that sophists' services were in high demand in classical Athens. We know the names of many from Plato's writings, such as Gorgias of Leontini, Prodikos of Keos, Hippias of Elis, and Thrasymachos of Chalcedon.[70] As their names indicate, all of these individuals were foreigners who enjoyed successful careers in the city. Furthermore, despite Plato's efforts to distinguish sophists from "true" philosophers, the line between different types of teachers was much blurrier than he would have us believe. He himself described Protagoras of Abdera (ca. 490–420), both as "the first to claim

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[67] Plato, *Gorgias*, 452d-e (τὸ πείθειν ἔγωγ᾽ οἷόν τ᾽ εἶναι τοῖς λόγοις καὶ ἐν δικαστηρίῳ δικαστὰς καὶ ἐν βουλευτηρίῳ βουλευτὰς καὶ ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ ἐκκλησιαστὰς καὶ ἐν ἄλλῳ συλλόγῳ παντί, ὅστις ἂν πολιτικὸς σύλλογος γίγνηται. καίτοι ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ δυνάμει δοῦλον μὲν ἕξεις τὸν ἰατρόν, δοῦλον δὲ τὸν παιδοτρίβην: ὁ δὲ χρηματιστὴς οὗτος ἄλλῳ ἀναφανήσεται χρηματιζόμενος καὶ οὐχ αὑτῷ, ἀλλὰ σοὶ τῷ δυναμένῳ λέγειν καὶ πείθειν τὰ πλήθη).
[68] Plato, *Protagoras* 3126b-319a; Wallace, "Plato's Sophists," 216.
[69] Plato, *Sophist* 231d (δοκῶ μὲν γάρ, τὸ πρῶτον ηὑρέθη νέων καὶ πλουσίων ἔμμισθος θηρευτής); Xenophon, *Memoribilia* 6.13 (καὶ τὴν σοφίαν ὡσαύτως τοὺς μὲν ἀργυρίου τῷ βουλομένῳ πωλοῦντας σοφιστὰς ὥσπερ πόρνους ἀποκαλοῦσιν, ὅστις δὲ ὃν ἂν γνῷ εὐφυᾶ ὄντα διδάσκων ὅ τι ἂν ἔχῃ ἀγαθὸν φίλον ποιεῖται, τοῦτον νομίζομεν, ἃ τῷ καλῷ κἀγαθῷ πολίτῃ προσήκει, ταῦτα ποιεῖν); Aristotle, *Sophistical Refutations* 171b; Wallace, "Plato's Sophists," 216.
[70] Wallace, "Plato's Sophists," 215.

payment for his services" (a shameful act to Plato's aristocratic eyes) and as "a teacher of culture and virtue."[71] Protagoras was active at Athens for forty years, during which time Pericles' son Xanthippos was one of many young Athenians who flocked to hear him speak.[72] Xanthippos, we are told, also complained that his father once spent an entire day with Protagoras debating the issue of guilt in a case of accidental homicide.[73] Beyond simply scoring points in debates, Protagoras taught "the proper management of one's own affairs as well as public matters, how best to run one's household, and how to make the most effective contribution to the affairs of the city by word and action."[74] The type of education he offered was highly valued at Athens, and the large pool of students eager to learn drew other teachers like him to the city.

Protagoras was in fact part of a long tradition of wise men came to Athens from abroad to educate the community and give counsel to the city's leaders. Epimenides of Crete, who arrived in the seventh century to help resolve civil strife, was one such figure.[75] Another was the Scythian philosopher Anacharsis, who gave advice to the statesman Solon in the sixth century and was later numbered among the

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[71] Plato, *Protagoras* 349a (σύ γ᾽ ἀναφανδὸν σεαυτὸν ὑποκηρυξάμενος εἰς πάντας τοὺς Ἕλληνας, σοφιστὴν ἐπονομάσας σεαυτόν, ἀπέφηνας παιδεύσεως καὶ ἀρετῆς διδάσκαλον, πρῶτος τούτου μισθὸν ἀξιώσας ἄρνυσθαι).

[72] Plato, *Protagoras* 315a.

[73] Plutarch, *Pericles* 36.

[74] Plato, *Protagoras* 318e-319a (τὸ δὲ μάθημά ἐστιν εὐβουλία περὶ τῶν οἰκείων, ὅπως ἂν ἄριστα τὴν αὑτοῦ οἰκίαν διοικοῖ καὶ περὶ τῶν τῆς πόλεως, ὅπως τὰ τῆς πόλεως δυνατώτατος ἂν εἴη καὶ πράττειν καὶ λέγειν).

[75] Pseudo-Aristotle, *Constitution of the Athenians* 1.

Seven Sages of Greece.[76] In the middle of the fifth century, Anaxagoras of

Clazomenae helped Pericles "steep his mind in philosophy and acquire both a lofty

bearing and public demeanor" and remained in Athens for thirty years teaching other

students.[77] Athens' reputation as a center of learning was undiminished by its defeat

in the Peloponnesian War, and in fact became even more prominent. In the fourth

century, Diogenes of Sinope (412/403–324/321) came to the city as an exile and

founded the Cynic school philosophy there. Perhaps the most famous metic

philosopher was Aristotle, who was born in 384 in Stagira on the Chalcidice

peninsula and came to Athens at age seventeen to study at Plato's Academy. During

his time in the city, Aristotle founded the Lyceum as a philosophical school to rival

the Academy, wrote treatises on a multitude of subjects, and became such an iconic

part of Athens' intellectual establishment that many people today fail to realize that

he was not, in fact, an Athenian himself.

To briefly summarize, then, a great number of foreigners came to Athens as

its political, economic, and cultural power grew over the course of the fifth and fourth

centuries BCE. Many of these were slaves whose labor supported the Athenians' way

of life and helped further their imperial ambitions. Some were short-term visitors

who traveled to the city to unload trading vessels, attend or participate in festivals,

take in the sights, or nurture friendships that extended across the Aegean. Others

were true immigrants such as Cephalus of Syracuse or Protagoras of Abdera, who

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[76] Plutarch, *Solon* 5; Hermippus *apud* Diogenes Laertius I.101-2; Diogenius Laertius 1.41, 106; Diodorus Siculus 9.6.
[77] Plutarch, *Pericles* 5 (τῆς λεγομένης μετεωρολογίας καὶ μεταρσιολεσχίας ὑποπιμπλάμενος); Diogenes Laertius 2.7; Plato, *Phaedrus* 269e-70a.

stayed in Athens for decades or their entire lives. These metics chose to live among

the Athenians primarily because of the economic and educational opportunities that

their city offered. As the capital of a commercial empire that extended far beyond the

area of its political hegemony, Athens was the premier emporium of the eastern

Mediterranean and a prime destination for ambitious entrepreneurs, skilled artisans,

and talented entertainers.[78] As a crucible of intellectual life and the school of Hellas,

the city was a powerful magnet for sophists in search of wealthy students,

philosophers looking to share their knowledge, and wise men who straddled the line

between these two groups. As we shall see, many of these factors also drove

immigration to Rome and Chang'an. However, as the following sections will show,

these two capitals also attracted immigrants for reasons that distinguish them from

Athens and reflect the different size, structure, and duration of the Roman and Tang

empires.

Rome: Brief History

According to ancient tradition, Rome was founded in 753 BCE by Romulus, a

descendent of the Trojan hero Aeneas and the god Mars who was suckled by a she-

wolf, murdered his twin brother, and ascended into heaven after a long and

productive career.[79] As tales the Roman told about themselves, these reveal few

verifiable facts about Rome's origins and murky early years. However, while we

cannot know whether figures like Aeneas, Romulus, and the hapless Remus ever

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[78] Kallet, "Athenian Economy," 80.
[79] Livy, book 1; Dionysus of Halicarnassus, book 1; Plutarch, *Romulus*; Viril, *Aeneid*, book 6.

existed, archaeology has confirmed that the site of Rome, an important ford of the Tiber River in the Latium region of central Italy (modern Lazio) about thirty kilometers from the sea, was occupied at the traditional time of the city's founding. Small settlements of wattle-and-daub huts have been discovered on the Capitoline and Palatine Hills in what would eventually become the Roman Forum, one of which, a small hut on the Palatine called the *casa Romuli* ("House of Romulus"), served as a shrine to the city's legendary founder in antiquity.[80] Whether these settlements came together to form a single city through a process of synoecism (συνοικισμός/*synoikismós*, "living together") similar to the one that appears to have taken place in Attica, or if settlers from surrounding Latium and the Sabine Hills gradually absorbed them, is difficult to determine.[81] It is certain, though, that Rome's position between the Greek poleis of south Italy and the Etruscan city-states of the north both spurred its growth and encouraged its involvement in the wider affairs of the Italian peninsula.

Historians usually divide the city's long history into three periods based on forms of government: an early Kingdom when Rome was ruled by native and Etruscan monarchs (753–509 BCE), a five hundred-year Republic when an oligarchic Senate governed the growing state in partnership with citizen assemblies (509–27 BCE), and an Empire when supreme power again rested in the hands of one or

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[80] Dionysus of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities* 1.79; Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 48.43, 54.29.
[81] T. J. Cornell, *The Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000-264 BC)* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 48-53.

sometimes a few men (27 BCE–476 CE).[82] Rome's sphere of influence in central

Italy began to expand during the early Republic, thanks in part to the Romans'

dogged militarism, policy of requiring defeated enemies to contribute troops to their

army, and willingness to transform those enemies into allies by granting them

citizenship rights. This had the advantage of constantly renewing the Romans'

manpower while giving their neighbors a stake in their growing state. Despite some

occasional setbacks, the city's influence spread throughout Latium and central Italy in

the fourth century BCE, and by the third century most of the peninsula was under

Roman hegemony.

Consolidating control over Italy transformed Rome into an international

power and led to conflict with Carthage, a Phoenician city in North Africa with an

expanding empire of its own that included Sicily and southern Spain. After clashing

with Carthage in three Punic Wars (264–241, 218–201, 149–146 BC), the second of

which involved the general Hannibal's protracted invasion of Italy and the revolt of

many of Rome's Italian allies, the Romans emerged victorious as the dominant power

in the western Mediterranean. Perhaps inevitably, they shortly thereafter became

involved in affairs of the Greek cities and Hellenistic kingdoms of the East. Although

initially (or ostensibly) reluctant to entangle themselves in Greek politics, the Romans

eventually fought and won three Macedonian Wars (217–205, 200–197, 171–168)

against King Philip V of Macedon and his son Perseus, as well as a war against the

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[82] The imperial period is typically further divided into two subperiods: the Principate (after *princeps*, "first citizen"), when the emperor's autocratic power was still partially veiled by republican traditions, and the Dominate (after *dominus*, "lord" or "master"), when overt despotism became the norm. The dividing line is typically the reign of the emperor Diocletian (r. 284-305 CE), who reorganized the imperial government after a period of sustained political, military, and economic crisis.

Seleucid King Antiochus III (192–189) that brought Greece and Asia Minor under their hegemony. By the middle of the second century, Rome's influence was so great that a single aged ambassador, Gaius Popillius Laenas, could successfully order King Antiochus IV Epiphanes ("God made Manifest") to turn back from the brink of conquering Egypt simply by threatening Roman intervention in Egypt's defense.[83]

Territorial expansion only accelerated in the first century BCE, spearheaded by a series of talented and ambitious generals. Pompey the Great solidified Roman control over Asia Minor and the Levant by stamping out a plague of Cilician piracy (67), decisively defeating the defiant Mithridates VI of Pontus (66), and putting an end to the anemic Seleucid kingdom (64). Shortly thereafter, his erstwhile ally Julius Caesar conquered Gaul in a series of well-documented campaigns (58–50). These gains did not come without a price. As Rome's empire continued to grow, rivalries between Pompey, Caesar, and other strongmen, each of whom commanded armies of loyal veterans, contributed to a simmering constitutional crisis that undermined and ultimately destroyed Rome's ancient republican government. The state only emerged from civil war when Octavian, Caesar's heir and adopted nephew, defeated Marc Antony and the Ptolemaic queen Cleopatra VII, his last remaining rivals, at the Battle of Actium in 31 BCE. With none left to challenge him, Octavian annexed Egypt, the last surviving Hellenistic kingdom, and initiated a new system of government with himself as "first citizen" (*princeps*) at the head of the Roman state. Under this

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[83] Polybius 29.27; Livy 45.12.

emperor (who took the name Augustus) and his successors, Western Europe and the

Mediterranean basin entered an era of political unity unknown previously or since.

Figure Four: The Roman Empire

By the beginning of the Common Era, the Romans had achieved direct rule or

supreme influence in all lands bordering the Mediterranean, which they took to

calling "Our Sea" (*Mare Nostrum*). Their empire would in time grow further to

encompass Britain (75–77 CE), Dacia (106 CE), and, briefly, Mesopotamia (117 CE).

At its height in the second century, the Roman Empire's borders stretched from

Hadrian's Wall in northern England to the edge of the Sahara desert in North Africa,

and from the shores of the Atlantic to the banks of the Euphrates River (Figure Four).

The two centuries of *Pax Romana* ("Roman peace") that followed Augustus' reign

allowed a great diversity of people to travel across this far-flung state with unprecedented freedom. Many navigated to the imperial capital, bringing with them the goods, languages, and customs of their homelands and rewriting both the appearance and the culture of the city beside the Tiber. Rome's imperial chickens had come home to roost.

Immigration to Rome

How did the empire change the city? Athenaeus of Naucratis, a Greek rhetorician and grammarian who flourished in the late second century and early third centuries CE, offered one astute reading of the ways immigration changed the capital's social landscape. In his *Deipnosophistae* ("Dinner Philosophers"), an eclectic work that takes the form of an extended conversation among learned guests at a symposium, he asserted: "One would not shoot far off the mark to call the city of Rome an epitome of the civilized world, for truly within it every city of the world has planted a colony."[84] More than a clever turn of phrase, Athenaeus' statement is an intriguing inversion of the expected order of things. In his eyes, Rome was not simply the city that colonized the rest of the world with its people and culture, but rather a place colonized *by* the rest of the world. Athenaeus presented the imperial city not as a dominant invader, but almost as a passive frontier for outsiders to exploit. In all likelihood, his background predisposed him to think about imperialism

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[84] Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 1.36 (ὅρος…οἰκουμένης δῆμον τὴν Ῥώμην φησί, λέγει δὲ καὶ ὅτι οὐκ ἄν τις σκοποῦ πόρρω τοξεύων λέγοι τὴν Ῥώμην πόλιν ἐπιτομὴν τῆς οἰκουμένης· ἐν ᾗ συνιδεῖν ἔστιν οὕτως πάσας τὰς πόλεις ἱδρυμένας, καὶ κατ᾽ ἰδίαν δὲ τὰς πολλάς); Catherine Edwards and Greg Woolf, "Cosmopolis: Rome as World City," in *Rome the Cosmopolis*, ed, Catherine Edwards and Greg Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 4.

and immigration in this way. Ethnically and culturally Greek, he came from Naucratis in the Egyptian delta, spent time Italy, and was friendsly with a number prominent Greeks and Romans.[85] Furthermore, his home city was only seventy kilometers from Alexandria, the cosmopolitan capital of Ptolemaic Egypt and the second greatest metropolis in the Roman Empire. As a sophisticated traveler who was integrated into Italian society and yet native to it, Athenaeus was well positioned to understand that as the world became increasingly Romanized, Rome itself became increasingly worldly.

Athenaeus was unique in applying the language of colonization to the imperial capital, but many other writers in Latin and Greek echoed his sentiments, extolling Rome as *caput mundi* ("head of the world") frequently enough for variations of the phrase to became a literary trope. [86] Beginning in the Republic, the city's reputation as a destination for immigrants grew in tandem with its expanding empire. In the first century BCE, Quintus Cicero, brother of the famous republican orator and statesman Marcus Tullius Cicero, described Rome as "a city made from a gathering of nations."[87] One hundred years later, the Spanish poet Martial rhetorically asked, "What race is so remote or barbarous, Caesar, from which there is no spectator in your city?"[88] A century later still, the Greek orator Aelius Aristides effusively proclaimed: "What a city is to its boundaries and its territories, so this city is to the

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[85] "Athenaeus." *Brill's New Pauly*. Brill Online , 2013. The details of Athenaeus' life are hazy, but the jurist Ulpian and the physician Galen are among the friends he invited to his literary banquet.
[86] Ovid *Fasti* 2.683-84; Edwards and Woolf, "Cosmopolis: Rome as World City," 3-4.
[87] Q. Cicero, *Commentariolum Petitionis* 54 (*Roma est civitas ex nationum conventu constituta…*)
[88] Martial, *On Spectacles* 1 (*Quae tam seposita est, quae gens tam barbara, Caesar, ex qua spectator non sit in urbe tua?*); Edwards and Woolf, "Cosmopolis," 1.

whole inhabited world! Just as the earth's ground supports all men, so it receives

men from every land, just as the sea receives the rivers!"[89] These encomia and others

like them show that in the eyes of many of its admirers, the crowds that flocked to

Rome were a measure of its greatness.

It therefore comes as no surprise to read Pliny the Elder's assertion in the late

first century CE that no city in the world could rival Rome for sheer size.[90] Estimates

for its population in the first and second centuries range from five hundred thousand

to one million people, although as with Athens precise numbers are impossible to pin

down.[91] What *is* certain is that the capital's population was quite high by pre-modern

standards, and that impressive numbers came with a high cost. Rome's crowded

conditions and unwholesome climate (*intemperies caeli*) meant for a high mortality

rate, as endemic diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria, and cholera took their toll on

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[89] Aelius Aristides 26.61-2 (…ὅπερ δὲ πόλις τοῖς αὐτῆς ὀρίος καὶ χώραις ἐστίν, τοῦθ᾽ ἥδε ἡ πόλις τῆς πάσης οἰκουμένης, ὥσπερ αὐτῆς χώρας ἄστυ κοινὸν ἀποδευδειγμένη· φαίης ἂν περιοίκους ἅπαντας ἢ κατὰ δῆμον οἰκοῦϝτας ἄλλον χῶρον εἰς μίαν ταύτην ἀκρόπολιν συνέπχεσθαι· ἡ δὲ οὐδεπώποτε ἀπεῖπεν, ἀλλ᾽ ὥσπερ τὸ τῆς γῆς ἔδαφος, φέρει πάντας· ὥσπερ δὲ ἡ τοῖς κόλποις δεχομένη τοὺς ποταμοὺς θάλαττα πάντας…); Neville Morley, "Migration and the Metropolis," in *Rome the Cosmopolis*, ed. Catherine Edwards and Greg Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Pres, 2003), 155.
[90] Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* 3.5.66.
[91] Ancient demography is a notoriously difficult field, due to the fragmentary and scattered nature of its evidence; as Walter Scheidel put it, "much of what we need to know about ancient demography will forever remain out of reach." Nevertheless, it is clear that the ancient life expectancies were quite low, especially in crowded cities that lacked modern advances in public health, medicine, and nutrition. Based on comparisons to rates in eighteenth-century France, nineteenth-century Spain and Russia, and early twentieth-century India and China, it is unlikely that the average life expectancy for the ancient world overall was around 30 years, and likely lower for urban populations. While pregnancy rates for ancient women were high, so too was the chance for sudden infant (and adult) mortality. As a result, great cities like Rome could not sustain their growth without the constant influx of immigrants. See Walter Scheidel, "Population and Demography," in *A Companion to Ancient History*, ed. Andrew Erksine (Malden, MA and Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 134-145; "Problems and Progress in Roman Demography," in *Debating Roman Demography*, ed. Walter Scheidel (Boston: Brill, 2001), 1-86; H. W. Pleket, "Rome: A Pre-Industrial Metropolis," in *Megalopolis: The Giant City in Antiquity*, ed. Theo Barker and Anthony Sutcliffe (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 14.

the population.[92] Like all premodern cities, Rome chronically experienced a natural demographic decrease that at times caused its population to contract, as in the second century when outbreaks of plague added to its residents' standard medical woes.[93] Nevertheless, the capital's population remained high well into the fourth century CE because a constant stream of newcomers from across the empire and beyond its borders replenished it.[94]

As at Athens, many of these "fresh bodies" were slaves. Roman law, like Greek philosophy, saw slavery as a fundamental cornerstone of society.[95] The need to protect and define the institution grew more acute in the late Republic, as accelerating conquests in Gaul and the eastern Mediterranean created a boom in Rome's slave population. By the time of Augustus, Rome had become such an active center of the slave trade that there were perhaps as many as three hundred thousand slaves living in the city, or one third of the total population.[96] Many of these individuals and their children left behind funerary inscriptions that commemorated

[92] Tacitus, *Histories* 2.93-4; Ammianus Marcellinus 14.6.23. The Forum was originally a malarial swamp.

[93] Pleket, "Rome," 17; David Noy, *Foreigners at Rome: Citizens and Strangers* (London: Duckworth, 2000), 18-9; Walter Scheidel, "Germs for Rome," in *Rome the Cosmopolis*, ed. Catherine Edwards and Greg Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 163-175.

[94] Lo Casico, "Le procedure di *recensus*," 45; Noy, *Foreigners*, 16. After the collapse of the Western Empire in the late fifth century, no European city would match imperial Rome's population until the nineteenth century.

[95] Grant, *Social History of Greece and Rome*, 100.

[96] Walter Scheidel, "Human Mobility in Roman Italy, II: The Slave Population," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 95 (2005): 67; Grant, *Social History of Greece and Rome*, 101, 105; Mary L. Gordon, "The Nationality of Slaves under the Early Roman Empire," *Journal of Roman Studies* 14, no. 1-2 (1924): 94-5; Keith Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves: Sociological Studies in Roman History*, Vol. I. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 68-9; Willem Jongman, "Slavery and the Growth of Rome: The Transformation of Italy in the Second and First Centuries BCE," in *Rome the Cosmopolis*, ed. Catherine Edwards and Greg Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 117; Ramsay MacMullen, "The Unromanized in Rome," in *Diasporas in Antiquity*, ed. S. Cohen and E. Frerichs (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1993), 327 note 3.

their professions and countries of origin: a corpus of evidence that shows how extensively slaves were thoroughly integrated into all levels of Roman public and private life.[97]

Epigraphic evidence indicates that slaves came from virtually every corner of the Romans' known world. Ethnic signifiers in inscriptions such as *Gallus* ("Gaul"), *Germanus* ("German"), *Baeticus* ("Spaniard"), *Afer* ("African"), *Maurus* ("Mauritanian"), *Ponticus* ("Pontian"), *Phryx* ("Phrygian"), *Lydus* ("Lydian"), *Cilix* ("Cilician"), *Araps* ("Arab"), *Parthus* ("Parthian"), and *Persicus* ("Persian") give a sense of the slave population's diversity.[98] The preponderance of names like *Atticus* or *Graecus* ("Greek"), *Asia* or *Asiaticus* ("from Asia Minor"), and *Syrus* ("Syrian") also indicates that the majority of slaves either came directly from the Hellenistic East or spent time there.[99] Literary references support this picture. Pliny the Elder commented on the "foreign crowds" of slaves that filled Rome's streets in the first century CE, and the historian Tacitus bemoaned the "slaves of every nationality" that crowded into imperial metropolis, in contrast with the (mostly imagined) simpler days of the old Republic.[100] In such an environment, the satirist Juvenal lamented, a free Roman could be trampled to death on the streets while, back at home, his bustling

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[97] Jongman, "Slavery and the Growth of Rome," 117.

[98] *CIL* i.1180 (*Gallus*), vi.14006 (*Galla*), v.1362 (*Germanus*), vi.10909 (*Germana*), vi.13499 (*Baeticus*), viii.13053 (*Getulicus*), viii.13188 (*Libycus*), vii.2237 (*Affra*), vi.10860 (*Ponticus*), vi.40452 (*Phryx*), vi.155, 2976 (*Lydus*); viii.12621 (*Cilix*), vi.8868 (*Araps*), vi.29112 (*Parthus*), vi.1877 13979 (*Persicus*); Gordon, "Nationality of Slaves," 98.

[99] *CIL* vi.4033, 12705 (*Atticus*), vi.12708 (*Attica*), vi.4252, 13290 (*Attice*), v.1014 (*Graeca*), iii.4870 (*Asiaticus*), vi.3952 (*Asia*), viii.24826 (*Syria*); Gordon, "Nationality of Slaves," 99.

[100] Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* 33.27 (*turba externa*); Tacitus, *Annals* 3.53 (*familiarum numerum et nationes*).

slaves busied themselves washing dishes, kindling fires, and preparing baths "unconcerned with their master's fate."[101]

In Rome as in Athens, slaves were transported from the margins of the empire and forcibly installed at its center to serve the city's needs. They performed many of the same tasks as their Athenian counterparts, from manual labor to domestic service to teaching and accounting. The crucial difference lies in manumission rates, which were much higher at Rome than at Athens. Many Roman masters permitted their slaves to keep a small savings (*pecunium*) to eventually buy their freedom, and it was also common to manumit slaves in one's will as a reward for loyalty or a sign of affection. In the Roman perspective, slaveholders could afford to be generous with manumission because the hope of freedom encouraged slaves to work harder and behave well.[102] Furthermore, the Roman system of clientage and patronage kept former slaves socially and economically bound to their former masters even after they were freed.[103] In this sense, manumission was a gift the receiver could never entirely repay. As a result of this more liberal policy and intermarriage between natives of the city and the freedmen and their descendents by the second century CE as much as 60

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[101] Juvenal, 3.260-7 (*obtritum vulgi perit omne cadaver more animae, domus interea secura patellas iam lavat et bucca foculum excitat et sonat unctis striglibus et pleno componit lintea guto. haec inter pueros varie properantur, at illeiam sedet in ripa taetrumque novicius horret, porthmea nec sperat caenosi gurgitis alnum infelix nec habet quem porrigat ore trientem*).

[102] Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves*, 128-132.

[103] Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves*, 130. Freedmen occupied a middle status between slaves and freeborn citizens, preventing them from holding certain offices and ensuring that they remained socially inferior to their former masters. They did not, however, pass this status on to their children, who possessed all the rights and privileges of freeborn citizens.

to 90 percent of Rome's population could trace their ancestry to people who came

from someplace else.[104]

In addition to slaves, a constant stream of free immigrants came to the capital.

As noted above, the Romans saw themselves as a mixed people from the moment of

their city's foundation.[105] As a result, they did not impose a metic status on foreigners

(*peregrini*) as did the Athenians, and on the whole were more open to assimilating

outsiders into their political and social community.[106] Because they were less closely

regulated than Athenian metics, it is not always easy to distinguish free immigrants to

Rome from slaves or freedmen in the textual and epigraphic records. High rates of

manumission blurred the line between "Romans" and "outsiders," as did the

extension of Roman citizenship to all free males in the empire in 212 CE. Perhaps for

these reasons, immigrants to Rome are not identifiable in overwhelming numbers in

surviving sources. The free immigrant population numbered perhaps sixty thousand

to one hundred thousand people in the third century.[107]

Nevertheless, foreigners were prominent enough in Roman life to inspire the

first-century philosopher Seneca to speculate on the reasons they came to the city:

> From their towns and cities, from the whole world they have
> congregated here. Ambition has brought some; the requirement of
> public office has brought others. For some, it was an embassy
> imposed on them; for others, it was luxury, seeking a convenient and
> wealthy setting for its vices. Eagerness for liberal studies brought
> some; the shows brought others. Some were led by friendship, others

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[104] Noy, *Foreigners*, 11.
[105] Livy, book 1; Dionysus of Halicarnassus, book 1; Plutarch, *Romulus*.
[106] Virgil, *Aeneid* 7.125-132; Livy 1.13; Pomponius, *Digest* 1.2.2.28. Starting in the mid-third century BCE a state official (the *praetor peregrini*) oversaw criminal trials involving foreigners in the city.
[107] Noy, *Foreigners*, 26. Noy estimates that free immigrants made up five percent of the city's population.

by industry taking the ample opportunity for showing virtue. Some have brought beauty for sale, others have brought eloquence. Every race of humans has flowed together into the city, which offers great rewards for both virtues and vices.[108]

Many of these factors align with trends already seen at Athens. Like a good aristocrat, Seneca did not spend much time discussing financial matters in his list, only briefly mentioning "industry" as a motivating cause.[109] Nevertheless, economic factors were a primary reason that people migrated to Rome. In its heyday the imperial city was the commercial heart of the empire and the biggest market in the western world. The opportunities it offered attracted a crowd of merchants, craftsmen, and service providers that would have had Athens bursting at the seams.

Many of these individuals imported the massive amounts of grain from the empire's breadbasket provinces – Sicily, North Africa, and Egypt – that were necessary to keep the city fed. The Roman government distributed some of this grain to the city's residents to provide crowd control and showcase the emperor's beneficence, giving rise to Rome's reputation as the place where "bread and circuses" (*panem et circenses*) could be had for free or at reduced prices.[110] The capital also

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[108] Seneca, *To Helvius* 6.2-3. (*Ex municipiis et coloniis suis, ex toto deinque orbe terrarium confluxerant: alios adduxit ambitio, alios necessitas officii publici, alios inposita legatio, alios luxuria opportunum et opulentum vitiis locum quaerens, alios liberalium studiorum cupiditas, alios spectacular; quosdam traxit amicitia; quosdam industria axam ostendendae virtue nancta materiam; quidam venalem formam attulerunt, quidam venalem eloquentiam. Nullum non hominum genus concurrit in urbem et virtutibus et vitiis magna pretia ponentem.*)

[109] The Latin word *industria* could also be translated as "diligence" or "hard work." The fact that Seneca did not spend much time discussing the financial reasons for immigrating to Rome is not surprising, Roman aristocrats shared an antipathy toward commerce with their Greek and Chinese counterparts.

[110] Southern, *Roman Empire*, 326. This distribution program, the *annona*, also made grain available for purchase at reduced rates on the open market. Initiated during the Republic, it was reorganized on several occasions during the imperial period, notably under Augustus (r. 27 BCE–14 CE), Trajan (r. 98–117), and Aurelian (r. 270–275), who expanded it to include rations of salt, pork, and wine.

consumed huge quantities of olive oil, wine, and garum, a sauce made from fermented fish intestines that we might think of as the Roman ketchup. Funerary inscriptions from Rome and its port of Ostia allow us to glimpse the careers of importers such as Gaius Sentius Regulianus, a wine seller from Lugdunum (modern Lyon), who traveled repeatedly to the city.[111] They also show that it was not uncommon for merchants to divide their time between the capital and their home cities. Publius Clodius Athenio, a garum dealer from Malaca in Spain (modern Malaga) who served as an officer in his city's Corporation of Traders and died while doing business at Rome, is one example of an importer who appears to have maintained a second residence in the capital.[112] Other merchants relied on family connections to watch over both ends of an import business, as a second-century letter between two Alexandrian brothers who shipped grain into Rome attests.[113]

Beyond basics like grain, wine, and oil, Rome had a hunger for exotic foods and luxuries. Aelius Aristides observed that all forms of crops and produce could be found in the capital, while Seneca more cynically reported that the Romans "scour the world to load their tables."[114] Recipes for dishes such as flamingo sauce and roast gazelle preserved in Apicius' cookbook *de Re Coqinaria* ("On Cooking") show us

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[111] *CIL* vi.29722; Noy, *Foreigners*, 116.

[112] *CIL* vi.9677; Cecilia Ricci, "Hispani a Roma," *Editorial Compultense* 10 (1992): no. a6; Noy, *Foreigners*, 115-6. Spanish merchants appear to have dominated the oil and garum markets.

[113] *IGUR* 393; Jean-Louis Podvin, "Les Égyptiens En Occident," in *Étrangers Dans La Cite Romaine*, ed. Rita and Christian-Georges Schwentzel Compatangelo-Soussignan (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2007), 118.

[114] Aelius Aristides, *To Rome* 10; Seneca, *To Helvius* 10.3. A former vegetarian, Seneca did not approve of the gluttony fashionable among some of his peers.

how far the Roman gourmand was willing to range in search of new flavors.[115] To do so, he had to do business with merchants from Africa, the Near East, and the furthest reaches of the Black Sea.[116] In addition to exotic foodstuffs, foreign merchants also imported commodities such as incense, cosmetics, precious stones, and fine clothes. One Egyptian trader who traveled to Rome by way of Syria, Asia, and Greece corresponded with his contacts at home about importing cotton and purple dye.[117] Another, an incense dealer (*thurarius*) named Lucius Lutatius Paccius, boasted that he was "a member of the household of King Mithridates" to stir up interest in his wares.[118] We can be certain that many other immigrants like him traveled to Rome to provide goods for the luxury market. Thanks to the *pax Romana*, merchants could travel in relative safety and with a frequency that at times seems almost modern. One inscription discovered at the Phrygian city of Hierapolis in central Asia Minor informs us that its author, a merchant named Titus Falvius Zeuxis, made seventy-two voyages to Italy in his lifetime in the late first century CE![119]

In addition to importers and merchants, economic opportunities also brought talented immigrants with marketable skills to Rome. The city that Augustus found built of brick and left sheathed in marble had a great need for masons and sculptors. Stone dealers (*lithemporoi*), masons (*cementarii*), and marble workers (*marmoraii*)

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[115] Apicius, *de Re Coquinaria* 6.4, 8.3.
[116] Indeed, pre-industrial modes of transportation and communion *required* more people to come into contact to move goods over long distances. In a world before FedEx, commodities had to exchange hands many times before completing their journey from producer to consumer.
[117] *P. Mich.* viii.500-1; Noy, *Foreigners*, 115.
[118] *CIL* vi.5639; Noy, *Foreigners*, 116. While we cannot know whether Paccius' claim of royal patronage was true or simply clever marketing, it is likely that came from the vicinity of Pontus, Mithridates' ancient kingdom on the southern coast of the Black Sea.
[119] *IGR* 4.841

appear frequently in inscriptions. Zeno of Aphrodisias, who "passed through many cities" before carving a tomb, stele, and statue for himself and his family at Rome at age seventy, is one such figure.[120] Skilled artisans like Zeno who worked and lived at Rome recall the many metic craftsmen who helped build the Parthenon, Erechtheion, and other temples of the Athenian Acropolis.[121] In addition, Rome required the services of architects such as Apollodorus of Damascus, who designed the Forum of Trajan in the second century and was part of a tradition of traveling urban planners that began with Hippodamus of Miletus, the designer of the Piraeus' urban grid.[122]

Foreign talent also fueled industries such as the production of gold and silver jewelry. Of 187 gold and silver workers known to us from inscriptions across the empire, 138 were based in the capital.[123] Many of these skilled craftsmen, such as the Cortinthian goldsmith Euboulus and the silversmiths that Augustine of Hippo saw working in the *vicus argentarius* ("Silversmith's District") when he visited Rome in the fourth century, were immigrants who came because Rome was greatest market for their wares in the Mediterranean world.[124] As in modern cities, specialists often clustered in districts that later took their names from their crafts.[125] This tendency highlights the fact that economics not only fueled immigration to the city but also

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[120] *IGUR* 1425; Noy, *Foreigners*, 113-14.
[121] Suetonius, *Augustus* 28; Cassius Dio 56.30.3.
[122] *PIR²* A922
[123] Noy, *Foreigners*, 113.
[124] *CIL* vi.18175; Augustine, *City of God*, 7.4.
[125] Wayne Meeks, *The First Urban Christians* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003)*, 29; Ramsay MacMullen, *Roman Social Relations* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974), 70-73, 129-137. MacMullen lists a number of districts, such as the *scalae anulariae* ("Ringmaker's Stairs") and the *porticus margaritaria* ("Pearl-seller's Portico"). These trade districts in Rome also recall Keramaikos quarter of classical Athens, where foreign artisans produced much of the city's prized pottery.

encouraged the growth of immigrant neighborhoods within it. As we shall see, the

same trend took place in Chang'an, where the residential wards adjacent to the city's

two great markets developed into trade enclaves where artisans produced goods such

as the high-quality musical instruments or Turkish-style clothing popular among the

city's elites.[126]

In addition to producing specialty goods for sale, some immigrants provided

services such as healing…or its reverse. Greeks and other easterners dominated the

medical profession. Galen of Pergamum, the most famous doctor in Roman history

who migrated to the capital from Asia Minor in the late second century CE, wrote that

Rome was an ideal destination for doctors because its large population and full roster

of public games provided an endless source of illnesses and limb dislocations for

practitioners to study.[127] He also mentioned colleagues in his writings, including his

countryman Quintus and an unnamed doctor from the Greek city of Syracuse in

Sicily.[128] Pliny the Elder, who distrusted Greek doctors, swore that Egyptians could

cure rare diseases when conventional methods failed.[129] Pliny's mention of

Egyptians, a group often associated with the magical arts, reminds us that the political

power concentrated in the capital also drew specialists from the dark side of the

medical profession, who used their expertise to further the schemes of the Roman

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[126] Edward Schaefer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand: A Study of Tang Exotics* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963), 19-20; Mark Edward Lewis, *China's Cosmopolitan Empire: The Tang Dynasty* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2009), 114; Victor Cunrui Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an* (Ann Arbor: Center for Chinese Studies: University of Michigan, 2000), 183.
[127] Galen 18a.347; Edwards and Woolf, "Cosmopolis," 4.
[128] Galen 8.361-6, 17b.1561; Noy, *Foreigners*, 111-2.
[129] Pliny, *Natural History*, 26.4

nobility. Lucasta, an expert in rare poisons who came from Gaul to serve Nero and

his mother Agrippina in the first century CE, represents an altogether different kind of

specialist whose talents earned her a profitable place in the imperial city.[130]

The entertainment industry was another big business that brought specialists

to Rome. Even more than in Athens, festivals and games (what Seneca calls "the

shows") attracted both skilled immigrants and short-term visitors. The Flavian

Amphitheatre (what we call the Coliseum), completed in 80 CE under the emperor

Titus (r. 79–81 CE), drew enormous crowds to the city to watch animal shows and

gladiatorial fights. Although most spectators would have come from Rome and its

environs, Pliny the Elder remarked that the beasts and men who fought in the famous

arena hailed Europe, Asia, and Africa.[131] Likewise, the poet Martial reported seeing

Sarmatians, Arabs, Ethiopians, and other foreigners in the crowd at the building's

opening ceremony.[132] By the third century, spectators from the Spanish city of Gades

(modern Cadíz) attended the games regularly enough to have their own inscribed

seats.[133]

In addition to the games held in the Ampitheater, festivals such as the

Capitoline Games founded by the emperor Domitian (81–96 CE) enticed athletes,

musicians, and performance artists to the capital. Many professional charioteers

came to race in the Circus; several, such as the Lusitanian Gaius Appuleius Diocles

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[130] *PIR²* L414.
[131] Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* 8
[132] Martial, *On Spectacles* 3 (*Venit ab Orpheo cultor Rhodopeius Haemo, venit et epolo Sarmata pastus equo, et qui prima bibit deprensi flumina Nili, et quem supremae Tethyos unda ferit; festinauit Arabs, festinauere Sabaei, et Cilices nimbis hic maduere suis. Crinibus in nodum tortis uenere Sygambri, atque aliter tortis crinibus Aethiopes*).
[133] *CIL* vi.320981; Noy, *Foreigners*, 117.

and the African Marcus Aurelius Liber, rose to celebrity status.[134] Actors could

achieve similar success, although the Roman theater never came close to rivaling the

Athenian Dionysia. Bathyllus, a popular pantomime actor who came to Rome from

Alexandria during the reign of Augustus, was one such figure.[135] In addition to the

adulation of the crowd, many performers came seeking the relative security of

imperial patronage. The *Historia Augusta* reports that Lucius Verus (r. 161–169)

brought the actor Agrippus Memfius with him from Syria to Rome along with a

troupe of flute and pipe players, actors, jesters, mimes, and conjurors.[136] Some of

these entertainers likely stayed in the capital only for a time before moving on in

search of new audiences, but others remained there either intentionally or by unhappy

chance. Most are, in fact, known to us only from their tombstones. Alcimas of

Smyrna, a trumpet player, a Cypriot flute player named Euphemus, and a cithara

player named Flavius Terpneus, who came to Rome from Alexandria and died at age

twenty, are just a few examples from many.[137]

The business of education is the last major area in which immigration to

Rome resembled Athens. Seneca includes "eagerness for liberal studies" in his list of

reasons that immigrants came to the capital, since by his time Rome had become a

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[134] *CIL* vi 10048 (Diocles); *CIL* vi 10058 (Liber); Noy, *Foreigners*, 119.

[135] *PIR*[2] B91; Noy, *Foreigners*, 118.

[136] Scriptores Historiae Augustae, *Verus* 8.10-1; Pliny, *Natural History* 7.74; Noy, *Foreigners*, 118, 122. This motley crew reminds us that imperial city also drew curiosities from all corners, such as one individual named Gabbaras, who billed himself as the Tallest Man in the World (at 9'9") during the reign of Claudius (41-54 CE). While the *Historia Augusta* is a difficult document that must be approached with caution, its biography of Lucius Verrus is generally help to be reliable. See Ronald Syme, *Emperors and Biography: Studies in the Historia Augusta* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), 56-7.

[137] *CIL* vi.10149 (Alcimas); *IGUR* 551 (Euphemus); *IGUR* 1034 (Flavius); Noy, *Foreigners*, 122.

center of learning that rivaled and in some ways surpassed Athens. This is despite the

fact that Roman intellectual life owed a glaring debt to the Greek and Hellenistic

world. While the Romans had been exposed to Greek learning and culture from the

earliest days of the Republic, the number of Greek intellectuals in Rome began to

grow exponentially in the second century BCE, as the Romans annexed the

Hellenistic kingdoms of the eastern Mediterranean.[138] Although this influx of Greek

culture in the late Republic initially repelled as many Romans as it attracted, by the

imperial period training in Greek language and literature had become a standard part

of the education of every upper-class Roman youth.

As at Athens, some of the foreign teachers who came to Rome were slaves.

Eros, the teacher of Brutus and Cassius who arrived in Rome on a slave ship from

Antioch in the first century CE, was one such individual.[139] Others were freedmen,

such as the Athenians Lucius Ateius Philologus and Gnaeus Pompeius Lenaeus, who

were active during the time of the dictator Sulla (81 BCE).[140] Still others were

prestigious scholars who came to the capital by special invitation. Examples include

Aristodemus of Nysa, who journeyed to Rome to teach the children of Pompey the

Great after previously founding schools in Nysa and Rhodes, and Apollonius of

Chalcis, who accepted an offer from Antoninus Pius (r. 138–161 CE) to tutor the

young Marcus Aurelius (r. 160–180).[141] Regardless of their social standing or

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[138] Lucius Aemilius Paullus, the conqueror of Macedon, brought King Philip V's royal library with him back to Rome in 168 BCE (Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* vi.5.1).
[139] Noy, *Foreigners*, 95.
[140] Suetonius, *de Grammaticis* 11. They likely came to Rome in the aftermath of Sulla's sack of Athens.
[141] Scriptores Historiae Augustae, *Antoninus* 10.

country of origin, the free teachers who migrated to Rome all came seeking "greater earnings and higher dignity" than could be found elsewhere in the empire.[142] By the first century CE, foreign scholars were numerous enough for Strabo to complain that the capital's intellectual community was full of Tarsians and Alexandrians and Horace to famously sing that "conquered Greece" had "taken captive her savage conqueror and brought her arts into rustic Latium."[143]

Many teachers offered training in rhetoric, a field of study that was as central to Roman political life as it was to the Athenian. Students looking to master the art of persuasive speaking studied literature under the guidance of *grammatici* and oratory under *rhetores*. So important was this training to Roman aristocrats that the emperor Vespasian (r. 69–79 CE) established chairs of Greek and Latin rhetoric at Rome to attract prominent scholars to the capital. Like endowed chairs at modern universities, these well-paid, highly prestigious positions represented the pinnacle of the academic career. Quintilian, an immigrant from Calaguris in Spain (modern Calahorra) and the most famous *rhetor* of his day, was the first to hold the Latin chair.[144] The Greek chair, which was considered more prominent even than the older one at Athens, was occupied by a series of scholars that included Philagrus of Cilicia, Hadrian of Tyre, Pausanias of Caesaria, and Euodianus of Smyrna.[145] It is worth noting that these prestigious teachers, who shaped the careers of many Roman aristocrats and were

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[142] Augustine, *Confessions* 5.8.
[143] Horace, *Epistles* 2.1 (*Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit et artes intulit agresti Latio)*; Strabo, *Geography* 14.5.15.
[144] *PIR²* E74; Noy, *Foreigners*, 96.
[145] Philostratus, *Lives of the Sophists* 580 (Philagrus), 589-90 (Hadrian), 594 (Pausanias), 596 (Euodianus).

influential in the capital's elite circles, were all born outside Rome. The city was a

center of rhetorical education for centuries. Even in the fifth century CE, as the

empire was crumbling in Western Europe, the Gallic senator Sidonius Apollinaris

reported that his friend Burgundio had successfully attracted students and built a

reputation for himself as a skilled teacher of oratory in Rome.[146]

Rome was also a premier center for legal studies. As the seat of the Senate

and later residence of the emperors, the city gave birth to a legal tradition that

powerfully shaped medieval and modern European law. It also mothered generations

of lawyers in antiquity, who used the training they received from *grammatici* and

rhetores in tandem with their knowledge of the law to argue cases before juries and

emperors. Because it was the best place to study jurisprudence in the empire, aspiring

young men came to Rome with the support of their families in the hope of securing

careers that would improve their social standing.[147] Their hopes did not always work

out as planned. The second-century sophist Philostratus tells a story, for example, of

one young man from the Greek city of Messene whose father sent him to Rome to

study law but returned home after he became the object of the emperor Domitian's

unwanted sexual advances.[148]

Nevertheless, coming to the capital opened doors for luckier students such as

the famous jurist Ulpian, who came to Rome from the Phoenician city of Tyre in the

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[146] Sidonius Apollinaris, *Epistles* 9.14. Burgundio's Germanic name reflects the shifting demographic trends of the late empire.

[147] Justinian, *Digest* 5.1.18.1; Ulpian 12.1.17, 47.10.5.5, 50.1.36; Augustine, *Confession*s 6.8; Noy, *Foreigners*, 93-4. This tradition, too, was long-lived. Even after the founding of Constantinople in the fourth century, Augustine mentions a friend named Alypius who journeyed to Rome to study law after exhausting the opportunities available to him in Thagaste and Carthage.

[148] Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius of Tyana* 7.42.

early third century to study with the North African jurist Aemilius Papianus. Ulpian eventually became an advisor to Septimius Severus (r. 193–211), Master of Petitions (*magister libellorum*) under Caracalla (r. 198–217), and Praetorian Prefect (*praefectus praetoritae*) under Severus Alexander (r. 222–235).[149] His career, like those of his contemporaries who held offices in the imperial bureaucracy, shows how education could raise immigrants to relatively high levels of political power in the capital. Ulpian held official appointments under several emperors, and his compilations of second and third-century laws had a major influence on later legal codes such as the fifth-century *Codex Theodosianus* and the sixth-century *Digest* of the Byzantine emperor Justinian (r. 527–565). As we shall see in the final section of this chapter, the opportunity to secure an administrative career through education also attracted far greater numbers of immigrants to Chang'an, where young men from across East Asia worked hard to pass the civil service examinations that were required for employment in the imperial government.[150] Like Ulpian and his peers, many successful students in Chang'an became the bureaucrats who advised the Tang emperor and ran the government under his supervision.

In the Roman Empire, any individual who wished to hold public office above the local level needed to move to the capital.[151] It is not surprising, then, that political motivations ("ambition," "embassies," and "the requirement of public office") show up early in Seneca's list of reasons why people migrated to Rome. Even after

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[149] Scriptores Historiae Augustae, *Alexander Severus* 68.1; Justinian, *Digest* 47.2, 50.15, 52.20; *Codex Justinianus* 4.65.4.1, 8.37.4. Ulpian also became the teacher of the jurist Modestinus Herennius, who also came from the Hellenistic East.
[150] Lewis, *China's Cosmopolitan Empire*, 91-2.
[151] Noy, *Foreigners*, 98.

Augustus and his successors monopolized all real political power in the Roman state, the ancient Republican offices of consul, praetor, aedile, and prefect continued to be coveted by both Italian and provincial elites because of the prestige they conferred upon them and their families.[152] The desire to be known, respected, and deemed worthy of one's ancestors was deeply ingrained in the Greco-Roman aristocratic character. Extending far beyond the walls of the capital, it induced many ambitious outsiders to relocate to the center of empire. Writing in the early second century, the biographer and essayist Plutarch commented on its power to draw provincial elites to Rome:

> There are Chians, Galatians, Bithynians, and others who are not content with their share of reputation or power among their countrymen, and weep because they do not wear the shoes of the patrician. And if they do wear them, they weep because they are not yet Roman praetors, and if they are praetors they weep because they are not yet consuls, and if consuls, they weep because they were proclaimed later rather than sooner![153]

In addition to provincial elites who came to the capital seeking senatorial offices, such as the contingent of Gauls who were admitted to the Roman Senate in 46 CE, by the second century it also became common for emperors to originate outside

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[152] The patronage networks that had always informed Roman political and social relations had not ceased to function with the advent of the imperial system; rather, the emperor simply moved to the top of the pyramid.

[153] Plutarch, *On Tranquility of the Spirit* 10 (Θάσιος γὰρ ἦν ἐκεῖνος: ἄλλος δέ τις Χῖος, ἄλλος δὲ Γαλάτης ἢ Βιθυνὸς οὐκ ἀγαπῶν, εἴ τινος μερίδος ἦν ἢ 7 δόξαν ἢ δύναμιν ἐν τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ πολίταις εἴληχεν, ἀλλὰ κλαίων ὅτι μὴ φορεῖ πατρικίους 8 ἐὰν δὲ καὶ φορῇ, ὅτι μηδέπω στρατηγεῖ Ῥωμαίων ἐὰν δὲ καὶ στρατηγῇ, ὅτι μὴ ὑπατεύει: καὶ ὑπατεύων, ὅτι μὴ πρῶτος ἀλλ᾽ ὕστερος ἀνηγορεύθη.); Noy, *Foreigners*, 98.

Italy.[154] Trajan (r. 98–117) and Hadrian (r. 117–138) came from the city of Italia in

Spain, Septimius Severus (r. 193–211) came from Leptis Magna in North Africa, and

Rome celebrated its one thousandth anniversary under the rule of Philip the Arab (r.

244-249), to name just a few. On the one hand the increasingly diverse background

of Rome's rulers reflects the mounting pressures that the empire faced in the third

century, when many provincial legions elevated their commanders into "barracks

emperors" in the midst of a period of sustained political, military, and economic

crisis. Yet on the other hand the diverse background of Rome's emperors represents

a willingness to admit outsiders into the highest circles of political power that

distinguishes Rome from Athens.

The political power located in Rome also drew embassies of provincials and

foreigners there on a regular basis. Provincial cities sent delegations to the capital to

proclaim their loyalty, register complaints, and ask for favors. The Jewish

philosopher Philo of Alexandria took part in one such embassy to Caligula (r. 37–41)

that came seeking imperial help ending pogroms against the city's Jewish

community.[155] The fact that Philo's embassy is one of ninety-three that we know

arrived between the reigns of Augustus and Gallienus (r. 253–268) suggests that

provincial delegations brought a great number of visitors to Rome and likely

consumed a good deal of the emperor's time.[156] Indeed, Trajan was so annoyed by

the annual greetings sent to him from the city of Byzantium that he sent his friend

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[154] Tacitus, *Annals* 11.24.
[155] Philo, *Embassy to Gaius* 18.
[156] G. A. Souris, "The Size of Provincial Embassies to the Emperor under the Principate," *Zeitschrift fur Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 48 (1982): 241-44; W. Williams, "Antoninus Pius and the Control of Provincial Embassies," *Historia: Zeitschrift fur Alte Geschichte* 16, no. 4: 470-1.

Pliny, the governor of Bithynia, a letter thanking him for putting them to an end.[157]

Trajan's reasons for curbing the Byzantines' enthusiasm were not just personal, since

embassies taxed the treasuries of their home cities as much as they did the emperor's

patience. It was for this reason that Vespasian (r. 69–79) restricted provincial

embassies to a maximum of three people, and Antoninus Pius (r. 138–161) laid out

specific times and circumstances under which cities could send ambassadors to

Rome.[158]

Delegations of foreigners also arrived to pay homage or seek Roman

intervention in their affairs. Well aware that foreign embassies highlighted his power,

Augustus reported that Indians, Scythians, Parthians, Sarmatians, Bactrians,

Albanians, Iberians, and Medes all sought his attention.[159] Unlike provincial

embassies, which were eventually regulated by imperial edict, foreign dignitaries

often came with entourages that were designed to impress. Tiridates of Aremenia, a

Roman-backed client king, brought several family members, 3,000 Parthian cavalry,

and a number of Romans resident in his kingdom with him when he came to the

capital in 63 CE to receive his crown from Nero.[160] Although embassies such as

these were by definition made up of visitors to Rome, it was not unusual for visiting

dignitaries and their entourages to stay in the city for years. Even provincial

assemblies could linger. Philo's embassy to Caligula, for example, lasted from 37 to

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[157] Pliny, *Epistle* 10.43-44; Souris, "Size of Provincial Embassies," 235.

[158] *Digest* L, 7, 5, 6; Souris, "Size of Provincial Embassies," 235; Williams, "Control of Embassies," 475.

[159] Augustus, *Res Gestae* 31-2*;* Suetonius, *Augustus* 21, *Tiberius* 16; Strabo, *Geography* 15.1.4; Aurelius Victor, *de Caesaribus* 1.7.

[160] Suetonius, *Nero* 13; Tacitus, *Annals* 16.24; Dio Cassius, *Roman History* 63.1-2; Pliny, *Natural History* 30.16-7; Noy, *Foreigners*, 102.

41 CE. Nearly two hundred years later, the philosopher Julius Africanus, originally sent to Rome as an ambassador from his city of Emmaus in Syria, ended up staying long-term to reorganize the Pantheon library at the request of Severus Alexander (r. 222–235 CE).[161]

Other visitors to Rome lingered for reasons outside their control. Some were high-profile hostages like the sons and grandsons of king Phraates of Parthia, whom Augustus tells us were sent because Phraates was seeking his friendship "through the pledging of his children."[162] Like other ancient peoples, the Romans frequently kept political hostages to maintain an upper hand over rival states as well as "barbarian" peoples such as Germans and Goths. Some of these individuals became allies, such as Italicus of the Cherusci, the son and grandson of two important Germanic chiefs who was sent back over the Rhine in 47 CE to rule his people after spending his youth as a hostage in Rome. Others were merely collateral, such as the sons of several Vandal leaders that Aurelian (r. 270–275) took with him back to the capital in the 270s.[163] Rome also hosted elite refugees displaced by events in their homelands, such as Gaius Iulius Artabasdes, the son of King Artabasdes of Armenia and Media who was expelled from his kingdom in 3 CE. Prince Artabasdes ended up in Rome and appears to have spent the rest of his life there, leaving behind an epitaph in Greek and Latin that commemorates his death at age thirty-nine.[164] As we shall see, his fate

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[161] Gustave Bardy, *La Question Des Langues Dans L'église Ancienne* (Paris: Beauchesne et ses fils, 1948), 90, citing *P. Oxy* 412; Noy, *Foreigners*, 100-105 lists several other examples.

[162] Augustus, *Res Gestae* 32.

[163] Tacitus, *Annals* 11.16; Lee, *Information and Frontiers*, 368.

[164] *IGUR* 602 = *CIL* vi.32264, as interpreted by Pani, "Documenti," 1679-84; *PIR*² A1044; Noy, *Foreigners*, 109.

resembles that of Peroz III, the last crown prince of the Sassanid Persian Empire who ended his life as an exile in Chang'an after the Arabs overran his kingdom in 651.

Like foreign ambassadors, royal hostages and refugees came with large entourages. Zia, the Dacian wife of King Pieporus of the Costobori who came to Rome after Marcus Aurelius defeated her husband in 170 CE, is one example. Although we know few details about Zia's life in the capital or the terms of her stay, the fact that her children and grandchildren commemorated a mausoleum for her there tells us that many family members followed her into exile, presumably with their own servants.[165] Although they may not have been free to leave Rome's environs, foreign dignitaries like Zia and her family were treated with respect that benefitted their status. These individuals moved in high circles, attending schools with leading Romans, learning their language, and transmitting knowledge, either directly or thorough osmosis, about their homelands. The ever-curious Pliny the Elder reported that the Romans' understanding of inner Asia Minor was greatly increased by the kings who came as suppliants to Rome after the general Corbulo's campaigns there in the early 60s CE and left their children behind as hostages.[166] Along with their

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[165] *CIL* vi.1801; Cecilia Ricci, "Balcanici E Danubianii a Roma," in *Prosoporgraphica*, ed, L. Mrozewicz and K. Ilski (Poznan: 1993), nos. Da6-8; G. G. Mateescu, "I Traci nelle Epigrafi di Roma," *EphDacor* 1 (1923): 99-100; Noy, *Foreigners*, 108. The Costoboci were a Thracian people who lived on the eastern margin of the Carpathians. See Pausanias 10.34; Cassius Dio 71.12; Ammianus Marcellinus 22.8.42.

[166] Pliny, *Natural History* 6.23; John Matthews, "Hostages, Philosophers, Pilgrims, and the Diffusion of Ideas in the Late Roman Mediterranean and near East," in *Tradition and Innovation in Late Antiquity*, ed. F. M. and R. S. Humphreys Clover (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 40.

entourages, "guests" such as these formed small enclaves of foreigners that diffused knowledge of distant lands and cultures to elite Romans.[167]

Furthermore, it was not unusual for the Romans to import large groups of hostages in addition to individuals and their entourages. They employed this tactic as early as the Second Punic War (218–202 BCE), when Rome was engaged in its life-and-death struggle with Carthage for supremacy in the Western Mediterranean. According to the historian Polybius, after winning the war, the Romans demanded the transfer of 200 Carthaginians to the capital to be held until Carthage's heavy war indemnity was completely paid off. Polybius had good evidence to support this part of his history, since the descendants of these Carthaginian hostages were still living in Rome when he came there in 167 BCE.[168] In fact, Polybius arrived to Rome as a hostage himself, as one of the 1,000 Achaean nobles brought to the city after Rome's victory over Philip of Macedon in the Third Macedonian War (171–168).[169] During the seventeen years he spent there, Polybius became the friend of Aemilius Paullus and the teacher of his sons Fabius and Scipio Aemilianus.[170] Later, at the end of the Third Punic War in 146 BCE, he witnessed the destruction of Carthage at Scipio's side.

As these examples imply, political immigration to Rome was often closely interwoven with military affairs. This should come as no surprise. Political authority and military power were as inextricably entwined in the Roman Empire as they are in

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[167] Matthews, "Hostages, Philosophers, Pilgrims," 39; Noy, *Foreigners*, 108.
[168] Polybius 15.18.8.
[169] Pausanias 7.10.11.
[170] Polybius 25. 1455-1462.

all imperial systems. The foreign ambassadors, refugees, and hostages who came to

Rome exemplify this inescapable fact, but so do the thousands of soldiers from across

the empire that were stationed in the capital and its environs. Most of these were

members of the Praetorian Guard (*cohortes praetoriae*), the elite corps that severed as

the emperor's bodyguard from the time of Augustus to Constantine (r. 306–337).

Originally composed of nine cohorts of 500 men, only three of which were garrisoned

in the city itself, the Guard expanded and centralized over time until, by the reign of

Domitian (r. 81–96) it was comprised of ten cohorts of 1,000 men that were all

garrisoned within Rome's walls.[171] As the numbers of soldiers in the city grew, so

did the diversity of their backgrounds. Over the first two centuries of the Common

Era, elite troops from the provincial legions gradually replaced the Italians who

originally filled the Praetorian ranks. This trend dramatically accelerated in 193,

when Septimius Severus (r. 193–211) replaced all of the existing Praetorians with

troops from the Danubian legions that had supported his claim in the civil war of 193-

4.[172] Cassius Dio's complaint that these newcomers were "savage in appearance,

terrifying in speech, and boorish in conversation" reflects his aristocratic bias against

them, but also indicates that they were a visible and active presence in the city.[173]

Indeed, although the Praetorians have become infamous in Roman history for their

ability to make or break emperors, it is important to remember that they also

represented a sizeable percentage of the city's foreign population. Their forts

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[171] Tacitus, *Histories* 2.93.2. This was the equivalent of two full legions.
[172] Cassius Dio 74.1.1f; Herodian 2.13.1-12, 2.14.3.
[173] Cassius Dio 75.2.6.

(*castrae*) were simultaneously military bases and centers of foreign infiltration into Roman life, especially as points of diffusion for religious cults popular among soldiers, such as the worship of the Persian god Mithras.[174]

Military service also brought immigrants to Rome besides members of the Praetorian Guard. The Julio-Claudian emperors maintained a personal bodyguard of fierce German warriors (*collegium Germanorum*) that was separate from the Praetorians, chosen for their skill in battle and lack of ties to potential rivals.[175] In a characteristic episode, Suetonius reports that Caligula staged a grand victory over German "barbarians" by taking fake prisoners from this bodyguard, as well as from a group of German hostages who were studying literature at Rome.[176] In addition to the German cohort, sailors in the imperial fleets based at Misenum and Ravenna had their winter barracks in the capital. Many of these were provincials and freedmen who originated in the Hellenistic East, such as one Egyptian sailor named Apollinarius who sent a letter home to his mother informing her that he had arrived in Rome safely and in good health.[177] The epitaph of a Pannonian named Lucius Licinius Capito, a helmsman in the Misenum fleet who died at Rome after forty-five years of service, reminds us that careers in the fleet made many sailors into more-or-

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[174] George La Piana, "Foreign Groups in Rome During the First Centuries of the Empire," *Harvard Theological Review* 20 (1927): 222-23. In addition to the main fort on the northeast edge of the city (the Castra Praetoria), these included the Castra Equitum Singularium in the Campus Coelemontanus, the Castra Misenatium in Regio III, the Castra Ravennatium in the Trastevere, and the Castra Peregrina on the Coelian hill.

[175] La Piana, "Foreign Groups in Rome," 222; Matthews, "Hostages, Philosophers, Pilgrims," 40.

[176] Suetonius, *Gaius* 45.

[177] *P. Mich.* viii 490-1; Noy, *Foreigners*, 165.

less permanent residents of the capital.[178] Immigrants could also serve in the police

force tasked with keeping order on the city streets (*cohortes urbanae*) and the

firefighting brigades that Augustus set up in 6 BCE (*vigiles*).[179] Between these

groups, the military population of the city was large. From perhaps 10,000 in 23 CE,

it may have reached as many as 30,000 people by the third century.[180]

These military reasons for immigration, and the political ones that are closely

related to them, distinguish Rome from Athens. As we have seen, many of the factors

that brought immigrants to these two cities overlap closely. Both were flooded with

huge numbers of slaves, who were either culled by force from distant lands or

purchased on the thriving Mediterranean slave market. Each attracted merchants and

skilled artisans because their large economies offered a potential for profit that other

places could not match. Students and teachers flocked Athens and Rome alike to

debate philosophy, acquire the rhetorical skills necessary for success in public life, or

immerse themselves in applied fields such as law or medicine. Festivals and games

also brought athletes, actors, and other sorts of entertainers to each metropolis. In

many ways, these imperial cities resembled each other. Yet their socio-political

landscapes fundamentally differed.

Perhaps the key factor that distinguishes imperial Rome from classical Athens

is the ability of immigrants to participate in political life. From the very beginnings

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[178] *CIL* xiv.238; Noy, *Foreigners*, 22.

[179] Suetonius, *Augustus* 30; Cassius Dio 55.8.7, 55.26.4; *ILS* 2154, 2178f. The *vigiles* had their own camp in the city, which is known to us only through inscriptions. They were almost exclusively freedmen. See *CIL* xiv.4381 = *ILS* 2155, *CIL* vi.3010 = *ILS* 2174.

[180] Yann La Bohec, *The Imperial Roman Army* (London: Routledge, 1994), 24; Silvio Panciera, "Soldati E Civili a Roma Nei Primi Tre Secoli Dell'impero," in *Prosopographie Und Sozialgeschichte*, ed. Werner Eck (Cologne: Böhlau Verlag, 1993), 262.

of their history, the Romans were willing to incorporate outsiders into their social and political community. The creation of a single city through the mixing of different peoples is a recurring theme in their foundation myths, whether the peoples in question are Trojans and Latins, or Romans and Sabines.[181] This policy, which Eric Orlin calls "the ideology of the open city," shaped Roman relations with foreigners throughout the Republic and accelerated during the Empire.[182] Citizenship, which granted legal protections and the ability to vote and hold public office, was granted to local elites or entire communities to secure their allegiance and give them a stake in the growing Roman state. By the first century CE, when Rome stood at the center of a multiethnic empire that straddled three continents, it had become expedient to admit provincial dignitaries even into its most revered offices. The emperor Claudius recognized this in 46 CE, when he argued for the admission of Gauls into the Roman Senate by reminding the reluctant senators that their city was, from its earliest days, built from the blending of diverse peoples.[183] Under the Flavian (69–96) and Antonine dynasties (96–192) that followed, it became increasingly common to see provincials from Gaul, North Africa, or the Hellenistic East wearing the striped togas of Roman senators, not to mention emperors who hailed from Spain, Syria, and other provinces outside Italy.

By contrast, the Athenians closely policed the boundaries of their community. Metics could not vote, hold office, or play any role in Athenian political life, and

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[181] Virgil, *Aeneid* 7.125-132; Livy 1.13.
[182] Eric Orlin, *Foreign Cults in Rome* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 4.
[183] Tacitus, *Annals* 11.24; *CIL* xiii.1668.

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were almost never granted full citizenship. When Pericles boasted that the Athenians "throw open [their] city to the world, and never exclude foreigners form any opportunity of learning or observing," he was speaking quite literally, since immigrants were seldom permitted to do anything other than observe Athenian civic life.[184] Despite living in Athens for years or decades, boosting to its economy with their labor, and putting their lives on the line in the city's defense, metics remained "anti-citizens" rather than full members of the community.[185] In contrast to Rome, Athenian imperialism only exacerbated this trend. In 451/450 BCE, when the city's power in the Aegean was approaching its height, the democratic assembly passed a law that restricted citizenship to those born of two pure citizens and prohibited the enfranchisement of children born of mixed marriages.[186] According to Aristotle, this law was enacted because there were already "too many citizens" in Athens; he went on to assert that individuals who lacked two pure-blooded Athenian parents had "no share in the city."[187] At the same time, foundation myths stressing autochthony – the idea that the ancestors of true Athenian citizens had been born from the soil of Attica itself – became increasingly popular among orators and philosophers who were interested in justifying their city's imperialism and strengthening the social and political boundaries that distinguished Athenians from outsiders.[188]

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[184] Thucydides, 2.39.

[185] Whitehead, *Ideology of the Athenian Metic*, 70.

[186] Plutarch, *Pericles* 37.3; Alan L. Boegehold, "Perikles' Citizenship Law of 451/50 B.C," in *Athenian Identity and Civic Ideology*, ed. Alan L. Boegehold and Adele C. Scafuro (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 57.

[187] Aristotle, *Constitution of the Athenians*, 26 (ἐπὶ Ἀντιδότου διὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν πολιτῶν Περικλέους εἰπόντος ἔγνωσαν μὴ μετέχειν τῆς πόλεως, ὃς ἂν μὴ ἐξ ἀμφοῖν ἀστοῖν ᾖ γεγονώς).

[188] Isocrates, *Panegyricus* 4.21; Plato, *Menexenus* 245d; Thucydides 2.36.1, 1.2.5.

Athens and Rome differed, then, with respect to the political rights they afforded immigrants. This distinction arose from their different geographical and cultural contexts, as well as the lifespan of their respective empires. Rome's origin as a trade community in central Italy, surrounded by a multitude of diverse ethnic and linguistic groups, encouraged a more liberal attitude toward outsiders. Athens, on the other hand, was situated in the more homogenous ethnic, linguistic, and cultural world of the Aegean Sea. The two cities' imperial experiences also differed greatly. Rome managed to create one of the longest-lived empires in world history, enduring in Western Europe until the fifth century CE and, as the Byzantine Empire, in Eastern Europe until the sixteenth.[189] The Athenian Empire, by contrast, did not long survive the Peloponnesian War. While it is obviously not possible to fully analyze these different trajectories within the scope of this chapter, it is undeniable that long centuries of Roman rule allowed more time for populations to move, ideas to percolate, and policies to evolve and that the short duration of the Athenian's hegemony over their neighbors did not provide this opportunity. We cannot know if, over time, the Athenians would have been forced to relax their restrictive citizenship policy in order to govern an empire in which subject peoples greatly outnumbered "pure citizens." Yet it is interesting to note that Claudius believed Athens and Sparta

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[189] Of course, Rome itself was not part of the Byzantine Empire for much of its existence. Constantinople, originally called *Nova Roma* ("New Rome") was the urban center of the eastern Roman state.

had failed to achieve lasting empires precisely because "they spurned as aliens those whom they had conquered."[190]

I will revisit these points in Chapter Four. For the moment, however, the important facts are that Athens and Rome both experienced surges in immigration that coincided with their bids for imperial power, and that the immigration each city experienced was commensurate with the ideology it produced. Athens, which avoided territorial conquest and created a coercive "alliance" to achieve commercial and cultural dominance over its neighbors, received immigrants chiefly for economic and educational reasons. Rome, the conqueror of the Mediterranean and Western Europe, went a step further and thus added political and military motivations to the mix. Both cities, though, became the ultimate destinations of the inward flow of people and goods that spatially defined their empires. As the embodiment of their states, they became architectural and ritual microcosms where the political whole was depicted and created through potent performance. Consequently both provide a model in which the structure or organizing principles of the entire state can be grasped.[191] To assess the extent to which this relationship between imperialism and immigration was a global rather than a regional phenomenon, I will now compare these two Mediterranean cities, which shared a shared geographical, historical, and cultural heritage, to a very different imperial capital on the far side of the world.

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[190] Tacitus, *Annals* 11.24 (*Quid aliud exitio Lacedaemoniis et Atheniensibus fuit, quamquam armis pollerent, nisi quod victos pro alienigenis arcebant?); cf.* Aelius Aristides 26.59-64.
[191] Mark Edward Lewis, *The Construction of Space in Early China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006), 169.

<u>Chang'an: Brief History</u>

Athens and Rome grew organically for centuries before developing into imperial capitals. By contrast, Chang'an (长安, "perpetual peace," modern X'ian), was an imperial capital built from scratch. Located in Guanzhong, a prosperous region centered on the Wei River in northwest China whose name (关中 "inside the passes") points to its strategic value, the Chang'an that served as the capital of the Tang Empire was not the first city to bear the name. Guanzhong was a cradle of Chinese civilization as early as the Western Zhou period (1045–771 BCE) and later became the heartland of China's first imperial dynasty, the Qin (221–206 BCE). Although the brutal policies of China's First Emperor, Qin Shi Huangdi, sparked rebellions that ultimately brought the Qin to an untimely end, the stable imperial system of the Han dynasty (206 BCE–220 CE) quickly replaced it. It was at this time, while the Romans were assembling their empire at the other end of Eurasia, that the first city called Chang'an arose in Guanzhong. Han Chang'an served as China's capital over two centuries, acquiring an aura of imperial authority that persisted even after the Han government relocated to the eastern city of Luoyang in the aftermath of the disastrous Wang Mang Rebellion of 9–23 CE. Later, after the Han came to an end in 220, the city survived three centuries of conflict and uncertainty until a new dynasty, the Sui (581–618), finally reunited China in the late sixth century.

By this time the old capital was in a desperate state: its infrastructure decaying, water supply brackish, and palaces in ruins. For these reasons, in 582 Emperor Sui Wendi ordered the construction of a new Chang'an, separate from Han

Chang'an but close enough to it to abut its southeast corner.[192] This new city,

carefully planned in accordance with cosmological conceptions of axiality and

symmetry traditional to Chinese urban planning, was designed to be the cosmic center

of a renewed empire.[193] Nevertheless, like the Qin before it, the Sui quickly fell to

widespread rebellions brought on by its exploitation of the peasantry and high

conscription rates.[194] It was replaced by the longer-lived Tang dynasty (618–907),

which proved to be one of the most successful in Chinese history and is widely

regarded as a golden age.[195]

Founded by Li Yuan, a general from the northern frontier who led the

rebellion that toppled Emperor Yang of Sui (r. 604–617), the Tang was a period of

political and economic strength. During the dynasty's first two centuries, China

increased its influence over Korea, Japan, and Southeast Asia and forged close ties

with the nomadic peoples of the central Asian steppe. In 630, these Turkish tribes

granted the second Tang emperor, Taizong (r. 626–649), the title of Heavenly Qaghan

(Khan), which gave him the power to appoint chiefs friendly to the Tang beyond the

empire's borders. This extended China's hegemony deep into central Asia and fueled

a fascination with western fashions and customs that was already prominent in Tang

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[192] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 35-6. This placement allowed the new Chang'an to benefit from the prestige of the old Han capital, establishing a link between the glory days of the Han and the promise of the ascendant Sui.

[193] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 35; Yi-Fu Tian, *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1974), 165.

[194] In addition to military service, Chinese peasants were required to provide labor for the Sui emperors' massive public works projects, which included completion of the Grand Canal linking Hangzhou to Chang'an and modern Beijing, and the construction of new fortifications along the Great Wall. This placed considerable strain on the rural economy, fueling resentment among the peasantry that eventually bubbled over into rebellion.

[195] Arthur Wright, "T'ang T'ai-Tsung: The Man and the Persona," in *Essays on T'ang Society*, ed. John Curtis and Bardwell L. Smith Perry (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976), 17-18.

society thanks to the imperial family's mixed Chinese and Turkish heritage.[196]
During the reigns of Taizong's successors, Tang society became increasingly
prosperous and creative, producing some of China's most enduring lyric poetry, prose
essays, and plastic arts.

Figure Five: The Tang Empire[197]

[196] *Zizhi Tongjian* ("Compreheisive Mirror to Aid in Government") 193; Edwin Pulleyblank, "The An Lu-Shan Rebellion and the Origins of Chronic Militarism in Late T'ang China," in *Essays on T'ang Society*, ed. John Curtis and Bardwell L. Smith Perry (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976) 38. Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 33.
[197] Image from www.edmaps.com.

The dynasty reached its apogee during the reign of Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712–756). By this time, the Tang Empire extended far west into the Tarim Basin of Central Asia through the strategically important Gansu Corridor, south into the Nanzhao kingdom of Southeast Asia, and, through alliances with various client kings, north to the Korean Peninsula (Figure Five). In tandem with the dynasty's success, by the eighth century Chang'an had become the largest and most cosmopolitan city in the world.   Around one million people lived in the bustling capital, while its surrounding countryside contained as many as two million.[198] The city epitomized the Tang dynasty's power, prosperity, and global reach. In addition to the scores of Han Chinese who called it home, Chang'an hosted Persians, Turks, Sogdians, Uighurs, Koreans, Japanese, Vietnamese, Indians, Tibetans, and other communities of foreigners. Its residents followed the teachings of Daoism, Buddhism, Nestorian Christianity, Manichaeism, Zoroastrianism, and Islam. The capital's fashions set trends across East Asia, and Chang'an served as the model for the Japanese capital of Heian-Kyō (modern Kyoto), which mimicked its physical shape and even its name (平安京 "Tranquility and Peace").[199]

This confidence was shaken when An Lushan, a half-Sogdian, half-Turkish frontier commander and a favorite of Emperor Xuanzong, turned his armies against the dynasty in 755. In the twelve years of devastating warfare that followed, millions died across China, the Tang government lost control of its militarily and commercially valuable western provinces, and China was made vulnerable to

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[198] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 233; Schaefer, *Golden Peaches*, 20.
[199] Wright, "T'ang T'ai-tsung," 17.

invasions by newly invigorated Turks and Tibetans. Chang'an fell to An Lushan's forces in 756, suffering damage in the process. Although both it and the eastern capital of Luoyang were eventually recaptured with the help of Uighur mercenaries, the dynasty was seriously weakened. Wide swaths of China became increasingly autonomous, and the Tang emperors became reliant on Uighur moneylenders and mercenaries to help finance and fight their wars. Although it recovered in the early ninth century, Chang'an never recaptured its former glory.[200] Hostilities broke out between the capital's residents and the Uighur community, whose influence was widely resented, and a major persecution of Buddhists, Manichaeans, Zoroastrians, and Christians began in the capital in 845 before spreading across the empire. Chang'an was sacked again in the Huang Chao Rebellion of 874–884, a few decades later the Tang state unraveled into warlordism and anarchy. Although the city continued to exist in a diminished state, it never again served as a center of empire.

Immigration to Chang'an

Like classical Athens and imperial Rome, in its heyday Tang Chang'an was a magnet for immigrants. Just as they did at the other end of Eurasia, newcomers came to the Tang capital to earn a living, acquire an education, partake in its rich cultural life, or fulfill political or military duties. Moreover, Chang'an also stands out from Athens and Rome as a major center of religious pilgrimage. Situated at the eastern

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[200] Denis Twitchett, "The Sui and T'ang Dynasties: An Introduction," in *Essays on T'ang Society*, ed. John Curtis and Bardwell L. Smith Perry (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976), 13. The recovery chiefly affected the southern cities of Yangzhou, Suzhou, and Hangzhou, which had been spared some of the devastation of the rebellion.

end of the silk roads, the city attracted missionaries and pilgrims from the Daoist, Buddhist, Christian, Zoroastrian, and Manichaean faiths who came to proselytize, study, and worship at the capital's many religious institutions. Along with the merchants, soldiers, students, and entertainers we have come to expect, these pious wayfarers added to the cosmopolitanism that defined Chang'an's culture and the character of the Tang dynasty as a whole.[201]

As a city created *ex nihilo* by the order of Emperor Sui Wendi, we might say that all of Chang'an's original inhabitants immigrated for political reasons. Large numbers of people were relocated from the surrounding countryside of Guanzhong to fill the city's enormous space and create a capital worthy of a new imperial age. Many others came from further afield. This was especially the case among the capital's aristocratic families. Many of the aristocratic frontier families that supported the rebellion of Li Yuan against the Sui and followed him to Chang'an from northern China were of mixed heritage, having intermarried with Turkish clans from the Eurasian steppe for centuries.[202] Others were of non-Han background entirely.[203] Thus, from its inception Tang power relied upon a synergy between Han Chinese and "barbarian" peoples, especially nomadic horsemen from northern and central Asia. Later, as the Tang consolidated its control over the rest of China, elite families from the south joined the capital's aristocracy.[204] This political immigration to Chang'an continued after the city's foundation. Aware that China was emerging

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[201] Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 163-4.
[202] Pulleyblank, "The An Lu-shan Rebellion," 37. This included the royal Li family itself, which was of Han Chinese descent only in its male line.
[203] Pulleyblank, "The An Lu-shan Rebellion," 47; Twitchett, "Sui and T'ang Dynasties," 6.
[204] Pulleyblank, "The An Lu-shan Rebellion," 47.

from three centuries of disunity and that the Sui had failed to forge a stable government, the early Tang emperors made a concerted effort to unite their state's diverse regions into a cohesive whole. To that end, beginning in 643 they summoned delegates from the empire's 358 prefectures to Chang'an for an annual assembly (*Ch'ao-chi shih*), where provincials professed their loyalty to the emperor, heard his directives, and asked for help.[205] These meetings also helped foster the sense of unity and engagement in a wider imperial polity that the Tang rulers wished to cultivate. To accommodate visiting officials, Emperor Taizong ordered the construction of a private mansion for each provincial ambassador in the capital. In time these became the headquarters for permanent provincial delegations, forging a stronger link between the imperial city and the empire it controlled.[206]

In addition to aristocratic families and provincial delegations, diplomats from neighboring countries came to Chang'an as they did to Rome, seeking the goodwill or patronage of the Tang emperor and offering nominal submission in exchange for Chinese titles. As early as the reign of the first emperor Gaozu (r. 618–626), Turkish envoys from rival clans visited Chang'an to pay tribute, where they caused havoc in the streets by fighting and occasionally killing each other.[207] Under Gaozu's powerful successor Taizong (r. 626–649), this violence was curbed and Chang'an came into its own as a truly international metropolis. Under Taizong and his

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[205] Denis Twitchett, *Financial Administration under the T'ang Dynasty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 332.
[206] S. A. M. Adshead, *T'ang China: The Rise of the East in World History* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 120.
[207] Howard J. Wechsler, "The Founding of the T'ang Dyansty: Kao-Tsu," in *The Cambridge History of China*, ed. Denis and John K. Fairbank Twitchett (Westford, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 181.

successors, the capital regularly hosted diplomats from the Korean kingdoms of Koguryo, Silla, and Paekche; Heian Japan; Tibet; and the states of Indochina.[208] As the frontiers of the Tang Empire expanded and its prestige grew, delegations also began arriving from remote peoples such as the Ku-li-kan, who lived in Central Siberia, and the Kirghiz, a Caucasian people with red hair and blue eyes from the lands east of the Urals.[209] The Byzantine Emperor Constans II may have sent the embassy from *Fulin* (the Byzantine province of Syria) that arrived in Chang'an in 643.[210] An Arab embassy from the fourth caliph 'Uthman (r. 644–56) visited the Tang court in 651, to be followed by another in 713 that demanded the Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712–756) submit to Islam.[211] Foreign delegates were officially considered bearers of tribute, appearing at the Tang court in their native costumes and carried precious objects characteristic of their homelands as visible proof that the powers of the Son of Heaven were world-encompassing. It was in this state that they became favorite subjects of court painters such as Yan Liben and Yan Lide, who were fascinated by visitors' pointy noses, full beards, curly hair, and exotic costumes.[212]

Not all foreigners came to the capital bearing tribute. As at Rome, some arrived as refugees or political exiles. In 630, a decisive victory over the Eastern

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[208] *Jiu Tangshu* ("Old Book of Tang") 66; *Zizhi Tongjian* ("Comprenehsive Mirror to Aid in Government") 199; Howard J. Wechsler, "T'ai-Tsung (Reign 626-49) the Consolidator." In *The Cambridge History of China: Volume 3*, ed. Denis and John King Fairbank Twitchett (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 235.

[209] *Tang huiyao* ("Instructional History of Tang") 35; Wechsler, "T'ai-Tsung the Consolidator," 235.

[210] Adshead, *T'ang China*, 155; Wechsler, "T'ai-Tsung the Consolidator," 235.

[211] Adshead, *T'ang China*, 160; Twitchett and Wechsler, "Gaozong and Wu," 280. Although this was followed in 726 by a more conciliatory embassy from the Umayyad Caliph Hisham, Arab and Tang armies eventually clashed at the Battle of the Talas River in 751.

[212] Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 164; Schaefer, *Golden Peaches*, 25-8.

Turks enabled Emperor Taizong to claim the title of Heavenly Qagan, 100,000

nomads were resettled in Chinese territory as a way to pacify and integrate them into

Tang society. Ten thousand of them came to live in Chang'an, where their leader, the

Eastern Turkish Qagan Hsieh-li, lived out the rest of his life as a political hostage.[213]

Many other Turkish leaders became generals in the Tang army at this time and in the

centuries that followed.[214] A Turkish inscription from this period described this

policy of forced immigration in terms of obligation to an ruler whose dual identities

as Son of Heaven and Heavenly Qagan gave him the right to rule over Chinese and

Turks alike: "The sons of the Turkish nobles became slaves to the Chinese people,

and their innocent daughters were reduced to serfdom. The nobles, discarding their

Turkish titles, accepted those of China and made submission to the Chinese Qagan,

devoting their labor and strength to his service for fifty years."[215]   This inscription

reflects the Tang policy of employing conquered barbarians as "claws and teeth" to

defend China, while the emperor and his bureaucrats acted as the "heart and belly"

that set policy and reaped the benefits of their protection.[216]

Chang'an became the home of political exiles as well as hostages. The most

famous of these was Peroz III, son of Emperor Yazdgard III and the last crown prince

of the Sassanid Persian Empire, who came to Chang'an in 650 seeking an alliance

against the Muslim armies that were invading his home.[217] After Persia fell to the

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[213] Wechsler, "T'ai-Tsung the Consolidator," 222.
[214] *T'ang huiyao* ("Institutional History of Tang") 73; Wechsler, "T'ai-Tsung the Consolidator," 223.
[215] Wechsler, "T'ai-Tsung the Consolidator," 223; Rene Grousset, *The Empire of the Steppes*, trans. Naomi Walford (New Brunswick: 1970), 92-3.
[216] Pulleyblank, "The An Lu-shan Rebellion," 40.
[217] Wechsler, "T'ai-Tsung the Consolidator," 235.

forces of the Caliph Umar in 651, Emperor Gaozong (r. 649–683) granted Peroz and a sizeable contingent of his countrymen permanent refuge in the Tang capital. In exchange for a pledge of loyalty, the prince was given a command and the title of "General of the Right Flank Guard" (右武衛將軍 *Yòuwǔwèi Jīangjūn*).[218] His attempt to return to Persia with the help of this Chinese army was a failure, however. Peroz ended his life in Chang'an, where he presided over a court in exile and received permission from Gaozong to build a Zoroastrian temple near the city's Western Market.[219] A large Persian minority remained in this part of the city after the prince's death, which eventually acquired more Zoroastrian temples and became famous for its Persian bazaar.

The fact Gaozong gave Peroz III a title and a military command is a reminder that many outsiders who came to Chang'an were engaged in military service. From the very beginning of the dynasty, Turkish chieftains such as A-shih-na She-erh and Ch'i-pi- Ho-li became generals for the Tang after journeying to the capital and pledging their loyalty to the emperor.[220] Later, in the middle of the eighth century, An Lushan owned a luxurious mansion in Chang'an and assiduously cultivated connections at court before turning against the dynasty and nearly bringing it to its knees.[221] In the aftermath of his rebellion, the Tang government maintained a

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[218] Paolo Daffinà, "La Persia Sassanide Secondo Le Fonti Cinesi," *Rivista degli Studi Orientali* LVII, 1983 (1985): 132-3.

[219] Twitchett and Wechsler, "Gaozong and Wu," 280; Jenny Rose, "The Sogdians: Prime Movers between Boundaries," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa, and the Middle East* 30, no. 3 (2010): 417.

[220] Pulleyblank, "The An Lu-shan Rebellion," 40.

[221] C. A. Peterson, "Court and Province in Mid- and Late T'ang," in *Sui and T'ang China, Part I*, ed. Denis and John K. Fairbank Twitchett (Westford, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 469, 473.

garrison of 1,000 Uighur troops in the capital to help keep the peace. It was this

garrison whose arrogant behavior and tendency to flout the law exacerbated tensions

between the Uighur community and other residents of the capital in the ninth

century.[222]

Indeed, literature from the later half of the dynasty suggests that foreign

military became an increasingly common sight in Chang'an as security concerns

increased. In Du Guangting's (850–933) short story "The Man with the Curly

Beard," for example, a series of encounters with a mysterious foreigner in the capital

leads to a political shakeup at the highest levels of government. In this story, the

eponymous stranger, whose curly red beard and penchant for eating mutton with a

dagger signal a Turkish background, gives the protagonist money and military

training to help Li Shimin (the future Emperor Taizong) stage a coup and take his

place as the ruler of China.[223] Although the story itself is fictional and safely set in an

earlier period of Tang history, the idea that foreign military men of nomadic

extraction could come to Chang'an to shake up the political status quo and prop up a

would-be emperor reflects the political reality of the later Tang dynasty.

Soldiers as well as ambassadors, then, came to the imperial capital because of

the political power located there. So too did scholars. We have already seen that a

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An Lushan's strategy also revolved around the immediate seizure of the political heartland, to legitimize himself and delegitimize or destroy the imperil Li family. This plan failed, and a war of attrition followed.

[222] Dalby, Michael T. Dalby, "Court Politics in Late T'ang Times," in *The Cambridge History of China*, ed. Denis Crispin Twitchett, and John King Fairbank (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 610.

[223] Lily Hwa, "State Building in the Government of Tang Taizong," *Forum on Public Policy* (2008): 5; Shen Jiji, Xianyi Yang, and Gladys Yang, eds. *Selected Tang Dynasty Stories* (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2001), 215, 225.

rhetorical or legal education could open a door to a political career for certain privileged individuals at Athens and Rome. This connection between education and political power was much more explicit at Chang'an, where the Tang government developed a system of civil service examinations to select skilled administrators to serve in the imperial bureaucracy. To pass, students were required to display extensive knowledge of classical Confucian texts, the ability to write critical prose essays in response to questions on governance and politics, skill in creating calligraphy and original poetry, and a high level of sophistication in speech and deportment.[224] Open to all males whose fathers were not of the artisan or merchant classes, the competitive examination system was designed to draw the best talent into government and to create a body of professional administrators who lacked ties to powerful aristocratic families, ensuring that their primary loyalty would be to the ruling dynasty rather than to their own social group.[225] This plan was only partially successful. Because preparation for the exams required years of careful study, the great majority of students who attended the Imperial Academy in central Chang'an came from wealthy aristocratic families that could support them during their time in the capital.[226] Such privileged young men appear as the protagonists of several Tang-era short stories, such as Po Hsing-chien's (799–831) "Tale of Li Wa."

Nevertheless, the exam system created an avenue for social mobility through education that went far beyond the chairs of Latin and Greek rhetoric that Vespasian

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[224] Patricia Buckley Ebrey, Anne Walthall, and James B. Palais, eds. *East Asia: A Cultural, Social, and Political History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006), 91-2.
[225] Denis Twitchett, *The Birth of the Chinese Meritocracy* (Torquay: Bendles Ltd, 1974), 6.
[226] Twitchett, *Birth of the Chinese Meritocracy*, 24.

established at Rome. As early as the reign of Emperor Gaozu, the Directorate of the State University supervised curricula for five schools in Chang'an, which over 2,000 registered students attended. Two more schools, focusing on calligraphy and law, were added under Taizong.[227] Emperor Taizong also expanded the holdings of the library of the College of Literary Studies (*Wen-hsueh kuan*) to over 200,000 volumes by encouraging literati from across the empire to donate books to the imperial collection.[228] In addition to expanding libraries and establishing schools, the Tang government provided food and clothing for students taking the exams.[229] As the assessment system continued to expand over the course of the eighth century, thousands of scholars and students streamed into Chang'an from the provinces, and lectures on the classics and histories were held regularly in the capital.[230] Instructors in classical learning were even provided for upper-class young men who entered government service as members of the emperor's bodyguard, who were permitted to sit for examinations if they proved capable.[231]

The vast majority of students and teachers were Han Chinese who came to Chang'an from the provinces, each of which could send a yearly quota of candidates

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[227] *Jiu Tangshu* 3 ("Old Book of Tang"); *Xin Tangshu* ("New Book of Tang") 48; Wechsler, "T'ai-tsung the Consolidator," 214; Twitchett, *Birth of the Chinese Meritocracy*, 11.

[228] *Jiu Tangshu* 3 ("Old Book of Tang") 80; Wechsler, "T'ai-tsung the Consolidator," 217. Taizong's devotion to literature recalls that of Ptolemy II Philadelphus (r. 283–246 BCE), whose support of the Great Library made Alexandria into a center of scholarship and, according to legend, led to the creation of the Septuagint.

[229] *Wen-hsien t'ung-k'ao* ("Supplements to the Encyclopedia of the Historical Records of the Qing Dynasty") 29; Wechsler, "T'ai-tsung the Consolidator," 213-4.

[230] The Bureau of Historiography (*Shih-kuan*) was established in 629.

[231] *Tang huiyao* ("Instructional History of Tang") 64; Wechsler, "T'ai-tsung the Consolidator," 214; Twitchett, *Birth of the Chinese Meritocracy*, 10.

to the capital.[232] However, non-Han people could also sit for the civil service

examinations. Japanese and Korean students, generally praised for their high level of

literacy in the Chinese classics, were known to take the exams because of the prestige

and opportunities for professional advancement that they offered either within China

or back at home.[233] A few students came from even further abroad, such an Arab

who passed the exams to earn the degree of "Advanced Scholar" (進士 *jinshi*) in the

mid-ninth century.[234] While foreigners who took the exams were certainly a

minority, it is noteworthy that the promise of prestige and political advancement the

system offered drew both Han and non-Han people to Chang'an.

Students who came to Chang'an to study for the exams were known to

frequent wine-shops and brothels run by foreigners (胡 *hu*), who employed women

with green eyes and pale skin as entertainers to entice guests to linger.[235] Several

Tang poets sang the praises of these exotic beauties and warned of the dangers they

posed to naïve young men with deep pockets. In "Passing by a Tavern," Wang Ji

(585–644) advised guests not to drink too much, warning "You will have to apologize

for buying on credit, and be shamed by the *hu* wine-seller."[236] The protagonist of Po

Hsing-chien's "Tale of Li Wa," a young exam candidate named Zheng, loses his

fortune and reputation after being conned a skilled courtesan. The famous poet Li Bo

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[232] Twitchett, *Birth of the Chinese Meritocracy*, 13. In the middle of the eighth century, two to three
thousand candidates were sent to the capital from the provinces each year.
[233] Twitchett, *Birth of the Chinese Meritocracy*, 29, 31.
[234] Schaefer, *Golden Peaches*, 23.
[235] Charles Benn, *Daily Life in Traditional China: The Tang Dynasty* (Westport, CT and London:
Greenwood Press, 2002), 57; Schaefer, *Golden Peaches*, 21.
[236] Xue Pingshuan, "The Merchants of Chang'an in the Sui and Tang Dynasties," *Frontiers of History
in China* 2 (2006): 217.

(701–762), a connoisseur of Chang'an's taverns, evoked the twin attractions of wine and foreign women in "The Ballad of Youth:"

> A young man of Five Barrows suburb
> east of the Golden Market,
> Silver saddle and white horse
> cross through wind of spring.
> When fallen flowers are trampled all under,
> where is it he will roam?
> With a laugh he enters the tavern
> of a lovely Turkish wench.[237]

The *hu* wine-sellers that feature prominently in these selections from poems and popular literature remind us that many immigrants came to Chang'an in pursuit of profit rather than educations or administrative careers. Official texts, shaped by the traditional Confucian bias against commerce, are less than sanguine about this fact. Nevertheless, they do acknowledge that economic opportunities brought many newcomers to Chang'an. The *Suishu* ("Book of the Sui") reports that in the imperial capital, "Customs come from the five orients, people and things are jumbled together, Chinese and western barbarians are intermixed. Having given up farming to engage in trade, they vie for quick profit, take indolence as their occupation, and compete over trifles."[238] According to the *Xirong Xhuan* ("Biographies of Western Barbarians"), a subsection of the *Jiu Tangshu* on the achievements of foreigners in

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[237] Translated in Stephen Owen, *The Great Age of Chinese Poetry: The High Tang* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1981), 111-114, 130. Li Bo was himself an immigrant to Chang'an from Central Asia whose family likely had Iranian or Turkish origins. A man with no social connections, he used his talent for poetry to win a favored place in the imperial court and sometimes joked that his "semi-barbarian" status made him the emperor's cousin, because of the imperial family's Turkish blood.

[238] *Quan Tangren* 477, translated in Xue, "Merchants of Chang'an," 258.

the official history of the Tang dynasty, "When a boy [of the Zhaowu people from the western regions] grows to be twenty, he travels to nearby countries and comes to China. They go wherever there is profit."[239] Yuan Zhen's "Song on Guest Merchants," a similar text describing the activities of merchants in Chang'an, best describes the success that traders could achieve in the imperial capital: "The businessman has traveled through the whole world, and now has come to Chang'an. The city's markets, east and west, have heard of him and line up to greet him. Greet him and entice him: great wealth makes power lean to one."[240]

Some of the merchants who accrued the most wealth and power in Chang'an were Sogdians, a Central Asian people who operated an extensive trade network on the silk roads connecting China to Central Asia and the eastern Mediterranean from as early as the days of the Han dynasty. Sogdians specialized in the importation of musicians, singers, dancers, and concubines to the capital, as well as commodities such as gold, silver, brass, ammonia, saffron, silk thread, medicinal plants, perfumes, and musk.[241] From the "Sogdian Ancient Letters," a cache of sixth-century correspondence discovered at the oasis city of Dunhuang in northwestern Gansu, we know that they were established on the silk roads well before the rise of the Tang.[242] Sogdians are also well attested in Tang texts and iconography, where they appear as merchants, grooms, soldiers, entertainers, and administrators. Along with the Persian

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[239] *Jiu Tangshu* ("Old Book of Tang") 198, translated in Xue, "Merchants of Chang'an," 269. Archaeological evidence from burials also points to the presence of Zhaowu people in Chang'an.
[240] *Quan Tangshi* ("Complete Collection of Tang Poetry") 418, translated in Xue, "Merchants of Chang'an," 260-1.
[241] Étienne de la Vaissière, *Sogdian Traders: A History*, trans. James Ward (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 175.
[242] de la Vaissière, *Sogdian Traders*, 136-7, 139; Sims-Williams, *Ancient Letters I-V*.

merchant community, Sogdians imported entertainers and commodities to feed the hunger for western fashions that gripped Chang'an in the seventh and eighth centuries. Among the upper classes, clothing styles best described as "barbarian chic" became very popular at this time. Deerskin boots, caftans, and leopard skin hats were popular among aristocratic men, and ladies favored riding hats that exposed the face and eventually the entire head, in steppe fashion.[243] Hairstyles, cosmetic beauty marks, and tattoos of Central Asian origin also became popular among the capital's socialites.[244] Sogdian merchants supplied many of these goods and services.

Since many *hu* merchants operated taverns and inns that catered to wide swaths of the population, foreign foods also became popular in Chang'an among all social classes. Iranian sweet and savory flat cakes seasoned with sesame seeds (*hubing*) were a popular snack, and mutton "*à la* hu" (roasted with pepper) is mentioned in several Tang tales.[245] For instance, in Shen Jiji's (ca. 740–ca. 800) short story "Ren the Fox Fairy," the protagonist, locked out of his home in the wee hours of the morning, waits to be let in at a pastry shop run by a *hu* merchant. Another story tells of an exam candidate who ate two pounds of *biluo*, a rice and lamb delicacy still popular among the peoples of Central Asia and Xinjiang (where it is now called *zhuafan*) at a *hu*-run restaurant.[246] We cannot be sure whether the student later regretted his decision, since the story does not say. We can be certain,

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[243] Arthur Cotterell, *The Imperial Capitals of China: A Dynastic History of the Celestial Empire* (Woodstock, NY: Overlook Press, 2008), 145; de la Vaissière, *Sogdian Traders*, 139.
[244] Benn, *Daily Life*, 105-6. Benn also includes drawings of these clothing and hairstyles.
[245] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 188; Cotterell, *Imperial Capitals*, 144; Schaefer, *Golden Peaches*, 29. The stranger in "The Man with a Curly Beard" enjoys a similar meal while plotting to overthrow the emperor.
[246] Xue, "Merchants of Chang'an," 271.

however, that Chang'an became a major hub of commercial activity because of its location on the silk roads that connected China to Bactria and Sogdiana, and the patterns of migration that these famous trade routes encouraged.

In this period, "western twirling girls," known for their colorful blouses, flowing pantaloons, and exotic dances such as the "Trill of the Spring Warbler," the "Western Prancing Dance," and the "Dance of Chach" (named for its place of origin near modern Tashkent) were a common site in taverns as well as the imperial palace.[247] However, it is important to note that many of these dancing girls, like the courtesans who spent most of their lives entertaining men in taverns and brothels, were not free. The eponymous courtesan in "The Tale of Li Wa," for example, deceives the protagonist Zheng against her wishes because she is under the control of her "mother," a madam who compels her to seduce and eventually ruin the naïve student. Women like Li Wa were caged birds, unfree but not obviously so, but there were also more visible forms of servitude that brought newcomers to Chang'an.

In Pei Xing's (825–880) short story "The Kunlun Slave," a slave named Melek helps his master, a young aristocrat named Cui, gain entry into the bedroom of the woman he loves by acrobatically vaulting with him over a high windowsill. Once Melek and Cui have gained entry into the forbidden bedchamber, her story about her background reveals that she is the property of another man: "I come from the northern borderland and my family used to be rich, but my present master was commander of

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[247] Ètienne de la Vaissiere and Èric Trombert, "Des Chinois Et Des Hu: Migrations Et Intégration Des Iraniens Orientaux En Milieu Chinois Durant Le Haut Moyen Âge," *Annales, Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 59, no. 5/6 (2004): 940; Rose, *The Sogdians*, 418-9. Merchants from the Sogdian city-states of Kumadh, Kish, Maimargh, and especially Samarkand typically brought these dancers to Chang'an.

the army there and forced me to be his concubine."[248] Hemmed in by poverty or

personal catastrophe at home, women like Cui's beloved could easily into various

forms of sexual slavery once they reached Chang'an, from which there were few

options for escape. The girl's sad tale, told in the presence of the slave Melek, also

links her experience to more overt forms of servitude that brought people to the city.

Just as women from Central Asia were especially prized for their exotic looks

and talents for music and dance, other ethnic groups were valued as servants for their

purported abilities or talents. As Pei Xing's story shows, Kunlun ("black") slaves

from Indonesia were considered to be physically powerful and naturally acrobatic.[249]

Human trafficking in Kunlun people, as well as Turks, Slavs, Koreans, Thais, Indians,

Malays, and even a Africans (called *Zanji* after "Zanzibar"), could at times have a

very public face in Chang'an. Bai Juyi's (772–846) poem "The Prisoner," which

begins with the line "Tartars in chains! Tartars in chains!" and describes a group of

war captives being led through the streets of the capital before being sold into slavery,

reminds us that Chang'an, like all imperial cities, relied at least in part on the labor of

subjugation and marginalized peoples. As in Athens and Rome, this was a form of

forced immigration. The typical Tang slave was a foreigner sold to put money in the

pocket of a Chinese slaver.[250]

Slavery, however, never operated in China on anything close the scale that it

did in ancient Greece and Rome. Although some slaves entered the war captives, as

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[248] Translated in Shen et al., *Selected Tang Dynasty Stories*, 201-205.
[249] Marc Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 11.
[250] Schaefer, *Golden Peaches*, 43-6.

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the poem "The Prisoner" indicates, penal slavery was much more common than chattel slavery on the ancient Mediterranean model. In this system, which was in use for centuries before the Tang period, convicted criminals were sentenced to hard labor for years or the remainder of their lives. These punishments were often brutal and could include branding, tattooing, or mutilation, but in most cases penal slaves did not pass on their servile status to their children.[251] There is little evidence that hereditary slaves formed a large part of the Chinese population, or that their economic contribution outweighed those of convicts, sharecropping tenants, unattached peasants, or attached retainers at any time.[252] In this regard, the economic and social systems of East Asia and the ancient Mediterranean fundamentally differed. While slavery accounted for enormous percentages of the immigrant populations of Athens and Rome, this was not the case in Chang'an. Although various forms of servitude were, of course, common in Tang China as they were in all premodern societies, chattel slavery was not one of the major factors that brought immigrants to the capital.

If the relative absence of slavery is one factor that sets Chang'an aside from Athens and Rome, immigration for religious reasons is another. The Tang capital stands out as a major destination for missionaries, monks, and pilgrims from a variety of faiths, who came to worship and study at its diverse array of religious institutions. Religion, however, is a difficult category to assess. As we shall see in the following

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[251] Edwin G. Pulleyblank, "The Origins and Nature of Chattel Slavery in China," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 1, no. 2 (1958): 205. Moreover, criminals enslaved as punishment for their crimes were typically sent to the frontier to fill out their sentences.
[252] Pulleyblank, "Chattel Slavery in China," 220; Twitchett, "The Sui and T'ang Dynasties," 13.

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chapter, religious buildings, inscriptions, offerings, and texts often represent some of the best pieces of *evidence* for the presence and location of foreign populations in all three cities under examination in this study. Rome, for example, abounds in inscriptions that can tell us much about the Jewish and Christian communities that lived there, as well as the cults of eastern deities such as the Egyptian Isis or the Persian Mithras. Yet it is rarely possible to state with confidence that immigrants traveled to Athens or Rome for the express purpose of spreading their religious beliefs. On the contrary, religion seldom appears to have been a primary motivating factor. Merchants, soldiers, and even slaves acted as agents of religious diffusion because they brought their beliefs with them to their new homes and continued to worship native gods there, but very often these individuals chose (or were forced) to migrate for more mundane reasons.[253] Even Paul of Tarsus, early Christianity's most prolific missionary, came to Rome not by choice but to appeal a criminal charge against him.[254] We have only a few examples of individuals who traveled to Rome or Athens for the express purpose of spreading their religion to a place where it had not yet taken hold.[255]

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[253] Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*, 17-8.

[254] Acts 25:11-12, 28:15.   It is also significant that there were already members of the Christian community there to meet Paul when he arrived. They were likely traveling artisans like the tentmakers Aquila and Priscila whom Paul previously met in Corinth, who had come to Rome in search of work.

[255] There are of course exceptions. One might be Porphyry, the philosopher who introduced Neoplatonism to Rome in the third century CE. According to the biographer Eunapius, after completing his education and achieving great fame for his wisdom, Porphyry "longed to see Rome, the mistress of the world, so that he might enchain the city by his wisdom." (*Vita Sophistae* 324; trans. W.C. Wright) However, Neoplatonism may not be the best example. Highly intellectualized, it straddled the line between philosophy and faith and cannot be classified as a popular or evangelizing religious movement.

Chang'an differed in this regard. Although it was not a "holy city" in the same sense as Jerusalem or Mecca, both of which had long histories and became the birthplaces of new religions, many people came to the Tang capital from across East and Central Asia to visit the city's many Buddhist monasteries and Daoist temples. These institutions, which were places of scholarship as well as worship, attracted monks and holy men in search of rare texts to transcribe or famous masters with whom they could study. Daoist wonderworkers came to perform rituals (and sometimes miracles) at the great temples patronized by the Tang emperors, who purportedly traced their ancestry back to Laozi.[256] Buddhist pilgrims traveled to venerate the sacred relics preserved in the city's great stupas, such as the teeth, limbs, and skulls of famous bodhisattvas.[257] Missionaries from the Christian, Zoroastrian, and Manichaean faiths arrived in Chang'an, the most populous city and largest communication hub on the silk roads, to spread their faiths and cater to the spiritual needs of the city's immigrant communities. Under the Tang dynasty Chang'an became not merely the source of culture, but the spiritual center of the East Asian world.[258]

Daosim was native to China and had been practiced for centuries before the Tang, but Buddhism too had a long history in East Asia. The Indian religion first entered China during the Han dynasty, carried by merchants traveling the Silk Roads, and rivaled Daoism in popularity for most of the Tang dynasty's existence.

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[256] Victor Cunrui Xiong, "Ritual Innovations and Taoism under Tang Xuanzong," *T'oung Pao, Second Series* 82, no. 4/5 (1996): 265-6, 270, 296.

[257] Ennin, *Ennin's Diary: The Record of a Pilgrimage to China in Search of the Law*, trans. Edwin Reischauer (New York: Ronald Press, 1955), 252-3.

[258] Twitchett, "The Sui and T'ang Dynasties," 8.

Chang'an's many Buddhist monasteries attracted monks, nuns, and pilgrims from China, Korea, Japan, India, and countries further afield. The one about whom we know the most is the Japanese pilgrim Ennin, a monk who came to China in the ninth century in search of sacred sutras to take back to Japan. Ennin eventually came to Chang'an and described his experiences in the imperial city in the detailed diary he kept throughout his journey. During his time in the capital, Ennin encountered several other monks from Japan and Korea, a Chinese master named Yuan-chien who could read and write Sanskrit, a monk from the Western Countries who could not speak Chinese, a Northern Indian Learned Doctor named Nanda, a Southern Indian Learned Doctor named Ratnacandra, an unnamed monk from Ceylon, and another from the land of Kucha in the north Tarim Basin.[259] On the walls of the Translation Hall in the Imperial Scripture Translation Cloister, he saw portraits of the Indian Learned Doctor Amoghavajra and the priests Vajrabodhi and Amoghavajra, who had journeyed to Chang'an in the past and been immortalized in paintings for the translation work they had done there.[260] Ennin's words bear witness to the powerful pull that the capital's many institutions of worship and learning had on Buddhists from across East, Central, and South Asia. It also provides a window into the highly diverse social lanscape of the capital city, where individuals of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds worked together to translate documents that devoted pilgrims then carried to other lands.

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[259] Ennin, *Diary*, 289, 309, 325.
[260] Ennin, *Diary*, 294.

Religions of West Asian origin, notably Zorastrianism, Manichaeism, and

Nestorian Christianity, were also common among travelers to Chang'an. Although

they had far smaller followings than Buddhism, these religions illustrate the city's

appeal to missionaries as well as pilgrims. Zoroastrianism arrived in China before the

beginning of the Tang, most likely during the Persian missions to the Toba Wei of

North China from 516 to 519, and a Zoroastrian community existed in Chang'an

before the arrival of the Sassanid Prince Peroz III in 650.[261] In 631 a Zoroastrian

magus (*muhu*) first arrived at the Tang court, and a Persian temple is attested in the

city shortly thereafter.[262] Another temple was built in 677 Peroz's request, likely to

accommodate the large number of Sassanid refugees that followed him to China after

the Arab conquest.[263] Buoyed by the favor of the imperial court and the traveling

Sogdian and Persian merchants who kept Chang'an connected to the religion's

Central Asian heartland, the Zoroastrian community in Chang'an prospered. By the

mid-ninth century, the capital had five Zoroastrian temples, four in the vicinity of the

Western Market and the other close to the Eastern Market.

Nestorian Christianity's history in Chang'an followed a similar trajectory.

Followers of Nestorius, a Patriarch of Constantinople whose teachings about the

divine nature of Christ had been declared heretical at the First Council of Ephesus in

431 and the Council of Chalcedon in 451, the Nestorian community thrived in

Sassanid Persia, where it was known as the Church of the East. Its missionary to

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[261] Donald D. Leslie, "Persian Temples in Tang China," *Monumenta Serica* 35 (1981-1983): 288.
[262] Leslie, "Persian Temples," 289.
[263] Leslie, "Persian Temples," 289.

China, a bishop named Alopen (most likely a Chinese rendering of "Abraham"),

arrived in the Tang capital from *Daqin* (the Byzantine provinces of the Near East) in

635.[264] Emperor Taizong, impressed by the religion's "luminous doctrine," ordered

the construction of a Nestorian church in Yining Ward near the Western Market in

638.[265] From the testimony of the Nestorian Stele, a stone pillar erected in Chang'an

that records the history of the Nestorianism in China from 635 to 781, it appears that

the Christian community in Chang'an prospered and that Nestorianism eventually

spread to the eastern capital of Luoyang as well as other major Chinese cities,

possibly through further missionary activity.[266] The stele records the names of sixty-

eight believers, all but eight of which were written in Syriac as well as Chinese,

suggesting that the religion retained close ties with its West Asian roots while making

a few inroads into Chang'an's broader community.[267] The Nestorian community's

success makes it likely that more than one Nestorian church existed in the capital, but

at present only the one in Yining Ward has been clearly identified.

Manichaeism, the third western religion, arrived in Chang'an later than

Nestorianism and Zoroastrianism, with the first definite appearance of a Manichean

priest (*Moni chiao*, later *Ming-chiao*) from Tokharistan in 719.[268] It initially made

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[264] Nestorian Christians continued moving east even after finding refuge in Sassanid Persia, spreading their religion along the silk roads in a manner analogous to the diffusion of Buddhism nearly one thousand years earlier. After arriving in Chang'an, the Church of the East spread to other major cities in China, but was eventually cut off from its western roots by the Muslim conquest of the Persia. See Samuel Hugh Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia, Volume 1: Beginnings to 1500* (New York: Harper San Francisco, 1992), 289, 313.
[265] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 241-2.
[266] Leslie, "Persian Temples," 290.
[267] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 242.
[268] Leslie, "Persian Temples," 291-292.

little headway with the imperial court and met with opposition from Zoroastrian, Nestorian, and Buddhist clergy, who may have felt that its highly syncretic character borrowed too heavily from their own faiths.[269] In 732, a limited proscription from the government attempted to prevent the Manichean community in Chang'an from making converts. Nevertheless, Manichaeism became the most influential of the western religions in China for a time in the late eighth and early ninth centuries, thanks to the conversion of the Uighurs and their increased presence in Chang'an after helping to quell the An Lushan Rebellion in 763.[270] Thereafter Manichaeism flourished in Chang'an and for a time enjoyed greater influence than either Zoroastrianism or Nestorianism. It is certain that Manichaean temples existed in the capital (an imperial edict of 768 ordered their construction), though none have been identified to date.[271] This is partially due to the fact that excavation of the Tang city is hindered by the existence of modern X'ian, and the Tang government deliberately destroyed Manichaean temples during the suppression of foreign religions that took place in 845.

All of these faiths point to the religious motivations behind immigration to the Tang capital. The arrival and continuing presence of Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, and Nestorianism shows that Chang'an was an attractive target for missionaries. These western religions made only limited inroads into the Chinese population, but

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[269] Leslie, "Persian Temples," 292; Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 241.
[270] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 239. The conversion came about after Uighur forces were brought into contact with Manichean priests during their occupation of the eastern capital of Luoyang.
[271] Leslie, "Persian Temples," 292; Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 240

all succeeded in establishing footholds in the city.[272] It is also likely that foreign

clerics continued to arrive to minister to the Persians, Sogdians, Uighurs, and other

immigrant populations. Furthermore, Chang'an's most popular religions – Daoism

and Buddhism – attracted scholars, priests, and pilgrims from across China and

beyond its borders, such as the Japanese monk Ennin. This spiritual cosmopolitanism

resulted from Chang'an's location on the Silk Roads, the imperial family's patronage

of Daoism, and, until 845, the government's tolerance and even enthusiasm for

foreign religions. Although religious diversity also abounded in Athens and Rome,

Chang'an best shows how the interplay of geographic location, official patronage,

and a prevailing atmosphere of tolerance could transform an imperial capital into a

center of religious pilgrimage.

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[272] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 247.

Conclusion

This chapter has revealed some significant differences in the factors that brought immigrants to classical Athens, imperial Rome, and Tang Chang'an. Athens and Rome, both Mediterranean city-states whose economies relied upon forced labor, were flooded by large numbers of chattel slaves, while domestic servants and caged female entertainers made up only a small percentage of Chang'an's population. As capitals of territorial empires with large standing armies, Rome and Chang'an received ambitious office-seekers, foreign ambassadors and refugees, and soldiers performing military service far more frequently than Athens, with its hegemonic maritime empire, citizen army, and restrictive citizenship policy. Chang'an developed into a major center for missionary activity and pious scholarship thanks to its location on the silk roads and the patronage of the imperial Li family, while religion was seldom the primary factor that caused people to migrate to Athens and Rome.[273] Nevertheless, common threads emerge when these cities are examined together. Commerce, encompassing the exchange of goods and the provision of a wide range of services, drew scores of enterprising outsiders to all three capitals. Educational opportunities attracted students and teachers of diverse social classes and ethnic backgrounds. Entertainment, whether in the form of the Athenian theater, the Roman games, or the dancers and musicians who lit up Chang'an's taverns, drew performers and spectators alike.

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[273] As we shall see, however, it played an important role in creating social bonds within immigrant neighborhoods in both of these cities.

Although factors that motivated people to migrate to each city varied in accordance with its location, period, and cultural context, in all three cases immigration inevitably followed imperialism. The political power concentrated in Athens, Rome, and Chang'an made each of these imperial cities into microcosms both of the territories under their direct control and of their broader spheres of cultural influence. Furthermore, the centripetal forces that drew immigrants to the center of empire changed each city's social landscape, making it more cosmopolitan and open to the influences of the outside world. As natives and natives interacted with each other in the intimate environment of the imperial city, they encountered new sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and ideas on a regular basis. At certain times, these transcultural contacts led to innovations such as the translation of Sanskrit sutras into Chinese that took place in the Buddhist monasteries of Chang'an, the marriages that mixed bloodlines from around the Mediterranean within the populace of Rome, or the contracts with metic artisans that played a crucial role in the construction of some of the most famous monuments on the Athenian Acropolis. At others, they sparked reactionary pushbacks in the form of restrictive citizenship laws, religious persecutions, or interethnic violence. At all times, however, residents of the imperial center were forced to meet the challenge of difference as a part of their everyday lives. In this sense, their experience resembled that of people who lived on the periphery.

One remaining factor links the immigrant experience to Athens, Rome, and Chang'an, alluded to above but not addressed at length. Although not always well

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documented, personal relationships compelled people to relocate in antiquity just as they do today. Wives accompanied their husbands when they accepted political offices or were given new military assignments.[274] Devoted mothers followed their beloved sons to school.[275] Friends traveled far to visit each other and nurture relationships across great distances.[276] Bonds of family and friendship such as these played a key role in creating a measure of solidarity, comfort, and community among immigrants living in all three cities. To examine how these bonds helped rearrange both social *and* spatial landscapes in the urban borderlands at the center of the Athenian, Roman, and Tang Empires, we must try to discover what immigrant life was like "on the ground."

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[274] For epitaphs of women who journeyed to Rome to be with their husbands, see *IGUR* 1262 (Lydia from Crete), *IGUR* 4209 (Helpis from Sicily), *CIL* vi.2734 (Aurelia from Thrace).

[275] Augustine (*Confessions* 5.8, 6.1) informs us that his mother Monica (and later his unnamed concubine) followed him to Rome.

[276] For example, the Christian apologist Minucius Felix (*Octavius* 2.1) wrote that his friend Octavius came to Rome "for the purpose of business and visiting me." The Greek poet Crinagoras, a contemporary of Strabo, sailed to Italy "to visit friends from whom I have been absent for too long" (*Greek Anthology* 9.559). See also Noy, *Foreigners*, 115; Dougherty, "Just Visiting," 393.

Chapter Three: Small Worlds

"People can live in the same city, even in the same part of the city, and yet perceive different worlds."[1]

As we have seen in the previous chapter, the familiar lures of politics, economics, education, entertainment, religion, and personal relationships drew immigrants to cities in premodern China as well as the ancient Mediterranean. While the predominant factors that brought newcomers to Athens, Rome, and Chang'an varied according to each city's particular geographical and historical context, immigration transformed all three capitals into microcosms of the empires under their control. This chapter will examine that transformation more closely by focusing on a neighborhood within each city where significant numbers of immigrants settled.

The Athenian Piraeus, Rome's Trastevere, and Northwest Chang'an were "small worlds" within their respective cities at large because of the foreign populations that resided, worked, and worshipped within them. The ethnic, cultural, and topographical boundaries that defined these neighborhoods demonstrate the fragmented nature of urban space and the close relationship between space and identity that shaped life in all three cities. In each case, newcomers did not simply assimilate and fade from view, but inscribed new boundaries onto the landscapes of their new homes. By doing so, they helped transform Athens, Rome, and Chang'an into contested spaces where ideas of social otherness had spatial analogues and the

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[1] Tuan, *Topophilia*, 248.

problem of how to accommodate new populations into existing structures of imperial

domination was worked out.

Finding Neighborhoods

In *Topophilia*, his study of the relationship between environment and

perception, the geographer Yi-Fu Tuan noted that "neighborhood is often a very

elusive idea."[2] Indeed, the problem of how to define a concept so easily taken for

granted has vexed urban planners and scholars of cities for over a century.[3] In the

first half of the twentieth century, sociologists such as Ernest Burgess and Robert

Park first approached the question as a matter of origins, arguing that neighborhoods

are communities that form naturally from the unplanned decisions of individuals to

live in certain parts of a city in response to economic, ethnic, or other factors.[4] Other

scholars, however, noted that factors such as zoning laws or decisions about the

placement of key infrastructure also play an important role in how neighborhoods

form and where they are located.[5] As Tuan pointed out, these problems with

definition stem from the fact that neighborhoods are, at least in part, subjective

entities. While some are highly visible to both locals and outsiders, others are known

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[2] Tuan, *Topophilia*, 223.

[3] Anthony Downs, *Neighborhoods and Urban Development* (Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1981), 13; Michael R. Williams, *Neighborhood Organizations* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985), 29.

[4] J. Bert Lott, *The Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 18; Robert Ezra Park, *Human Communities: The City and Human Ecologies* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1952), 118-20; E. W. Burgess, "The Growth of the City," in *The City*, ed. Robert Ezra Park, E. W. Burgess, and Roderick Duncan McKenzie (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1925), 53-6.

[5] Lott, *Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 18-9; Kevin Lynch, *A Theory of Good City Form* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1981), 44-50.

only through the repetition of certain sounds and smells, participation in various

communal activities, and feelings of familiarity and security shared by residents.

Such "deep, undramatic ties to locality" are difficult to document, let alone define.[6]

It is clear, though, that our concept of "neighborhood" fundamentally derives

from the fact that urban space is divided into units that are at the same time physical

and mental, and that these units function as socio-spatial subdivisions of their greater

cities.[7] Residents of a neighborhood dwell within a limited territory, possess common

interests and norms of conduct, engage in social interaction and mutual aid, and have

their own groups, associations, and institutions to meet their basic needs.[8] To pin

these communities down more precisely, the sociologist Howard Hallman argued that

city neighborhoods can be identified by (1) the geographical boundaries surrounding

them, (2) the ethnic or cultural characteristics of their inhabitants, (3) a degree of

psychological unity among residents who feel they belong together, and (4) the

common use of the district's facilities for economic, educational, religious, or other

purposes.[9] These characteristics provide a useful starting point from which trace the

boundaries that define neighborhoods. A further point to consider, however, is the

degree to which residents cross these boundaries to interact with the greater urban

community. This process of boundary negotiation is crucial to understanding the role

of neighborhoods in urban life.

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[6] Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 159.
[7] Howard Hallman, *Neighborhoods: Their Place in Urban Life* (Beverly Hills, London, and New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1984), 13, 58, 89; Lott, *Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 13.
[8] Hallman, *Neighborhoods*, 34.
[9] Hallman, *Neighborhoods*, 15.

The physical boundaries surrounding a given neighborhood may be readily apparent in the form of physical obstacles such as rivers, hills, walls, or wide avenues. Alternately, they can be subtle and understood only by residents, taking the form of certain street corners or buildings. For this reason, it can be frustratingly difficult for outsiders to identify the physical markers that serve as a given neighborhood's borders.[10] It is clear, however, that the neighborhoods with the strongest sense of identity are often those where common characteristics such as language, religion, ethnicity, or political affiliation intersect in a clearly defined geographical space.[11] In such areas, the physical environment has a discernable effect on perception, reinforcing feelings of distinctiveness from the city at large and giving rise to a sense of "the local."[12] When circumscribed by clear topographical boundaries in this way, neighborhoods highlight the entangling of social and spatial boundaries in the urban landscape.[13]

Neighborhoods also vary in their levels of exclusivity. Some are self-policing communities whose residents closely guard their borders, where membership is often contingent upon class, ethnic, religious, or other qualifications. "Defended neighborhoods" such as these can be found at all social levels, from wealthy gated communities to poor slums.[14] Neighborhood communities can also be made

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[10] Mark Abrahamson, *Urban Enclaves: Identity and Place in America* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 4; Downs, *Neighborhoods*, 16. This is particularly true for historians, who are separated from their subjects by time as well as space.

[11] Lott, *Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 20.

[12] Tuan, *Topophilia*, 246.

[13] Massey et al., *City Worlds*, 111.

[14] Gerald D. Suttles, *The Social Order of the Slum* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 35; Lott, *Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 19.

exclusive by outside pressure, in the form of discrimination, violence, or laws that

constrain people's movements and places of residence.[15] The Jewish ghettoes of

medieval and modern Europe are the most obvious and extreme example of this sort

of imposed segregation, but as we shall see even the nightly curfew the Tang

government imposed on Chang'an originally functioned as a *de facto* form of

segregation that bound certain populations to certain parts of the city.[16] Whether

populations choose to isolate themselves or are forcibly segregated from without,

neighborhood exclusivity is another way in which social differences manifest as

boundary lines etched in city space.[17]

Hallman's second criterion for identifying neighborhoods focuses on the

ethnic or cultural characterizes of their inhabitants. Districts whose residents share an

ethnicity or minority status and may also share commonalities based on wealth,

lifestyle, or other attributes are sometimes referred to as "enclaves," another term that

connotes a close relationship between a distinctive group of people and a place.[18]

Since immigrants by definition carry minority status, display characteristics that mark

them as different, and tend to dwell near each other for social and economic reasons,

most enclaves begin as immigrant communities. They typically form through a

process known as chain migration, in which newcomers maintain flows of

information to their countrymen back home, act as magnets that attract relatives and

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[15] Abrahamson, *Urban Enclaves*, 11-12.
[16] David Herbert and Colin Thomas, *Cities in Space: City as Place* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1997), 243.
[17] Massey et al., *City Worlds*, 86.
[18] Abrahamson, *Urban Enclaves*, 2.

friends, and offer aid to newcomers who settle near them.[19] In his study of enclave

communities in American cities, Mark Abrahamson classifies first-wave immigrants

as "pioneers" who move in search of opportunity and often establish themselves near

places of work or other economic resources that can ultimately sustain a community

of other "settlers."[20] His characterization of modern immigration as a process of

exploration and settlement echoes Athenaeus of Naucratis' observation that migrants

from across the known world had "colonized" Rome by the third century CE.[21] In the

ancient world as well as the modern, social networks among new arrivals played an

important role in the formation of neighborhood consciousness and the growth of

enclaves in the city.[22]

A neighborhood may consist of a single enclave, as the Chinatowns and Little

Italies found in many modern cities attest. However, a neighborhood can also

encompass several enclaves. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, for

example, the Lower East Side of Manhattan was home to populations of Irish, Italian,

Polish, and Ukranian immigrants, a thriving German enclave known as Little

Germany (*Kleindeutschland*), and one of the earliest and most important communities

of Ashkenazi Jews in America.[23] In large immigrant neighborhoods such as this,

several distinct linguistic, religious, and cultural traditions coexist. Over time, these

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[19] Herbert and Thomas, *Cities in Space*, 241.
[20] Abrahamson, *Urban Enclaves*, 8-9.
[21] Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 1.20b.
[22] Abrahamson, *Urban Enclaves*, 61.
[23] Moses Rischin, "Toward the Onomastics of the Great New York Ghetto: How the Lower East Side Got Its Name," in *Remembering the Lower East Side: American Jewish Reflections*, ed. Jeffrey Shandler Hasia Diner, and Beth Wenger (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 13-4; Burrows, Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, eds., *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 745.

traditions become entangled as residents interact with each other on a regular basis in cramped apartment buildings, busy markets, and crowded streets. Sometimes, though not always, these entanglements give rise to uniquely hybrid local cultures that blend elements from several previously distinct traditions.[24] As we shall see, this process played out to varying degrees in immigrant neighborhoods in Athens, Rome, and Chang'an. The Thracians and Phoenicians who did business in the Athenian Piraeus, the Syrians and Jews who worshipped in Rome's Trastevere, and the Persians and Sogdians who lived near Chang'an's Western Market made these neighborhoods into places where social and spatial boundaries played a decisive role in shaping transcultural contacts between diverse.

Questions of ethnic, class, and religious identity bring us to the third factor in Hallman's list of neighborhood characteristics: psychological unity among residents. As noted above, states of mind are difficult if not impossible to document empirically. Nevertheless, residents of neighborhoods very frequently share a sense of group cohesion that grows out of the attachment they feel to their local territory.[25] One way to detect this sense of cohesion is to examine voluntary associations based in a neighborhood or its vicinity. Voluntary associations are groups in which membership is not based wholly on criteria such as kinship, citizenship, or location,

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[24] Abrahamson, *Urban Enclaves*, 8. Deborah Dash Moore and David Lobenstine nicely capture a sene of this entanglement in an essay documenting photographic representations of the Lower East Side from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries. See Deborah Dash Moore and David Lobenstine, "Photographing the Lower East Side: A Century's Work," in *Remembering the Lower East Side: American Jewish Reflections*, edited by Jeffrey Shandler Hasia Diner, and Beth Wenger (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000), 28-69.
[25] Herbert and Thomas, *Cities in Space*, 264.

but is at least in part a matter of personal choice.[26] Whether taking the form of

religious groups, charitable societies, neighborhood watches, or local fire brigades,

voluntary associations reinforce shared values, common interests, and norms of

conduct among members who interact socially while working toward a mutually

beneficial goal. They tend to be small and convivial, providing opportunities for

belonging and even a degree of notoriety that may not be met in the outside world,

and serving as substitutes or supplements for family networks.[27] Sociologists

studying modern cities have observed that the first extra-familial relationships to form

in urban neighborhoods are often between people who are members of voluntary

associations and share common interests.[28] With this in mind, it is not surprising that

such groups tend to flourish among transplanted populations instinctively looking for

familiar organizations to pick up the threads of their social and religious life, or

individuals simply looking establish a sense of community in a new and unfamiliar

setting.[29]

Voluntary associations were popular in the ancient world for many of the

same reasons. Members worshipped the same deities, shared common trades, came

from similar ethnic or cultural backgrounds, or simply shared a love of eating and

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[26] Lott, *Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 24; Smith, "Social Construction of Ancient Cities," 17. It should be noted that membership is also often a matter of eligibility, since some voluntary associations are self-selecting on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion, or political affiliation. Masonic lodges, for example, do not admit women. This sort of discrimination was even more pronounced in the ancient world, where gender roles were more rigidly maintained.
[27] S. G. Wilson, "Voluntary Associations: An Overview," in *Voluntary Associations in the Greco-Roman World*, ed. John S. and Stephen G. Wilson Kloppenborg (New York: Routledge, 1996), 13.
[28] Jacobs, *Death and Life of American Cities*, 153; Hallman, *Neighborhoods*, 34.
[29] S.R. Lauer and M. C. Yan, "Voluntary Association Involvement and Immigrant Network Diversity," *International Migration* 51, no. 3 (2013): 133-50; Wilson, "Voluntary Associations: An Overview," 14.

drinking in good company.[30] Indeed, a number of ancient sources make it clear that

communal eating and drinking, often to the accompaniment of music and

entertainment, were important aspects of association meetings throughout the ancient

Mediterranean.[31] Although rules for entry and standards of behavior varied between

groups, membership was within most people's reach. In ancient Rome, for example,

joining an artisans' association (*collegium*) seems to have been as easy as practicing

the appropriate trade, living or working on the right street, and being voted in.[32] Even

more common were funerary associations that functioned as a form of life insurance,

collecting dues to provide their members with proper burials after death.[33] It is hard

to imagine that joining a funerary association would not foster at least some feelings

of fellowship between its members, as their members were willing to commit to a

network of social support devoting to caring for its affiliates after their deaths. In

these ways, belonging to a local craft guild, religious cult, or funerary association

would have strengthened the sense of neighborhood as a refuge or haven within the

greater city and a social world unto itself.[34] Voluntary associations are one way to

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[30] Wilson, "Voluntary Associations: An Overview," 14.
[31] I Cor. 11:20-1; Philo, *de Specialibus Legibus* 2.145-46, *de Vita Contempliva* 40-47; Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* 14.214-16, 260-61.
[32] Wilson, "Voluntary Associations: An Overview," 9; John S. Kloppenborg, "Collegia and *Thiasoi*: Issues in Function, Taxonomy, and Membership," in *Voluntary Associations in the Greco-Roman World*, ed. John S. Kloppenborg and Stephen G. Wilson (New York: Routledge, 1996), 23-7; *CIL* iv.960, vi.26032, vi.9148-9, vi.10260-64; Acts 18:3.
[33] Wilson, "Voluntary Associations: An Overview," 13; Kloppenborg, "Collegia and *Thiasoi*," 20-23; *CIL* x.1238, vi.471, vi.958, xii.286, vi.85, vi.1872, xiv.168-9, xiv.256, xiv.10, ix.2213; *ILS* 4075. These inscriptions all come from Rome and its port of Ostia.
[34] Herbert and Thomas, *Cities in Space*, 268-9.

better understand how neighbors can become colleagues or friends, and neighborhood the place in which one *feels* at home.[35]

Hallman's final criterion for identifying neighborhoods is the shared use of the area's facilities for commercial, religious, or other purposes. In addition to being a geographically bounded territory whose residents possess some level of social integration and psychological unity, a neighborhood must have at least one institution that locals use in common. In terms of the immigrant neighborhoods that are our primary focus, these institutions are usually economic or religious in nature. As noted in the previous chapter, immigrants tend to settle where they have access to employment, and skilled workers often cluster together in districts that come to bear the name of their trade.[36] This process of occupational differentiation influenced the placement of immigrant communities in all three cities under examination.[37] As the following sections will show, most metics and visitors clustered in the Piraeus because its port facilities were unparalleled in the Aegean, many of the freedmen who lived in Trastevere worked in Rome's riverine shipping industry, and Central Asian immigrants to Chang'an dwelt close to the city's great Western Market because their businesses were located there. Each of these neighborhoods also contained religious institutions that functioned as a different form of shared space, whether the temples to the Thracian goddess Bendis and the Anatolian Mother of the Gods that sprang up in the Piraeus, the Syrian shrines and Jewish synagogues of Trastevere, or the

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[35] Tuan, *Topophilia*, 215.
[36] *CIL* vi.18175; Augustine, *City of God*, 7.4; Meeks, *The First Urban Christians,* 29; MacMullen, *Roman Social Relations*, 70-73, 129-137.
[37] Lott, *Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 12.

Zoroastrian temples and Christian monasteries found in Northwest Chang'an. These religious institutions played an important social role by bringing together residents of the neighborhood who otherwise might not encounter each other and reinforcing a sense of group identity among them. As in modern cities, workplaces and religious buildings were shared spaces that could nurture a sense of solidarity and community among neighbors.[38]

The key fact is that neighborhoods stand out from their cities at large because they are socially and spatially bounded. When topography and architecture work in tandem with social and economic relations to put people "in their place," they fragment the urban landscape in ways that make it difficult to ignore difference in the city.[39] As its residents associate with each other and make use of shared facilities, a neighborhood becomes an economic, social, and political community, a "cell within a larger settlement" that provides a frame of reference and serves as a venue for mutual protection, emergency assistance, and the exchange of skills.[40] Yet cell membranes are permeable. Crossing the boundaries between neighborhoods is both an unavoidable and an integral aspect of city life. Despite the gulf separating Athens, Rome, and Chang'an from modern cities, these sorts of urban interactions are relatively consistent across time and space. In both modern and premodern times, neighborhoods are distinct communities in which proximity and geography become

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[38] Hallman, *Neighborhoods*, 39-40.
[39] Herbert and Thomas, *Cities in Space*, 259.
[40] Smith, "Social Construction of Ancient Cities," 20-1.

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the defining characteristics of membership.[41] Because of this, they have always

functioned as small worlds within the city.

Before proceeding further, it must be noted that almost all sociologists and

urban theorists who study neighborhoods focus their attention on the industrial cities

of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. In terms of their size, technology, and

degree of connection to global networks of communication and exchange, modern

metropolises such as New York, London, or Rio de Janiero are obviously very

different from even the largest ancient or medieval cities.[42] Fixating on these

differences has led some scholars of ancient urbanism to argued that concepts of

neighborhood culture and identity developed in industrial and postindustrial cities are

inappropriate tools for understanding the social dynamics and spatial organization of

ancient neighborhoods.[43] To a certain extent, this is true. We must take care not to

uncritically employ sociological theory developed for a contemporary context or to

bend ancient evidence to suit modern ideas of urban life.

However, cities have always represented a social order in which numerous

different groups must coexist and where the process of daily life takes place in a

physical landscape that forms and is formed by a negotiated consensus between

them.[44] Trying to understand how this process of negotiation took place in ancient

cities is not an opportunity to anachronistically project modern ideas onto the past,

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[41] Smith, "Social Construction of Ancient Cities," 20.
[42] Lott, *Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 21.
[43] Kathryn Keith, "The Spatial Patterns of Everyday Life in Old Babylonian Neighborhoods," in *The Social Construciton of Ancient Cities*, ed. Monica L. Smith (Washington and London: Smithsonian Books, 2003), 58.
[44] Smith, "Social Construction of Ancient Cities," 1-2.

but rather to use modern insights to more deeply understand the past when connections are clear and the evidence permits. While it would be a mistake to simply and naively equate modern neighborhoods with their premodern predecessors, ignoring modern scholarship also means abandoning a valuable theoretical context within which to study ancient cities.[45] Examining ancient neighborhoods in this way moves the study of premodern cities beyond the accumulation of encyclopedic knowledge about famous monuments and grand buildings which, although valuable, tells us little about what life in them was actually like.

Neighborhoods, in other words, bring us down from the level of high abstraction to the specific experience of boundary negotiation on the ground.[46] That experience defined urban life in antiquity as it does today. It also defined life in the center of empire just as it did on the periphery. Immigrant neighborhoods function as small worlds within their greater cities because the boundaries that divide them from their cities at large often also define them economically, socially, and culturally. When residents cross those boundaries to commute to a job in a different part of the city, participate in civic or religious ceremonies, or attend public games and festivals, they interact with their neighbors in ways that can blur the lines between them. These interactions enhance the diversity of the community at large, nurturing the sense of cosmopolitanism typically associated with great cities. It also sometimes fuels xenophobic resentments against outsiders who refuse to stay in their "proper place." Analyzing boundary negotiation at the neighborhood level enables us to trace both the

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[45] Lott, *Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 9, 21.
[46] Tuan, *Topophilia*, 224.

ties that bind urban communities together and the points at which they fracture. It

also shows how the creation and transgression of boundaries in major cities serves as

a catalyst for historical change.

The Piraeus: Port of Athens
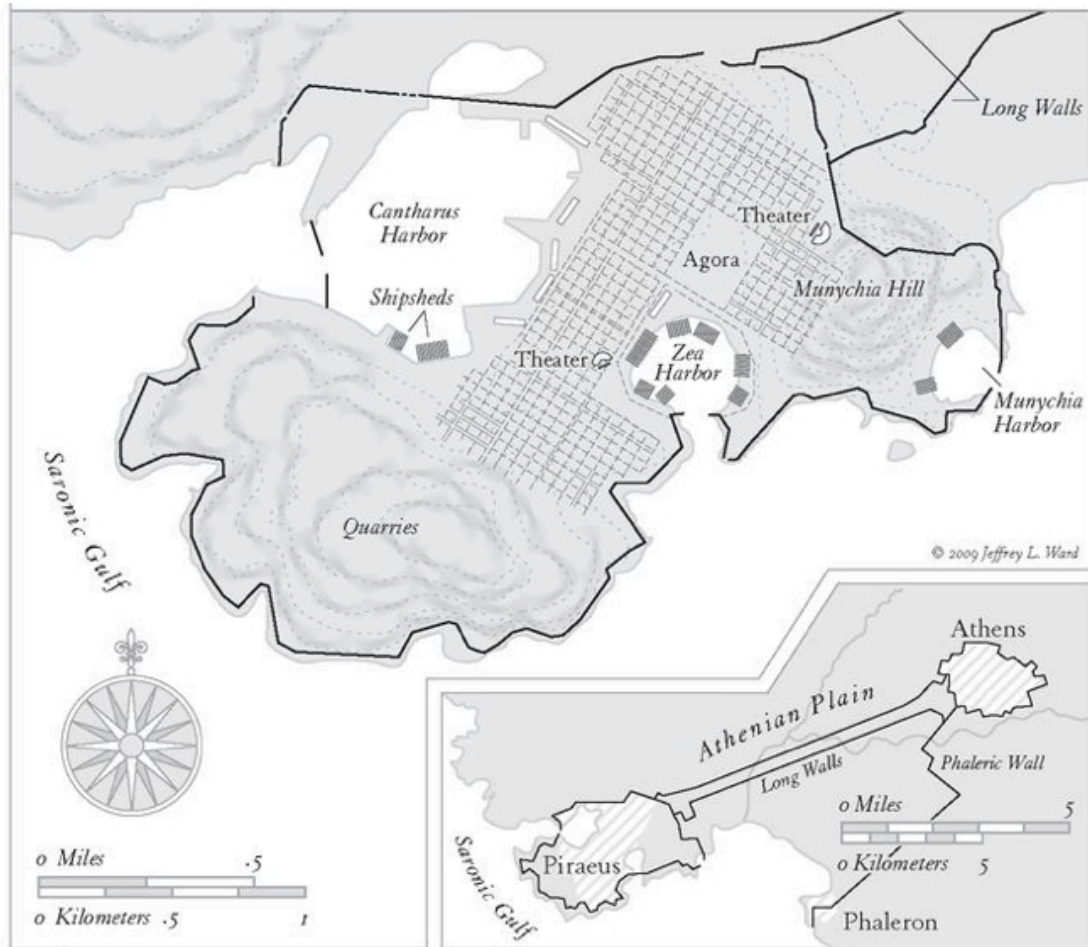
Figure Six: The Piraeus and Athens[47]

The Piraeus is a peninsula extending into the Saronic Gulf of the Aegean Sea,

boasting three natural harbors: the large Katharos harbor on its western side and the

smaller Mounichia and Zea harbors to the east and south. To the south, its landscape

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[47] Image from Johnathan Hale, *Lords of the Sea: The Epic Story of the Athenian Navy and the Birth of Democracy* (New York: Penguin, 2009), 116.

rises to form the Acte ridge and Mounichia hill, which command views of land and

sea (Figure Six). The peninsula first become important to Athens in the late sixth

century BCE, when Hippias, the eldest son of the tyrant Peisistratus (r. 561–527

BCE), recognized its strategic value and first attempted to fortify the Mounichia

hill.[48] Later, in 493/2, the statesman Themistocles successfully transformed the

Piraeus into a major military and commercial harbor, basing the Athenian navy there

and, in Plutarch's estimation, "making the city the dependent and the adjunct of the

port."[49] Seventy years later, a character in Aristophanes' play *The Knights* described

this event by saying that Themistocles "gave the Piraeus to the Athenians for dinner,"

a curious phrase suggesting that the port both provided the city with an key source of

sustenance and that the Athenians in a sense "consumed" the port by absorbing it into

their city.[50] Indeed, the decision to enclose the port within Athens' Long Walls

proved crucial during the Peloponnesian War, when grain shipments into the Piraeus

kept the Athenians from starving through decades of repeated sieges.[51] In addition to

these important fortifications, the urban planner Hippodamus of Miletus devised a

plan for the Piraeus around 450 BCE, creating a regular grid of straight streets and

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[48] Aristotle, *Constitution of the Athenians,* 19.2.
[49] Plutarch, *Themistocles* 19 (ἐκ δὲ τούτου τὸν Πειραιᾶ κατεσκεύαζε, τὴν τῶν λιμένων εὐφυΐαν κατανοήσας καὶ τὴν πόλιν ὅλην ἁρμοττόμενος πρὸς τὴν θάλατταν…); Thucydides 1,93,3; Philochorus *FGrH* 328 F 40; Diodorus Siculus 11,41,2.
[50] Aristophanes, *Knights*, 815 (σὺ Θεμιστοκλεῖ ἀντιφερίζεις; ὃς ἐποίησεν τὴν πόλιν ἡμῶν μεστὴν εὑρὼν ἐπιχειλῆ, καὶ πρὸς τούτοις ἀριστώσῃ τὸν Πειραιᾶ προσέμαξεν, ἀφελών τ' οὐδὲν τῶν ἀρχαίων ἰχθῦς καινοὺς παρέθηκεν); von Reden, "The Well-Ordered Polis," 186.
[51] Thucydides 1,107,1; 108,3; 2,13,6.

uniform housing blocks that sharply contrasted the narrow and haphazard roads that meandered through the rest of Athens.[52]

After the end of the Peloponnesian War in 404, the Spartans and their allies destroyed all fortifications and shipyards in the Piraeus, Athens' democratic government collapsed, and an oligarchic government known as the Thirty Tyrants came to power with Spartan backing. In opposition to this new regime, a group of Athenian citizens fled to the port and fortified it under the leadership of the statesmen Thrasybulus and Critias. A short civil war ensued between port and city, lasting until the partisans in the Piareus overthrew the Thirty and reinstated a democratic government in 403.[53] By the early fourth century, fortifications and naval facilities were again under construction in the port, and under the direction of the statesman Philo a large arsenal was built at the Zea harbor from 347 to 330 BCE.[54]

Nevertheless, the high tide of Athenian naval supremacy was already ebbing. After Athens' defeat in the Lamian War in 322, a Macedonian garrison installed on the Mounichia hill put a definitive end to hopes for a renewed Athenian thalassocracy. Although the Piraeus continued to function as a commercial port for centuries after this, Athens never regained the military and commercial hegemony it had enjoyed in the classical period. The Roman general Lucius Cornelius Sulla destroyed Philo's arsenal when he sacked the port in 86 BCE, during the First Mithridatic War, and despite some recovery in the Roman imperial era, the Piraeus

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[52] Aristotle, *Politics* 1267b 22.
[53] Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 2.3.11-4, 43; Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 2.7.2; Pseudo-Aristotle, *Constitution of the Athenians*, 34.2-40; Lysias, *Oration* 12, 13.
[54] Lysias 13.8; Xenophon, *Hellenica* 2.2.15; *IG* II ^{2} 1668.

declined in importance as Alexandria, Rhodes, and Delos increasingly came to dominate the shipping in the Eastern Mediterranean.[55] With the decay of the Long Walls, the unity of harbor and city was eventually breached, and the Piraeus gradually dwindled into a small fishing village.[56] Even its name was forgotten during the medieval period (the Venetians called the village "Porta Leone" after a statue of a lion that remained there), until it was reborn as an international port and thriving suburb of modern Athens in the nineteenth century.

In the classical period, the Piraeus stood out as a geographically and socially distinct community within greater Athens. Surrounded by the sea to the south, east, and west, it was separated from the upper city (ἄστυ/*ásty*) by five miles of gradually sloping land on its northern side. This significant geographical barrier shaped the district's history and sense of local identity. Yet the port was also connected to the upper city on this same side by the umbilicus of the Long Walls, which enclosed a strip of land that must also be considered part of Athens (Figure Six).[57] This unique arrangement meant that although port and town were inextricably bound together, in practice they functioned as two poles of a single city. The Piraeus was both a constituent part of Athens and at the same time a "second Athens" enclosed within the same set of walls.[58]

Ancient sources support this picture of the Piraeus as a geographically distinct neighborhood and yet part of its *polis* at large. In the opening scene of Plato's

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[55] Appian, *Mithridatic War* 30ff.; 40f; Plutarch, *Sulla* 14.7.

[56] Robert Garland, *The Piraeus* (London: Duckworth, 1987), 53.

[57] Dicks, *Piraeus*, 142. During the Peloponnesian War, much of the population of Attica crowded into this area for safety, as well as within the land protected by the Phaleric Wall.

[58] Cartledge, "Defining a Kosmos," 6.

Republic, Socrates walks down to the port with Glaucon, the son of Ariston, to attend

a festival being held there in honor of the Thracian goddess Bendis. After viewing

the celebration, the chatty philosopher is about to start back for home when his friend

Polemarchus invites him to visit the house of his father, the wealthy metic Cephalus,

where he becomes enmeshed in conversation and the action of the *Republic* plays

out.[59] The episode suggests that, despite requiring a walk of perhaps two hours, the

physical distance between the Piraeus and the *asty* did not inhibit regular traffic

between them.[60] Walking down to the port and back in the course of an afternoon

comes across in the *Republic* as rather unremarkable, which should perhaps not

surprise us when we consider that ancient people were more accustomed to walking

long distances than their modern descendents. An episode in Plutarch's *Life of Nikias*

further illustrates this point. According to Plutarch, news of the Athenian fleet's

destruction at Syracuse in 413 arrived in the city when a foreigner stopped into a

barbershop in the Piraeus and began to discuss the news with his barber. When the

barber heard his customer's report of the disaster, he ran out of his shop and up the

Long Walls, calling out and spreading the news to the rest of the city.[61] In this

passage as well, the distance between the harbor and upper city comes across as

significant but easily crossable.

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[59] Plato, *Republic* 1.327b
[60] This estimate is based on an average pedestrian walking speed of around 3 miles per hour. See Richard L. Knoblauch, et al. "Field Studies of Pedestrian Walking Speed and Start-Up Time." *Transportation Research Record* 1538 (1996): 27-38.
[61] Plutarch, *Nikias* 30.1; Sian Lewis, "Barbers' Shops and Perfume Shops: 'Symposia without Wine'," in *The Greek World*, ed. Anton Powell (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), 432. We are not told if his customer received a refund.

The population of the Piraeus was a mix of Athenian citizens, immigrants or

metics (μέτοικοι/*métoikoi*), and short-term visitors (ξένοι/*xénoi*). Most Athenians

who lived in the port were members of the deme of Piraeus. A deme (δῆμος *dêmos*)

was an official subdivision of Attica that functioned somewhat like a city in

miniature, possessing its own institutions and laws that supplemented but did not

supersede those of Athens itself.[62] Citizens were registered in the demes where they

were born, participated in their local religious festivals, and bore a "deme name"

(*demotikon*) name in addition to their given name and patronymic.[63] Although rarely

defined by clear physical boundaries, many demes were associated with

topographical features such as valleys, harbors, or shrines.[64] In this sense, they

resemble modern neighborhoods that lack precise physical borders but center on

reference points such as parks or important intersections.[65] Demes with long local

histories such as Marathon or Eleusis also tended to have local identities independent

of their association with Athens.[66] This was true for the Piraeus as well. Yet the port

was unique in that, unlike other demes, it was not only incorporated politically within

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[62] Herodotus 5.69.2: Pseudo-Aristotle, *Constitution of the Athenians* 21.4-5; Strabo 9.1.16. For two "deme level" laws known from inscriptions discovered in the Piraeus, see *IG* II[2] 1177 and 2623, with discussion in Jones, *Associations of Classical Athens*, 38, 59.

[63] An example of the full name of an Athenian citizen would therefore be: "Pericles, son of Xanthippus, from the deme Cholargus." In place of this *demotikon* a metic's name would include the phrase "*oikon en*" ("residing in"), or an *ethnikon* indicating his country of origin.

[64] Edward E. Cohen, *The Athenian Nation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 121; D. M. Lewis, "Cleisthenes and Attica," *Historia: Zeitschrift fur Alte Geschichte* 12, no. 1 (1963): 22-40; Aristotle, *Constitution of the Athenians* 42.1-2.

[65] Cohen, *The Athenian Nation*, 122.

[66] John S. Traill, "The Political Organization of Attica: A Study of the Demes, Trittyes, and Phylai, and Their Representation in the Athenian Council," *Hesperia Supplements* 14 (1975): i-iii+v-xi+xiii-xvii+a-135+39-69, 101; Sitta von Reden, "The Well-Ordered *Polis*: Topographies of Civic Space," in *Kosmos: Essays in Order, Conflict and Community in Classical Athens*, ed. Paul Cartledge, Paul Millett, and Sitta von Reden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 172-181.

the greater Athenian community but also physically within the walls of the city itself. The port's fate was always tied to that of Athens, even as its geography, population, and local culture made it stand out from the city at large.[67]

In a discussion of the origins of civil strife (στάσις/*stásis*) in a polis, Aristotle argued that there is a relationship between geographical divisions in a city's topography and psychological differences within its population:

> States sometimes enter into strife because of geography, when the nature of the country is not suited for their being a single city; for example at Clazomenae the people near Chytrum are in a feud with the inhabitants of the island…and at Athens the population is not uniformly democratic in spirit, but the inhabitants of the Piraeus are more so than those of the city. For just as in wars the fording of watercourses, even quite small ones, causes the formations to lose contact, so every difference seems to cause division.[68]

Aristotle wrote after the civil war of 404/3, when the supporters of Athenian democracy fortified the Piraeus against the forces of the Thirty Tyrants and their Spartan allies. This event undoubtedly shaped his thinking about geography and civil strife, and means that using his analysis to declare the Piraeus "a heartland of radical democracy," as some scholars have done, is problematic.[69] However, archaeological evidence does suggest that there may have been a connection between Hippodamus' urban plan for the Piraeus, the political power of rowers in the fleet, and a sense of

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[67] Dicks, "Pireaus," 140

[68] Aristotle, *Politics*, 5.1303b7-12 (στασιάζουσι δὲ ἐνίοτε αἱ πόλεις καὶ διὰ τοὺς τόπους, ὅταν μὴ εὐφυῶς ἔχῃ ἡ χώρα πρὸς τὸ μίαν εἶναι πόλιν, οἷον ἐν Κλαζομεναῖς οἱ ἐπὶ Χύτρῳ πρὸς τοὺς ἐν νήσῳ, καὶ Κολοφώνιοι καὶ Νοτιεῖς· καὶ Ἀθήνησιν οὐχ ὁμοίως εἰσὶν ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον δημοτικοὶ οἱ τὸν Πειραιᾶ οἰκοῦντες τῶν τὸ ἄστυ. ὥσπερ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς πολέμοις αἱ διαβάσεις τῶν ὀχετῶν, καὶ τῶν πάνυ σμικρῶν, διασπῶσι τὰς φάλαγγας, οὕτως ἔοικε πᾶσα διαφορὰ ποιεῖν διάστασιν). Part of the coastal polis of Clazomenae was located on the Ionian mainland, and part on an offshore island.

[69] Garland, *Piraeus*, 33.

shared political values among the Athenian citizens who lived in the port. As noted above, Hippodamus' uniform street grid divided the Piraeus into uniform blocks of eight dwellings each, in contrast to the haphazard layout of the upper city.[70] Although extensive archaeological work is limited by modern settlement in the port, excavations done in the nineteenth century indicate that these blocks were divided into long narrow lots, each of which contained houses built to a standardized type, equipped with courtyards and outdoor ovens, and, thanks to the sloping terrain, sharing a view of the sea.[71]

These houses may have been built to accommodate Athenian citizens serving in the navy, who were attracted to the new facilities Piraeus by the promise of decent housing and employment.[72] Historians such as John Hale have argued that as the fleet became increasingly central to Athenian military power, the men who served in it as rowers and steersmen came to play a more active role in the city's democratic government, realizing that without them the foundation of the city's military power would crumble.[73] In addition to serving side by side in the fleet, the Piraeus' uniform housing units may have reinforced a sense of democratic egalitarianism among Athenian citizens who lived in the Piraeus and were affiliated with the fleet through military service or trades such as shipbuilding. Ancient authors did not comment on this possibility directly, but Aristotle did note that Hippodamus had been the first to argue that a city's social and spatial landscapes should align with each other, and that

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[70] Richard Tomlinson, *From Mycenae to Constantinople: The Evolution of the Ancient City* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 71.
[71] Hale, *Lords of the Sea*, 118.
[72] Tomlinson, *From Mycenae to Constantinople*, 71-2.
[73] Hale, *Lords of the Sea*, 95-122.

the urban planner believed the ideal *polis* should be divided into distinct sacred, public, and private districts. In Hippodamus' ideal city, these districts would parallel the populations' division into three social classes (artisans, farmers, and soldiers), civic responsibility into three forms of duty (sacred, agricultural, and military), and criminal trials into three types of offense (violence, damages, and murder).[74] While we cannot know if Hippodamus was attempting to put these ideas into practice when he designed his grid plan for the Piraeus, it is clear that the neighborhood's architecture and layout were the products of a new set of ideas about how Greek cities should be arranged spatially. It is highly likely that at least a few of Hippodamus' peers would have considered the social implications of his work, as they looked over the prominent docks and markets, uniform street grid, and revolutionarily homogenous housing blocks of the Piraeus.[75]

Alongside the port's Athenian citizens resided a population of metics and foreign visitors that gave the district a bustling and cosmopolitan air.[76] These newcomers congregated in the Piraeus because it was the foundation of Athens' maritime empire and, consequently, the best place in the Aegean to exchange goods and information. Examining the Piraeus' foreign population and its relationship to the citizen body therefore moves us into a place where the distinction between polis

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[74] Aristotle, *Politics* 1267b (κατεσκεύαζε δὲ τὴν πόλιν τῷ πλήθει μὲν μυρίανδρον, εἰς τρία δὲ μέρη διῃρημένην· ἐποίει γὰρ ἓν μὲν μέρος τεχνίτας, ἓν δὲ γεωργούς, τρίτον δὲ τὸ προπολεμοῦν καὶ τὰ ὅπλα ἔχον. διῄρει δ' εἰς τρία μέρη τὴν χώραν, τὴν μὲν ἱερὰν τὴν δὲ δημοσίαν τὴν δ' ἰδίαν· ὅθεν μὲν τὰ νομιζόμενα ποιήσουσι πρὸς τοὺς θεούς, ἱεράν, ἀφ' ὧν δ' οἱ προπολεμοῦντες βιώσονται, κοινήν, τὴν δὲ τῶν γεωργῶν ἰδίαν. ᾤετο δ' εἴδη καὶ τῶν νόμων εἶναι τρία μόνον· περὶ ὧν γὰρ αἱ δίκαι γίνονται, τρία ταῦτ' εἶναι τὸν ἀριθμόν, ὕβριν βλάβην θάνατον.); Tomlinson, *From Mycenae to Constantinople*, 71-2.
[75] Lisa C. Nevett, *House and Society in the Ancient Greek World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 32-3.
[76] Jones, *Associations of Classical Athens*, 97; Dicks, *Piraeus*, 146.

and empire begins to blur.[77] As noted in Chapter Two, most foreigners living in

Athens were merchants, artisans, entertainers, and teachers of various stripes, such as

the Syracusan arms-dealer Cephalus and his sons Polemarchos and Lysias, the

freedman-turned-banker Pasion, or the courtesan Hermionie, who specialized in

entertaining foreign businessmen.[78] Countless others are nameless, many of them

poor, homeless, or otherwise undistinguished.[79] Yet although the names of many

immigrants have been lost, it is certain that non-Athenians were a common sight in

the port. Of the 366 metics whose deme residence is known from inscriptions and

texts, sixty-nine (19%) were registered in the port.[80] Using this figure, Robert

Garland estimates a total population of 5,000-6,000 immigrants in the Piraeus in the

late fifth century, with a constantly fluctuating number of short-term visitors.[81]

For the most part, ancient writers did not concern themselves with metics'

regional origins, though Xenophon's comment that the majority of Athens' foreign

residents came from Lydia, Phyrgia, and Syria in the mid-fourth century is a notable

exception.[82] Funerary inscriptions provide better data about metics' homelands and

occasionally their places of residence, but do not reflect the size of the expatriate

community. Common laborers or low-skilled workers, for example, are typically

underrepresented in the epigraphical record, either because they were illiterate, lacked

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[77] Kallet, "The Athenian Economy," 80.
[78] Garland, *Piraeus*, 142; Clerc, *Les Bas-Fonds*, 389.
[79] Clerc, *Les Bas-Fonds*, 389.
[80] Garland, *Piraeus*, 61; Jim Roy, "The Threat from the Piraeus," in *Kosmos: Essays in Order, Conflict and Community in Classical Athens*, ed. Paul Cartledge, Paul Millett, and Sitta von Reden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 196.
[81] Garland, *Piraeus*, 61
[82] Xenophon, *Ways and Means* 2.3; Garland, *Piraeus*, 63-4.

the funds to commission an inscription, or were cut off from kinship networks who would have taken care to commemorate them after death. Other immigrants may have spent years living in working in Athens before leaving the city to spend their remaining years in their homelands. For these reasons, the number of funerary inscriptions tends to be small in comparison to the probable size of the immigrant population. For instance, very few Thracian metics are commemorated despite the fact that they were one of the most prominent foreign groups in the Piraeus.[83] In spite of these difficulties, it is clear that metics from across the Aegean relocated in the Piraeus to advantage of its unparalleled facilities, and that short-term visitors from places such as Caria, Cyprus, Egypt, Phoenicia, Phrygia, and Thrace also congregated there on a regular basis.[84]

The best evidence for immigrant communities in the Piraeus, and for a sense of psychological cohesion among them, comes from religious practice. From at least the fifth century forward, metics introduced the worship of eastern deities such as the Thracian goddess Bendis, the Anatolian Mother of the Gods, the Syrian Aphrodite, and the Egpytian Isis to the port. These cults created a spiritual life of considerable scope and color in the neighborhood. Worshipping their native deities in cult associations (θίασοι /*thíasoi*) allowed immigrants to Athens to maintain the traditions of their homelands and express the sense of ethnic or religious identity that is often important to an expatriate community. Religious associations also provided a way

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[83] Garland, *Piraeus*, 65-6.
[84] For a list of sepulchral inscriptions commemorating foreigners domicilied in the Piraeus in the fourth century, see Garland, *Piraeus*, 64-5; cf. *IG* II^2 9031-6 (Kitian), *IG* II^2 (Thracian); *IG* II^2 141.30-6, 2946 (Phoenician).

for communities of immigrants such as the Thracians to gain privileges and negotiate their relationship with the Athenian citizen body, which took a conservative approach to the role of outsiders in their city and was inclined to closely police the social boundaries of their civic community.[85]

As noted above, the *Republic* opens with Socrates' decision to attend a festival in honor of the goddess Bendis organized by her worshippers in the Piraeus. Bendis was a Thracian goddess of the hunt originating from the lands northeast of Macedon bordering the Black Sea. Her cult is well attested in the Piraeus, where the celebration of the festival of Bendis (the Bendidea) that Socrates witnessed included public sacrifices and a torch-lit procession from the Prytaneion, the city's sacred hearth located in the upper city, to Bendis' cult center in the port. During the festival, the Thracians also staged dramatic relay races in which they tossed torches to each other while riding horses, a spectacle that, as the opening of the *Republic* suggests, drew spectators from both the port and the upper city.[86] A votive relief in honor of Bendis discovered in the Piraeus in 1895 depicts this event (Figure Seven). In it, a group of worshippers comprised of eight naked athletes and two bearded and draped priests approach the goddess, who is standing at the right holding a libation bowl dressed in a short tunic, knee-high boots, an animal skin, and her distinctive Phrygian cap with pointed crown. The athletes wear wreathes in their hair and the priest at the

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[85] Garland, *Piraeus*, 102-5; Ilias Arnaoutoglou, "Between *Koinon* and *Idion*: Legal and Social Dimensions of Religious Associaitons in Ancient Athens," in *Kosmos: Essays in Order, Conflict and Community in Classical Athens*, ed. Paul Cartledge, Paul Millett, and Sitta von Reden (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 78; Ronda Rae Simms, *Foreign Religious Cults in Athens in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries BC* (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1992), 286; Sitta von Reden. "The Piraeus - a World Apart" *Greece & Rome* 42, no. 1 (1995): 32-3.
[86] Plato, *Republic* 1.327a, 1.354a; *IG* II[2] 1496.86, 117.

front of the line carries a torch, suggesting that they have just completed a race and are in the process of making an offering to the goddess. Displays of devotion such as this would have fostered a sense of communal identity among the Thracian metics living in the Piraeus, who were responsible for first introducing the worship of Bendis to Athens. The public nature of the Benedeia would also have brought the Thracian community into the spotlight and helped to integrate it into the broader Athenian polity, since witnessing it would have familiarized non-Thracian spectators with the cult's traditions and practices. Finally, physically crossing the urban landscape during the sacred procession would have emphasized the primary and essential attachment between the port and the upper city, where the Thracian devotees of Bendis established another sanctuary in the third century.[87]

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[87] Simms, *Foreign Religious Cults in Athens*, 37, 42; Garland, *The Piraeus*, 121. This is especially the case when we consider that the Prytaneion, where the procession began, was the city's symbolic center of sacred and civic authority.

Figure Seven: Votive relief honoring Bendis, c. 400–375 CE.[88]

Although the remains of Bendis' temple in the Piraeus have not been found, a
number of inscriptions related to the cult have been discovered in Piraeus in the
vicinity of the Munichia hill.[89] Moreover, a third-century inscription dedicated by the
worshippers of Bendis attests to the existence of a sanctuary in the port by reporting
that "the assembly of the Athenians has granted to the Thracians alone of the other
tribes the right of owning land (ἔγκτασις/énktēsis) and the establishing of a temple, in
accordance with the response of the oracle at Dodona and the right to process from

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[88] Currently held in the British Museum. Image from www.britishmuseum.org.
[89] *IG* I[3] 136, 383.143; *IG* II[2] 1284, 1255-6,1361,1496; Simms, *Foreign Religious Cults in Athens*, 13.
Xenophon (*Hellenica* 2.4.10-1) stated that the democrats based in the Piraeus and forces of the
Spartan-backed Thirty met in battle during the civil war of 404/3 near the sanctuary of Bendis on
Munichia.

the hearth of the Prytaneion."[90] This land grant was a rare privilege, since metics

were ordinarily not permitted to own property under Athenian law. It is possible that

by granting Thracian metics permission to construct a temple to Bendis in the Piraeus,

the Athenians were attempting to increase the likelihood of securing an alliance with

the Thracian king Stialces against Sparta and its Peloponnesian allies.[91] If this was

the case, we should see the cult of Bendis as a noteworthy, but by no means unique,

example of the relationship between foreign policy and domestic worship in an

imperial capital. Just as publicly honoring Bendis provided a means for the Thracian

immigrant community to integrate itself into the Athenian center, so too did the cult

serve as a diplomatic instrument that the Athenians hoped would foster their interests

abroad.[92]

Other cults besides that of Bendis also point toward shared interests among

immigrants in the Piraeus. One noteworthy inscription from 333/2 records the

Athenian assembly's decision to allow Phoenician merchants from the city of Kition

in Cyprus to buy a plot of land in the Piraeus to build a temple to their native goddess

Aphrodite Ourania, "just as the Egyptians also built a sanctuary of Isis."[93] This

inscription thus provides evidence for the worship of two foreign deities in the port,

Aphrodite Ourania and Isis, in one stroke.[94] It goes on to say that Lycurgus, Athens'

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[90] *IG* II[2] 1283; Simms, *Foreign Religious Cults in Athens*, 15.
[91] Thucydides (2.29.4) noted that the Athenians placed considerable importance upon forging an alliance with the Thracians at the outbreak of the Peloponnesian War.
[92] Simms, *Foreign Religious Cults in Athens*, 18; Garland, *Piraeus*, 119.
[93] *IG* II[2] 337; Simms, *Foreign Religious Cults in Athens*, 197; Garland, *Piraeus* 112-3.
[94] This inscription makes it clear that Egyptian metics had been granted permission to erect a sanctuary to Isis at some point before 333/2. This was an early move for a goddess who later became very popular in Athens and many other cities in the Roman period. Isis was often depicted holding a

chief financial officer from 338–326, supported the Kitians' request. Like the earlier

privileges granted to the worshippers of Bendis, this support for the Kitian

community's desire to build a temple of Aphrodite Ourania may have been a way to

foster good commercial and social relations with Phoenician merchants in a time

when Athens was struggling with an economic downturn.[95] If so, the measure

appears to have been successful. A later dedication to Aphrodite Ourania by a

Cypriot breastplate manufacturer named Stephanos shows that at least some wealthy

metics were eager to dedicate their resources to cult in collaboration with their

countrymen.[96]

Residents of the Piraeus also worshipped the Mother of the Gods (Μητηρ

Θεων/*Mêtêr Theôn*), an ancient deity whose history can be traced back to early Iron

Age Mesopotamia.[97] Mendicant priests known as "beggars of the goddess"

(μητραγύρται/*mētragýrtai*) first arrived in Athens in the early fifth century, disturbing

the populace with their alien methods of worship, which included the use of

percussion instruments to induce a mood of frenzied ecstasy that sometimes

steering oar in sculpture, an allusion to her association with navigation. Port cities across the
Mediterranean held an annual festival in her honor known as the Ploiaphesia ("Launching of the
Sacred Ship of Isis") to mark the beginning of the sailing season in March. Over one hundred funerary
reliefs of female devotees of Isis survive from Attica, typically portraying the deceased wearing a
fringed shawl knotted between the breasts, holding a rattle (*sistrum*) in one hand and a bucket of Nile
water in the other. None of these reliefs, however, can be dated to earlier than the Augustan era.
Garland; *Piraeus*, 128.
[95] Jennifer M. S. Stager, ""Let No One Wonder at This Image": A Phoenician Funerary Stele in
Athens," *Hesperia* 74, no. 3 (2005): 443; Simms, *Foreign Religious Cults*, 198-9.
[96] *IG* II[2] 1261. A number of late fourth century decrees refer to other Cypriot participants in Aphrodite
Ourania's cult. See *IG* II[2] 1290, 1337, 4636-7, 4586, 4616; Garland, *Piraeus*, 228-9; Clerc, *Les Bas-Fonds*, 392.
[97] A mysterious and mutable figure, the Mother of the Gods was closely associated (and sometimes
assimilated) with the Anatolian goddess Cybele and the Greek goddesses Rhea and Demeter.

culminated in public acts of self-castration.[98] Perhaps to stay in the good graces of

such a powerful and unsettling goddess, the Athenians erected a shrine to a

Hellenized version of the Mother (drawing upon imagery associated wht the Greek

the goddess Rhea) on the southwest side of the Agora. Alongside this small public

cult, immigrants from Asia Minor introduced a private cult of the goddess to the

Piraeus in the fourth century. This second cult of the Great Mother was more public

and overtly alien than its Hellenized predecessor.[99] Lead by an annually elected

priestess whose duties included officiating at sacrifices, recording dedications, and

organizing the festival of the goddesses' consort Attis, it also included female

devotees who circulated through the port's streets bearing silver trays and asking for

donations on their deity's behalf.[100] The unnamed man who Plutarch reported as

mutilating himself on the altar of the Twelve Gods before the Athenian fleet's

departure on the Sicilian Expedition in 415 was almost certainly a member of the

Great Mother's cult.[101] Despite Plutarch characterization of this event as an ill omen

that foreshadowed the fleet's disastrous defeat at Syracuse, the worship of the Mother

of the Gods appears to have become more popular among Athenians as well as

foreigners living in the Piraeus as time went on, as votive offerings to her proliferated

in the Hellenistic and Roman periods.[102]

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[98] Aristotle, *Rhetorica* 1405a 20f.
[99] *IG* II² 4609; Simms, *Foreign Religious Cults in Athens*, 103, 111.
[100] See *IG* II² 6288 for the epitaph of one such priestess, Chairestrae of Ikaria, who described herself "an attendant and revered priestess of the Mother who bears all things" and lived from 350 to 317. For other dedications datable to the fourth and third centuries, see *IG* II² 1273, 1301, 1314-6, 4563, 4609, 4671; Garland 129-131, 235-6.
[101] Plutarch, *Nicias* 13.2.
[102] *IG* II² 1327-9, 1334, 2950, 4579, 4590, 4703, 4714, 4760.

Religious associations such as these played an important role in fostering a sense of shared identity and priorities among immigrants living in the port, since without the continued participation of the immigrants who made up the majority of their congregations they would almost certainly have ceased to exist.[103]   However, they are not the only pieces of evidence that show how the Piraeus stood out as neighborhood of Athens that was both socially and spatially distinct. Other institutions shared by immigrants, visitors, and citizens also point to the neighborhood's heterogeneous character and unique local identity. The most important of these were, of course, the harbor facilities themselves. Aristophanes captured the energy and pleasing chaos of the docks in a scene from his play *Acharnians*:

> Why, on the very instant you'd have been full of the hubbub of soldiers, noisy crowds surrounding ships' captains, pay being handed out, Pallas emblems being gilded, the colonnade groaning, rations being measured out, leathers and oarloops and people buying jars, garlic, and olives and onions in nets, crowns and anchovies and flute girls with black eyes; and the dockyard full of the planning of oar-spars, the hammering of dowel-pins, the boring of oarports, full of flutes and boatswains, of warbling and piping.[104]

A bustling port attracts people from all walks of life because it primarily functions as a place of convergence and a node of exchange. The workmen, sailors,

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[103] Simms, *Foreign Religious Cults in Athens*, 283.

[104] Aristophanes' *Acharnians* 544-54 (καὶ κάρτα μέντἂν εὐθέως καθείλκετε τριακοσίας ναῦς, ἢν δ' ἂν ἡ πόλις πλέα θορύβου στρατιωτῶν, περὶ τριηράρχου βοῆς, μισθοῦ διδομένου, παλλαδίων χρυσουμένων, στοᾶς στεναχούσης, σιτίων μετρουμένων, ἀσκῶν, τροπωτήρων, κάδους ὠνουμένων, σκορόδων, ἐλαῶν, κρομμύων ἐν δικτύοις, στεφάνων, τριχίδων, αὐλητρίδων, ὑπωπίων: τὸ νεώριον δ' αὖ κωπέων πλατουμένων, τύλων ψοφούντων, θαλαμιῶν τροπουμένων, αὐλῶν, κελευστῶν, νιγλάρων, συριγμάτων.) Translation by Henderson in Dougherty, "Just Visiting," 396.

musicians, buyers and sellers that Aristophanes conjures in this passage no doubt

hailed from a diversity of countries and a range of social classes. As noted in Chapter

Two, maritime commerce, whether in luxury goods or in fish and grain from regions

as diverse as Sicily, Egypt, Cyprus, and the Black Sea, was largely (though not

entirely) in the hands of metics.[105] Trade therefore necessarily involved encounters

between citizens and foreigners on the Piraeus' docks and in its agora, which was

named "Hippodamia" in honor of Hippodamus of Miletus, the metic who designed

it.[106] The legal distinctions between citizens and outsiders no doubt seemed at least a

bit blurrier on the ground, as citizens and metics worked side by side on the docks to

unload ships or haggled over prices in the agora.[107] In addition to being a driving

force behind the Athenian economy, this commercial focus was a major aspect of the

neighborhood's identity.

Commerce and communication went hand in hand. Both the agora and the

individual businesses of the Piraeus were institutions where the exchange of

knowledge often accompanied transactions of goods and services. The orator

Demosthenes asserted that in addition to traveling abroad, "spending time in the

market has made me familiar with most of the men who sailed the sea."[108] He was

certainly not alone in this. To do business, buyers and sellers needed to comprehend

each other and, ideally, possess a rudimentary understanding their each other's mores

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[105] Clerc, *Les Bas-Fonds*, 397.
[106] Tomlinson, *From Mycenae to Constantinople*, 70; Aristotle, *Politics* 1267b.
[107] Von Reden, "The Piraeus: A World Apart," 32.
[108] Demosthenes 33.5. Although he does not mention the Piraeus directly in this passage, Demosthenes' association of the market with "men who sail the sea" is a nod to the district's importance to the Athenian economy.

and cultural assumptions. Citizens and foreigners interacted daily in the shared space

of the agora as they did on the docks, and it was arguably on the docks and in the

markets of the Piraeus that the Athenians fully experienced the flavor of urban life in

all of its encounters and contradictions, as well as the effects of political and

commercial empire.[109] Plutarch's report that news of the Sicilian disaster came first to

a barbershop in the port also reminds us that shops functioned as spaces where

information was exchanged and relationships could be built, yet also makes it clear

that the port was a gateway to a wider world that, once opened, could not be

closed.[110] As an intermediate stage between the house and the agora, individual

businesses such as barber shops and taverns allowed residents to form and maintain

relationships larger than kinship groups but smaller than civic or religious

associations.[111] They thus provided a milieu that could nurture the sense of local

community crucial to the formation of neighborhood identity.

The Piraeus was also known for businesses that encouraged encounters of a

more personal nature. The neighborhood was one of Athens' red-light districts,

where citizens and foreigners alike frequented cheap brothels.[112] In the *Laws*, Plato

warned that a polis located next to the sea would likely be plagued by "a variety of

luxurious and depraved characters."[113] Although the philosopher was interested in

more than sexual immorality, it is nevertheless true that the Piraeus had a rather seedy

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[109] Tuan, *Topophilia*, 179-80.
[110] Plutarch, *Nicias* 30.
[111] Lewis, "Barbers' Shops and Perfume Shops," 439.
[112] Catherine Salles, *Les Bas-Fonds De L'antiquité* (Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont, 1982), 22. The Keramikos was the other neighborhood where residents of Athens went "for a good time."
[113] Plato, *Laws* 4.704d-705a.

reputation. Several strands of evidence indicate that the neighborhood had a local flavor resembling that of many other ports in history. The courtesan Hermionie, who specialized in providing young girls to rich foreign businessmen at high prices, ran a brothel there.[114] The orator Isaeus reports that his rich friend Euctemon owned a whorehouse in the Piraeus and delegated its management to one of his freedwomen.[115] During a prosecution in the law courts, the orator Aeschines accused Timarchus of apprenticing himself to Euthydicus the physician in the Piraeus, "pretending to be a student of medicine, but in fact deliberately offering himself for sale" to "merchants, other foreigners, and our own citizens."[116] These examples provide a glimpse of the neighborhood's local color and show how the shared institutions of the Piraeus fostered interactions between Athenians and foreigners that could be seen as either productive or corrupting. While we do not know if Aeschines' accusation about Timarchus was true or merely a tactic to blacken his reputation by casting him as a gigolo and a passive partner in homosexual intercourse, what matters is that story was plausible enough to carry weight with the audience. Aeschines employed a "rhetoric of otherness" to link Timarchus with a part of Athens whose local character was clear to everyone listening.[117]

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[114] Clerc, *Les Bas-Fonds*, 389; *Epistologr. Graec.* 83.

[115] Isaeus 6.17-24; Mary R. Lefkowitz and Maureen B. Fant, eds., *Women's Life in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), 65.

[116] Aeschines, *Against Timarchus* 40 (οὗτος γὰρ πάντων μὲν πρῶτον, ἐπειδὴ ἀπηλλάγη ἐκ παίδων, ἐκάθητο ἐν Πειραιεῖ ἐπὶ τοῦ Εὐθυδίκου ἰατρείου, προφάσει μὲν τῆς τέχνης μαθητής, τῇ δ' ἀληθείᾳ πωλεῖν αὑτὸν προῃρημένος, ὡς αὐτὸ τοὖργον ἔδειξεν. ὅσοι μὲν οὖν τῶν ἐμπόρων ἢ τῶν ἄλλων ξένων ἢ τῶν πολιτῶν τῶν ἡμετέρων κατ' ἐκείνους τοὺς χρόνους ἐχρήσαντο τῷ σώματι τῷl Τιμάρχου, ἑκὼν καὶ τούτους ὑπερβήσομαι, ἵνα μή τις εἴπῃ ὡς ἄρα λίαν ἀκριβολογοῦμαι ἅπαντα).

[117] Von Reden, "The Piraeus: A World Apart," 32-33.

The docks, marketplaces, and shops of the Piraeus were common facilities that brought residents of the port together and helped to define the neighborhood as a place of sacred, profane, and commercial encounters. Cults of deities such as Bendis or the Mother of the Gods fostered feelings of community and a degree of psychological unity among the district's various immigrant communities, most of which had ethnic, linguistic, and cultural ties to Asia Minor and the Levant. Citizenship, deme affiliation, military service, and possible democratic leanings, on the other hand, forged ties among Athenians who lived in the port. Within the geographical boundaries that surrounded it by land and sea, these social distinctions made the Piraeus stand out as a neighborhood of Athens that was unique enough to almost form a second urban center within a single set of city walls.[118] Nevertheless, these social and spatial boundaries were far from absolute. Crossing them, whether to visit a brothel, deliver news from abroad, transport goods from the docks to the Agora, or participate in a procession honoring a foreign goddess, brought the Athenians and their metic neighbors into frequent contact with each other and helped knit the port and upper city into a single, albeit fragmented, community.

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[118] Von Reden, "The Piraeus: A World Apart," 27.

Trastevere: The *Regio* across the River
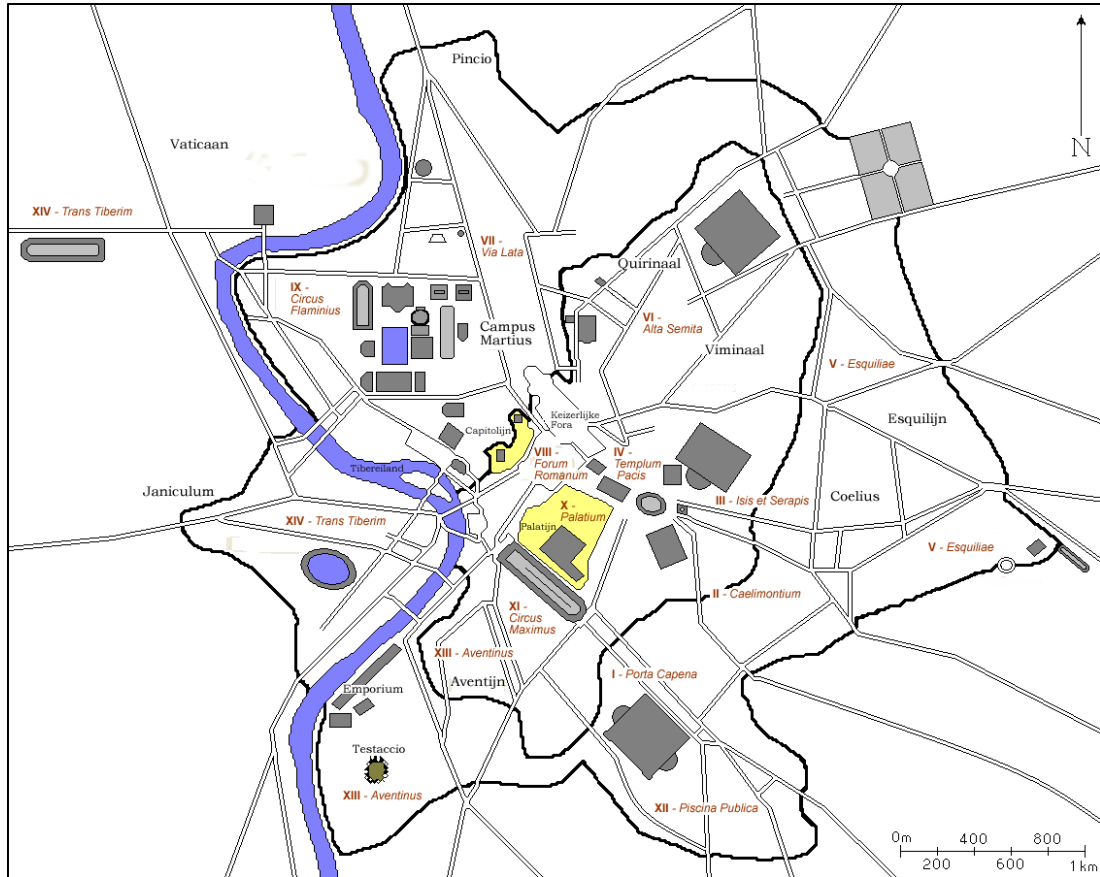
Figure Eight: Imperial Rome (major features)[119]

According to the Romans' ancient traditions, the twin brothers Romulus and Remus founded their city on April 21, 743 BCE.[120] In the years that followed, kings ruled Rome. Tradition also dictated that the sixth of these kings, Servius Tullius (r.

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[119] Image from Wikimedia Commons (www.commons.wikimedia.org). Accessed 10/10/13.

[120] Livy 1.6-7. Our historical insight into Rome's early years is cloudy at best, relying heavily on stories written down centuries after the city's foundation. However, excavations have shown that the area of Rome was inhabited from at least the middle Bronze Age. See A. Carandini and P. Carafa (eds.), *Palatium e Sacra Via I*, vol. 1, *Bollettino di Archeologia* 31/33 (1995).

578–535 BCE), was the first to divide the city into four *regiones* ("regions" or "quarters"): administrative districts intended to organize its population into four tribes of voting citizens.[121] Five centuries later, Rome had grown into the capital of a vast empire and the city of Servius Tullius lay at the center of a wide urban sprawl. Recognizing this, Rome's first emperor, Augustus (r. 27 BCE–14 CE) undertook a sweeping program of reforms designed to reshape the city's administration and infrastructure to meet a new imperial age. In addition to undertaking a monumental building project on the Campus Martius, greatly expanding public facilities such as baths and theatres, refurbishing eighty-two temples and constructing several new ones, and giving Rome its first firefighting force (*vigilies*), Augustus increased the number of *regiones* from four to fourteen to better administer Rome's swelling population.[122] These fourteen *regiones* remained the city's chief divisions as long as it remained an imperial capital.[123]

Each *regio* contained a number of smaller units called *vici* (sing. *vicus*), parcels of urban space corresponding to a street with its adjoining apartment buildings (*insulae*), private houses (*domus*) and local businesses.[124] At the center of each *vicus*

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[121] Varro, *Ling.* 5.45, 49, 51, 53; Livy 1.43.13; Pliny, *Natural History* 18.13; Paulus Festus 506.5. For this reason, scholars refer to the archaic city as *Roma quadrata*.
[122] Augustus, *Res Gestae* 19-21; Suetonius, *Augustus* 30.1
[123] G. Hermansen, "The Population of Imperial Rome: The Regionaries," *Historia* 27 (1978): 144; Stephen Dyson, *Rome: A Living Portrait of an Ancient City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 2010), 220.
[124] Our knowledge of Rome's *vici* comes chiefly from two sources. The first of these is the *Forma Urbis*, a marble map of the city put up for public display by Septimius Severus (r. 193-211) that survives in fragments. The second is a document known as the *Regionaries*, which is itself a compilation of two lists – the *Notitia* and the *Curiosum* – that were likely composed in the fourth century. Possibly commissioned by the office of the city prefect, these list catalogue the landmarks, residences, and other features of the imperial city. Their record of 1,797 *domus* and 46,602 *insulae* (a figure that may be an error for 26,602) suggests that Rome retained a large population even in late

was a crossroads (*compitium*) with a communal shrine to two tutelary spirits called

the Lares. Residents of each *vicus* elected officers who maintained this shrine in

addition to overseeing administrative tasks such as fire and crime prevention, food

supply, and the regulation of businesses.[125] More than just collections of apartments

or houses, then, *vici* were places where the bonds of physical proximity, religious

practice, and sometimes ethnic identity brought residents together into communities

associated with specific places in the city.[126] For this reason, many scholars translate

the Latin term as "village" or "neighborhood."

   Vici obviously have important bearing upon any analysis of urban life in

ancient Rome. Yet because of their small size they offer only limited evidence for

immigrant communities at Rome on an individual basis.[127] Focusing on the broader

level of the *regio*, on the other hand, allows access to a larger body of evidence about

immigration's impact on Rome's social and spatial landscapes. Despite the standard

English translation of *vicus*, *regiones* also functioned as smaller worlds within Rome

that displayed many of the characteristics we associate with neighborhoods. Within

them, bonds of proximity, ethnicity, religion, and occupation extended beyond the

reach of a single street or compital shrine. This was particularly the case when

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antiquity. See Hermansen, "Population of Rome: the *Regionaries*," 133; John E. Stambaugh,*The Ancient Roman City* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 114; Charles Gates, *Ancient Cities: The Archaeology of Urban Life in the Ancient near East and Egypt, Greece, and Rome* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 369. For a reading of *insulae* as individual apartments rather than multiple-unit buildings, see Glenn R. Storey, "Regionaries-Tyle Insulae 2: Architectural/Residential Units at Rome," *American Journal of Archaeology* 106, no. 3 (2002): 411-13, 431.

[125] Lott, *Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 4.

[126] Lott*, Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 5; Dyson, *Rome*, 226

[127] Dyson, *Rome*, 216. There were 265 *vici* in Rome at the end of the first century CE, and 323 by the fourth.

topographical features such as walls, hills, or rivers physically distinguished a *regio* from the rest of Rome, as they did in Trastevere (*Trans Tiberim*), Rome's fourteenth quarter and the only one located on the far bank of the Tiber. My analysis will focus on the southern half of this vast *regio*, both because it was the only part eventually enclosed within the city walls and since it has yielded useful archaeological evidence for immigrant settlement in the city. The boundaries that surrounded this neighborhood helped make it a world unto itself, both separate from Rome and inextricably part of it.
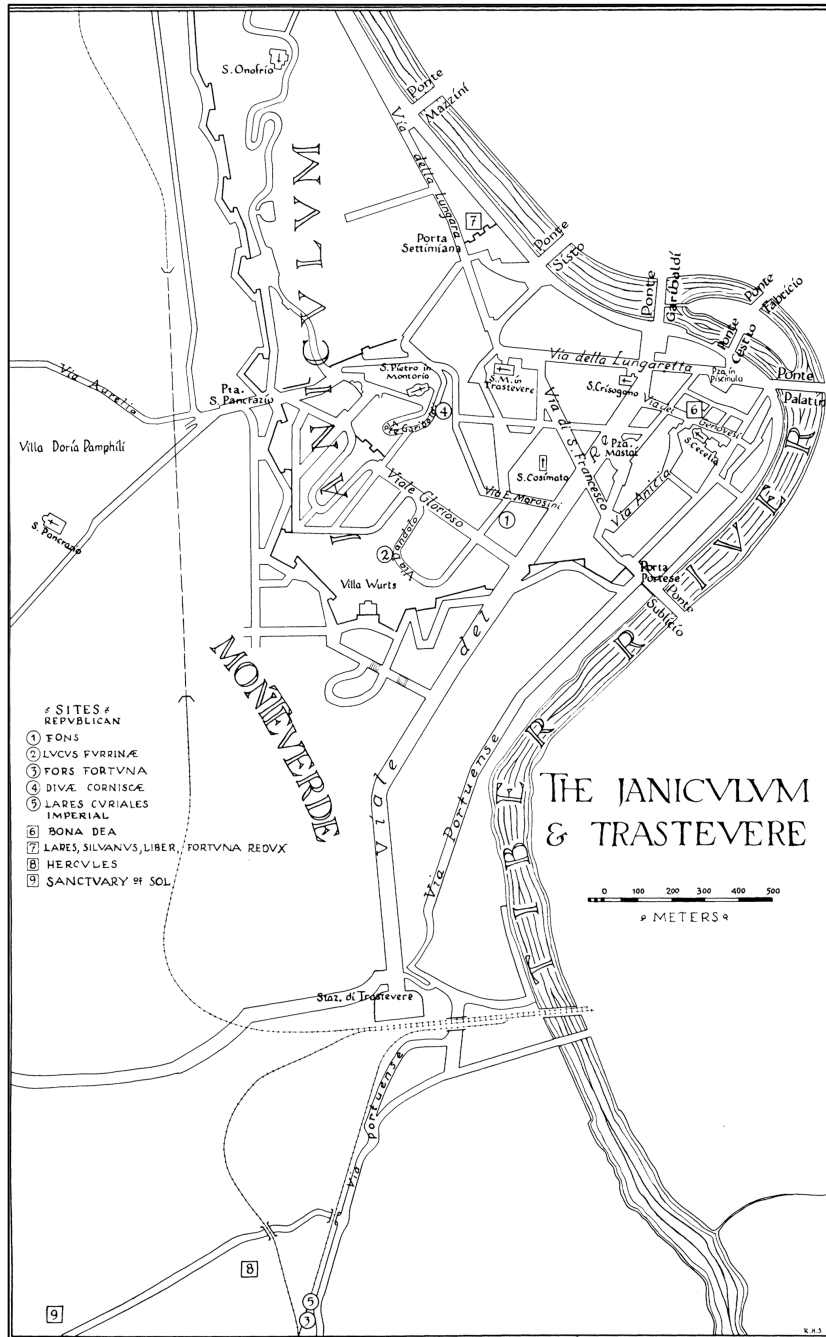
Figure Nine: Trastevere (southern sector)[128]

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[128] Image from S. M. Savage, "The Cults of Ancient Trastevere," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 17 (1940): 33.

Trastevere's outer boundaries were imprecise for much of its history, tapering off gradually into Rome's hinterland. Nevertheless, its main residential area was always located between the Tiber River and the long ridge of the Janiculum hill, which extends from the Vatican region in the north to the slopes of Monteverde in the south (Figure Nine).[129] Trastevere was only partially under Roman control during the city's early years, when it was called the "Etruscan bank" (*ripa Etrusca*) because of the Etruscan presence there. The area did not formally become part of the city until the reign of Augustus, when it became *Regio XIV*.[130] In the centuries that followed, it became one of the capital's most populous districts, characterized by a large population of immigrants and freedmen, the proliferation of cults devoted to deities originating from the empire's eastern provinces, and the presence of industries that supplied the city with necessary commodities such as grain, leather, and pottery. In some ways, the layout of the ancient *regio* foreshadowed that of modern Trastevere, which remains a tightly packed quarter of apartments and businesses sandwiched between the Tevere River and Gianicolo hill.[131]   Then as now, the neighborhood's unique geography has shaped its identity and relationship to the broader Roman community.[132]

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[129] Savage, *Cults of Ancient Trastevere*, 26. The hill took its name from the two-faced god Janus and the related word *ianua* ("door"), pointing to its role as one of the city's ancient borders but also suggesting that it functioned as a gateway into Rome. For an analysis of this etymology, see Livy 1.33.6-9.

[130] Suetonius*, Augustus* 30; Cassius Dio IV.8.7.

[131] Savage, *Cults of Ancient Trastevere*, 28; Filippo Coarelli, *Guida Archeologica Di Roma* (Rome: Arnoldo Mondadori, 1974). 308. The tanneries and tenements of the ancient *regio*, however, have largely been replaced by wine bars and trattorie.

[132] Savage, *Cults of Ancient Trastevere*, 26.

In antiquity, the Tiber was the most prominent physical boundary separating the fourteenth *regio* from the rest of the city. Travel to and from the neighborhood could only take place at bridges that linked Trastevere to Rome, narrow points of contact that Roman authors portrayed as undesirable places frequented by panhandlers, prostitutes, and desperate people with nowhere else to go.[133] The satirist Juvenal, for instance, criticized a lackluster meal by saying that not even "a beggar from a bridge" would accept an invitation to it.[134] One of Martial's epigrams cruelly mocked a Celtic immigrant named Vacerra for facing the prospect of living under one of Rome's bridges with his family after being unable to pay the rent on his apartment.[135] The philosopher Seneca was even more explicit in a passage from his treatise "On the Blessed Life" (*de Vita Beata*) in which, arguing that happiness can be maintained even in the direst of circumstances, he wrote: "Take me over to the Pons Sublicius and toss me among the beggars there, but do not despise me because I will be seated among their number, who stretch out their hands for alms."[136] Beggars and unfortunates could certainly be found anywhere in Rome, but writers such as Juvenal, Martial, and Seneca saw the river as a place where the dregs of society tended to congregate.[137] Their writings portrayed the geographic boundary of the Tiber as a

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[133] MacMullen, "The Unromanized in Rome," 56. In this way, too, ancient Rome prefigures the modern metropolis.

[134] Juvenal, *Satire* 14.134 (*invitatus ad haec aliquis de ponte negabit*).

[135] Martial, *Epigram* 12.32; Watson, "Martial 12.32: An Indigent Immigrant," 316; Dyson, *Rome*, 295.

[136] Seneca, *de Vita Beata* 7.25.1 (*In Sublicium pons fer et inter gentes abice: non ideo tamen me despiciam, quod in illorum numero consedero, qui manum ad stipem porrigunt.*) The *pons Sublicius* was one of the three bridges that linked Trastevere to Rome.

[137] Disgruntled Romans also used the river to dispose of the bodies of reviled emperors such as Vitellius (r. 69 CE) and Elegabalus (r. 218-222 CE). See Suetonius, *Vitellius* 17; Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 80.20.

socially marginal space that attracted outcasts such as poor immigrants and panhandlers. This sentiment no doubt applied equally to the *regio* beyond the river, since it was to there that Rome's bridges led.

Trastevere was, one might say, on the wrong side the tracks. For much of its existence, it was also on the wrong side of the pomerium, the sacred boundary that surrounded Rome. Although stories of its establishment by Romulus during Rome's foundation are more legendary than historical, the pomerium nevertheless played an important role in the city's history, as a boundary that divided the civic sphere from the external world of war and the world of the living from the world of the dead.[138] Servius Tullius, the dictator Sulla, and the emperors Augustus, Claudius, Nero, and Trajan each extended it as the city grew in population and size.[139] Small stones called *cippi* marked the pomerium's line in antiquity, though their displacement and disappearance over the centuries makes it impossible to pin down its precise location today.[140] It is certain, however, that the sacred boundary followed the line of the Tiber for centuries, leaving Trastevere religiously outside of the city. This situation lasted until the emperor Aurelian (r. 270–275) extended the pomerium to meet the circuit of walls he built to defend Rome during the troubled third century.[141] It is therefore not surprising that Trastevere became a hotbed of foreign religious cults in the early empire, as will be discussed below. Although not as far removed from the

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[138] Dyson, *Rome*, 295. Within the pomerium, burials, armies, and temples to foreign deities were traditionally forbidden except by special permission of the Senate (later the emperor).
[139] Livy 1.44; Tacitus, *Annals* 12.23.2-24; Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights* 13.143.
[140] The *cippi* have for the most part been lost or displaced over time. For some examples of surviving ones, see *CIL* vi 31537-31539.
[141] Coarelli, *Guida Archelologica di Roma*, 308. Still standing today, the Aurelian Walls also gave southern Trastevere a firm outer boundary for the first time in its existence.

center of Rome as the Piraeus was from upper Athens, the geographic boundary of the Tiber and the symbolic boundary of the pomerium helped make the fourteenth *regio* a distinctly separate space. These boundaries also influenced its evolution into a diverse immigrant neighborhood with a distinctively "eastern" local culture.

Although the literary record is thin, a sizeable corpus of archaeological and epigraphic evidence suggests that many of Trastevere's residents had ethnic and cultural ties to the eastern Mediterranean. This fact has led a number of modern scholars to collectively refer to them as "Syrians."[142] This broad label is somewhat misleading, since the term in antiquity referred to individuals not only from the province of Syria but also from Asia, Judaea, Arabia, and other areas of the eastern Roman Empire. What is clear, however, is that it had a negative connotation. Juvenal famously lashed out against Syrian immigration he perceived as eroding the traditional Roman character in his Third Satire, complaining that "the Syrian Orontes is already flowing into the Tiber, bringing with it its language and morals, its crooked harps and flute-players and tambourines, and its girls made to stand for hire at the Circus."[143] Cicero, Livy, and other elite authors joined him in characterizing Syrians and other "Asiatics" as effeminate, duplicitous, and generally worthless, calling them as "peoples born to be slaves."[144]

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[142] MacMullen, "The Unromanized in Rome," 63; Noy, *Foreigners at Rome*, 151; La Piana, "Foreign Groups at Rome," 218.

[143] Juvenal, 3.62-65 (*iam pridem Syrus in Tiberim defluxit Orontes, et linguam et mores et cum tibicine chordas obliquas nec non gentilia tympana secum vexit et ad circum iussas prostare puellas*).

[144] Cicero, *De prov. Cons.*, 10 (*Iudaei et Syri, nations natae servituti*); Livy 36.17.5 (*hic Syri et Asiatici Graeci sunt, vilissima genera hominum et servituti nata*); Scriptores Historia Augusta, *Tacitus* 3.5 (*cogitate tam leves esse mentes Syrorum, ut regnare vel fiminas cupiant potius quam nostram perpeti*

As we shall see in a moment, the evidence is clear that many immigrants from the eastern Mediterranean were resident at Rome and in Trastevere in particular. While the sources do not always permit us to trace their origins precisely, it is likely that many used ties of kinship and nationality to establish themselves in Rome through processes of chain migration like the ones discussed at the start of this chapter.[145] The imperial capital was, after all, not an easy place for newcomers. In an epigram listing some of the travails of city life, Martial mocked naïve provincials who came to Rome hoping to become famous writers by calling them "Ovids and Virgils shivering in threadbare cloaks."[146] In another, he told the story of a hungry Spanish immigrant named Tuccius who arrived in the capital and immediately turned back for home after hearing how hard it was for a man to support himself there.[147]

Newcomers enjoyed much better chances of survival if they knew how to find networks of mutual aid and support. In his study of the growth of the early Christian community at Rome, Paul Meeks argued that the social and professional associations that played an important role in the spread of religions across the ancient Mediterranean were also instrumental in the growth of immigrant neighborhoods in cities.[148] The apostle Paul, for example, was particularly successful at establishing connections with individuals who shared his trade of tentmaking such as the

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sanctimoniam), *Aurelian* 31.3 (*rarum est ut Syri fidem servent, immo difficile*); Ricci, Stra*nieri Illustri e Comunità Immigrante a Roma*, 93.

[145] Noy, *Foreigners at Rome*, 90-1. This process of chain migration, discussed in Chapter One, is familiar to us from a number of ancient and modern metropolises.

[146] Martial, *Epigram* 3.38 (*Insanis: omnes gelidis quicumque lacernis sunt ibi, Nasones Vergiliosque vide*).

[147] Martial, *Epigram* 3.14; Watson, "Martial 12.32: An Indigent Immigrant," 319.

[148] Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*, 29.

Corinthians Aquila and Priscilla, and used these connections to facilitate his missionary work.[149] Paul was aided in this task by the tendency of individuals who shared ties of ethnicity, profession, or religious belief to live and work in close proximity to each other.[150] Upon arriving in a new city, the apostle almost always went first to the places where his target audience could be found, whether the synagogue, agora, or a certain house. His career reminds us that, as at Athens, religious practice provides some of the best evidence for the existence of neighborhood communities and local identities at Rome.

Indeed, some of the best evidence about the identity of Trastevere's residents comes from a building known as the Syrian Sanctuary. First discovered in 1906 by workmen laying the foundations of a guardhouse at the Villa Sciarra on the eastern side of the Janiculum hill and fully excavated in 1908, the Sanctuary provides a window into the neighborhood's varied and vibrant religious life. Finds at the site indicate that it was a temple devoted to a pantheon of eastern gods assimilated with Greco-Roman deities, active from the first to the late fourth centuries CE.[151] The Sanctuary offers abundant evidence for transculturative contacts in Trastevere, and its

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[149] Acts 18:2-3; Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*, 29; Ronald F. Hock, *The Social Context of Paul's Ministry* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Books, 1980), 26, 35, 42. Paul repeatedly stated that he supported himself by working with his hands (1 Cor. 9:15-18; I Cor. 4:12; 1 Thess. 2:9; Phil. 4.12). It is likely that other artisans and their customers would have been some of his earliest contacts in a new city, and that his workplace may have functioned as a social setting where the first steps toward conversion took place (see Acts 17:11, 17-33, 19:12).

[150] For a list of districts named after particular trades, see MacMullen, *Roman Social Relations*, 129-30. Jewish quarters were found in Kerateion quarter of southeastern Antioch (Cicero, *Pro Flacco* 55), two of the five divisions of Alexandria (Philo, *Embassy to Gaius* 155), and in Trastevere (Philo, *Embassy to Gaius* 23.156).

[151] Nicholas Goodhue, *The Lucus Furrinae and the Syrian Sanctuary on the Janiculum* (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1975), 5-10; Cecilia Ricci, *Stranieri Illustri e Comunità Immigrante a Roma* (Rome: Edizioni Quasar, 2006), 96; La Piana, "Foreign Groups in Rome," 314.

material culture suggests that it was a place where cultural entanglements between individuals of different ethnic and religious backgrounds became increasingly intricate over time. For example, its three distinct phases of construction incorporated architectural elements characteristic of Near Eastern temples into a standard Roman blueprint, including a polygonal room in Stage II that resembles the hexagonal forecourt of the great temple at Baalbek in Syria, a tripartite division of the cella in Stage III that is also found in the temple of Adonis at Dura-Europos on the Euphrates, and a large basin for sacred fish similar to those found in several Near Eastern temples such as the sanctuary of Atargatis in Hierapolis.[152]

The Sanctuary also occupied the site of the "Grove of Furrina" (*lucus Furrinae*), an ancient wood and sacred spring devoted since archaic times to a goddess or nymphs of Etruscan origin.[153] Largely forgotten by the imperial period, Furrina's cult appears to have been revived and repurposed by the Syrian community living in Trastevere, in an example of the blending that characterized much of the neighborhood's religious life as well as the identities of some of its residents. A Greek inscription found at the Sanctuary honoring "Zeus Keraunios and the Nymphs of Furrina" illustrates this phenomenon. Datable to the late second century CE, it was dedicated by a woman who identified herself twice, as "Artemis" and "Sidonia of

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[152] Goodhue, *The* Lucus Furrinae *and the Syrian Sanctuary*, 48, 62, 66; Savage, "Cults of Ancient Trastevere," 45. Its situation on a high slope of the Janiculum also evokes the "high places" devoted to Canaanite gods in the Hebrew Bible (Numbers 33:52, Levitcus 26:30, I Samuel 7:16, Judges 3:19, I Kings 18:16-40, II Chronicles 3:1, et al.).
[153] Goodhue, *The* Lucus Furrinae *and the Syrian Sanctuary*, 14; Palmer, "Topography and Social History of Rome's Trastevere," 370-1.

Cyprus."[154] These names provide a helpful window into the identity of one of the

Sanctuary's worshippers. "Keraunos" is an epithet of Zeus derived from his

association with the Phoenician god Ba'al Karnaim. The "Nymphes Phorrines" pay

respect to the ancient Etruscan deities who presided over the sacred grove and spring

of the *lucus Furrinae*. "Artemis" and "Sidonia" (after Sidon, a Phoenician city)

indicate that the donor had ties to the East, and "Cyprus" confirms her immigrant

status and reveals her country of origin.[155] Like the gods she worshipped, Artemis

appears to have had a complex identity that blended elements of her former life in the

East with her new one at Rome.

Other discoveries at the site shed more light on the diverse background of the

people who worshiped at the Syrian Sanctuary. In the third century, a man named

Lucius Trebonius Sossianus dedicated a marble pillar topped with a relief of the

goddess Atargatis to Jupiter Heliopolitanus, as an offering to ensure the health of the

emperor Gordian (r. 238). This dedication, too, blended eastern and Roman elements,

since Jupiter Heliopolitanus was associated with the Syrian god Hadad and the Latin

name for Atargatis was Dea Syria ("the Syrian goddess").[156] Other small finds help

to flesh out the picture. Another worshiper, this one unnamed, donated a marble altar

to Jupiter Maleciabrudus, a Romanized version of the Palestinian deity Ba'al

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[154] *CIL* VI 36802 = *IGUR* I 111 (Διὶ Κεραυνίῳ Ἄρτεμις ἢ καὶ Σιδωνία Κυπρία ἐξ ἐπιταγῆς ἀνέθηκεν καὶ Νύμφες Φορρίνες).

[155] Robert E. A. Palmer, "The Topography and Social History of Rome's Trastevere (Southern Sector)," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 125, no. 5 (1981): 372; Savage, "Cults of Ancient Trastevere," 35.

[156] *CIL* VI 423 = *ILS* 4287; Goodhue, *The* Lucus Furrinae *and the Syrian Sanctuary*, 38. Jupiter Heliopolitanus was likely the chief divinity worshipped in the Syrian Sanctuary, since four of the five dedications to him discovered in Rome came from Trastevere (*CIL* VI 36793, 36791, 422, 423)

Malek.[157] A bronze figurine of a human figure tightly wrapped in a sheath-like

garment and encircled by seven coils of a serpent found at the site has been

interpreted as evidence that the cult of Adonis may have taken root there.[158] A

broken statue of a pharaoh even hints at a connection to Egypt, and possibly the cult

of Isis and Serapis.[159]

The Sanctuary's richest dedications, however, all came from a prominent

benefactor named Marcus Antonius Gaionas. Datable to the reigns of Marcus

Aurelius (r. 161–180) and Commodus (r. 180–192), the six surviving inscriptions that

bear Gaionas' name reveal him to have been an important patron of the Sanctuary

who displayed his ties to Syria through his patronage of Jupiter Heliopolianus, and his

allegiance to Rome with several dedications in honor of the emperor Commodus.

Although it is impossible to say whether Gaionas was born in Rome or was a first-

generation immigrant (possibly from the city of Heliopolis, where the center of the

cult of Jupiter Heliopolitanus was located), his gifts to the Sanctuary show how

religious practice could contribute to a sense of local identity in Trastevere, the

neighborhood where he almost certainly lived. Gaionas' dedications also illustrate

how institutions such as the Syrian Sanctuary can yield evidence of activities such as

membership in civic or professional associations that also allow us to trace the

boundaries of neighborhood communities in the city.[160]

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[157] *CIL* VI 36792 = *ILS* 9282 (*Aug[usto] Iovi Maleciabrudi*).
[158] Goodhue, *The* Lucus Furrinae *and the Syrian Sanctuary*, 38; Coarelli, G*uida Archelologica di Roma*, 318.
[159] Goodhue, *The* Lucus Furrinae *and the Syrian Sanctuary*, 36-7.
[160] Ricci, Stra*nieri Illustri e Comunità Immigrante a Roma*, 96; La Piana, "Foreign Groups at Rome," 315; Noy, *Foreigners at Rome*, 240-1; Goodhue, *The* Lucus Furrinae *and the Syrian Sanctuary*, 5-10.

Gaionas' first dedication to the Sanctuary is a rectangular marble slab that was initially used as an altar and later repurposed as a threshold, with a Latin inscription running around its edges asking for the victory and safe return of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus from a military campaign in 176 CE.[161] In this inscription, Gaionas identified himself as member of the night watch (*cistiber*), a title that he repeated on his second gift to the Sanctuary: a limestone column with an inscription honoring Jupiter Optimus Maximus Heliopolitanus and Commodus.[162] Gaionas' third dedication, a marble colonnette that once served as a pedestal for a statue of Commodus, includes a bilingual inscription in Latin and Greek that praises Commodus as "protector of the world," mentions Gaionas' position as *cistiber* for a third time, and goes on to identify him as a priest of the cult of the deified emperor Claudius (*Claudialis Augustalis*).[163] Gaionas added yet another title to his résumé – "judge of banquets" (*deipnokrites*) – in his fourth dedication, a marble slab with a hole in the center that probably served as the base of the fountain that fed the Sanctuary's sacred pool (Figure Ten).[164]

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[161] *CIL* VI 36793 (*Pro salute et reditu et Victoria imperatorum Aug(usti) Antonini et Com[m]odi Caes(aris) Germanic(i) principis iuvent(utis) Sarmatici Gaionas cistiber Augustorum d(ono) d(edit)*).
[162] Duthoy and Frel, *Observations sur le sanctuare syrien*, 294.
[163] *CIL* VI 420 = 30764 = *IG* XIV 985 = *IGUR* I 70 = *ILS* 398 (*I(ovi) O(ptimo) M(aximo) Heliopolitano · Κομμόδῳ ἀνδρὶ βα[σι]λικ[ω]τ[άτῳ] ἀσπιστῇ [τῆς] οἰκουμ[ένης] · Imp(eratori) Caes(ari) M(arco) Aur(elio) Commodo Anto?nino Pio [...] Sarm(atico) Germanico trib(unicia) pot(estate) X[I], imp(eratori) [VIII, co(n)s(uli) V, p(atri) p(atriae)], M(arcus) Antonius M(arci) f(ilius) Gai[on]a[s] Cl(audialis) Aug(ustalis) Quiriṇ(alis) . . EC . . .VS cistiber dedic(avit) u(rbis) c(onditae) [a(nno) DCCCC]XXXIX Imp(eratore) Commodo A[n]t?o?n?ino Pio Felice Aug(usto) V, M(arco) Acil(io) Glabrione co(n)s(ulibus) k(alendas) dec(embres)*). Noy, *Foreigners at Rome*, 241.
[164] *CIL* VI 36804 = *IGRR* I 1388 (*Desmos hopôs krateros thyma theois parechoi / Hon dê Gaiônas deipnokritês etheto*); Nicholas Goodhue, "Janiculan Mysteries? A Consideration of Cil Vi 32316 and 36804," *Pacific Coast Philology* 10 (1975): 29.

Figure Ten: Gainoas' sacred pool dedication.[165]

These four offerings, all found on the Janiculum, reveal Gaionas to have been an enthusiastic patron of the Syrian Sanctuary. His name also appears in two inscriptions not directly associated with the Janiciulum site. The first is a column from Portus, one of Rome's two harbors at the mouth of the Tiber, bearing a Latin dedication to Jupiter Heliopolitanus for the health of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus.[166] The last inscription is Gaionas' epitaph, repurposed as a decoration for the house of a Roman nobleman in1550 but since lost. Thankfully, a copy of the Greek text has survived. It again includes the titles *deipnokrites* and *cistiber*, suggesting that these offices, along with his worship of Jupiter Heliopolitanus and

[165] Image from Savage, *Cults of Ancient Trastevere*, plate 3.
[166] *CIL* XIV 24 = *ILS* 4294 (*pro salute imperator(um) Antonini et Commodi Augg*).

devotion to Commodus, were important aspects of Gaionas' identity that shaped both

his self-image and his role in the community.[167]

Gaionas' position as an *Augustalis* is at first puzzling, since priests of the

imperial cult were usually freedmen and it is clear from his dedications that he was

not born a slave.[168] However, there are instances of freeborn *Augustales*, such as the

Syrian pantomine Lucius Aurelius Agrippus Memphius Apolaustus and the

Claudialis Quintus Poblicius Modestinus.[169] Although typically restricted to

freedmen, participation in the imperial cult also may have appealed to freeborn

individuals of unremarkable social standing who sought a degree of upward mobility

in Roman society. Assessing his title of *Augustalis* in tandem with his many

dedications honoring Commodus, it seems that Gaionas may have been one such

individual. At the very least, he participated in the worship of Roman emperors and

the cult of Jupiter Heliopolitanus with the same degree of enthusiasm.

Gaionas' remaining two titles are easier to interpret. A *cistiber* was a member

of a voluntary association (*collegium*) responsible for maintaining nighttime security

on the streets of Rome and keeping an eye out for fires.[170] The title is attested in

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[167] *CIL* VI 32316 (*Enthade Gaiônas, hos kistiber en pote Rhômês / kai deipnois kreinas [i.e. krinas] polla met' euphrosynês, / kaimai [i.e. keimai] tô thanatô mêden opheilomenos*); Goodhue, "Janiculan Mysteries?," 29.

[168] None of his inscriptions include the letter "L" (for *libertus*, "free") with his name, which was standard practice for freedmen across the Roman Empire.

[169] *CIL* XI 696 = *ILS* 4313; Goodhue, *The* Lucus Furrinae *and the Syrian Sanctuary*, 93. In addition to being a member of the imperial cult, Modestinus also described himself as an organizer of sacred banquets (*cenatorium p(ecunia) s(ua) f(ecit)*) in a dedication to Jupiter Dolichenus.

[170] *Collegia* were common among Roman artisans and business owners, such as shoemakers or shop owners (*tabernarii*). They were not like medieval-style guilds that strictly controlled access to a particular trade and represented the practitioners of that trade to the craft community. Rather, Stephen Dyson suggests that they more closely resembled nineteenth-century Anglo-American fraternal organizations that, in addition to being hierarchically organized and sometimes based on occupational

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other inscriptions and seems to have been the sort of minor civic position that would grant an individual a degree of authority and notoriety on a purely local level.[171] The fact that Gaionas mentioned serving as *cistiber* in four inscriptions, including his epitaph, indicates that he was nevertheless proud of this position. He also clearly valued his role as *deipnokrites*, an overseer of sacred meals that were most likely related to the worship of Jupiter Heliopolitanus that took place at the Syrian Sanctuary. The last words of Gaionas' epitaph, which described him as "judging many things in banquets with cheerfulness," suggest that he enjoyed this job as well.[172] Gaionas' other *deipnokrites* inscription, on the fountain slab, states that he made his offering so that a "strong bond" could provide a sacrifice to the gods.[173] This phrase may refer to a "binding" oath that the diners may have taken to keep silent about revelations imparted to them during the sacred meal. It is equally likely, however that it refers simply to bonds of human fellowship forged over dinner. Perhaps Gaionas believed that his chief responsibility as *deipnokrites*, a position he undertook "with cheerfulness," was to nurture a "strong bond" of community among his companions at the table.

After assessing these titles, a clearer picture of Gaionas emerges. A man of Syrian heritage who was either born in Rome or immigrated there from the East, he had enough wealth (possibly through business connections down the river in Portus,

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groupings, also provided a type of social belonging that extended beyond professional affiliation. See Dyson, *Rome*, 278-9; Stambaugh, *The Ancient Roman City*, 152; Savage, "Cults of Ancient Trastevere," 42.

[171] *CIL* VI 3822; Goodhue, *The* Lucus Furrinae *and the Syrian Sanctuary*, 80.

[172] *CIL* VI 32316 (*deipnois kreinas [i.e. krinas] polla met' euphrosynês*).

[173] *CIL* VI 36804 = *IGRR* I 1388 (*desmos krateros*); Goodhue, *The* Lucus Furrinae *and the Syrian Sanctuary*, 107-8; Noy, *Foreigners at Rome*, 242 Goodhue, "Janiculan Mysteries?," 31-2.

where one of his inscriptions was found) to generously patronize the sanctuary of his

ancestral god located near the neighborhood where he almost certainly lived.[174]

Dedications on behalf of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus in Latin and Greek show

that he managed to integrate himself into Rome's Latin-speaking society without

shedding ties to the Greek East. Yet he was also sufficiently rough around the edges

to take obvious pride in the minor civic and religious offices of *cistiber* and

deipnokrites, titles that would at best have garnered a condescending smile from a

blue-blooded Roman aristocrat.[175] By his own admission, Gaionas enjoyed judging

the sacred meals that encouraged conviviality among his fellow worshippers at the

Syrian Sanctuary. He also engaged with the community through his position as a

member of the nightly watch responsible for maintaining security in his

neighborhood. In short, Gaionas appears to have been a local big man who

exemplified the foreign background of many of Trastevere's residents as well as the

ways that religious practice and participation in voluntary associations could help

establish or reinforce a sense of community at the local level.

In addition to the Syrian Sanctuary on the Janiculum, southern Trastevere

contained a second religious institution that provides more evidence about the

background of the *regio*'s residents and the social ties that bound them together.

Although the building itself has not been discovered, a great number of dedications to

solar deities found in the vicinity of the Porta Portuensis indicate that the area once

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[174] *CIL* XIV 24 = *ILS* 4294; Palmer, "Topography and Social History of Trastevere," 372; Savage, "Cults of Ancient Trastevere," 29. Further connections between Trastevere and Portus will be addressed below.
[175] Savage, "Cults of Ancient Trastevere," 37.

contained a temple dedicated to the solar and lunar gods Bel, Iaribol, Aglibol, and

Malachbel, all of who were worshipped in the Syrian city of Palmyra.[176]   In one

dedication from this Solar Sanctuary, a badly broken relief honoring Bel, Iaribol, and

Aglibol (Palmyra's trinity of divine protectors) with a bilingual inscription in Greek

and the Palmyrene dialect of Aramaic, two donors identified themselves as "Maqaai

son of Lišamš" and "Sodu son of Tiame son of Lišamšai."[177]   In another relief

sculpture dated to 236 that shows the moon god Aglibol and the sun god Malachbel

shaking hands, the donor identified himself in Greek as Julius Aurelius Heliodorus

and in Aramaic as "Iarhai son of Haliphi son of Iarhai son of Lišamš son of Soadu"

(Figure Eleven). The fact that these three individuals knew the names of their

Palmyrene ancestors and chose to include them in their dedications suggests that their

eastern background remained an important part of their identities at Rome. It also

strongly implies that other members of the community would be able to speak these

languages and to both recognize and appreciate the dedicants' Palmyrene heritage,

presumably because they shared it.[178]

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[176] Savage, "Cults of Ancient Trastevere," 52; Noy, *Foreigners at Rome*, 242-3; Dyson, *Rome*, 287; Palmer, "Topography and Social History of Rome's Trastevere," 372. Palmyrenes had settled in Rome in considerable numbers during the second and third centuries CE, forming a group that, like Jews and Christians, was held together by nationality, kinship, religion, and language. Many identified themselves as immigrants or the descendants of immigrants in inscriptions, more than thirty of which have survived. Of these, twenty-one are in Latin, six in Greek, two in Greek and Latin, two in Greek and Palmyrene (a dialect of Aramaic), and one in Latin in Palmyrene.
[177] *IGUR* 120; Palmer, "Topography and Social History of Rome's Trastevere," 376.
[178] *IG* XIV 971; Palmer, "Topography and Social History of Rome's Trastevere," 376.

Figure Eleven: Relief dedication of Julius Aurelius Heliodorus.

A number of gifts to the Solar Sanctuary came from patrons who, like Marcus Antonius Gaionas, advertised their piety and their local prominence in the same breath. One member of the congregation named Gaius Julius Anicetus (from *Aniketos*, "unconquered," a Greek epithet of the divine sun) made several donations at the beginning of the second century that confirm the existence of a solar temple and hint at the building's appearance. In addition to donating an altar to the Divine Sun in

payment of a vow, Anicetus enlarged the sanctuary, restored a damaged portico, and

may have celebrated the occasion with a stage performance in 102 CE.[179] A century

later, seven Latin inscriptions dating from 199 to 215 record the gifts of Tiberius

Julius Balbillus (a name that, despite its Latinate appearance, derives from the

Phoenician epithet *Ba'al*), a priest of the Syrian sun god Elegabalus that briefly

enjoyed imperial patronage in the early third century and gave his name to the short-

lived Roman emperor who tried to promote his worship (r. 218–222).[180] Among

other dedications, in 199 Balbillus donated a statue of the emperor Septimius Severus

(r. 193–211) to celebrate the birthday of his co-regent and son, Caracalla (r. 198–

217). This donation recalls Gaionas' dedications to Marcus Aurelius and Commodus

and, like them, points to a desire to maintain ties to home while supporting Roman

civic institutions.[181]

Perhaps the most intriguing dedication to the Solar Sanctuary, however, came

not from a wealthy individual but a group of ordinary workers. It is an altar dedicated

to Sol Sanctissimus ("the most holy Sun") with relief sculptures on each of its faces

showing scenes from the god's life cycle above bilingual inscriptions in Latin and

Palmyrene (Figures Twelve and Thirteen).[182] Stylistically dated to the late first or

early second century CE, the altar's Palmyrene inscription reports that it is an offering

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[179] *CIL* VI 31034 817, 709, 52; Palmer, Topography and Social History of Rome's Trastevere," 375; Savage, "Cults of Ancient Trastevere," 53. The inscription mentioning the portico was found among some broken pillars near Monteverde, suggesting that the building may have been located nearby.

[180] *CIL* VI 708, 1027, 1603, 2129, 2130, 2269, 2270; Palmer, Topography and Social History of Rome's Trastevere," 375.

[181] *CIL* VI 1027.

[182] Savage, "Cults of Ancient Trastevere," 53. Sol Sanctissimus was an epithet of the solar god commonly used in Syria. The god is pictured as a youth carrying a kid, riding a sun chariot, and as a bust with a radiate halo above an eagle with outstretched wings.

to Malachbel and the gods of Palmyra given by Tiberius Claudius Felix and "the Palmyrenes."[183] The Latin inscription differs somewhat, stating that Tiberius Claudius Felix, Claudia Helpis, and their son Tiberius Claudius Alypius donated the altar in fulfillment of a vow. No mention is made of "the Palmyrenes" in the Latin text, but Tiberius Claudius Felix and his family are identified as members of "the third cohort of the Galbiensians."[184] They were, in other words, workers at the *Horrea Galbana*, the "Galbian Warehouses" located across the Tiber on the southwestern slopes of the Aventine hill.

I will return to the *horrea* shortly, but for the moment it is important to note that the Solar Sanctuary received gifts not only from local luminaries such as Tiberius Julius Balbillus or Gaius Julius Anicetus, but also from at least one family of ordinary working people. Furthermore, if "the Palmyrenes" and "members of the Third Cohort of the Galbensians" referred to a group of donors that included Tiberius Claudius Felix and his family but was not limited to them, the altar may have been donated by a *collegium* of warehouse laborers who were linked by ties of occupation, devotion, and nationality. Either way, the epigraphic evidence suggests that, like the Syrian Sanctuary, the Solar Sanctuary was both a religious institution and a place where certain residents of Trastevere came together to display their ancestral heritage, celebrate a sense of ethnic pride, or display their affiliation with a trade based in a particular part of the city.

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[183] *CIL* VI 710 = 30817 = *CIS* II 3.3903 (Palmyrene trans. Teixidor 1979); Noy, *Foreigners*, 243.
[184] (*Soli Sanctissimo Sacrum Ti. Claudius Felix et Claudia Helpis et Ti. Claudius Alypus fil. eorum votum solverunt libens merito Calbienses de Coh. III*).

Figure Twelve:
Latin inscription from "the third cohort of the Galbensians."[185]

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[185] Image from Savage, *Cults of Ancient Trastevere*, plate 4.

Figures Thirteen:
Palmyrene inscription from "the third cohort of the Galbensians."[186]

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[186] Image from Savage, *Cults of Ancient Trastevere*, plate 4.

Trastevere was also home to Jews and Christians who possessed their own

religious institutions, ethnic identities, and shared values. Rome's Jewish community

was well established by the imperial period, with a population estimated at 40,000 to

50,000 individuals in the first century CE.[187] In antiquity as today, diaspora Jews

tended to live in Jewish districts (*Ioudaikai*). These were not ghettoes in the modern

sense, but ethnic enclaves whose members lived in close proximity to each other

seeking a sense of familiarity and protection, as well as the convenience of not having

to travel too far to regularly meet for worship.[188] While Rome had more than one

Jewish district, Trastevere was its oldest and largest.[189] In the early first century CE,

the Jewish scholar Philo of Alexandria described the Jews who lived across the Tiber

as mostly Roman citizens who had been emancipated after being brought as captives

into Italy, stating that they "had synagogues and were in the habit of visiting them,

most especially on the sacred Sabbath day, when they publicly cultivate their national

philosophy."[190] Trastevere most likely acquired more synagogues in the centuries

after Philo lived, though none have been discovered to date. This does not indicate

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[187] Jerome, *In Ieremiam* 31.15, Josephus, *Vita* 416-23; Williams, *Jews among the Greeks and Romans*, 6, 9; MacMullen, "The Unromanized in Rome," 54. It had been swelled by the conquests of Pompey in the late first century BCE and from the infusion of Jewish slaves captured in the Jewish War (66-73 CE), but dated back to at least the second century BCE. Valerius Maximus (1.3.3) first mentioned an expulsion of Jews from the city in 139 BCE, and Cicero (*Pro Flacco* 66) noted the Jewish community's size, solidarity, and influence in 59 BCE.

[188] S. J. D. Cohen and E. S. Frerichs, *Diasporas in Antiquity* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 28. The *Ioudaikai* of Antioch and Alexandria have been mentioned above (Josephus, *Jewish War* 2.488; Philo, *Against Flaccus* 8.55).

[189] La Piana, "Foreign Groups in Rome," 346; MacMullen, "The Unromanized in Rome," 63; Savage, "Cults of Ancient Trastevere," 56. The others were likely located near the Suburba and the Esquiline hill.

[190] Philo, *Embassy to Gaius* 23.156 quoted in Margaret H. Williams, ed., *The Jews among the Greeks and Romans: A Diasporan Sourcebook* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1998). In addition, at least one of the Jewish cemeteries in Rome was located south of Trastevere on the Via Ostensis.

that the Jewish community went into decline, but rather reflects the fact that much less archaeological excavation in the residential area of Trastevere between the Janiculum and the banks of the Tiber has been done compared to the Vatican region to the north.[191] In fact, ancient Trastevere's Jewish population was large enough for it to remain a Jewish neighborhood throughout the Middle Ages and into the twentieth century.

Nevertheless, the inconvenient truth remains that we know little about the lives of Trastevere's Jewish residents. Aside from Philo's testimony, a handful of literary references from non-Jewish authors characterize the Jews of Rome as a poor and antisocial people without specifically tying them to a location. Juvenal represented them as destitute wanderers in several of his satires, and one of Martial's epigrams mentions "the Jew taught by his mother to beg."[192] Inscriptions from Jewish burials provide some counterweight to these jaundiced perspectives. In them, we find evidence of Jewish painters, butchers, synagogue officials, teachers, students, and, in the case of one lucky man who lived to be 110 years old, a "father of the community."[193] These prove that at least some Jews of Rome were prosperous and active in their communities. However, many of these epitaphs have uncertain find spots and none can be definitively linked to Trastevere.

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[191] Stambaugh, *The Ancient Roman City*, 95; Coarelli, *Guida Archeologica di Roma*, 314. This is both due to the Vatican's obvious importance to Christian history and to the fact that modern Trastevere is still densely populated. Moreover, it is likely that many Jews, like the early Christians, worshipped in synagogues that were attached to private homes.

[192] Juvenal, *Satire* 3.10-16, 3.296, 6.542, 14.101-4; Martial, *Epigrams* 12.57.13; MacMullen, "The Unromanized in Rome," 54.

[193] *CIJ* I² 210, 109, 304, 457, 333, 509; Williams, *Jews among the Greeks and Romans*, 9, 11, 26, 39, 50, 53.

As a result, we can do little more than postulate that the Jewish community in Trastevere likely resembled others in the Roman diaspora: closely bound together by ethnic identity, observance of the Law, and occasional persecution from the Roman authorities, with a social and religious life that revolved around synagogues and their associations. Many of the neighborhood's Jews were probably poor, but it is also certain that some Jewish laborers and artisans managed to support themselves and raise families in a degree of comfort comparable to that enjoyed by Trastevere's other residents. These individuals undoubtedly patronized their synagogues and displayed their affiliations in many of the same ways that their "pagan" neighbors did at the Syrian and Solar Sanctuaries. Beyond this, unfortunately, the evidence does not allow us to say much more.

Southern Trastevere's Christian community is even more difficult to pin down. Like most Christian groups in the Roman Empire, it was an offshoot of the Jewish community. Christian preachers and converts thus most likely arrived early to the fourteenth *regio*, since missionaries such as the Paul of Tarsus had a habit of visiting synagogues first upon arriving in a new city. The Christian community in Trastevere's northern end, in the vicinity of the modern Vatican, is of course well known. The earliest evidence for their presence south of the *ager Vaticanus*, however, comes from a shaky story in the *Historia Augusta*, an idiosyncratic and sometimes collection of late imperial biographies. In the tale, a former slave, which Catholic tradition later identified as the future Pope Callixtus, successfully petitions the emperor Alexander Severus (r. 222–235) to turn over a tavern to the Christians in

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Trastevere for use as a church, over the protests of the *collegium* of tavern-keepers.[194]

Legends later identified Callixtus' tavern as the church of Santa Maria in Trastevere, but no independent sources support this interpretation of the story.

Similarly, Catholic tradition gives Pope Urban I, Callixtus' successor, credit for founding church of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere in honor of a noble lady who was martyred with her husband Valerian, brother Tiburtius, and a Roman soldier named Maximus around 230. Again, corroborating evidence is lacking. As a result, sources from the first three centuries of the Common Era can tell us little about the Christian community in southern Trastevere, or its interaction with local Syrians, Palmyrenes, and Jews. It is highly unlikely, however, that the neighborhood's Christians differed dramatically from their neighbors in terms of their ethnic background, class level, or occupations. As mentioned above, one of the most important social boundaries that defined the neighborhood in the eyes of the Roman gentry was that of class. Regardless of religious affiliation, residents of Trastevere walked the same streets, practiced similar occupations, and shared ethnic and linguistic ties to the eastern Mediterranean.

Leaving religion aside for a moment, where else can we find the traces of local community that made Trastevere a small world within the Roman metropolis? As per Hallman's analysis of neighborhoods, one way is to examine the facilities that "pagans," Jews, and Christians shared as residents of the fourteenth *regio*.[195] Many of these related to industries in and around Trastevere that supplied the capital with a

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[194] Scriptores Historiae Augustae, *Alexander Severus* 48.6.
[195] Hallman, *Neighborhoods*, 15.

range of important commodities, such as shipping, milling, and pottery making.

Above all, the neighborhood played a crucial role in Rome's riverine shipping

industry. The imperial city required an estimated 200,000 tons of grain, 800,000-

1,450,000 hectoliters of olive oil, and equally large quantities of wine, vegetables,

fruits, spices, and other commodities per year to feed its population.[196] The majority

of these goods were shipped by sea from provinces such as Egypt, Africa, and Spain

to the ports of Ostia and Portus and then up the Tiber to Rome itself. The most

striking monument to this incredible volume of imported goods is Monte Testaccio, a

hill thirty meters high and a kilometer in circumference formed entirely from

fragments of an estimated fifty-three million pieces of pottery vessels used to ship

olive oil.[197] Monte Testaccio stands today near the base of the Aventine as an

enduring monument to the importance of olives in the Roman diet, but many other

commodities also came up the Tiber. In addition to ceramics, excavations near the

hill have unearthed large quantities of unworked and semiworked stone brought into

the city to meet the needs of the Roman construction industry.[198]

Many individuals worked together on the docks to unload these sacks of grain,

amphora of olive oil, and blocks of marble. A few weathered relief sculptures of

dockworkers unloading barges from a statue of Father Tiber, the river's divine

personification, offer mute testimony to the centuries of backbreaking work that took

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[196] Dyson, *Rome*, 242, 248.

[197] Dyson, *Rome*, 248; Coarelli, *Guida Archeologica di Roma*, 307. Painted control memos found on many of these amphora fragments indicate that some 80-85% came from the southern Iberian Peninsula. This means that an estimated 50,000 hectares of olive trees was required to meet the Roman demand.

[198] Dyson, *Rome*, 257. The modern street running through the area is called the Via Marmorata.

place along the river's banks.[199] After these ancient longshoremen did their work,

they passed their cargo on to workers at the great storage facilities located nearby: the

Horrea Galbana, Horrea Loliana, and the Porticus Aemiliana. These structures' great

size reminds us that Rome's demand for labor was as prodigious as its hunger for

grain. The Galbian Warehouses, for example, were made up of three courtyards

whose storage bays had 225,000 square feet of ground floor storage space, enough to

hold an estimated six million sacks of grain per year and as much again in wine, oil,

or other commodities.[200]

The routines of these warehouses were labor-intensive, complex operations

that demanded a well organized and disciplined workforce, including laborers who

hauled the goods, clerks who monitored the accounts, and guards who watched for

thieves.[201] Inscriptions from the Horrea Galbana, for example, reference an overseer

(*procurator)*, bookkeeper (*dispensator*), and ordinary workmen (*operarii*).[202] One

mentions a female-fish seller who identifies herself as "of the Galbian warehouses,"

perhaps indicating that she sold food to the workers who spent their days hauling and

tallying figures there.[203] These pieces of epigraphic evidence help paint a picture of a

bustling shipping industry that required diverse sources of skilled and unskilled labor.

It is not far-fetched to suppose that a sense of shared experience developed among the

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[199] Reproduced in MacMullen, "The Unromanized in Rome," 58; Savage, "Cults of Ancient Trastevere," 29. Sailors from fleet based at Ravenna also must have used the docks, as part of their duties involved acting as couriers between Rome and Ostia. The existence of their fort (*castra*) in Trastevere is known from a sailor's epitaph discovered at the Villa Pamphili (*CIL* VI 3148).

[200] MacMullen, "The Unromanized in Rome," 60-2.

[201] Dyson, *Rome*, 243-4. It is likely that slaves, freedmen, and freeborn worked side by side.

[202] *CIL* VI 188, 236, 588, 6619, 30741, 30855, 30901, 39895; *LTUR* III 41; Dyson, *Rome*, 245; Gatti, *Frammento d'inscrizione*, 112.

[203] *CIL* VI 9801 (*piscatrix de horreis Galbae*).

workers whose lives were shaped by the daily rhythm of work in the docks and warehouses.

Monte Testaccio, the Porticus Aemiliana, and the Horrea Galbana and Loliana were located across the river from Trastevere in the Aventine district, which had been a commercial area on the outskirts of the city during the Republic but became an aristocratic neighborhood in the imperial period, in what we might think of as a process of ancient gentrification.[204] Many of the free laborers who worked in the Aventine's docks and warehouses therefore lived to the south or across the river in Trastevere, where rent was cheaper. These individuals would have trooped every day across the Tiber bridges from their homes to their places of work, forming well-trodden paths through the urban landscape.[205] As Diane Favro pointed out in her study of Augustan Rome, such paths have a tendency to influence the point of view of city-dwellers and their perception of their place in the broader community, limiting their vision to the particular slice of the city they experienced as they made their way through the urban landscape.[206] In fact, repeatedly following paths such as the one between Trastevere and the Aventine is a quintessentially urban experience that helps create the narrowed sense of familiarity individuals use to find their place, so to speak, in a large and diverse city like Rome. This sense of the familiar would have

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[204] Coarelli, *Guida Archaeologica di Roma*, 296, 308; MacMullen, "The Unromanized in Rome," 58; Dyson, *Rome*, 222. The families of the emperors Trajan and Hadrian, as well as several other households of noble extraction (several of them fellow Iberians) lived on the Aventine in the second century CE. See Tacitus, *Histories* 3.84.4; *LTUR* 2.108-9, 4.164-65; Martial, *Epigrams* 6.64.12-13; Cassius Dio, *Roman History* 68.15.3; *ILS* 5715.
[205] Dyson, *Rome*, 247.
[206] Diane Favro, "Reading the Augustan City," in *Narrative and Event in Ancient Art*, ed. Peter J. Holiday (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 232.

been heightened if travelers shared ethnic, linguistic, or occupational ties with others making the same journey.

This brings us back to the members of "the third cohort of the Galbensians" who donated the altar to Sol Sanctissimus at Trastevere's Solar Sanctuary (Figures Twelve and Thirteen above). Tiberius Claudius Felix, his wife Claudia Helpis, and their son Tiberius Claudius Alypius were three residents of Trastevere who made the daily commute over the river to work in the warehouses located near Monte Testaccio in the Aventine district (Figure Nine). Furthermore, the phrasing of their inscription strongly suggests that they were not alone in doing so.[207] These individuals used their gift to the Solar Sanctuary to show that, along with their Palmyrene heritage and devotion to their ancestral gods, crossing the Tiber to work in the Horrea Galbana was an experience that helped to define their identities as residents of Rome. Like many of their modern counterparts, these ancient urbanites defined their place in the city partially through employment in a particular location, while at the same time associating themselves with a larger group of peers and companions with whom they worked side by side.[208] By doing so they articulated a sense of meaning and place that let them stake a claim to their own narrow slice of Rome.[209] Such an act is a key component in the development of a neighborhood identity because it links ethnic, cultural, and occupational identity to the use of shared facilities and feelings of belonging associated with specific locations in the city. Crossing Trastevere's

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[207] *ILS* 4337; Ricci, "Stranieri Illustri e Comunità Immigrante," 96; Savage, "Cults of Ancient Trastevere," 53.
[208] Sandra R. Joshel, *Work, Identity and Legal Status at Rome: A Study of the Occupational Inscriptions* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), 24; Noy, *Foreigners at Rome*, 78.
[209] Joshel, *Work, Identity, and Legal Status at Rome*, 120-1, 169.

borders at the beginning and end of the day was an experience that would have made it clear that these individuals lived in a neighborhood that was simultaneously distinct from the rest of Rome and inextricably part of it.

Back across the river, other residents of Trastevere worked together in industries such as tanning or milling, lived cheek-by-jowl in apartment buildings, and met at public fountains or in bathhouses. These local industries and facilities would also have helped to define the neighborhood. Archaeological excavations along the right bank of the Tiber indicate that the area contained small structures that served as brick factories and pottery kilns in the imperial period.[210] A tannery containing seven cylindrical brick vats for cooking skins has also been unearthed nearby.[211] These noxious but necessary industries were found in Trastevere because of its location across the river from the heart of the city but close enough to it to easily supply important commodities such as leather and bricks. These industries almost certainly employed slaves, freedmen, and freeborn Romans who lived in nearby *insulae* and whose rents remained affordable due to the stench of the tanning vats. Milling was another industry that took hold in the fourteenth *regio* thanks to its geography and relationship to the rest of Rome. The mills installed on the Janiculum hill after the completion of the Aqua Traiana in 109 CE made use of hydraulic power to grind

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[210] MacMullen, "The Unromanized in Rome," 56; Savage, "Cults of Ancient Trastevere," 28.
[211] Coarelli, *Guida Archaeologica di Roma*, 308f, 316; Mocchegiani C. Carpano, "Considerazione Dul Versante Orientale Del Gianicolo," in *L'area Del Sanctuario Siriaco Del Gianicolo: Problemi Archeologici e Storico-Religiosi*, ed. M. Mele (Rome, 1982), 25ff.

wheat into the capital's much-needed supply of flour.[212] Like the shipping, tanning,

brickmaking, and pottery industries, this business, too, would have required the labor

of Trastevere's residents.

Many of these individuals lived in *insulae* crowded between the Janiculum

and the Tiber like the one whose foundations have been discovered under the church

of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere.[213] Extensive excavations of the *insulae* of Rome's

nearby port at Ostia, which have survived in much better condition than those of

Rome due to the port's abandonment in late antiquity, provide valuable insight into

the housing conditions that most of Trastevere's residents shared.[214] More than

thirty-one of Ostia's apartment buildings had a high population density, containing

over one hundred residents each.[215] Their walls were thin, with upper stories built

mostly of wood and plaster.[216] Looking at them, one better understands Seneca's

description of *insulae* as places where the walls were "rotten, full of cracks, and

uneven" and a person could hear, all at once, "laughter and weeping, coaxing and

quarrelling, joy and sorrow, the human voice and the roaring and barking of

animals."[217] Most buildings lacked easy access to kitchens or latrines, and individual

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[212] Dyson, *Rome*, 229. The extreme precautions that Aurelian and the Byzantine general Belisarius
took to defend these mills indicate that they were still vital to keep Rome's population fed in the sixth
century. See Procopius*, Gothic War* 1.19.8.

[213] Coarelli, *Guida Archaeologica di Roma*, 310; Dyson, *Rome*, 219 with note.

[214] For the application of Ostian evidence to housing in Rome see Packer, "Insulae of Imperial Ostia,"
77-8.

[215] James E. Packer, "The Insulae of Imperial Ostia," *Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome* 31,
no. xi-217 (1971), 70.

[216] Packer, "Insulae of Imperial Ostia," 67. Some structures had load-bearing walls less than half a
meter thick.

[217] Seneca, *de Ira* 3.35.5 (*Hi nempe oculi, qui non ferunt nisi varium ac recenti cura nitens marmor,
qui mensam nisi crebris distinctam venis, qui nolunt domi nisi auro pretiosiora calcari, aequissimo
animo foris et scabras lutosasque semitas spectant et maiorem partem occurrentium squalidam,*

apartments were sometimes so ill-equipped to meet the physical needs of their

inhabitants that they were not homes in the modern sense of the word, as much as

places to sleep and store property.[218] Conditions were unpleasant, but apartment

living also fostered a certain sort of intimacy. The Ostian evidence suggests that

residents spent the majority of their time outside of their individual dwellings, on the

city streets and in the food stalls and taverns (*popinae*, *tabernae*) that occupied the

ground floors of most *insulae*.[219] This would have meant that conversations and

exchanges between neighbors would have almost never ceased.

Intimacy of another sort was found at Trastevere's bathhouses and public

fountains. Public bathing was an important ritual in Roman society in which all

classes, ages, and genders participated, and bathing establishments doubled as venues

for entertainments that ranged from oratorical discourses to parlor tricks.[220] Baths

therefore doubled, like food stalls and taverns, as social centers that encouraged the

development of communal sensibilies. Furthermore, although the subject of Roman

bathing typically conjures images of lavish complexes (*thermae*) such as such as the

famous Baths of Caracalla, in reality most bathing took place at small local

institutions (*balnea*) where the same individuals would have encountered each other

on a regular basis.[221] The same was true for Rome's street fountains, which provided

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parietes insularum exesos, rimosos, inaequales). See also Martial, *Epigrams* 1.108, 117, 3.30, 4.37,
5.22, 6.27, 7.20; Juvenal, *Satires* 3.6, 3,166, 3,190-202, 3.223-5, 3.235-248, 3.268-312.
[218] Packer, "Insulae of Imperial Ostia," 72-3.
[219] Packer, "Insulae of Imperial Ostia," 73. The owners of these business (and their families) often
lived in their shops or in apartments above them.
[220] Dyson, *Rome*, 230. For an example of some shenanigans in the baths, see Petronius, *Satyricon* 26-7.
[221] Packer, "Insulae of Imperial Ostia," 73. Although they would have been found all over the city, few
of these have survived in Rome itself. Ostia, however, does provide examples of excavated *balnea*.

water for public use. As in any traditional society, these necessary pieces of urban

infrastructure also functioned as places where news was distributed, gossip

exchanged, and romances begun.[222] Shared institutions such as these emphasized the

local in the sprawling city and helped to form the familiar pattern of everyday life.[223]

Along with workplaces and religious institutions, facilities such as apartments,

bathhouses, and fountains were the matrix in which neighborhood identity took

shape.

Taken together, the evidence suggests that Trastevere's residents experienced

life in the fourteenth *regio* and related to each other on a number of overlapping

levels. A great number of inscriptions show how religious practice created a sense of

community among the neighborhood's pagan immigrants. Local notables like

Marcus Antonius Gaionas used the Syrian Sanctuary to broadcase their devotion to

their ancestral deities, support of Roman institutions such as the imperial cult, and

participation in local institutions such as the neighborhood watch. At the Solar

Sanctuary, Palmyrene workers in the Galbian Warehouses articulated a sense of

kinship and ethnic pride while expressing another aspect of their identity through

work. Trastevere's Jewish residents attended their synagogues and distinguished

themselves through observance of the Law, but also mingled with their neighbors

while "publicly cultivat[ing] their national philosophy" and worked and lived side-by-

side with them.[224] Indeed, Shaye Cohen has argued that without inquiring or

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[222] Ovid, *Ars Amatoria*, book 1.
[223] Dyson, *Rome*, 230.
[224] Philo, *Embassy to Gaius* 23.156

checking, it would have been very difficult to determine who was or was not a Jew and who was not in the Roman Diaspora.[225] The Christian community, too, had its own places of worship, shared values, and sense of identity. But Christians also had jobs, lived in apartments, visited the baths, and participated in the life of the community.

Religious congregations of various stripes are relevant to the question of neighborhood identity because they offered a more concrete idea of community, with institutions and traditions deeply rooted in metropolitan society.[226] But this idea of community was not restricted to what we might think of as the religious sphere. In addition to the cults that made Trastevere a haven for "alien ways" within Rome, ties of language, ethnicity, occupation, and class bound the neighborhood's residents together.[227] The last of these factors may be the most telling. It is significant that the few Roman authors who mentioned Trastevere in their writings always did so while referencing the poverty and marginality of the people who lived there. In addition to the negative associations surrounding the Tiber bridges and the stereotypes against Syrians discussed above, Martial described "the vagabond Trastevere man" as a worthless person "who trades pale, sulphur-dipped kindling for pieces of broken

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[225] Cohen, *Diasporas in Antiquity*, 30; A. T. Kraabel, "The Disappearance of the 'God-Fearers'," *Numen* 28, no. 2 (1981): 113-15; Cohen, "Respect for Judaism," 410. The well-documented presence of "God-fearers" (pagans who were interested in Judaism and sometimes attended synagogue but did not commit to circumcision or strictly observe the Law) provides good evidence of this mingling.
[226] Ricci, *Stranieri Illustri e Comunità Immigrante*, 95.
[227] MacMullen, "The Unromanized in Rome," 53.

glass."[228] Similarly, in the legal writings of the jurist Ulpian we hear of a slave who

peddled in Trastevere to earn a small income.[229] It is indeed highly likely that many

of the neighborhood's residents were poor, and that many of those who escaped

destitution still spent their lives toiling on the Aventine docks or in the Janiculum

mills. Yet the few outside perspectives we have about the fourteenth *regio* offer a

distorted view, as they often reflect the marriage of classicism and xenophobia.

While not many residents of Trastevere would have stood out from the vulgar mob

(*turba*) in the eyes of Rome's elites, it does not follow that they lacked self-respect, a

need for companionship, and a desire to call a part of the city their own.

We cannot really know whether Trastevere was "an accepted refuge of the

unorthodox" or merely a particularly visible case study of an immigrant experience

that took place all over the capital.[230] It is clear, though, that the *regio* was in many

ways a world unto itself. Separated from the rest of Rome by the physical barrier of

the Tiber and the sacred boundary of the pomerium, this marginal part of the city

attracted residents who were themselves marginally situated within Roman society.

Many who settled on the far bank of the Tiber did so out of necessity, either in search

of work or lower rents or because they encountered resistance from those who lived

in the city center. Yet the ties of ethnicity, language, religion and occupation that

bound them together also helped many of Trastevere's residents find a bit of the

familiar amid what was, to them, the foreign landscape of the imperial city. Living

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[228] Martial, *Epigrams* 1.41.4 (*Verna es, hoc quod Transtiverinus ambulator qui pallentia sulphurata fractis permutat vitreis*). In another words, the Trastevere man is the Roman equivalent of a classic Dickensian image: the ragged, match-selling street waif.
[229] Ulpian, *Digest* 14.4.5.16; *LTUR* 1.203; Dyson, *Rome*, 217.
[230] Savage, "Cults of Ancient Trastevere," 56.

cheek by jowl, worshipping together, working similar jobs, and sharing facilities such as bridges, fountains, and bathhouses reinforced a sense of shared experience among these individuals. The boundaries that divided Trastevere from the rest of Rome also helped to define its identity. Indeed, this sense of local identity may have been common among many who lived in the cosmopolitan capital, whose experience of Rome may have been largely focused on the part of the city where they spent their lives in limited contact with the larger *urbs*.[231]

Yet even the most distinctive neighborhood is inextricably tied to the city of which it is a part. By crossing the river to work on the wharves of the Aventine district, learning Latin while still expressing themselves in Greek, Aramaic, and Hebrew, worshipping their ancestral gods in conjunction with Roman deities, and enthusiastically supporting civic institutions such as the imperial cult and the nightly watch, residents of Trastevere continually navigated the boundaries surrounding their neighborhood, managing to carve out places for themselves and their children at the heart of the Roman Empire. In doing so, they helped to expand the idea of what it meant to be residents of the imperial city and, more broadly, Romans. The case of Trastevere shows that this sense of locality could be found not only at the narrow level of the *vicus*, where scholars have typically looked for it, but also at the broader level of the *regio*. As they did in the Piraeus, overlapping social and spatial boudaries helped to foster a sense of shared experience and community among Trastevere's

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[231] Dyson, *Rome*, 246. With this in mind, it is easy to understand how Sextus Propertius could write about the great metropolis as a little town, where everyone knew and gossiped about everyone else's business. See Sextus Propertius, *Elegies* 2.5.1-2, 2.20.21-2, 2.26.21-2; Stambaugh, *The Ancient Roman City*, 65.

residents. By crossing those boundaries, members of this "small world" interacted

with and contributed to their city at large. Yet could such a sense of locality still take

shape in a city where topographical barriers such as rivers or hills were largely

absent, and urban life was the whole quite different? To answer this question, we

must return to Chang'an.

Figure Fourteen: Sui-Tang Chang'an[232]
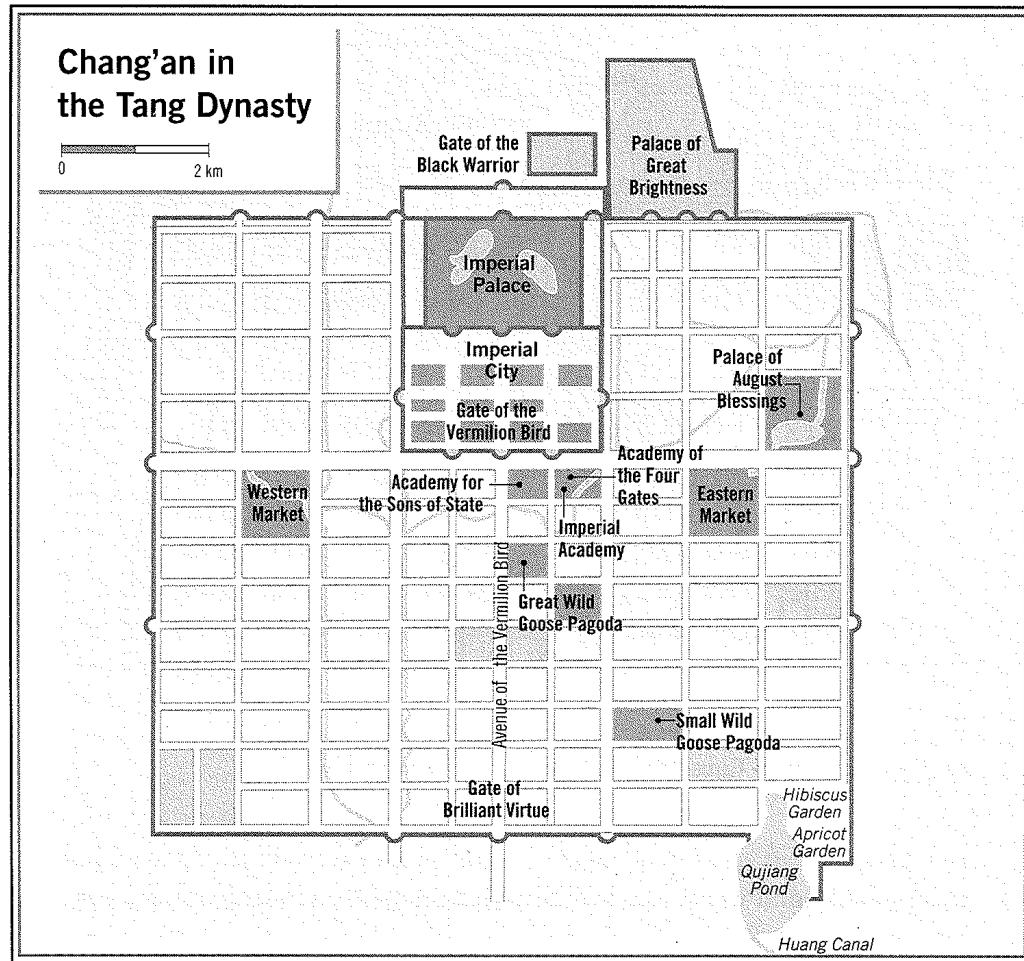
Chang'an was not like Athens and Rome. Built from scratch adjacent to the old Han dynasty capital, it was a truly massive city. Chang'an's rammed earth walls, which ran 9.5 kilometers east to west and 8.5 kilometers north to south, were 18 meters high and enclosed an area of 70 square kilometers. By contrast, the Aurelian

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[232] Map from Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 87.

walls of third-century Rome and the Theodosian walls of fifth-century Constantinople

each enclosed 14 km^2, and the walls of Abbasid Baghdad at its height in the tenth

century enclosed only 5 km^2.[233] The city was also meticulously planned and more

uniform in appearance than its Mediterranean counterparts, aligned to the cardinal

directions and slightly rectangular in form. A series of broad avenues, fourteen of

which ran East-West and eleven of which ran North-South, divided the Tang capital

into an orderly grid (Figure Fourteen). Six of these streets connected to twelve gates

in the city's outer walls, making them main arteries for transport as well as easily

recognizable reference points for Chang'an's residents. The largest, the Avenue of

the Vermillion Bird (*Zhuquemen Dajie*), connected the imperial complexes at

Chang'an's northern end to the colossal Mingde Gate in its southern wall. Measuring

150 to 155 meters wide, the equivalent of a 45-lane modern highway, this massive

thoroughfare split Chang'an into eastern and western halves, each of which had its

own administrative bureaucracy.[234]

In both form and function, the city was designed to be the cosmic center of a

renewed empire.[235] The emperor's Taiji Palace and the Imperial City that housed the

Tang bureaucracy dominated its northern end. Walls more than eleven meters high

encircled these areas, and access to them was highly restricted.[236] In addition to this

forbidden city that ran the Tang state, Chang'an eventually boasted two additional

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[233] Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 86-7; Cotterell, *Imperial Capitals*, 111. Baghdad, however, covered a total area of 30 km^2.

[234] Heng Chye Kiang, *A Digital Reconstruction of Tang Chang'an* (Beijing: China Architecture & Building Press 2006), 20-22. It also served as a massive firebreak.

[235] Cotterell, *Imperial Capitals*, 112-3.

[236] Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 88. Even attempting to peek over was punishable by one year's imprisonment.

palaces, the Imperial Academy where prospective bureaucrats took the civil service

exams required for administrative work, two large markets, a plethora of Buddhist

monasteries and Daoist temples, several foreign religious institutions, a famous red-

light district, and sizeable areas devoted to parkland and agriculture on its southern

end.[237] Just as Chang'an inherited many of these features from previous imperial

capitals, the Tang government likewise followed the example of preceding dynasties

in attempting to regulate the movement and behavior of the capital's residents.[238]

Commerce, for example, was limited to the large Eastern and Western Markets,

which were walled and operated only at approved hours.[239] Above all, the

overarching imperative was to keep the capital's population under control and to

protect and privilege the royal and governmental quarters over the rest of the

surrounding city.[240] This approach to urban development, which derived from

models of Chinese city planning first developed during the Zhou dynasty (1046–256

BCE) and refined during the Han (206 BCE–220 CE), had a history in China longer

than that of the polis in the ancient Mediterranean.[241]

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[237] Benn, *Daily Life*, 59. Benn calculates that there were 91 Buddhist monasteries, 16 Daoist temples, 2 Nestorian churches, and 4 Zoroastrian shrines in the city by the early 8th century.

[238] Nancy Shatzman Steinhardt, *Chinese Imperial City Planning* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1990), 342.

[239] Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 113. As we shall see, in practice this policy proved difficult to enforce.

[240] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 166.

[241] Tao Wang. "A City with Many Faces: Urban Development in Pre-Modern China," in *Exploring China's Past: New Discoveries and Studies in Archaeology and Art*, ed. Roderick and Wang Tao Whitfield (London: Saffron, 1999), 112.

To facilitate social control, smaller streets intersecting the main avenues divided the capital into 108 wards (*fang*), where most of the population lived.[242] These were, in effect, cities in miniature, surrounded by their own sets of walls measuring one *li* or more on each side (about half a kilometer). The "city blocks" of Chang'an were thus many times bigger than comparable subdivisions in either the later cities of Qing dynasty China (1644–1912) or contemporary Europe and North America, each in turn almost a miniature city unto itself.[243] Within their walls, an intersecting pair of streets connected a gate facing each cardinal direction, dividing each ward into four quadrants. At this point, the orderly grid system broke down into a maze of narrow lanes that connected to each ward's main cross streets and allowed ward residents access to their homes.[244] Gazing down at this carefully planned city from a high vantage point, Du Fu (712–770), one of the Tang period's most renowned poets, was inspired to remark, "Indeed, Chang'an looks like a chessboard."[245] More than this, it was a Matryoshka doll of bounded spaces.

Unlike at Athens and Rome, where natural features such as rivers, hills, and simple distance encouraged the growth of immigrant neighborhoods in certain parts

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[242] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 208. The number of wards varied slightly over time, but totaled 108 for most of the city's history. Chinese sources on the wards include *Chang'an zhi* ("Gazetteer of Chang'an) by Song Minqiu, *Leibian Chang'an zhi* ("Gazetteer of Chang'an, Arranged by Categories") by Luo Tianxiang (ca. 1223-ca. 1300), and *Tang liangjing chengfang kao* ("Exanimation of Urban Wards in the Two Tang Capitals") by Xu Song (1781-1848). These are briefly summarized in Jack W. Chen, "Social Networks, Court Factions, Ghosts, and Killer Snakes: Reading Anyi Ward," *T'ang Studies* 29 (2011): 46-7.

[243] Keyang Tang, "The Ward Walls and Gates of Tang Chang'an as Seen in 'the Tale of Li Wa'," in *Chinese Walls in Time and Space*, ed. Roger Des Forges, Minglu Gao, Liu Chiao-mei, Haun Saussy, and Thomas Burkman (Ithaca, NY: Cornell East Asia Series, 2009), 117-8.

[244] Tyrwhitt, Jacqueline Tyrwhitt, "The City of Ch'ang-An: Capital of the T'ang Dynasty of China," *The Town Planning Review* 39, no. 1 (1968): 26.

[245] Du Fu, "Autumn Meditations" (translated in Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 89).

of the city, Chang'an's flat and open topography did not naturally lend itself to social differentiation. The imperial government therefore mapped social hierarchy onto the urban landscape through its construction of walls, gates, avenues and other physical barriers.[246] The essential function of these structures was to divide Chang'an into disparate political, commercial, and social zones, separating out various elements of its population into different districts where they could be more efficiently monitored and taxed.[247] The Tang authorities never fully succeeded at this task, and many regulations on commerce and movement established at the dynasty's beginning became defunct in its later years. However, in principle at least, the men who administered Chang'an agreed with answer the Confucian philosopher Xunzi (ca. 312–230 BCE) gave when asked what it is that makes a man human: "I think it is his ability to draw boundaries."[248]

The boundaries that internally divided Chang'an were both physical *and* temporal. Beginning in 636, the Tang government imposed a curfew on residents of the capital. Every day, three hundred drumbeats signaled its beginning and end at dusk and dawn, drawing a sharp line between daytime and night, when movement outside the wards was forbidden. A description of this daily cacophony by the poet Li He (791–817) – "Drums at dawn rumbling like thunder, hastening the sun/Drums at dusk rumbling like thunder, calling out the moon." – hints at the pervasive effect

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[246] Tuan, *Topophilia*, 176.
[247] John Hay, "Introduction," in *Boundaries in China*, ed. John Hay (London: Reaktion Books, 1994), 15.
[248] Xunzi, book 5 translated by John Knoblock in Hay, *Boundaries in China*, 302.

the curfew must have had on the daily rhythm of life in Chang'an.[249] Residents

wandering the city streets after the evening drums fell silent risked twenty strokes

with a light stick if the Gold Bird Guards, the capital's police force, caught them.[250]

Each ward also had a warden (*fangzheng*) who locked its four gates at night and was

empowered to arrest anyone he discovered attempting to climb the walls after dark, a

more serious crime punishable by ninety blows with a thick rod.[251] Thus, while

Greco-Roman *insulae* functioned primarily as housing units and, on their lower

levels, venues for small businesses, the wards of Chang'an were designed to facilitate

social control.[252]

The Tang government did not assign people to particular wards, as had earlier

dynasties. Yet although populations were not segregated by decree as they had been

in Han Chang'an or Northern Wei Luoyang, they still tended to cluster in certain

parts of the city.[253] The curfew played an important part in this *de facto* social sorting

because of the restrictions it placed upon people's freedom tio move across

Chang'an's huge area.[254] In the first, formative decades of the dynasty, the

impending thunder of the evening drums kept people close to their homes and places

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[249] Li He, "Drums in the Streets of the Officials" translated in Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 90.
[250] Benn, *Daily Life*, 48.
[251] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 210-11; Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 90; Wang, *City with Many Faces*, 116. This method of law enforcement drew upon Legalist traditions as well as a collective responsibility system that dated back to the Zhou period, in which groups of families took were tasked with maintaining order in their local communities.
[252] Arthur Wright, "Symbolism and Function: Reflections on Chang'an and Other Great Cities," *Journal of Asian Studies* 24, no. 4 (1965): 671.
[253] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 233; Wang, *City with Many Faces*, 116.
[254] Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 113-118; Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 215. Like the restriction of commerce to the Eastern and Western Markets, the curfew was less rigidly enforced as the centuries wore on and fell into complete disuse by the dynasty's end. Yet it was strictly maintained during the first half of the Tang period, when settlement patterns in the city were still being established.

of business to avoid being caught on the streets at night. For this reason, East

Chang'an abounded with civil servants who needed to live as close as possible to the

Imperial City (and, after their completion in 663 and 712 respectively, the Daming

and Xingqing palaces to the northeast) to present themselves at its gates at sunrise.[255]

Similarly, young men who came to Chang'an to study for the civil service

examinations tended to live in the wards between the Imperial Academy and the

Eastern Market (these were also, unsurprisingly, close to the city's famous red-light

district, the Northern Hamlet).[256] The wards to the north of the Western Market, on

the other hand, were home to a diverse population of immigrants from Central Asia

that included Turks, Persians, Uighurs, Sogdians, and others. Drawn to Chang'an

because of the political power located in the imperial city as well as direct connection

to the Silk Roads and China's Grand Canal, these foreigners also needed to stay close

their places of business to avoid violating the curfew and running afoul of the

authorities.[257]

In this way, the temporal boundary of the curfew worked in tandem with

physical barriers such as walls and wide avenues to encourage regional differences

within Chang'an. Although individual wards in many ways functioned as worlds

unto themselves and were at least theoretically sealed off from the rest of the city at

night, broader neighborhoods with distinct populations and local flavors also existed

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[255] Tyrwhitt, "City of Chang'an," 30.
[256] Tyrwhitt, "City of Many Faces," 30.
[257] Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 91, 169-70; Schaefer, *Golden Peaches*, 20;

in the Tang capital (Figure Fifteen).[258] Chang'an was not built along a river like the

Tiber or divided by distance such as the five kilometers between the Piraeus and

upper Athens. Nevertheless, its design and administration channeled various groups

defined by ethnicity, class, or occupation into certain parts of the city.[259] The Tang

capital, then, offers a twist on Hallman's analysis of neighborhood identity discussed

at the beginning of this chapter, since the boundaries surrounding its neighborhoods

were simultaneously ubiquitous and invisible.[260] On the one hand, the omnipresent

walls and gates that crisscrossed Chang'an visibly divided the city into wards that in

some ways each functioned as communities unto themselves. On the other, the

invisible boundary of the curfew also encouraged the growth of broader

neighborhoods such as Northwest Chang'an, with its population of merchants,

monks, and mercenaries from Central Asia.

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[258] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an* 234. Without pushing the comparison too far, it is not inappropriate to compare the relationship between ward and district to that between *vicus* and *regio* in Rome.
[259] Wang, *City with Many Faces*, 116; Tyrwhitt, "City of Many Faces," 30. As a result of this policy, the city's population was not evenly distributed, with the northern districts more heavily populated than the south, and the western more than the eastern.
[260] Hallman, *Neighborhoods*, 15.
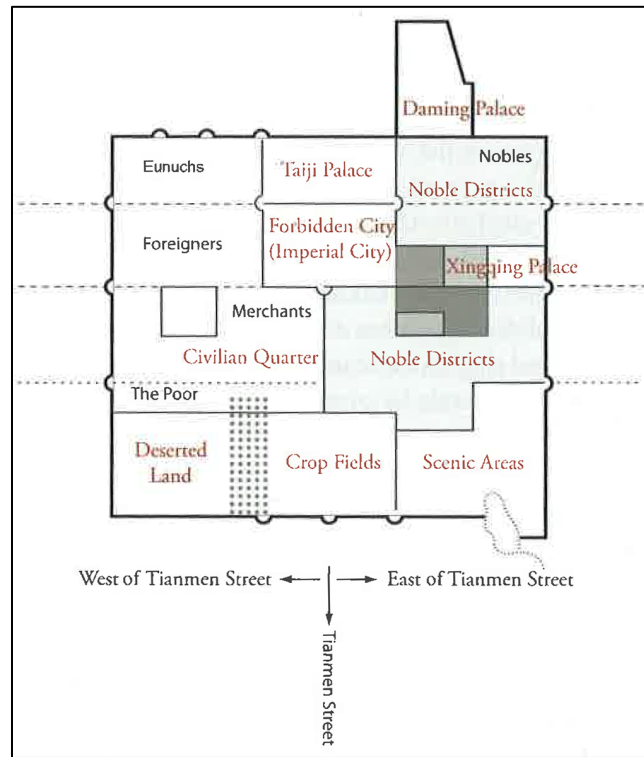
Figure Fifteen: Social Map of Tang Chang'an[261]

Many of these immigrants came to Chang'an along the Silk Roads that

extended from the eastern shore of the Mediterranean through Persia and the oases of

Central Asia into China.[262] Most settled in the vicinity of the Western Market to be

close to their businesses and because the eastern half of the city was dominated by

noble households. For this reason, the Western Market catered to a less refined

clientele than its Eastern counterpart. Its bazaars specializing in particular types of

merchandise (the ironmonger's bazaar, the clothing bazaar, the bazaar of the

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[261] Adapted from Seo, "Tangdai houqi," 510, in Tang, "Ward Walls and Gates," 131. For a general description of each district, see Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 234.
[262] Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 168.

druggists, etc.) had signs posted by law describing the items for sale.[263] As the names of these bazaars indicate, this was the place where residents of Chang'an or their servants came to purchase the necessities of daily life. The ninth-century Arab traveler Ibn Wahab noted this aspect of the Western Market when he visited the city: "West of the main thoroughfare (Zhuquemen Street) live the commoners and merchants, with storehouses and the market. At dawn, the emperor's stewards and retainers, court servants, and generals' servants and their agents come, on horse or on foot, to this area with its market and its merchant population, to purchase daily necessities for their masters."[264]

Beyond necessities, the Western Market was famous for its "foreign shops" (*hudian*) that sold silk fabrics, raw medicinal herbs, tea, horses, cattle, and sheep, and various other commodities from Central Asia.[265] It also functioned as a headquarters for Persian and Sogdian jewelers who specialized in appraising pearls and jade.[266] The Persian community in particular was known for operating "Persian warehouses" (*bosi di*) in the Western Market that featured commodities such as gems, elephant tusks, and precious metals. One imagines that these foreign-run emporia maximized their profits by emphasizing the exoticism of their wares to those customers that

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[263] Schaefer, *Golden Peaches*, 20. Each was also under the supervision of a headman (*hang t'ou*) who oversaw business affairs and acted as a liaison with the Tang government in a manner analogous to the warden of a residential ward.
[264] Translated in Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 229.
[265] Xue, "Merchants of Chang'an," 270.
[266] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 182. One jeweler of Sogdian descent, Mi Liang, was so skilled in "examining jade" (*lanyu*) that he made his friend and patron Don Yi a sizeable fortune. Chinese sources record the names of several other successful merchants in Chang'an, many of who were of foreign extraction. For a list, see Xue, "Merchants of Chang'an," 261.

could afford to buy them.[267] Commerce was thus a major force that induced

foreigners to settle in Northwest Chang'an and a highly visible aspect of immigrant

identity. However, as at Athens and Rome, some of the best surviving evidence for

the immigrant populations that lived in the neighborhood comes not from bills of sale

but from their religious practices. The three foreign faiths that established themselves

in Chang'an – Zoroastrianism, Nestorian Christianity, and Manichaeism – highlight

the close relationship between trade, religion, and migration that we have already

observed at Athens and Rome.

The first two of these provide information about Chang'an's sizeable Persian

community that goes beyond their reputation as canny peddlers of foreign luxuries.

Zoroastrianism arrived in China before the beginning of the Tang, most likely during

the Persian missions to the Toba Wei of North China from 516 to 519, but the first

record of it in Chang'an is the appearance of a Zoroastrian magus (*muhu*) at the Tang

court in 631.[268] The number of Zoroastrians in the capital increased significantly

after the Sassanid prince Peroz III, having failed to recover his empire from the Arabs

with the help of a Tang army, returned to Chang'an and petitioned Emperor Gaozong

to order the construction of a Persian temple near the Western Market in 661. This

building served as a gathering place for the refugees who followed Peroz to China

and became his court in exile, as well as for the Persian merchants who had been

present in Chang'an since before his arrival.[269] Buoyed by imperial favor and

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[267] Benn, *Daily Life*, 55; Xue, "Merchants of Chang'an," 270, Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 182.
[268] Leslie, "Persian Temples," 288-9.
[269] Leslie, "Persian Temples," 289.

continuing commercial contacts with Persia along the Silk Roads, the Zoroastrian community in Chang'an prospered. By the mid-ninth century, the capital had five Zoroastrian temples, located in Buzheng, Liquan, Puning, Jinggong, and Chonghu Wards.[270] Their placement in the city provides good evidence for the Persian community's presence in Northwest Chang'an, since four of these wards were in the vicinity of the Western Market.[271]

In addition to Zoroastrian refugees and traders, a community of Persian Christians also existed in the Tang capital. They were followers of the teachings of Nestorius (c. 386–450), an archbishop of Constantinople whose beliefs about the divinity of Christ had been condemned as heresy at the First Council of Ephesus in 431. Although Nestorius died as an exile in Upper Egypt centuries before the rise of the Tang, many of his followers had relocated to Persia, where they became known as the Church of the East. In time, they made their way further east still, with the first Nestorian missionary to China, the bishop Alopen ("Abraham"), arriving in the Tang capital from *Daqin* (the Chinese term for the Roman Empire, usually interpreted as the province of Syria) in 635. After being met in the city's western suburbs by Fang Zuanling, Emperor Taizong's chief minister, Alopen gained an imperial audience and so impressed Taizong with his religion's "luminous doctrine" that the emperor

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[270] Xue, "Merchants of Chang'an," 270.
[271] Leslie, "Persian Temples," 289. The fifth near the Eastern. Additionally, by Leslie's count there were also two or three Zoroastrian temples in the eastern capital of Luoyang, one or two in Kaifeng, and one at least in Yangchow, Wuwei, Liangchow, Ichow, Chinkiang, Taiyua, and Dunhuang.

ordered the construction of a monastery to house twenty-one Nestorian monks in Yining Ward near the Western Market in 638.[272]

A stele originally erected in Chang'an in 781 and discovered in modern Xi'an in 1623 describes the history of Christianity in China beginning with Alopen's arrival at Taizong's court. Called the Nestorian Stele, its find spot near the Buddhist monastery of Ch'ung'jen szu was either on the site of the Yining Ward of Tang times or close to it, providing good evidence for the established presence of a Christian enclave in Northwest Chang'an.[273] Chinese sources also associate this part of the city with a community of Persian Christians. Among others, the *Chang'an zhi* ("Gazetteer of Chang'an"), an eleventh-century description of the Tang capital by Song Minqui (1019–79), states: "In the Yining quarter north of the east of the street is the foreign Monastery of Persia. In the twelfth *Cheng-kuan* year (638) Taizong built it for Alopen, a foreign monk from the kingdom of *Daqin*."[274]

The stele's inscription, entitled "A Monument Commemorating the Propagation of the *Daqin* Luminous Religion in China," records the construction of the monastery in Yining Ward and lists the names of sixty-eight believers, all but

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[272] F. S. Drake, "Nestorian Monasteries of the T'ang Dynasty and the Site of the Discovery of the Nestorian Tablet," *Monumenta Serica* 2, no. 2 (1937): 293-340. 304; Moffett, "History of Christianity in Asia," 398; A. C. Moule, *Christians in China before the Year 1550* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1930), 67; Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 241-2; Leslie, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 290. There appears to have been some initial confusion about the differences between Zoroastrianism and Nestorianism, both of which were practiced primarily by Persians living in Northwest Chang'an. Manichaeism, which tended to borrow freely from both traditions, was sometimes confused with them as well. Yet the distinctions among the three western religions were clear by at least 721, when the *Ch'uan t'ang wen* stated: "Among the different foreigners who have come here are the *Mo-ni* (Manichees), the *Ta-ch'in* (Christians), and the *Hsien-shen* (Zoroastrians) (translated in Moule, *Christians in China*, 67).
[273] Drake, "Nestorian Monasteries," 303.
[274] Translated in Moffet, *History of Christianity*, 70. See also Drake, "Nestorian Monasteries," 308-331; Moule, *Christians in China*, 65-6; Chen, "Social Networks," 45.

eight of which were written in both Syriac and Chinese.[275] The use of Syriac, the liturgical language of the Church of the East, suggests that Nestorianism retained close ties with its West Asian roots and was mostly likely practiced primarily by a subset of Chang'an's Persian community.[276] Despite the Christian community's small numbers, the placement of the Nestorian Stele in Yining Ward one hundred fifty years after the construction of the monastery there indicates that the building served as a center of worship in the neighborhood for generations. Like the Syrian Sanctuary on the Janiculum, it very likely also functioned as a center of local community since repeated practice tends to create a sense of socio-spatial "belonging" in a particular part of the city.

In addition to the Persian merchants and monks who lived in Northwest Chang'an, Sogdians also settled around the Western Market in considerable numbers.[277] An enterprising people from a cluster of city-states in and around modern Uzbekistan that included Kish, Chach, and especially Samarkand, the Sogdians dominated the caravan routes into China from the sixth to the eighth centuries. Their presence in Chang'an is well documented in art and literature, which portray them as a trading people fond of wine, music, and dancing.[278] Like the Persians, the Sogdians tended to settle around the city's marketplaces because their

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[275] Moffett, *History of Christianity in China*, 288. For a detailed description of the stele and a translation of the inscription, see Moule, *Christians in China*, 27-39.

[276] Leslie, "Persian Temples," 290; Drake, "Nestorian Monasteries," 307. Like Zoroastrianism, Christianity eventually spread to the eastern capital of Luoyang and several other major Chinese cities. The Syriac at the base of the Nestorian Stele mentions one Gabriel, "priest and archdeacon and head of the church of Khumdan and of Sarag." These have been identified as Chang'an and Luoyang, respectively.

[277] de la Vaissière, *Sogdian Traders*, 139.

[278] Rose, "The Sogdians," 418-19.

primary business was importing luxuries and exotic female entertainers to Chang'an.[279] Their community was also large enough to have its own liaisons to the Tang government. These officials, called *sabao* (薩保, a Chinese rendering of the Sogdian word for "caravan leader"), held the same rank as Chinese scholar-bureaucrats (進士 *jinshi*) and acted simultaneously as spokesmen and leaders of the Sogdian community.[280] Two were on duty in Chang'an, and one in every city of the empire with more than two hundred Sogdians in residence.[281] Since *sabao* were typically recruited from families considered trustworthy because they had long been resident in China, they provide good evidence for the longevity as well as the organization of the Sogdian trade diaspora.[282]

The sarcophagus of a *sabao* named Wirkak, who died in 579 at age eighty-six, sheds light on Sogdian-Chinese relations before the rise of the Tang that informs our understanding of later periods. Discovered in Xi'an in 2003, its bilingual inscription in Chinese and Sogdian informs the reader that Wirkak's grandfather had been a *sabao* and that his wife was also of Sogdian origin. His Sogdian name indicates that his ancestors came from the city-state of Kish (modern Shahr-i Sabz), although this is not evident in the Chinese version of the text, which names Wirkak "Shi" and his wife "Lady Kang."[283] The *sabao*'s Zoroastrian faith is evident from the sarcophagus' carvings, which include a scene of priests wearing the *padan* (a veil

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[279] de la Vaissière, *Sogdian Traders*, 140. In total, two thirds of the Sogdians of Chang'an whose residences or known lived either near either the Western or the Eastern Market.
[280] Rose, "The Sogdians," 416.
[281] de la Vaissière, *Sogdian Traders*, 148-9; Rose, "The Sogdians," 417.
[282] de la Vaissière, *Sogdian Traders*, 150.
[283] de la Vaissière, *Sogdian Traders*, 150; Rose, "The Sogdians," 416.

worn to prevent human breath from polluting the sacred fire central to Zoroastrian worship) standing at the entrance of the Chinvat Bridge where souls are judged in Zoroastrian theology. Wirkak and his wife are shown in Chinese clothes leading a group of departed souls and animals across the bridge.

The fact that one of these animals is a camel laden with wares reflects the commercial focus of the Sogdian community, while the presence of the other figures suggests that Wirkak and his wife had important social roles as leaders of the community that extended beyond death.[284] The emphasis in the tomb's iconography on collective rituals that brought members of the Sogdian community together into fellowship suggests that that Wirkak's position also involved nurturing a sense of solidarity among his countrymen residing in Chang'an in addition to serving as a liaison to the Tang government.[285] Although he and his wife lived long-term in China, adopted Chinese dress, and acquired Chinese names, they remained connected to and proud of their Sogdian heritage. Maintaining this connection would have been difficult in the absence of any sense of community among the Sogdians living in Chang'an.

Like Wirkak, many Sogdians were Zoroastrians and as such likely interacted on a regular basis with the Persians who were their neighbors, coreligionists, and colleagues. However, many Sogdians were also followers of Manichaeism, the third western religion with a foothold in Chang'an. Founded by the Persian prophet Mani in the third century CE, Manichaeism was a missionary faith whose adherents

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[284] Rose, "The Sogdians," 417.
[285] de la Vaissière, *Sogdian Traders*, 147-8.

traveled to many parts of the Eurasian continent. It was more popular than Zoroastrianism among the Sogdians, so much so that the Chinese came to regard it as a characteristically Sogdian religion.[286] Nevertheless, Manichaeism initially made little headway and met with opposition from Zoroastrian, Nestorian, and Buddhist clergy, who may have felt that its doctrine borrowed too readily from their own faiths.[287] Chinese sources do not record the appearance of a Manichean priest (*moni*) at court until 719, about eighty years after the first Zoroastrians and Christians gained imperial audiences.[288]

Nevertheless, Manichaeism became the most influential of the western religions in Chang'an in the late eighth and early ninth centuries. This was largely due to the influence of the Uighurs, a Turkish people from the Mongolian steppes whose military aid enabled the Tang government put down the An Lushan Rebellion in 763. The Uighurs had adopted Manichaeism in the same year, after their leader Mou-yü came into contact with Manichaeans in the eastern capital of Luoyang, converted, and imposed the faith on his people.[289] This conversion led to an alliance with the Sogdians that, for a time, proved highly profitable to both peoples. Uighur leverage in Tang politics, the number of Sogdians resident in the Tang Empire, and the power of Manichaeism in Chang'an all increased significantly in the second half of the ninth

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[286] Colin Mackerras, ed., *The Uighur Empire According to the T'ang Dynastic Histories* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1972), 10; Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 239.
[287] Leslie, "Persian Temples," 292; Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 241. In 732, a limited proscription attempted to prevent the Manichean community from making converts.
[288] Leslie, "Persian Temples," 291-292.
[289] Mackerras, *Uighur Empire*, 9.

century.[290] Imperial edicts of 768 and 771 ordering the construction of Manichaean

temples (*Dayun guangming*) in Chang'an, help us chart both Manichaeism's reversed

fortunes after the An Lushan Rebellion and the visibility of Sogdians and Uighurs in

the capital at this time.[291]

None of these temples has survived due to the official suppression of foreign

religions that began in Chang'an in 845 and later spread throughout the empire.[292]

Yet we can be reasonably certain that the capital's Manichaean temples of the capital

were located in the vicinity of the Western Market. The thousands of Uighurs who

settled in the Tang capital in the second half of the eighth century to work as

mercenaries and exploit the advantages of having saved the empire from destruction

very likely settled near their already-established allies, the Sogdians. Many also

became involved in the money lending business, which required them to live near the

city's commercial districts. Indeed, rudimentary banking establishments known as

guifang began to appear in the wards surrounding the Eastern and Western Markets at

this time.[293] These became infamous for their steep interest rates, which fueled

growing resentments against the Uighurs, Sogdians, and their Manichaean faith.[294]

An excerpt from the *Jiu Tangshu* ("Old Book of Tang") pithily described the souring

relationship between these groups and the capital's Chinese population in the early

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[290] *Jiu Tangshu* ("Old Book of Tang") 195.11a translated in Mackerras, *Uighur Empire*, 114.
[291] Leslie, "Persian Temples," 292; Mackerras, *Uighur Empire*, 42-3; Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 240. This was presumably done at the urging of the Uighur khagan. An embassy of 807 also asked that Manichaean temples be constructed in Luoyang and Taiyuan in 807.
[292] Ennin, *Diary* 327; Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 240-1.
[293] Mackerras, *Uighur Empire*, 49; Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 182.
[294] Uighur soldiers also disrespected Tang officials, kidnapped Chinese children, and occasionally committed murder in the capital's streets and marketplaces. See *Hsin T'ang-shu* ("New Book of Tang") 214A.6b, 217A.7a translated in Mackerras, *Uighur Empire*, 85, 89.

ninth century, as well as their association with the Western Market: "*Moni* [Manicheans] came to the capital. Every year they came and went in the Western Market. Merchants often colluded with them to do evil."[295]

This resentment erupted into violence in 845, eradicating Manichaeism in China (as well as Zoroastrianism and Christianity) and contributing to the decay of Chang'an's cosmopolitan culture. For the moment, though, the most important thing to note is that the Uighur and Sogdian immigrants followed the lead of their Persian and Turkish predecessors by congregating in the wards to the north of the Western Market. As at Athens and Rome, they were first drawn to the district because of the commercial opportunities it offered and made it their own through the maintenance of their native customs and especially their own forms of religious practice. After Chang'an's curfew fell into abeyance, newcomers to the capital continued to settle there because it contained familiar religious institutions and countrymen who spoke their language and shared their customs, providing newcomers with a sense of familiarity and comfort in a strange city. In addition to the bazaars of the Western Market itself, the Zoroastrian, Nestorian, and Manichean temples of Northwest Chang'an functioned as shared spaces where residents of the district came together and experienced a sense of solidarity within, and sometimes beyond, their ethnic and religious communities.[296]

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[295] Translated in Xue, "Merchants of Chang'an," 270.

[296] Linda Rui Feng, "Chang'an and Narratives of Experience in Tang Tales," *Harvard Journal of Asian Studies* 71, no. 1 (2011): 53. Several Tang dynasty short stories set in the capital show how temples functioned as public spaces for lay gatherings and performances in addition to places of worship.

The neighborhood's shops, restaurants, and taverns were another type of space that residents of Northwest Chang'an shared. Most of these were located outside of the market on the streets and inside the residential wards. This reflects the loosening of restrictions that took place in the capital during the latter half of the dynasty. Although the restriction of commerce to the Eastern and Western Markets was strictly enforced in the early Tang, after the An Lushan Rebellion left the government in a weakened state and with less power to closely police its citizens, regulations broke down and private businesses began to proliferate across the city.[297] We know from the *Chang'an zhi* that in the late Tang rich individuals such as the merchant Dou Yi bought up large areas of land in the sparsely inhabited wards south of the Western Market and used them to build warehouses, shops, and hostels for travelers.[298] Near these extra-market businesses, wine shops, restaurants, and street vendors offering food became increasingly common.[299] As the streets of Chang'an became crowded with vendors selling popular snacks such as Persian sweet and savory flat cakes seasoned with sesame seeds (*hubing*) or mutton "*a la* hu" (roasted with pepper), the exotic flavors of the markets infused the neighborhoods surrounding them.[300]

Literary sources show how these restaurants and wine shops functioned as meeting places between people of different ethnicities, classes, or walks of life. For example, Sun Qi's "Record of the Northern Hamlet" *(Bei li zhi)*, a description of Chang'an's pleasure quarter written toward the end of the dynasty, portrays the

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[297] Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 97; Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 187-8.
[298] Xue, "Merchants of Chang'an," 262.
[299] Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 97.
[300] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 188; Cotterell, *Imperial Capitals*, 144; Schaefer, *Golden Peaches*, 29.

district's taverns as places where young exam candidates met each other, became

friends, showed off their poetic talents, and established social connections while

sharing food and drink in the presence of beautiful women.[301] In the realm of fiction,

several Tang tales set in the capital paint a similar picture. In Shen Jiji's late eighth-

century short story "Ren the Fox Fairy," the young protagonist Zheng, locked out of

his ward after missing curfew, waits for the morning drums at a bread shop run by a

hu merchant outside his ward gates. It is in this shop that he first hears news of the

mysterious and beautiful woman Ren, who becomes his object of affection for the rest

of the story.[302] Although in this tale Zheng's visit to the shop functions primarily a

literary device to set up the plot, it also hints at a sense of easy familiarity between

him and the *hu* merchant whose food stall was located outside the gates of this ward

that would have been plausible to the story's readers. This sense of familiarity is one

of the key factors in the formation of a neighborhood consciousness.

Picaresque stories set in the capital also provide a sense of the social level of

many of Northwest Chang'an's residents. Some of the neighborhood's foreign

businessmen were of course quite rich (the phrase "Poor Persian" had an ironic

connotation similar the Latin phrase "*punica fides*"), although their foreign origins

meant that they would have retained outsider status in the eyes of many of the

capital's Han Chinese residents. Several other literary anecdotes, however, indicate

that many residents of western Chang'an (both foreign and Chinese) were poor. Later

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[301] Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 101-5; Benn, *China's Golden Age*, 64-7; Xiong, "*Ji* Entertainers," 152-60. For a full translaton of the "Record," see des Rotours, *Courtisanes Chinoises à la fin des T'ang* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1968).
[302] Shen et al., *Selected Tang Dynasty Stories,* 19.

in "Ren the Fox Fairy," Zheng suffers a disaster that leaves him destitute and drags himself to a pawnshop in the Western Market to scrounge up a decent set of clothes.[303] In another story, "Prince Huo's Daughter" by Jiang Fang, a young woman named Jade is abandoned by her betrothed and forced to sell her dresses and trinkets with the help of an innkeeper in the Western Market in order to survive.[304] In Li Fuyan's "The Spendthrift and the Alchemist," an inveterate gambler spends his days begging in the Eastern Market until he meets a strange man who promises to show him the secret of making money through alchemy. While the plan doesn't work out quite as promised, it is noteworthy that the mysterious stranger tells the desperate gambler to meet him at a Persian hotel in the Western Market to receive his alchemy lesson.[305]

Official texts support this picture of the Western Market as a destination for down and out as well as a part of the city shaped by encounters with the exotic. According to the *Chang'an zhi*: "The merchandise brought in by merchants and vendors converges on the Western Market. At the Western Market, people are found not only in the shops and bazaars [but in other places as well]. There are countless transients and drifters."[306] Most of these transients (*fuji liuyu*) did not register with the authorities in hopes of evading taxation and hung around the market looking for handouts, gossip, or a public spectacle.[307] Although it is impossible to say what degree of psychological unity (if any) existed among the common folk or vagrants

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[303] Shen et al., *Selected Tang Dynasty Stories*, 19.
[304] Shen et al., *Selected Tang Dynasty Stories*, 89.
[305] Shen et al., *Selected Tang Dynasty Stories*, 185.
[306] Translated in Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 228.
[307] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 170. The Western Market was also the site for public executions.

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who spent time in the market or lived in the wards surrounding it, it is clear that many of the neighborhood's residents occupied the lower rungs of the Chang'an's social ladder. At the very least, they knew that their proper place was not the eastern end of the city, with its palaces and aristocratic mansions, but in the western wards. We might say, then, that the neighborhood around the Western Market was a paradoxical mix of the exotic and the common.

The evidence from Northwest Chang'an indicates that this unique local character was evident to both locals and newcomers. The Tang government's early attempt to control the movement and behavior of Chang'an's residents through the erection of physical boundaries and the imposition of the curfew encouraged foreigners to settle near the Western Market in the dynasty's early years. Official texts and inscriptions prove that the communities of immigrants who lived in this district, such as the Persians and Sogdians, had their own religious institutions, community leaders, languages, and customs.[308] Yet they also shared the resources of the market and the wards surrounding it with Chang'an's Han Chinese residents and interacted with them on a daily basis as customers and neighbors. Furthermore, anecdotal literature from the capital reveals how often the curfew was ignored and walls breached by adventurous souls looking to experience the city on their own terms.[309] As the rules governing the behavior of society were relaxed in the latter half of the dynasty, the busy market spilled beyond its confines into neighboring

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[308] de la Vaissière, *Sogdian Traders*, 150; Lewis, *Cosmopoitan Empire*, 152, 170.
[309] Linda Rui Feng, "Negotiating Vertical Space: Walls, Vistas, and the Topographical Imagination," *T'ang Studies* 29 (2011): 43.

residential quarters, ward gates were left open at night, and a shared sense of shared

experience beyond the level of individual wards could only have grown stronger.[310]

The result was the evolution of a neighborhood whose multiethnic population,

commercial flavor, and spiritual diversity in many ways exemplified the character of

the Tang dynasty as a whole.

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[310] Tuan, *Topophilia*, 117.

<u>Conclusion</u>

  The Piraeus, Trastevere, and Northwest Chang'an were small worlds within their cities at large. Each of these neighborhoods was home to a community of immigrants who came to the center of empire for a variety of reasons: in pursuit of profit or enlightenment, to follow friends or family, or as someone else's property or servant. As they settled near each other to safeguard their interests and find a bit of the familiar in what was, to them, the foreign landscape of capital, these newcomers created enclaves of "otherness" within Athens, Rome, and Chang'an. In addition to being unique social worlds, these neighborhoods had spatial boundaries that varied in their prominence and level of permeability. In the case of the Piraeus, for example, the physical distance between neighborhood and city center was significant enough for the port to almost become a city unto itself. On the other hand, physical boundaries were more nuanced in Northwest Chang'an, where foreigners resided in a series of wards near the Western Market to easily access their places of business and avoid violating the nightly curfew. Although the precise circumstances varied by context, in each case immigrant neighborhoods altered the social-spatial landscapes of their cities at large. Just as processes of imperial expansion created new borders at the edge of empire, immigration transformed the metropolitan center into a fragmented and at times contested space.

Chapter Four: Urban Borderlands

"The struggle has always been inner, and is played out in outer terrains."[1]

How does the center of an empire come to resemble its distant peripheries? The answer lies in the nature of imperialism itself. The preceding chapters have shown how projects of conquest and annexation that push the boundaries of empires outward inevitably produce a countervailing pull back toward their metropolitan centers.[2] Immigration, whether willing or forced, transforms imperial cities into microcosms that display the wealth of empire in their demography, customs, markets, and architecture.[3] On their streets and in their neighborhoods, contacts between individuals of different classes, ethnicities, cultures, and linguistic backgrounds are inevitable, whether or not they are desired.[4]

The examples of Athens, Rome, and Chang'an remind us that these contacts play out differently across different historical and geographical contexts. Yet a common thread ties these diverse case studies together. Encounters with "the other" did not only take place at the geographical limits of Athenian, Roman, or Tang power. In each case, the imperial project transformed both center *and* periphery into places where interactions between diverse groups took place across entangled social and spatial boundaries. None of these cities were "pure" centers of power whose hegemony was uncontestable and whose culture radiated unidirectionally outward

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[1] Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, 109.
[2] Colás, *Empire*, 33.
[3] Colás, *Empire*, 7.
[4] Iossifova, Deljana Iossifova, "Searching for a Common Ground: Urban Borderlands in a World of Borders and Boundaries," *Cities* 34 (2013): 2.

like the light of the sun.[5]   Rather, the borderlands paradigm makes it clear that these

imperial cities were heterogeneous and contested zones of transcultural contact that

anticipated political, economic, social, and cultural changes to come even as they

responded to those that had already occurred. Analyzing Athens, Rome, and

Chang'an as urban borderlands enables us to see how imperialism collapses the

distance between center and periphery. Beyond that, it helps us better understand

how newcomers change the city, even as the city changes them.

Undertaking this analysis requires us to think simultaneously about the social,

temporal, and spatial factors that shape human life.[6] As scholars such as Henri

Lefebvre and Edward Soja have observed, historians and social scientists have a

tendency to take the first two of these categories for granted. Sensitivity to the fact

that everything is a product of its time, and that social factors play a fundamental role

in shaping people's choices and identities, is a prerequisite for any serious work of

historical or sociological scholarship. Space, on the other hand, sometimes receives

less direct critical attention and come across as a mere backdrop or stage for the

human drama. To paraphrase Soja, while historians portray time as richly filled with

agency, action, the dynamics of social development, and all the contradictions and

crises that carry human beings along the rhythmic paths of an "ever-accumulating

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[5] In her comprehensive study of empires, Barbara Bush defines this cultural power as "the will to dominate and not be dominated, to impose change while remaining unchanged." Bush, *Imperialism and Postcolonialism*, 123.

[6] Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1996), 2, 10.

past," space still tends to be treated as something fixed, lifeless, and immobile: an external complication rather than an integral part of lived experience.[7]

One way to redress this imbalance is to attempt to give equal consideration to time, space, *and* society: what Soja calls "the all-embracing dimensions of human life."[8] Although rarely framed in these terms, this mode of analysis lies at the heart of the borderlands paradigm, with its emphasis on the entanglement of social and physical boundaries and their effect on political, economic, and social relationships over time. Simply put, when analyzing borderlands it is impossible to ignore the fact that social interactions are never just coincidentally spatial, existing "in" space.[9] The physical environment of a borderland is an essential part of its residents' lived experience that both reflects and actively shapes their social worlds.[10] People's birthplaces, the communities where they put down roots, the daily paths they trace on their way to work or worship, and the places where they are laid to rest are as central to their identities and behaviors as are the centuries or cultures into which they are born. Rather than remaining abstract and ungrounded, social relations in a borderland (whether linked to class, commerce, family, community, or state power) are

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[7] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 169. This tendency has changed somewhat in response to the "spatial turn" in the humanities and social sciences, but spatial factors are still rarely given the same weight as temporal and social ones in mainstream historiography. For example, while environmental historians structure their analyses around the social implications of physical landscapes, resource distribution, climate change, and other issues, their close attention to space has only recently begun to spread beyond their subdisciplinary specialization.

[8] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 10. He also, less helpfully, refers to this mode of analysis as the "socio-temporal-spatial trialectic."

[9] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford, UK and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1991), 410-11; Soja, *Thirdspace*, 46.

[10] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 132.

inextricably tied to the region's natural landscape and built environment.[11] With its

focused attention to this relationship between time, space, and society, the

borderlands paradigm thus puts into practice Lefebvre's assertion that there is, in fact,

no such thing as a truly unspatialized social reality.[12]

Chapter One has shown that applying this analytical framework to the outer

limits of empires and nation-states can do much to further our understanding of

human relations in a variety of geographical and historical contexts. What about

cities? Virtually all historians and social scientists agree that, more than any other,

these forms of community have fundamentally shaped – even defined – human

civilization since the urban revolution of the late Neolithic period.[13] Yet few scholars

have given equal weight to temporal, spatial, and social factors when trying to

understand not only *why* but also *how* urban communities have had such a powerful

impact on history. Some of the most famous urban theorists of the twentieth century,

for example, described cities as the spatial manifestations of culturally specific traits

(for example, "the Greco-Roman city," "the East Asian city," or "the Islamic city") or

analyzed changes in their form and function as signs of humanity's progress through

various stages of civilization ("the ancient city," "the medieval city," "the industrial

city," etc.).[14] Such modes of analysis portray cities as containers for human activity

that signify, through monumental architecture and other aspects of their built

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[11] Edward W. Soja, *Postmetropolis: Critical Studies of Cities and Regions* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2000), 9.

[12] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 129; Soja, *Thirdspace* 46.

[13] For this term, see V. Gordon Childe, "The Urban Revolution," *Town Planning Review* 21 (1950), 3-17.

[14] For a classic example, see Lewis Mumford, *The City in History* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961).

environments, political, economic, or cultural developments that have already taken place.[15] They have the potential to make cities seem either like eternal and unchanging models, or blank canvases that are shaped by, but do not themselves shape, human action.

Because they are so far removed in time, ancient cities in particular are in danger of being reduced to symbolic rather than dynamic spaces in this way. While ancient cities *are* powerful symbols, to be sure, their portrayal through a series of stock images – the Parthenon, the Forum, the Imperial Palace – simplifies them in a way that is analogous to the representation of peripheral borderlands as "lines in the sand" such as rivers, mountain ranges, walls, or fences. Such treatments, while suggestive of their profound legacies in world history, obscure the fact that cities like Athens, Rome, and Chang'an were engines of historical change precisely because of the transcultural contacts that took place across their fragmented urban landscapes. By bringing diverse groups into close contact in an intimate physical environment, these imperial cities were constantly reacting, evolving, and anticipating changes to come.[16]

As the analysis of migration patterns in Chapter Two shows, becoming the metropolitan center of an expansive empire caused each city's immigrant population to swell. At the same time, the careful manipulation of physical space emerged as an

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[15] Soja, *Postmetropolis*, 9. For example, a triumphal arch may be erected to commemorate a great military victory, or new infrastructure built to accommodate populations that have already grown beyond the city's ability to supply water, transportation, housing, or other basic services.
[16] I. William Zartman, "Borderland Policy: Keeping up with Change," in *Understanding Life in the Borderlands: Boundaries in Depth and Motion*, ed. I. William Zartman (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2010), 245.

important part of the machinery of imperialism.[17] Street layouts, monumental

architecture, and the placement of markets and religious institutions worked in

tandem with ideologies of order, hierarchy, and control to signal "where people

belonged" and how they fit into the broader framework of imperial society.[18] The

monumental building project that Augustus initiated on the Campus Martius, the

"Field of Mars" just north of the Capitoline Hill, is one example of an imperial

regime's manipulation of the physical space of its capital city to broadcast ideologies

of dominance and control. Rome's first emperor used this part of the imperial city as

a staging ground to showcase it role as as *caput mundi* and the greatness of his

regime, filling it with monumental structures such as the Temple of Mars the

Avenger, the Altar of Augustan Peace, and his own Mausoleum with an impressive

sundial (*horologium)* whose pointer (*gnomon*) was made from an obelisk of the

pharaoh Psammetichus II (595–589 BCE) looted from the Egyptian city of

Heliopolis.   By using a piece of Egyptian architecture to create a structure inspired

by Greek science, this last structure in particular signaled Rome's dominion over the

ancient civilizations of the Eastern Mediterranean and ability to unite their diverse

cultural traditions. Nearby, large bronze tablets posted at the Mausoleum of Augustus

listed his *Res Gestae* ("Things Done"), a list of accomplishments making it clear that,

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[17] Jacobs, *Edge of Empire*, 158;
[18] Herbert, *Cities in Space*, 111; Massey et al., *City Worlds*, 111; Simon Parker, *Cities, Politics, and Power* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 161.

under his rule, Rome had become the geographical, political, and spiritual master of the world.[19]

Yet not all changes to an imperial city's physical landscape result from the "top down" policies of its ruling regime. As Chapter Three illustrates, immigration also creates "small worlds" of otherness within the city in ways that imperial regimes cannot entirely predict or control. The Piraeus, Trastevere, and Northwest Chang'an each took shape and developed their unique local cultures because diverse newcomers clustered together within their limits in search of opportunity, familiarity, or networks of mutual aid and support. These neighborhoods show how the socially divisive aspects of imperial ideology – the parts that look to ethnic, religious, or cultural distinctions to make sense of the complex diversity that comes with empire – can etch new boundary lines into city space in unexpected ways.[20] Moreover, the boundaries that surrounded these neighborhoods were permeable. Immigrants who moved to the center of the Athenian, Roman, and Tang Empires in the aftermath of a military conquest, the opening of a new trade network, or the spread of a religion did not sequester themselves into one corner of the city and stay put for the rest of their days. Rather, they traversed the urban landscape and interacted with their neighbors as they went about their daily lives. As in external borderlands, these interactions could act as catalysts for the sort of social, cultural, economic, and political innovations that we

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[19] Favro, "Reading the Augustan City," 241; Paul Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, trans. Alan Shapiro (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1988), 144; Claude Nicolet, *Space, Geography, and Politics in the Early Roman Empire*, Trans. Helene Leclerc (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1980), 192-193.

[20] Massey et al., *City Worlds*, 86.

tend to associate with cosmopolitan cities. They could also be troubling, fueling

xenophobia and violent pushbacks against outsiders whose presence at the center of

empire some saw as inappropriate or corrupting. In this way, the urban borderlands at

the center of empire mirror those found on the periphery, and point to the instability

that lies at the heart of every imperial project.[21] Socio-spatial management of

difference did not only occur at outer margins of the Athenian, Roman, and Tang

states, but also in the contact zones that were their metropolitan centers.

From Ideology to Everyday Life

As Charles Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, chief foreign minister to

Napoleon and Louis XVIII, put it, "Empire is the art of putting people in their

place."[22] Even as they bring people from diverse backgrounds into contact through

conquest and migration, imperial regimes distinguish them from each other through

boundary processes that actively produce and reproduce difference.[23] Exaggerating

divisions between "civilized" and "uncivilized," "insiders" and "outsiders," or "us"

and "them," has often proven an effective strategy for imposing an orderly system on

the inherently untidy experience of empire building.[24] Even the most ecumenically

minded regimes readily use such labels, which articulate ideologies of power that

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[21] Zartman, "Borderland Policy," 245.
[22] Colás, *Empire*, 7, quoting Talleyrand from A. Pagden, *Lords of all the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain, and France, c. 1500-1800* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).
[23] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 87.
[24] Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York: Routledge, 1966), 5.

seek to justify the dominance of an imperial people over subaltern populations, reinforce hierarchy, and keep people "in their places."[25]

A quick survey of my three case studies illustrates this point. As noted in Chapter Two, the enfranchised male citizens of Athenians prided themselves on having a city that was open to foreigners and a "school for Hellas," preferring to see their society as a progressive model that the rest of Greece would do well to emulate.[26] Yet they also worried that metics would become too powerful and usurp citizens' rights, and passed laws relegating them to second-class citizenship.[27] The senatorial elites of Rome believed that their city was born from the union of many peoples and ascribed to a founding mythology that asserted "there should be no reluctance for men to mingle their blood with their fellow-men."[28] Nevertheless, fearing that "a mob of foreigners, a troop of captives, [will be] forced upon us," they resisted granting provincials full access to citizenship and political power for centuries.[29] Chinese writers and artists of the Tang dynasty fixated on ethnocultural markers such as facial features, styles of dress or dance, or religious beliefs in their depictions of the many "exotic" foreigners living in Chang'an. While initially celebrated as signs of the Tang Empire's worldly cosmopolitanism, these same markers were used to target non-Han people for expulsion and violent persecution

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[25] Bush, *Imperialism and Postcolonialism*, 22. Although geared toward younger readers, Jim Carnes' *Us and Them: A History of Intolerance in America* (New York: Oxford, 1999) provides a useful survey of this phenomenon in American history.
[26] Thucydides 2.39-41.
[27] Aristotle, *Politics* 1326b20-2; Plutarch, *Pericles* 37.3.
[28] Livy 1.8-9 (*...ne grauarentur homines cum hominibus sanguinem ac genus miscere…*).
[29] Tacitus, *Annals* 11.23 (*...coetus alienigenarum velut captivitas inferatur…*).

during the dynasty's troubled later half.[30] In each of these cases, ideologies advocating the accommodation of diverse populations into a single, all-embracing society were counterbalanced by impulses to disavow and displace foreign elements seen as corrupting or dangerous.[31]

Like other empires in world history, the Athenian, Roman, and Tang regimes also used specifically spatial terminology to articulate imperial ideologies intended to establish order and hierarchy among their diverse populations.[32] In the Chinese case, it is possible to trace the codification of spatial thinking to early texts such as "Yu's Tribute" (*Yugong*), one of the Confucian classics likely first written down in the fifth century BCE. In this story, Yu the Great, the legendary founder of the Xia dynasty, divides the world into five concentric zones (*wufu*) that radiate outward from his royal domain at the center of Chinese civilization (*zhongguo*). Each zone's level of civilization is determined by its distance from this central axis, with the furthest, the "desert zone" (*huangfu*), bordering vast oceans and barren wastelands at the ends of the earth (*sizhi*).[33]

Centuries after it was first written down, the historian Ban Gu (32–92 CE) incorporated this story into his history of the Former Han dynasty (*Hanshu*), sensibly

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[30] Abrahamson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 142-8.

[31] Homi K. Bhabha, "Introduction: Narrating the Nation," in *Nation and Narration*, ed. Homi K. Bhabha (London: Routledge, 1990), 1-7.

[32] Colás, *Empire*, 35; Gregory E. Areshian, "Introduction: Variability and Complexity in Multidisciplinary and Interdisciplinary Studies of Empires," in *Empires and Diversity: On the Crossroads of Archaeology, Anthropology, and History*, ed. Gregory E. Areshian (Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology Press, 2013), 7-8; Soja, *Thirdspace*, 46. A number of premodern empires in particular, including the Akkadian, Incan, and Turkic, produced ideologies that invoked ideas of the "four corners" of the world united by an imperial center.

[33] For a translation of this part of the *Yugong*, see Abrahamson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 120; see also Q. Edward Wang, "History, Space, and Ethnicity: The Chinese Worldview." *Journal of World History* 10, no. 2 (1999): 290-1.

adapting it to identify China's center as the Han capital at Chang'an. In this way, the historian linked ancient cosmological thinking, which embedded an ethnocentric social hierarchy into the physical landscape of East Asia, to the imperial ideology of the Han dynasty.[34] Later still, Tang historians produced a different picture of the world that reflected the changed sociopolitical circumstances of their day, moving away from the idealized vision of five concentric zones and integrating the northern steppe more closely into the civilized world of China proper. Rather than the plains of Mongolia, Tang spatial thinking identified the islands and peninsulas of Southeast Asia as the distant lands at the end of the earth where one found unsophisticated and alien barbarians.[35] Yet at all times, the link between peoples and places remained strong. Although different dynasties produced different mental landscapes, Chinese imperial ideologies continued to be expressed in spatial as well as social terms up to the end of the dynastic system in the early twentieth century.[36]

Roman imperial ideology also embedded social relations into geographical landscapes. Augustus traced the physical borders of the Roman world under his rule in the *Res Gestae*, boasting that he "extended the boundaries of all the provinces which were bordered by races not yet subject to our empire," sent ships to explore the North Sea coast "where no Roman had gone before," and ordered armies to penetrate south into Ethiopia (modern Sudan), among other places.[37] He also reported that he

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[34] Wang, "History, Space, and Ethnicity," 291-2.
[35] Abrahamson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 124-5; Wang, "History, Space, and Ethnicity," 300.
[36] Wang, "History, Space, and Ethnicity," 304-5.
[37] Augustus, *Res Gestae* 26 (*Omnium provinciarum populi Romam quibus finitimae fuerunt gentes quae non parerent imperio nostro fines auxi…classis mea per Oceanum ab ostio Rheni ad solis orientis regionem usque ad fines Cimbrorum navigavit, quo neque terra neque mari quisquam*

received embassies from Indian potentates, "which had not been seen before that time by any Roman leader," as well as ambassadors and political hostages from various Scythian, Sarmatian, Albanian, Iberian, British, German, and Parthian kings.[38] In this way, Rome's first emperor articulated the empire's growing territorial extent and the Romans' political and social dominance over distant barbarian peoples in one deft stroke.

A century and a half later, Hadrian shifted the emphasis from expansion to consolidation by ordering the construction of new fortifications and the reinforcement of existing ones "to separate the barbarians from the Romans" in places like northern England and along the Rhine and Danube *limes*.[39] Although Hadrian's actions reflect a changed balance of power, in both cases the emperors used geographical itineraries to trace both the social and the spatial boundaries of the Roman world. By the late empire, the idea that physical boundaries such as walls and rivers were the only thing protecting Roman civilization from the depredations of savage outsiders had become firmly entrenched. This is the sentiment reflected in the fourth-century treatise *de Rebus Bellicis* quoted in Chapter One, whose author worried that "wild nations are pressing upon the Roman Empire and howling about it everywhere."[40] As in the

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Romanus ante id tempus adit.…in Aethiopiam usque ad oppidum Nabata perventum est, cui proxima est Meroe…).

[38] Augustus, *Res Gestae* 31-3 (*…ad me ex India regum legationes saepe missae sunt non visae ante id tempus apud quemquam Romanorum ducem...*).

[39] Scriptores Historiae Augustae, *Hadrian* 11-12 (*…Britanniam petiit, in qua multa correxit murumque per octoginta milia passuum primus duxit, qui barbaros Romanosque divideret… Per ea tempora et alias frequenter in plurimis locis, in quibus barbari non fluminibus sed limitibus dividuntur, stipitibus magnis in modum muralis saepis funditus iactis atque conexis barbaros separavit.*)

[40] *De Rebus Bellicis* 6 (*…imperium Romanum circumlatrantium ubique nationum perstringat insania…*).

Chinese case, despite fluctuations in the empire's fortunes over time, Roman imperial ideology frequently employed spatial language to articulate social differences.

The Athenian Empire, a short-lived thassalocracy centered on the Aegean Sea, differed from the Tang and Roman states in a number of significant ways. Yet physical landscapes (or, perhaps better, seascapes) were also central to the Athenians' imperial thinking. In Thucydides' assessment, Athenian hegemony over Greece only became possible after the general and statesman Themistocles persuaded his fellow citizens to build up the Piraeus and make Athens into the greatest naval power in the Aegean.[41] From that point forward, the sea became central to the way the Athenians thought about their political, economic, and social relations with "allied" as well as enemy cities. Themistocles, Thucydides reported, was fond of telling his fellow-citizens that they could seal off the Piraeus and "defy the world with their fleet" if threatened by a land invasion.[42] It is telling that the sea remained central to the Athenian political, economy, military, and social system even after the Athenians adopted this advice to disastrous effect during the Peloponnesian War.[43]

On the eve of that conflict, Pericles asked the Athenians to imagine their city as an island, invulnerable to land attacks and free to exploit the resources of two continents – Europe and Asia – as long as it remained the premier naval power in Greece.[44] The spatial imagery in this speech is striking. Although Pericles pictured

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[41] Thucydides 1.93.

[42] *Ibid* (καὶ πολλάκις τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις παρῄνει, ἢν ἄρα ποτὲ κατὰ γῆν βιασθῶσι, καταβάντας ἐς αὐτὸν ταῖς ναυσὶ πρὸς ἅπαντας ἀνθίστασθαι).

[43] Hale, *Lords of the Sea*, xviii-xxx.

[44] Thucydides 1.143 (σκέψασθε δέ: εἰ γὰρ ἦμεν νησιῶται, τίνες ἂν ἀληπτότεροι ἦσαν; καὶ νῦν χρὴ ὅτι ἐγγύτατα τούτου διανοηθέντας τὴν μὲν γῆν καὶ οἰκίας ἀφεῖναι, τῆς δὲ θαλάσσης καὶ πόλεως φυλακὴν

Athens as "an island in a sea" rather than "a city on a hill," his use of a geographical

metaphor to argue that Athens was naturally situated to rule over its neighbors is

reminiscent the efforts of some American politicians to present the United States as

the world's best candidate for political and moral leadership.[45] Pericles' image of

Athens as a physical island also serves as an apt metaphor for the Athenians'

socioeconomic relations with non-citizens. In the Athenian Empire, both the hapless

allies and the foreign metics living in the city itself had to be kept accessible enough

to be exploited economically and far enough away to prevent them from attempting to

claim equality with the citizen body. An island is an appropriate symbol for a system

that rested upon the need to keep full membership in the imperial commuity beyond

the reach of most of its subjects. While Pericles' goal in this speech was surely not to

call attention to this fact but rather to reassure the Athenians that the city would be

able to win the Peloponnesian War on the basis of its fortifications and naval strength,

the social subtext of the spatial imagery he used to make his point is difficult to miss.

As noted at the start of this chapter, focused attention to the relationship

between social and spatial thinking, and its effect on people's identities and

behaviors, is central to the borderlands paradigm. This relationship is often easiest to

observe "at work" on the periphery, in borerland regions like the Rhine-Danube *limes*

ἔχειν...). This hypothetical scenario is repeated in Pseudo-Xenophon, *Constitution of the Athenians*,
2.14-6.
[45] John F. Kennedy, "City Upon a Hill" (speech, Boston, MA, January 9, 1961), Miller Center,
http://millercenter.org/president/speeches/detail/3364; Ronald Reagan, "A Shining City Upon a Hill,"
(speech, Washington, DC, January 25, 1974),
http://www.nationalcenter.org/ReaganConvention1976.html.

or the US-Mexico border.[46] In such places, physical and mental landscapes tend to be closely entangled. A person's position on one side of a river or a wall often says a great deal about his or her identity and agency, as can the decision to cross such bondaries. In a similar fashion, the immigrant neighborhoods analyzed in Chapter Three were also manifestations of social ideologies in physical space. Marked off by topographical boundaries such as walls or rivers, the Piraeus, Trastevere, and Northwest Chang'an were physical subdivisions of their cities at large. They were also distinct social communities whose unique local characters showcased their residents' diverse origins and by the ways that their host populations perceived them.[47] The Piraeus, simultaneously separated from and connected to Athens by the eight-kilometer umbilicus of the Long Walls, was both the city's source of wealth and power and an outpost of otherness within its walls at times threatened its unity.[48] A lynchpin of the shipping industry that kept Rome fed and supplied, Trastevere was also a slum across the river where Jewish beggars, Syrian freedmen, and Christian troublemakers worshipped strange gods.[49] Circumscribed by high walls, locked gates, and the nightly curfew, Chang'an's northwestern wards and the great market they abutted were hotspots for exotic luxuries, fashions, and ideas, but respectable members of Tang society ran the risk of sliding down the capital's social ladder by

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[46] Bush, *Imperialism and Postcolonialism*, 116.

[47] Lott, *Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 11-3; Hallman, *Neighborhoods*, 13; Williams, *Neighborhood Organizations*, 33; Park, *The City*, 6.

[48] Thucydides (1.93.7) reported that Themistocles in fact thought that the Piraeus was important than the upper city (…τόν τε Πειραιᾶ ὠφελιμώτερον ἐνόμιζε τῆς ἄνω πόλεως…). See also Aristophanes, *Acharnians* 544-54; Aristotle, *Politics*, 1303b7-12; Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 2.3.11-4, 43; *Memorabilia* 2.7.2; Pseudo-Aristotle, *Constitution of the Athenians*, 34.2-40; Lysias, *Oration* 12, 13.

[49] Seneca, *de Vita Beata* 7.25; Juvenal, *Satire* 14.134; Martial, *Epigram* 12.32; Philo, *Embassy to Gaius* 23.156; Scriptores Historiae Augustae, *Alexander Severus* 48.6.

spending too much time there.[50] These neighborhoods illustrate how ideologies of

empire do not only create socio-spatial boundaries in distant peripheries, but also

inscribe them onto the physical landscapes of the capital cities that produce them in

the first place. They exemplify the tension between the desire for cosmopolitanism

and the impulse to keep outsiders at a distance.[51]

Furthermore these neighborhoods were also were enclaves, not ghettoes.[52]

Traffic across their boundaries also took place on a regular basis. In Athens,

Socrates' afternoon stroll from his home in the upper city to attend the festival of

Bendis, and the speed with which news of the Athenian fleet's defeat at Syracuse

spread up the Long Walls from the port to the rest of the city, makes it clear that the

Piraeus, while in some ways "a world apart," was also always within easy reach.[53] In

Rome, the daily commute of Tiberius Claudius Felix, Claudia Helpis, their son

Tiberius Claudius Alypius, and the other workers at the Galbensian warehouses

across the Tiber bridges to their jobs at the foot of the Aventine hill remind us that

Trastevere was both a uniquely bounded space and an integrated part of the city at

large.[54] In Chang'an, the frequency with which people from all walks of life came

and went from the Western Market – especially the Persians and Sogdians who

operated businesses there and lived in the wards on its northern side – prove that

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[50] Du Fu, "Autumn Meditations;" Li He, "Drums in the Streets of the Officials;" "Ren the Fox Fairy" in Shen et al., *Selected Tang Dynasty Stories*, 19; Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 228; Xue, "Merchants of Chang'an," 270.
[51] Massey et al., *City Worlds*, 171.
[52] Abrahamson, *Urban Enclaves*, 11-12.
[53] Plato, *Republic* 1.327a, 1.354a; Plutarch, *Nikias* 30.
[54] *CIL* VI 710 = 30817 = *CIS* II 3.3903.

border crossing was a constant reality of life even in this most painstakingly regulated of cities.[55]

Analyzing this process of boundary crossing at both the neighborhood and the citywide level requires a heightened appreciation for concrete, immediate, routine, and seemingly trivial acts: what Lefebvre called "the critique of everyday life."[56] We might compare this type of analysis to writing biography, a form of historiography that focuses closely on where and when significant events in an individual's life take place, as well the broader impact of unremarkable, everyday acts on their behavior and identity.[57] In a city, such acts might include attending a public festival, taking a trip to the market, commuting to work, visiting the baths, meeting friends at a tavern, or striking up a conversation with a stranger. Taken together, it is unremarkable actions such as these that make up the "life" of a city. All of them involve movements across physical space that have the potential to shake people "out of their places" by exposing them to new sights, sounds, smells, tastes, or ideas.

For Lefebvre, one of the chief virtues of the critique of everyday life was its potential to break down oppositional binaries, whether between haves and have nots, natives and newcomers, or mental and material landscapes.[58] In a similar sense, the borderland paradigm undermines distinctions between "insiders" and "outsiders" and blurs lines between "civilized" and "barbarian" by focusing on local interactions at

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[55] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 229; de la Vaissière, *Sogdian Traders*, 150; Feng, "Chang'an and Narratives of Experience," 53.
[56] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 40; Henfi Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*, trans. John Moore, 3 vols. (New York: Verso, 1991-2005).
[57] Soja, *Postmetropolis*, 11.
[58] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 60; Lefebvre, *Production of Space*, 60.

the edges of empires and nation-states. As Chapter One has shown, applying this

mode of analysis to the Rhine-Danube *limes* allows us to see that a variety of

economic, cultural, and demographic entanglements existed between the Romans and

Germans who lived on either side of the rivers. When directed inward toward the

imperial center, this paradigm forces us to question not only the divisions between

social groups that live cheek-by-jowl in cities, but also the larger distinction between

core and periphery that frames our analyses of imperial systems. We typically think

of empires as looking outward and operating at a macro level, mobilizing immense

political, military, and socio-economic resources across different parts of the world

for and from a metropolitan center.[59] Yet most of the people that live within them

operate on the local levels of household, village, or neighborhood.[60] Tracing the

boundaries of neighborhoods like the Piraeus, Trastevere, and Northwest Chang'an

can tell help us understand how social relations of production, exploitation, and

exclusion manifested spatially at the center of empire as well as on the periphery.[61]

Close attention to the rhythms of everyday life in these neighborhoods also makes it

clear that their residents did not simply stay put. Rather, they contributed to the lives

of their cities at large precisely because they transgressed the boundaries that

surrounded them.

Moreover, the boundaries that define neighborhoods are no more static than

those found along the edges of empires. Rather, they move and evolve in response to

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[59] Colás, *Empire*, 166.
[60] Keith, "Spatial Patterns of Everyday Life," 60.
[61] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 68.

changing political, economic, and social circumstances. For example, the Piraeus

only became a part of Athens after Themistocles convinced the Athenians to include

the port within the circuit of the Long Walls in the mid fifth century.[62] The boundary

between the port and the upper city changed over time, hardening during the civil war

of 404-3, diminishing in importance during the resurgence of Athenian naval power

during the fourth century, and gradually becoming more permanent as the port

declined and the Long Walls decayed under later Macedonian and Roman rule.[63]

Trastevere, too, was originally not part of Rome, but an unregulated area of

population spillover located across the Tiber and beyond the sacred line of the

pomerium. Although Augustus' administrative reforms of the early first century CE

made the district part of the city officially, its outer limits remained "soft" until the

mid third century, when Aurelian defined them with the walls that bear his name.[64]

Trastevere's outer borders were thus in a state of flux for centuries before the

construction of defensive fortifications made them static. In this sense, the edges of

the imperial city resembled those of its empire at large.[65]

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[62] Plutarch, *Themistocles* 19; Thucydides 1.93.3; Philochorus, *Fragments of Greek Historians*, 328.40; Diodorus Siculus 11.41.2; Cornelius Nepos, *Themistocles* 6.1.

[63] Xenophon, *Hellenica*, 2.2-3; Xenophon, *Memorabilia* 2.7.2; Pseudo-Aristotle, *Constitution of the Athenians*, 34.2-40; Lysias, *Oration* 12, 13; *IG* II[2] 1668; Garland, *Piraeus*, 53.

[64] Suetonius*, Augustus* 30; Cassius Dio IV.8.7; Scriptores Historiae Augustae, *Aurelian* 21.9. Even under the regularized Augustan system, boundaries between neighborhoods were probably unstable and not always agreed upon by those who inhabited them. See Lott, *Neighborhoods of Augustan Rome*, 26.

[65] It is also noteworthy that, according to the (admittedly problematic) *Historia Augusta*, Aurelian was only able to extend the pomerium to meet his new circuit of walls because he had added territory to the empire: "For no emperor may extend the pomerium except one who has added some portion of foreign territory to the Roman Empire" (*pomoerio autem neminem principum licet addere nisi eum qui agri barbarici aliqua parte Romanam rem publicam locupletaverit*). If true, this custom nicely illustrates how the boundary processes at work in the imperial center are related to those that take place on the periphery. Scriptores Historiae Augustae, *Aurelian*, 21.10

The boundaries that surrounded Northwest Chang'an followed the opposite trajectory. In the first half of the Tang dynasty, the imperial government painstakingly regulated space in imperial capital. Commercial activity was restricted to the two great markets, ward gates were locked at night, the curfew was strictly enforced, and illegal movements were severely punished.[66] Nevertheless, the proliferation of laws against wall-climbing and curfew violatin, as well as the testimony of stories like "The Tale of Li Wa," in which the protagonist Zheng repeatedly wanders across Chang'an at night, indicate that the imperial government was never truly able to keep the capital's residents "in their places." Furthermore, the stark borders that subdivided the city began to dissolve in the late Tang period as government oversight weakened and rules governing the behavior of society were relaxed. The busy markets spilled beyond their confines into the neighboring residential quarters, stalls began to sprout up even along the city's main ceremonial avenues, cafes and bars multiplied, ward gates were left open, and the curfew was no longer enforced.[67] A greater mingling between classes and social groups accompanied the shifting of these spatial boundaries, tending to fuse together the wealthier merchants and peasants and encourage populations to move beyond the strict local isolation of their wards.[68]

These shifting borders remind us that residents of all three cities structured much of their lives around encounters with people who were different from them. In

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[66] Tang, "Ward Walls and Gates," 117-8; Hay, "Introduction," 15; Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 210-11; Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 90; Wang, *City with Many Faces*, 116. However, both the severity of these laws and the testimony of stories such as "The Tale of Li Wa" makes it clear that movement
[67] Tuan, *Topophilia*, 177; Southall, *The City in Time and Space*, 156.
[68] Southall, *The City in Time and Space*, 157; Twitchett, "The Sui and Tang Dynasties," 14.

this sense, too, social relations in the urban center of empire mirrored those on the periphery. As a borderland scholars such as Oscar Martinez have noted, people living in external borderlands such as the US-Mexico border or the Rhine-Danube *limes* spend a good deal of their time interacting with foreigners.[69] As borderlanders frequently move among different cultural milieus in the course of their daily lives, they develop expertise in the ways of others and sensitivity to their chief concerns.[70] For this reason, borderlands tend to be sites of creative thinking and innovation at all levels of society. Their residents' need to come to some level of mutual understanding in order to live together shapes political, economic, and social relations in the region as a whole, and leads to new trends, ideas, and ways of doing things.[71]

In a similar fashion, cosmopolitan cities make it possible for individuals to pass quickly from one moral milieu to another and to live at the same time in several different contiguous but separated worlds.[72] By bringing together disparate elements of society, they establish conditions for the development of new political, demographic, economic, social, and cultural norms.[73] In Jane Jacobs's estimation, this ability to foster interactions between people with "so many different tastes, skills, needs, supplies, and bees in their bonnets" is precisely the reason cities have had such a profound impact on human history.[74] While the pace and intensity of these

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[69] Martinez, *Border People*, 305.
[70] Martinez, *Border People*, 306.
[71] Martinez, *Border People*, 315.
[72] Park, *The City*, 40-1.
[73] Radovic, Darko Radovic, "The World City Hypothesis Revised: Export and Import of Urbanity Is a Dangerous Business," in *World Cities and Urban Form: Fragmented, Polycentric, Sustainable?*, ed. Mike Jenkins, Daniel Kozak, and Pattaranan Takkanon (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 42.
[74] Jacobs, *Death and Life of Great American Cities*, 147.

interactions have changed over time, Jacobs' understanding of their importance to

urban life applies to ancient cities as well as modern ones.[75] The transcultural

contacts that take place in urban environments have always tended to complicate

social relationships and produce new ways of viewing the world.[76]

Nowhere is this truer than in cities that function as microcosms of empire.

Precisely because they concentrate wealth, power, and expertise in such dramatic

ways, imperial cities are especially charged focal points for historical change.[77] The

necessities of everyday life that compel their inhabitants to move across their physical

landscapes also foster social interactions that complicate and undermine the divisions

between different groups.[78] Processes of boundary negotiation transform

metropolitan centers into places where transcultural contacts are often messy,

unpredictable, and difficult to control.[79] On their streets and in their neighborhoods:

> Imperial subjects combine foodstuffs, languages, rhythms, and rituals
> to produce new, syncretic, and generally unruly culinary cultures,
> dialects, musical forms and belief systems. The same goes for
> intellectual and "high" culture. Above all, [they] engage in one
> activity that often accompanies the indulgence in food, drink, music,
> or ritual celebration, and that which imperial authorities find hardest to
> regulate: sex.[80]

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[75] Smith, "Introduction," 7.
[76] Park, *The City*, 41; Nezar AlSayyad, "Hybrid Culture/Hybrid Urbanism: The Pandora's Box of the "Third Space"," In *Hybrid Urbanism*, edited by Nezar AlSayyad (Westport, CT and London: Praeger, 2001), 2.
[77] Sutcliffe, "The Giant City as a Historical Phenomenon," 2.
[78] Iossifova, "Searching for a Common Ground," 4.
[79] Bush, *Imperialism and Postcolonialism*, 135; Iossifova, "Searching for a Common Ground," 4.
[80] Colás, *Empire*, 120.

As this last point suggests, connections can form between people living in cosmopolitan urban environments in unexpectedly productive ways. These connections tend to complicate social landscapes and blur the distinctions between different groups in cities just as they do in external borderlands. Consider the episode already mentioned in Chapter One, in which a mixed crowd of soldiers and locals protested the reassignment of Roman troops from their garrison on the Syrian front to the Rhine *limes* in 69 CE, because "many of them were connected by friendship or relationship."[81] There is also the case of the residents of the cities of Trier and Bagacum, who had a habit in the late first century of boasting publicly about their mixed Roman and Germanic blood as a way to make themselves seem tougher than the other residents of northern Gaul.[82] Such episodes point to a more complex understanding of what it mean to be a Roman, German, outsider, or local along the northern limits of the Roman Empire. The culture of the *limes* was not simply one of opposed binaries, but a spectrum of identities, behaviors, and priorities that resulted from ongoing contacts between different groups on both sides of the borderline.

In a similar fashion, imperial cities expose their residents to a wider world of alternatives and possibilities and act as crucibles for the formation of new tastes, fashions, ideas, and bloodlines. Indeed, panegyrists often pointed to this dynamism as one of the markers of an imperial city's greatness. Pericles, for instance, boasted that, "to an Athenian the fruits of other countries are as familiar a luxury as those of his

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[81] Tacitus, *Histories* 2.80; Ammianus Marcellinus (20.4.4) described a similar incident in fourth-century Gaul, when troops from the Rhine *limes* were threatened with a transfer to the East.
[82] Tacitus, *Germania* 28.

own, because our city's greatness draws the products of the world into our harbor."[83] Pseudo-Xenophon's "Old Oligarch" echoed this sentiment, asserting that the Athenians were accustomed to all the best things in life because they brought the delicacies of Sicily, Italy, Cyprus, Egypt, Lydia, Pontus, and the Peloponnese together in one place and mingled with various peoples in the process of doing so.[84] He went on to note that this high degree of contact with outsiders played a role in shaping the Athenians' unique way of speaking: "Hearing every kind of dialect, they have taken something from each; while the Greeks tend to each have their own dialects, ways of life, and types of dress, the Athenians use a mixture from all the Greeks and the barbarians."[85] Reading this statement, one is reminded of the argots that tend to form in borderland regions where one or more languages meet.[86]

In addition to the linguistic innovations that went hand in hand with international commerce in the Piraeus, sacred processions such as the torch lit Bendideia, which linked the bustling port to the upper city through the public worship of a foreign goddess, exposed to the Athenians to new religious traditions and expanded the pantheon of detities housed within the city's walls. Relationships between citizens and metics, such the friendship between Socrates and the Syracusan

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[83] Thucydides 2.38 (ἐπεσέρχεται δὲ διὰ μέγεθος τῆς πόλεως ἐκ πάσης γῆς τὰ πάντα, καὶ ξυμβαίνει ἡμῖν μηδὲν οἰκειοτέρᾳ τῇ ἀπολαύσει τὰ αὐτοῦ ἀγαθὰ γιγνόμενα καρποῦσθαι ἢ καὶ τὰ τῶν ἄλλων ἀνθρώπων). The harbor he was referring to was, of course, the Piraeus.
[84] Pseudo-Xenophon, *Constitution of the Athenians*, 2.7
[85] Pseudo-Xenophon, *Constitution of the Athenians*, 2.8 (ἔπειτα φωνὴν πᾶσαν ἀκούοντες ἐξελέξαντο τοῦτο μὲν ἐκ τῆς, τοῦτο δὲ ἐκ τῆς: καὶ οἱ μὲν Ἕλληνες ἰδίᾳ μᾶλλον καὶ φωνῇ καὶ διαίτῃ καὶ σχήματι χρῶνται, Ἀθηναῖοι δὲ κεκραμένῃ ἐξ ἁπάντων τῶν Ἑλλήνων καὶ βαρβάρων). His comment recalls the "hubbub of soldiers" and "noisy crowds surrounding ships' captains" that Aristophanes described on the Piraeus docks in the *Acharnians* (544-5).
[86] Baud and van Schendel, "Toward a Comparative World History of Borderlands," 234.

arms dealer Cephalus, the partnership of the philosopher Hermarchus of Mytilene

with his Athenian students, or the romance between Pericles and his Milesian

mistress Aspasia, were common.[87] These partnerships produced the business deals

that stimulated the Athenians' appetite for foreign luxuries and left their marks on

some of the city's most enduring works of architecture, such as the Parthenon and

Erechtheion, which were built with the help of metic craftsmen.[88] The ideas of metic

philosophers like Aristotle and Diogenes helped give birth to schools of thought that

we think of as characteristically "Athenian" today.[89] Intimate relationships, such as

the one between Pericles and Aspasia, could produce children of mixed parentage

who forced the Athenians to decide who got to be a citizen, and who did not.[90]

Far more than Athens, Rome was a multicultural mosaic from its earliest days.

By the first centuries of the Common Era, the city that "receives men from every land

just as the sea receives the rivers," had a cosmopolitan culture influenced by cultural

traditions from three continents.[91] As noted in Chapter Two, the Greek rhetorician

Athenaeus of Naucratis was not off the mark when he remarked that, by the late

second century, "every city in the world had planted a colony" in the metropolitan

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[87] Diogenes Laertius 10.16-22; M. Leiwo and P. Remes, "Partnership of Citizens and Metics: The Will of Epicurus," *The Classical Quarterly* 49, no. 1 (1999): 161-6; Plato, *Republic* 1.327b; Plutarch, *Pericles* 24.2-7.

[88] Plutarch, *Pericles* 12; Patterson, "Other Sorts," 159.

[89] Diogenes Laertius 6.20-30.

[90] Plutarch, *Pericles* 24.2-7; W. Robert Connor, "The Problem of Athenian Civic Identity," in *Athenian Identity and Civic Ideology*, ed. Alan L. Boegehold and Adele C. Scafuro (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 36; Patterson, "Other Sorts," 165-7.

[91] Aelius Aristides, *To Rome*, 61.

center of the Roman Empire.[92] Indeed, Athenaeus' most famous work, the

Deipnosophistae, showcased the fusion of Latin and Greek traditions in the

intellectual culture of his day by presenting its reader with a dinner party whose

guests hailed from across the Roman world and whose courses (which, in a scene

reminiscent of Trimalchio's dinner in the *Satyricon*, included an exotic bird that the

guests first admire and then promptly eat) exemplified the type of conspicuous

consumption one expects from a Roman banquet.[93]

    A host of inscriptions attest to the fact that transcultural entanglements

fundamentally shaped the lives of Rome's residents.[94] The six associated with

Marcus Antonius Gaionas, for instance, highlight the activities of a successful man of

Syrian descent who was a member of the night watch, served as a priest of the

imperial cult, and acted as a "judge of banquets" in the immigrant neighborhood of

Trastevere.[95] Such activities have enabled Gaionas to interact with individuals of

diverse backrounds on a regular basis, and the discovery of one of his inscriptions

down the river in Portus suggests that he may have had business contacts outside the

city as well.[96] In addition to immigrants and their descendents, a host of foreign gods

could also be found at Rome. In addition to the profound influence of Greek religion,

a dizzying array of eastern religions such as the cults of Isis and Serapis, Cybele,

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[92] Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, 1.36 (ὅρος οἰκουμένης δῆμον τὴν Ῥώμην φησί, λέγει δὲ καὶ ὅτι οὐκ ἄν τις σκοποῦ πόρρω τοξεύων λέγοι τὴν Ῥώμην πόλιν ἐπιτομὴν τῆς οἰκουμένης· ἐν ᾗ συνιδεῖν ἔστιν οὕτως πάσας τὰς πόλεις ἱδρυμένας, καὶ κατ᾽ ἰδίαν δὲ τὰς πολλάς).

[93] Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, 9.398-9; Edwards and Woolf, "Cosmopolis: Rome as World City," 12; Petronius, *Satyricon*, 31-41, 47; Seneca, *Ad Helviam* 10.3.

[94] Noy, *Foreigners at Rome*, 157-97; Morley, "Migration and the Metropolis," 147-57.

[95] *CIL* VI 36793; *CIL* VI 420 = 30764 = *IG* XIV 985 = *IGUR* I 70 = *ILS* 398; *CIL* VI 36804 = *IGRR* I 1388; *CIL* XIV 24 = *ILS* 4294; *CIL* VI 32316; *CIL* VI 3822.

[96] *CIL* XIV 24 = *ILS* 4294.

Mithras, and the Syrian solar deities worshipped in Trastevere left their mark on the imperial city's spiritual and material landscapes.[97] Ultimately, of course, it was another eastern religion – Christianity – that spread beyond its initial foothold in Rome's Jewish community to drastically the appearance and symbolic meaning of Rome itself in the fourth and fifth centuries.

Non-Han peoples, particularly those of central Asian heritage, contributed so extensively to Tang culture that it is difficult to imagine what the social landscape of Chang'an would have looked like without their influence. Residents of the Tang capital snacked on Turkish sesame cakes and roast mutton, drank "Three Fruits Brew" distilled from the fruit of Indian myrobalan trees, watching "western twirling girls" perform dervish-like dances, and sported "barbarian chic" fashions such as caftans, deerskin boots, and veil-less riding hats.[98] After the ward system fell into abeyance in the late Tang period and the city's sharp boundaries began to blur, new economic panorama opened up and Chang'an harbored more mixed social identities and diversified life experiences than ever before.[99]

In the realm of ideas, Turkish songs left their influence on Tang styles of poetry and Chinese scholars studied foreign languages such as Sanskrit, Korean, Tocharian, and Tibetan alongside the Confucian classics.[100] Buddhism became even more entangled with Chinese culture than it had been during the Han dyansty, with

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[97] Edwards and Woolf, "Cosmopolis: Rome as World City," 8-9; Dyson, *Rome*, 281-91.
[98] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 181, 188; Cotterell, *Imperial Capitals*, 144; Schaefer, *Golden Peaches*, 29; de la Vaissière, "Des Chinois et des *Hu*," 940; *Sogdian Traders*, 139; Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 55-6; Rose, *The Sogdians*, 418-9.
[99] Tang, "Ward Walls and Gates of Tang Chang'an," 133-4.
[100] Schaefer, *Golden Peaches*, 28.

Boddhisatvas such as Guanyin, the Goddess of Mercy, and Kuvera, Protector of the North, finding their way into popular religious practice. In the Buddhist temples of the capital, teachers such as the Chinese master Yuan-chien, the Indian masters Nanda and Ratnacandra, and the Japanese pilgrim Ennin interpreted sacred sutras for lay believers and translated them from Sanskrit into Chinese, Japanese, and other East Asian languages.[101] Meanwhile, western religions such as Nestorian Christianity expressed their "luminous doctrine" using terminology that echoed Buddhist and Daoist teachings, such as *Dao* ("the Way") and *Tian* ("Heaven").[102] These exchanges opened up new channels of communication between traditions whose origins, dogmas, and practices differed significantly, and helped foster a level of cosmopolitan creativity in Chang'an that was unprecedented in Chinese history.[103]

These examples show how the connections that take place in urban borderlands can be catalysts for productive change. However, transcultural entanglements are often also troubling for the people who experience them. Precisely because of their diversity, great cities like Athens, Rome, and Chang'an become saturated with possibilities for the destabilization of the status quo.[104] While the crossing of spatial and social boundaries that take place within them give rise to new customs, ideas, and identities, it also undermines ideas of purity, order, hierarchy, and

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[101] Schaefer, *Golden Peaches*, 32; Ennin, *Diary*, 289, 309, 325.
[102] Moule, *Christianity in China*, 34-52.
[103] Leslie, "Persian Temples," 289; Drake, "Nestorian Monasteries," 304; Moffett, *History of Christianity in Asia*, 398; Moule, *Christians in China*, 67; Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 241-2; Leslie, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 290.
[104] Jacobs, *Edge of Empire*, 4.

control that inform their imperial ideologies.[105] Once subject peoples are no longer

"out there" and have begun "colonizing" the imperial center, it becomes possible (or

perhaps inevitable) to ask what the essential nature of that center actually *is*.[106]

Questions of national identity emerge as the boundaries between neighbors begin to

blur and traditions start to fuse, creating new patterns that some find upsetting or

abhorrent.[107] For this reason, while the imperial metropolis tends to understand itself

as determining the periphery, it often blinds itself to the ways in which the periphery

determines the metropolis.[108] When the outsiders' influence on the center becomes

too pronounced to overlook, it can cause a crisis of national identity that fans the

flames of xenophobic discrimination and violence.

With this in mind, we should not be surprised that the concept of autochthony

became increasingly popular at Athens as the city's population grew in tandem with

its imperial ambitions. According to this imperial myth, the Athenians had occupied

the site of Athens from time immemorial and were superior to other Greeks because

they had never mingled their bloodlines with those of foreigners. Plato outlined it

most fully in his dialogue *Menexenus*:[109]

> Our city is so firmly rooted and sound in its noble and liberal
> character, and endowed also with such a hatred of the barbarian,
> because we are pure-blooded Greeks, unadulterated by barbarian
> stock. The descendents of Pelops, Cadmus, Aeguptus, Danaus, and the

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[105] Ian Chambers, *Migrancy, Culture, Identity* (London and New York: 1994), 23, 95; Bhabha, "Introduction: Narrating the Nation," 1-7.

[106] Bush, *Imperialism and Postcolonialism*, 148; Chambers, *Migrancy, Culture, Identity*, 24.

[107] Martinez, *Border People*, 25.

[108] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 6.

[109] Thucydides 1.2.5, 2.36.1; Connor, "The Problem of Athenian Civic Identity," 35-7.

many other so-called Greeks who are in fact barbarians, are not found among us; our people are pure Greeks and not a barbarian blend. Hence the whole-hearted hatred of alien races which has intensified in the city.[110]

Any claim of "purity" such as this is obviously not a description of social reality. Rather, the Athenian myth of autochthony is an expression of the anxiety of a people faced with the challenge of diversity that goes hand in hand with empire.[111] Autochthony gave the Athenians a way to differentiate themselves from both their allies and their enemies by shoring up their boundaries of civic community. In contrast to all other Greeks, they alone possessed pure Hellenic lineage, unmixed with barbarian stock.[112] This separateness made them a people apart, fit to rule over Hellenes and barbarians alike.[113]

The sort of reactionary xenophobia that this myth represents also informed the passage of a law in 450 restricting Athenian citizenship to men born of two Athenian parents.[114] Proposed by Pericles as Athens was consolidating its hold over its "allies" in the Delian League, it most obviously targeted metics: people whose status as foreigners already made them unable to own or inherit land, barred from voting or holding any public office, vulnerable to being sold into slavery if convicted of any

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[110] Plato, *Menexenus*, 245c-d (οὕτω δή τοι τό γε τῆς πόλεως γενναῖον καὶ ἐλεύθερον βέβαιόν τε καὶ ὑγιές ἐστιν καὶ φύσει μισοβάρβαρον, διὰ τὸ εἰλικρινῶς εἶναιἝλληνας καὶ ἀμιγεῖς βαρβάρων. οὐ γὰρ Πέλοπες οὐδὲ Κάδμοι οὐδὲ Αἴγυπτοί τε καὶ Δαναοὶ οὐδὲ ἄλλοι πολλοὶ φύσει μὲν βάρβαροι ὄντες, νόμῳ δὲ Ἕλληνες, συνοικοῦσιν ἡμῖν, ἀλλ᾽ αὐτοὶ Ἕλληνες, οὐ μειξοβάρβαροι οἰκοῦμεν, ὅθεν καθαρὸν τὸ μῖσος ἐντέτηκε τῇ πόλει τῆς ἀλλοτρίας φύσεως).
[111] Connor, "The Problem of Athenian Civic Identity," 38.
[112] Susan Lape, *Race and Citizen Identity in the Classical Athenian Democracy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 19.
[113] One is reminded of Pericles' island imagery, discussed above.
[114] Plutarch, *Pericles* 37.3; Aristotle, *Constitution of the Athenians*, 26.34. For a synopsis of the ongoing debate about the reasoning behind the law's passage, see Bogehold, "Perikles' Citizenship Law of 451/40 B.C.," 57-60.

serious crime.[115] Even though these restrictions were already in place to safeguard

Athenians' privileged status over foreigners living in their city, the need to quarantine

off foreign influences and police the boundaries of citizen identity became more acute

in the face of the multiculturalism that went hand in hand with empire.[116] Futher laws

passed in the fourth century further emphasized the role of marriage as an institution

of kingship, allowing that foreigners caught in illegal unions to be sold enslaved and

their citizen spouses burdened with heavy fines.[117] Children of mixed marriages, for

their part, were barred from citizenship and viewed as incapable of genuine patriotism

and democratic loyalty.[118] Under the influence of these laws, accusing someone of

foreign or servile origins became a popular tactic for damaging their reputation and

strengthening a case against them in court.[119] Disconnecting foreigners from kinship

networks and underscoring their outsider status thus strengthened a sense of national

and racial solidarity among Athenian citizens at a time when their city was becoming

increasingly diverse.[120] Faced with transcultural connections that had the potential to

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[115] Aristotle, *Politics*, 1278a35-8, 1326a18; Patterson, "Other Sorts," 163-4; Whitehead, *Ideology of the Athenian Metic*, 71.

[116] Patterson, "Other Sorts," 163.

[117] Demosthenes, 59.16.

[118] Lape, *Race and Citizen Identity*, 25. Ironically, after the death of his sons Xanthippus and Paralus in the plague of 430 Pericles himself had to petition the *demos* to make an exception to the citizenship law that he himself had first proposed, to make his half-Athenian son with Aspasia, Pericles the Younger, his legal heir. See Plutarch, *Pericles* 37.

[119] In Aristophanes' *Frogs*, for example, the democratic leader Cleophon is derided for his Thracian accent and comes under suspicion of having barbarian origins (678-82, 1532-4). See also Aeschines 2.76; Demosthenes, 21.149; 57.66-70; Isaeus 3.79-80, 6.64-5; Adele C. Scafuro, "Witnessing and False Witnessing: Proving Citizenship and Kin Identity in Fourth-Century Athens." In *Athenian Identity and Civic Ideology*, ed. Alan L. Boegehold and Adele C. Scafuro (Baltimroe and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 156; Cohen, *The Athenian Nation*, 76;

[120] Lape, *Race and Citizen Identity*, 26, 50. As Lape put it, "hybridity and/or fusion had no place in the ideology of Athenian citizenship."

redefine their civic identity, the Athenians responded by reinforcing existing boundaries and erecting new ones.[121]

Many ancient acknowledgements of Rome's cosmopolitanism reveal a similar anxiety about the influx of outsiders into the city, as migration overturned boundaries and undermined stable notions of separation and distance.[122] Although the Romans were much more liberal about extending citizenship than the Athenians, they were obsessed with the idea that the presence of foreigners in the city (especially those from the decadent East) would bring about moral degradation and an erosion of traditional Roman values.[123] Tacitus, Lucian, Appian, Valerius Maximus, and other elite writers complained about the servile blood and alien practices that slaves and freedmen brought into the city, fearing that they undermined the strong Roman spirit.[124] Sallust lamented that all criminals driven from their homes eventually made their way to Rome, causing moral decay.[125] Perhaps the most notorious expression of Roman xenophobia is Umbricius' comment in Juvenal's *Third Satire* that Rome had become a city of easterners because "for a long time now, the Syrian Orontes has poured into the Tiber."[126] One wonders if Juvenal was thinking of the Syrian

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[121] Philip Brook Manville, "Toward a New Paradigm of Athenian Citizenship," in *Athenian Identity and Civic Ideology*, ed. Alan L. Boegehold and Adele C. Scafuro (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 27. Manville notes that this reaction can perhaps best be understood as a sign that Athens "was not ready to accept the reality of empire."

[122] Edwards and Woolf, "Cosmopolis," 9; Morley, "Migration and the Metropolis," 155.

[123] Isaac, *Invention of Racism*, 306, 378.

[124] Tacitus, *Annals* 14.44; Lucan, *Pharsalia* 7.400-6, 7.535-43; Aulus Gellius 12.1.17; Lucian, *De Mercede* 10, 17, 27; Appian, *Bellum Civilum*, 2.120; Valerius Maximus 6.2.3; Noy, *Foreigners at Rome*, 34-5. Noy correctly notes that their xenophobia was often linked with class antagonism.

[125] Sallust, *The Catilinarian Conspiracy*, 37.

[126] Juvenal, 3.58-60.

immigrants that lived across the river in Trastevere and made their livings working on the docks when wrote these words.

At times, Roman xenophobia soured into reactionary and violent policies intended to eradicate social contamination by removing undesirable populations of foreigners from the physical space of the city. The Roman government's habit of driving foreigners out of the capital to stem the tides of impiety and immorality was already established in 139 BCE, when the historian Valerius Maximus recorded an expulsion of Jews and "Chaldaeans" on the grounds that they were "trying to contaminate the Roman way of life with the rituals of Jupiter Sabazius."[127] Later, several authors described an expulsion of four thousand Jews along with "those who were in the grip of their superstition," that took place under Tiberius in 19 CE.[128] These attempts to shore up social boundaries by pushing undesirables outside the capital's spatial limits took place periodically throughout the imperial period. In addition, the Roman government notoriously responded to the religions "contamination" of Christianity by identifying and killing Christians in Rome and other cities. The first organized persecution of Christians took place in the capital, on the orders of Nero in 64 CE, followed by others over the course of the next two and a

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[127] Valerius Maximus, *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia* 1.3.3; Williams, *Jews among the Greeks and Romans*, 98; Erich S. Gruen, *Diaspora: Jews Amidst Greeks and Romans* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 16; Noy, *Foreigners at Rome*, 39-40.

[128] Josephus, *Antiquities* 18.65-80, 81-84; Tacitus, *Annals* 2.85; Seneca, *Epistulae Morales* 108.22. The quote above is from Suetonius, *Tiberius* 36 (*Iudaeorum iuuentutem per speciem sacramenti in prouincias grauioris caeli distribuit, reliquos gentis eiusdem uel similia sectantes urbe summouit, sub poena perpetuae seruitutis nisi obtemperassent*). Cassius Dio (47.18) echoed this comment, reporting that the Jews were expelled because they had persuaded many indigenous Romans to adopt their customs, which Tiberius didn't like.

half centuries.[129] In Rome, these included the death of a number of well-born

Christians under Domitian in 93, the martyrdom of Fabian, bishop of Rome, in 250

under Decius, and the death of many Christians both in the capital and in the Great

Persecution that Diocletian initiated in 303.[130] By executing Christians as common

criminals, often in public places such as amphitheaters and arenas, the Roman

government attempted to underscore the boundary between acceptable and

unacceptable social behavior in the most dramatic way possible.

Neither was cosmopolitanism incompatible with distrust or hatred of outsiders

in Tang Chang'an.[131] While Chinese writers sometimes portrayed *hu* peoples

positively as fierce fighters, canny businessmen, or exotic beauties, negative

stereotypes also characterized them as untrustworthy, bloodthirsty, greedy, lazy, and

unfilial.[132] Confucian traditionalists had a tendency to identify all foreigners with

merchants and idlers in the marketplaces, expressing an antipathy toward commerce

inspired some of the legal restrictions on foreigners' activities in Chang'an and

throughout the Tang Empire.[133] The Chinese government strictly controlled the

goods that *hu* merchants were permitted to import or export, and mandated that the

goods of foreigners who died in China be confiscated by the state. In addition, an

imperial decree of 638 required foreigners who married Chinese wives or took

Chinese concubines to remain within the empire; those who wanted to leave had to

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[129] Suetonius, *Nero* 26; Tacitus, *Annals* 15.44.
[130] Eusebius, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 6.39, 7.2, 9.10; Cyprian, *Epistle*, 3.2.
[131] Schaefer, *Golden Peaches*, 23; Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 50.
[132] Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 24-42. For example, critical Chinese writers described Tibetans as dogs and Turks as wolves, and portrayed Persians and Sogdians as solely motivated by the desire for profit.
[133] Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 45.

leave their families behind.[134] These official policies limited foreigners' movements within Tang society and prevented the social boundaries between Han and non-Han peoples from becoming too permeable.[135] Anxiety about the role of foreign peoples in Tang society also grew more acute after the An Lushan Rebellion, which had benefitted from the financial support of Sogdian merchants who operated trade networks in northern China.[136] An Lushan's attempt to play upon a feeling of solidarity among *hu* minorities living in Chinese cities – Chang'an prominent among them – fueled the shift from xenophilia to xenophobia that took place in the late eighth and ninth centuries. In such an environment, it is not surprising that some *hu* peoples (Sogdians chief among them) begin to hide their origins to avoid being linked with the revolt in the eyes of their Han neighbors.[137]

Foreign religions also came under attack in the late Tang period. Although Buddhism was widely popular in Chang'an and much of the city's population participated in Buddhist festivals, its foreign character made it vulnerable as social tensions in the capital mounted in the ninth century.[138] Daoist priests had been attacking Buddhism's foreign character for centuries, asserting the religion had no place in China because the Buddha himself had been a barbarian.[139] Yet it was not until 845 that they successfully incited Emperor Wuzong to suppress the religion,

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[134] Schaefer, *Golden Peaches*, 23-5; Benn, *Daily Life*, 42.

[135] Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 103. Abramson also nokes and insults about noses, beards, eyes, skin color, and other physiognomic features also "hid behind them the accusation, or merely the observation, that there were ethnic others lurking in the bloodlines."

[136] Rose, "The Sogdians: Prime Movers between Boundaries," 419.

[137] de la Vaissière, *Sogdian Traders*, 218-221. De la Vaissière notes that the Sogdians begin to disappear from Chinese records in the aftermath of the rebellion.

[138] Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 92-3, 173-6.

[139] Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 59-60, 65-6; Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 172-178.

force Buddhist clergy to return to lay life, and confiscate the holdings of Buddhist temples.[140]   The Japanese pilgrim Ennin described the experience of being deported along with Chang'an's other foreign clerics, and noted that those who refused to comply were condemned to death on the spot.[141]   This was the fate that the capital's Manichaeans had experienced two years earlier, in 843, when the imperial government suppressed their religion in a violent persecution that began in the capital and later spread to the empire at large.[142]   This persecution, which involved the massacres of Manichaeans on Chang'an's streets and in its marketplaces, is another example of an attempt to expunge foreign social elements that some residents of the imperial city saw as corrupting or threatening.[143]   Cosmopolitanism and tolerance had their limits in the Tang capital just as they did at Athens and Rome. In times of stress, reactions against a relatively cooperative *modus vivendi* could lead to discrimination, violence, and death.

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[140] Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 173-5; Twitchett, *Sui and Tang China*, 666-7. The suppression of Buddhism also had an economic dimension, as the empire was suffering from bad inflation and the Buddhist temples were thriving.

[141] Ennin, *Diary* 351-363. Zoroastrianism and Nestorian Christianity were also suppressed at this time.

[142] Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 240; Ennin, *Diary*, 327. Ennin describes the deaths of some Manichaean clergy he witnessed in gruesome detail.

[143] Lewis, *Cosmopolitan Empire*, 170; Abramson, *Ethnic Identity in Tang China*, 105; Xiong, *Sui-Tang Chang'an*, 240; It was also linked to resentments against Chang'an's exclusively Manichaean Uighurs, who had become very powerful after helping the Tang government crush the An Lushan Rebellion in 763 and were widely disparaged as greedy, brutish, and unsophisticated barbarians.

The Secret of Empire

An empire's borders run through its capital city. This is the real secret of empire, the true *arcanum imperii*.[144] Athens, Rome, and Chang'an became urban borderlands at the center of the empires they controlled because, quite simply, imperialism is never a one-way street. Once begun, migration cannot be stopped. Every extension of an empire's territory creates a new concentration of outsiders at its center because no imperial regime is powerful enough to keep its heartland cordoned off from the influence of the wider world that it seeks to dominate.[145] This feedback loop of outward expansion and inward migration involves more than the simple importation of exotic fads or foreign luxuries into the imperial core. Rather, the social dynamics of the metropole come to resemble those of its peripheries because in both places conquerer and conquered must find ways to coexist and "transform conflict into the civic."[146]

The social tensions between accommodation and rejection that lie at the heart of every imperial project also have physical analogues in the center of empire just as they do on the periphery. Wherever they are located, borderlands are spatial manifestations of inclusion and exclusion.[147] Physical borders and social boundaries are closely entangled, such as the ones that divided the immigrant neighborhoods of the Piraeus, Trastevere, and Northwest Chang'an from their cities at large and helped

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[144] For the original use of this phrase, see Tacitus, *Histories* 1.4.

[145] Park, *Human Communities*, 136.

[146] Jacobs, *Edge of Empire*, 20; Saskia Sassen, "When the Center No Longer Holds: Cities as Frontier Zones," *Cities* 34 (2012): 69-70.

[147] Iossifova, "Searching for Common Ground," 4; AlSayyad, "Hybrid Culture/Hybrid Urbanism," 14-6.

to define their unique local identities. Yet even the most imposing borders are permeable. The diverse residents of the imperial city do not placidly stay "in their places," but come into contact with their neighbors – however barbarous they may be – as they patiently and persistently navigate the boundaries that surround them in the course of their daily lives. By doing so, they undermine old identities even as they help give birth to new ones.

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