

Of Archetypes and Special Cases: Colonization in Greek and Roman Antiquity

Martin Mauersberg

ABSTRACTS

Für „Comparing Colonialism“ bieten sich auch vormoderne Formen von Kolonisation an, wobei die griechische und römische Kolonisation aufgrund der Annahme eines besonderen Verhältnisses zur neuzeitlichen europäischen Kolonisation heraussticht: Die beiden antiken Kolonisationen wurden nicht nur als Beispiele von Kolonisation gesehen, sondern als inhärent „europäisch“ und somit als Vorläufer der modernen europäischen Kolonialreiche. Die Folge war die Verwendung eines anachronistischen Deutungsmusters bei der Rekonstruktion der beiden antiken Phänomene. Folglich hinterfragt der Aufsatz diese überkommene moderne Wahrnehmung und erläutert die Eigenheiten der griechischen und römischen Kolonisation: Sie bedeuteten primär die Gründung von Städten, und zwar nicht notwendigerweise in der Nachbarschaft von „Anderen“ oder mit dem Ziel der politischen Domination.

Pre-modern forms of colonization readily come to mind when “comparing colonialism”. Among them, the colonization undertaken by the Greeks and the Romans stands out, because of a longstanding assumption about their special relationship to modern European colonization. Greek colonization and Roman colonization were not merely seen as distinct exemplars of colonization, but also as inherently “European” phenomena and therefore as forerunners of Europe’s more recent exploits overseas – a perception which imposes an anachronistic interpretative framework. Consequently, the paper calls into question these well-established modern perceptions and examines the peculiarities of Greek and Roman colonization, which consisted, above all, in the establishment of cities, which were, however, not necessarily adjacent to “Others” or aimed at political domination.

1. Introduction

Handbooks on colonization occasionally include pre-modern forms of colonization when they try to establish a typology of this phenomenon. While, in the era of “post-colonialism”, non-European cases are also considered,¹ for a long time a Eurocentric perspective was responsible for the inclusion of the presumed ancestors of colonialism: the Greeks and the Romans.² At first glance, this paper is no exception: It describes the characteristics of Greek and Roman colonization as a part of an endeavour of “Comparing Colonialism”.

First, some preliminary definitions: “Greek colonization” and “Roman colonization” are modern framings. The first refers primarily to the settlement of the Mediterranean coasts by groups originating in the Aegean from the second half of the eighth century to the sixth century BC. “Roman Colonization” is the label for the foundation of *coloniae* in conquered regions starting from roughly the fifth century BC. Both cases primarily involved the establishment of cities. “Colonization” will primarily be understood in terms of the establishment of a double power relation: metropolises – colonies (here: cities) – local populations. This point of view allows us to condense the presentation of the two cases according to the plan of, first, highlighting their peculiarities in comparison with modern European colonization, and, second, juxtaposing traditional modern accounts with recent re-evaluations of these accounts.

Hence, the relations between metropolises and colonies will be defined as basic parameters, including the question of the reason for their being established. The relations between colonizers and colonized will also be defined, including the question how land was obtained and the issue of “othering”, i.e. if a dichotomisation of in- and outgroup was palpable. First, however, special emphasis will be placed on ancient accounts. Modern scholarship has tended to integrate extant ancient accounts into a modern interpretative framework, i.e. assumptions concerning the overall nature of the phenomenon of colonization, thereby suppressing some of the peculiarities of the two cases. The subsequent presentation of Greek and Roman colonization will combine those aspects that we know about these two cases with an outline of recent developments in contemporary scholarship, since there is a heightened awareness today concerning the retrojection of modern assumptions onto premodern cases. Consequently, we are witnessing the ongoing deconstruction of traditional views on Greek and Roman colonization, one of whose consequences is a debate about whether it is justified to use colonial terminology in relation to the Greeks.³

1 See C. Gosden, *Archaeology and Colonialism: Cultural Contact from 5000 BC to the Present*, Cambridge 2004; J. Osterhammel, *Kolonialismus. Geschichte – Formen – Folgen*, München 2009, pp. 8–15.

2 See M. Mauersberg, *Die „griechische Kolonisation“. Ihr Bild in der Antike und der modernen altertumswissenschaftlichen Forschung*, Bielefeld 2019; for modern perceptions of Roman colonization, e.g. see the essays in C. Edwards (ed.), *Roman Presences*, Cambridge 1999.

3 See H. Hurst/S. Owen (eds.), *Ancient Colonizations. Analogy, Similarity and Difference*, London 2005; G. R.

2. Ancient Perceptions

Our access to the way in which the Greeks and Romans themselves perceived their colonizations is hindered by the small number of surviving written sources. The biggest problem is caused by the absence of contemporary accounts: In the case of Greek colonization, the earliest extant works of ancient historiography explicitly addressing this phenomenon date to the fifth century BC, that is, up to 300 years after the events described. The situation is only marginally better for Roman colonization: The earliest, largely preserved historiographical works date to the second century BC. Thus, in the case of the earlier Roman *coloniae*, as well, our sources consist of retrospective descriptions. Historical information was often transmitted orally, which means that we enter the realm of oral tradition with all of its attendant problems, first and foremost the adaptability of content to contemporary perceptions and interests. Furthermore, ancient historiography is typically an interpretation of the past in line with contemporary axiomatics, as well as an emplotment that follows an overarching narrative aim.⁴ In both cases, archaeological and epigraphic evidence can alleviate this situation to a certain extent.

The modern framing of colonization is alien to the Greeks. Instead they spoke about the foundation (*ktisis*) of *apoikiai*, which roughly translates as “settlement away from home”.⁵ Generally speaking, nearly every Greek city (*polis*) was considered an *apoikia*, meaning that at some point in the distant past it had been founded by a migrant. This basic assumption also meant that *apoikiai* were not restricted to foreign regions, but were also founded in Greece itself. Almost as a matter of course, an *apoikia* claimed a particular *mētropolis* – literally “mother city” – as its origin (only the Athenians made an exception of themselves by claiming that they were sprung from the soil). One of the earliest extant examples of this phenomenon is from a fragment of a poem by Anacreon (c.580–c.485 BC), in which the city of Abdera is described as the “beautiful *apoikia* of the Teians”.⁶ As a consequence, relations of kinship and descent between *poleis* were addressed when talking about *apoikiai*.

Foundations were narrated as intentional acts of establishment, either by individuals or by *mētropoleis*. This also determined the perception of the causes of these foundations: If foundation narratives focused on individuals, then they prominently featured motives like political discontent or flight because of crimes. By contrast, if a community decided to send away some of its members, this was attributed to political strife or natural disasters. In either case, the Delphic oracle too could command a colony to be founded.⁷

Tsetskhadze / J. Hargrave, Colonisation from Antiquity to Modern Times: Comparisons and Contrasts, in: AWE 10 (2011), pp. 161–82.

4 See, e.g., J. Marincola, Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography, Cambridge 1997.

5 See M. Casevitz, Le vocabulaire de la colonisation en grec ancien. Étude lexicologique, Paris 1985, esp. pp. 120–121.

6 Anacreon fr. 505a (PMG) *apud* Strabo 14. 1. 30.

7 See C. Dougherty, The Poetics of Colonization: From City to Text in Archaic Greece, New York/Oxford 1993.

This genealogical perspective on the history of *poleis* was charged with the issue of power politics in Classical Greece (fifth and fourth centuries BC). After the Persian Wars, Athens and Sparta emerged as the two leading powers in Greece. Their struggle for hegemony (*hēgemonia* – from *hēgeomai*, to lead – was used alongside the term *archē* to denote political domination) culminated in the Peloponnesian War, which was eventually won by the Spartans. Thucydides, one of our main sources for Greek colonization, wrote against this background. A decisive factor in obtaining power was winning the allegiance of other cities, for which reference to common descent was considered the most solid foundation.⁸ Hence, *apoikia* were of special interest. Accordingly, Thucydides' excursus on the history of the Greek cities of Sicily deduced their loyalty from their pedigree.⁹ He was forced to concede, however, that the customary bonds between a *mētropolis* and its *apoikia* were in some cases no longer upheld because of short-term political interests.¹⁰ While cities were continually founded by Alexander the Great and his successors in the Hellenistic period (end of the fourth century to the first century BC), the term *apoikia* seems to have gone out of fashion. This might have been the result of the loss of specific *mētropoleis* as points of reference: The settlers were often of different origins and they owed allegiance to the king who founded the city and to his dynasty.¹¹

Modern colonial terminology derives from the Latin term *colonia*, which builds on the verb *colere*, designating the activity of cultivation. Accordingly, the *colonus*/settler was considered a farmer, as well as a soldier: *Coloniae* were perceived as having a military function, since they were outposts in conquered territories.¹² There was, however, no general term comparable to “colonization” for the establishment of *coloniae* considered as a whole.

The genealogical paradigm also applied to Roman perception of the past, only with the multitude of Greek *mētropoleis* replaced by Rome as the central focal point. Rome itself was also considered a *colonia*, founded by the mythical twins Romulus and Remus from Alba Longa (in 753 BC, as tradition has it – although there was no agreement about this date even in Antiquity). Alba Longa itself was assumed to have been founded by Ascanius, son of the Trojan fugitive Aeneas, which provided Rome with its Trojan pedigree. The foundation of Rome was depicted as an archetypical foundation: Romulus was supposed to have inaugurated the future practice of the Roman foundation of *coloniae* (along with other central elements of the Roman socio-political order): There was a formal *deductio*, the leading away of the settlers from Rome, and specific rites to be carried out when settling a conquered territory.

The extant historiographical works were written with knowledge of the Roman conquest of the Italian Peninsula and its rise as the dominant power in the Mediterranean. Dur-

8 See the so-called “Melian dialogue”: Thucydides 5. 84–116.

9 Thucydides 6. 3–5.

10 Ibid. 7. 57. 6–7.

11 See Mauersberg, Die „griechische Kolonisation“, pp. 113–173.

12 See J. R. Patterson, Colonization and Historiography: The Roman Republic, in: G. Bradley / J.-P. Wilson (eds.), Greek & Roman Colonization: Origins, Ideologies and Interactions, Swansea 2006, pp. 189–218, at 191–199.

ing this process, the *coloniae* were perceived as one of several factors contributing to the Roman success story. Since *coloniae* were considered to have been an element of Roman politics since its inauguration by Romulus, we must be aware that contemporary knowledge about the establishment of *coloniae*, as found in the extant sources, was retrojected onto earlier eras of Roman history.¹³ At the same time, we must account for the presence of a certain hindsight in these later historiographical narratives, which served, at least implicitly, to explain Rome's ascent as the dominant power in the Mediterranean¹⁴ – a process, which was seen as inevitable due to the superiority of the Roman political system, “typical” Roman virtues (like *virtus* – i.e. valor, that is virility – and piety) and the blessing of the gods.¹⁵

Increasing awareness of the constructedness of self-perception and its dialectical relation to the perception of others has shaken the humanities and social sciences over the course of the last decades: Identity has become a complex and contingent object. This is also true for classics. Especially in relation to the early historical phases, feelings of belonging must be envisaged as being community-centred, while a supraordinate common identity needed to evolve over time. Kinship, descent and common cultural markers helped to shape discourses of inclusion and exclusion,¹⁶ although an individual's social status or gender (e.g. intermarriage, although women were excluded from the citizen body) also potentially played a role in inter-community movement.

We know little about the self-perception of archaic Greeks or their views of outgroups. There is even a debate about whether we can properly speak of “Greeks”, that is, whether there was already an overarching Greek consciousness.¹⁷ The rare contemporary sources at our disposal, such as the Homeric epics, suggest that while markers like language or cultural differences helped to differentiate “we” from “they”, there does not seem to have been any stereotypical debasement of outgroups: They were rather perceived heterogeneously.¹⁸ It is noteworthy that relations of kinship and descent were also applied to non-Greeks, since they could be described as being descended from Greek heroes and foreign heroes could be seen as ancestors of Greeks.¹⁹ We know even less about the self-perceptions of local populations, who became neighbours of the Greeks, since only the latter's perceptions have been preserved in the extant sources.

13 See E. Bispham, *Coloniae deducere*: How Roman was Roman Colonization during the Middle Republic?, in: G. Bradley/J.-P. Wilson (eds.), *Greek & Roman Colonization. Origins, Ideologies & Interactions*, Swansea 2006, pp. 73–160, esp. 75–85.

14 See H. Mouritsen, *Hindsight and Historiography: Writing the History of Pre-Roman Italy*, in: M. Jehne/R. Pfeilschifter (eds.), *Herrschaft ohne Integration? Rom und Italien in republikanischer Zeit*, Frankfurt am Main 2006, pp. 23–37.

15 See G. Woolf, *Rome: An Empire's Story*, Oxford 2012, pp. 113–126.

16 On these mechanisms, see E. S. Gruen, *Did Ancient Identity depend on Ethnicity? A Preliminary Probe*, in: *Phoenix* 67 (2013) 1/2, pp. 1–22.

17 See J. Hall, *How “Greek” were the Early Western Greeks?*, in: K. Lomas. (ed.), *Greek Identity in the Western Mediterranean*, Leiden 2004, pp. 35–54.

18 See K. Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*, Cambridge 2013, pp. 161–225.

19 See E. S. Gruen, *Rethinking the Other in Antiquity*, Princeton 2012, pp. 223–243.

A more pronounced Hellenic self-perception in opposition to a generalized perception of outgroups (i.e. “barbarians”) probably developed around the fifth century BC as a result of the Persian Wars (early fifth century BC) and the subsequent ideological use of the political project of a war of retribution against the Persians in the struggle for hegemony in Greece. There was a tendency in the sources of the Classical era towards a stereotyped, negative perception of “barbarians” as being culturally inferior.²⁰ A sentiment of belonging to a greater Greek cultural community prevailed in the Hellenistic period, while the situation became more complex, as the conquests of Alexander the Great brought with them the task of ruling over multi-ethnic kingdoms. This led to ambivalent situations: We see, for example, the adaption of the Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt to the Pharaonic style of rulership, while other Diadochi maintained their Greekness. Complex processes of integration and acculturation thus occurred, as well as accentuations of one’s own identity both on the side of the local populations and on that of the Greeks.

A similar development may have occurred in Rome, too. Early Roman self-perception correlated with the extension of its domination, especially when the Romans encountered groups speaking different languages outside of Latium. The apparent possibility of enfranchising outgroup members into their own citizen body suggests, in any case, that there was no unbridgeable dichotomisation. Once again, these early historical phases are difficult to penetrate, since we only have access to later descriptions, which were written from within a very different understanding of Roman civic identity. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that depictions of the foundation of Rome put an explicit emphasis on the “fact” that people with different origins gathered at Rome to build its community – an emphasis which also was pointed out by Greek observers, since it stood in contrast to a more restrictive policy concerning enfranchisement into the citizen body in the Greek *poleis*.²¹ This accentuation of inclusiveness may, however, have been a retrojection against the background of the enfranchisement all (free) inhabitants of Italy up to the Po Valley into the Roman citizen body, which brought an end to the Social War (91–88 BC) against rebellious Italian allies. A more rigorous distinction between “we” and “they” developed in the second century BC after the Second Punic War (218–202 BC), which included an increasing feeling of exclusiveness, even towards non-Roman Italians.²² At the same time, there was an ongoing process of integration into Roman citizenship, not least through the admission of non-Romans to *coloniae*.

Colonies were potentially an integrative factor (notwithstanding the violence and displacement that their establishment potentially brought with them) and a means of Hellenisation and Romanisation, at least in later historical phases. This implies that “othering” was never as rigid as in the modern colonization of the nineteenth and twentieth

20 See J. Hall, *Hellenicity: Between Ethnicity and Culture*, Chicago 2002, esp. 205–220; Vlassopoulos, *Greeks and Barbarians*, pp. 190–200.

21 See, e.g. Dionysius of Halicarnassus 2. 16.

22 See Bradley, *Colonization and Identity* pp. 161–187.

centuries with its, *in extremis*, racialized justification for the opposition between colonizers and colonized.

3. Greek “Colonization”?

The application of colonial terminology to the settlement of the Mediterranean coast by groups originating in the Aegean between the eighth and the sixth century BC is currently hotly debated in the scholarship. While consensus exists that there is a danger of retrojecting anachronistic conceptions, scholars disagree about how to respond to this threat: One side urges that we “eradicate” “chapters on ‘Colonization’ from books on early Greece” to allow a “proper understanding” of the phenomenon in question, to cite the battle cry of Robin Osborne;²³ the other side acknowledges the problems that colonial terminology and its connotations bring with it, but believes that the term can be defined more openly to match the specific case.²⁴

The definition of “colonization” is under scrutiny: Concerning the relation of a metropole to its colonies, it has become a matter of debate whether the earlier *apoikiai*, in particular, were established intentionally at all. Instead, a gradual process of settlement is envisaged: Accumulative settlements only eventually developed into fully-fledged Greek *poleis* – a process which was only retrospectively narrated as a deliberate foundation by one or at most two specific Greek metropolises, as a result of the attempt to create clear-cut genealogical webs between Greek *poleis*.²⁵ Thus, the colonial analogy is considered a hindrance, because of the fact that it connotes intentional foundation by a metropole. The traditional modern perception takes these ancient retrospective constructions as proof for intentional foundations, thereby suppressing the ancient interpretative framework, which served to create genealogies, and replacing it with the modern framework of telling a typical “colonial” story. Another underlying issue in this debate is the question of when the “precolonial” establishment of improvised settlements turned into the proper practice of colonial foundation: Scholars suppose either that this happened in the course of the Archaic period or that this process is relegated to its earliest beginnings, resulting in more or less fixed practices of establishing colonies from early on. Effectively this amounts to the question of whether there were already Greek *poleis*, in the sense of city-states, from the beginning, which could then function as *métropoleis*, or whether the Greek city-state, as we know it from the Classical period, also developed gradually.²⁶

23 R. Osborne, *Early Greek Colonization? The Nature of Greek Settlement in the West*, in: N. Fisher/H. van Wees (eds.), *Archaic Greece: New Approaches and New Evidence*, London 1998, p. 269.

24 See Tsetschladze/Hargrave, *Colonisation from Antiquity to Modern Times*.

25 E.g. see C. Ulf/E. Kistler, *Die Entstehung Griechenlands*, Berlin 2020, pp. 44–48 and 92–95. Cf. e.g. I. Malkin, *Exploring the Validity of the Concept of “Foundation”: A Visit to Megara Hyblaea*, in: V. B. Gorman/E. W. Robinson (eds.), *Oikistes: Studies in Constitutions, Colonies, and Military Power in the Ancient World*, Leiden 2002, pp. 195–225.

26 On the issue of the development of the Greek polis in the Archaic period, see A. Duplouy, *Pathways to Archaic Citizenship*, in: A. Duplouy/R. W. Brock (eds.), *Defining Citizenship in Archaic Greece*, Oxford 2018, pp. 1–49.

Hence, even though we can account for 152 *apoikiai* by around 500 BC, it is uncertain how this phenomenon unfolded.²⁷

This debate also relates to the question of the possible causes of colonization. In modern scholarship, a debate long prevailed about whether overpopulation or trade were generalisable incentives for Greek colonization. Today, many scholars dismiss the idea of overpopulation: there is insufficient proof in the archaeological record of a massive population increase in the Archaic period. It seems more likely that there existed a mix of reasons driving settlers to emigrate, which must be determined for each *apoikia* separately. The possible push- and pull-factors include socio-political transformations in the *poleis*, among them social stratification, prompting groups of people to seek their fortunes elsewhere, and the integration of Greece into the Mediterranean web of trade contacts. Furthermore, the possibility of a colony being established for strategic reasons should not be dismissed, especially in the case of secondary colonies in the later Archaic period.²⁸

Regardless of one's positioning in the debate on accumulative versus intentional settlement, there is agreement that relations between metropolises and colonies were mostly rather loose. In both Antiquity and Modernity a mother-child metaphor has often been applied, suggesting an eventual emancipation counterbalanced by a bond of affection. Consequently, Greek colonization was considered to not really correspond to modern colonization. Interest in the Greek example only increased when the issue of the possible independence of colonies was on the table: It was the American Revolutionary War, in particular, which sparked scholarly preoccupation with Greek colonies. In the nineteenth century, the abnormality of the Greek colonies was explained by specific circumstances, whether the geographical distance between colonies and metropolises (given the conditions of ancient seafaring) or the supposition of a political particularism which lay in the "nature" of the Greeks. The Greeks were referred to as an exemplum in discussing matters of cultural, economic and civilizing progress – or even to criticize imperialistic policies. The modern legitimizing topos of a *mission civilisatrice*, in particular, could be illustrated with reference to its Greek forebears.

It was especially in the topical field of relations between the Greek colonizers and the local populations that the colonial paradigm filled the gaps left by the extant sources: Culturally and technologically superior Greeks were pitted against savage locals, who automatically absorbed the blessings brought to them (gladly reproducing later ancient perceptions of "barbarians"). This image has proved rather long lived: Even as a racialized definition of the term "people" disappeared from scientific discourse in the decades after the Second World War, the notion of the superiority of the Greeks prevailed. Only in recent decades has it increasingly been deconstructed, not least under the influence of postcolonial studies. Today there is an agreement that the earlier dichotomizing percep-

27 See the overview by G. R. Tsetskhladze, *Revisiting Ancient Greek Colonisation*, in: G. R. Tsetskhladze (ed.), *Greek Colonisation: An Account of Greek Colonies and Other Settlements Overseas*, vol. 1, Leiden 2006, pp. xxiii–xxxiii.

28 For an overview, see J.-P. Descœudres, *Central Greece on the Eve of the Colonisation Movement*, in: G. R. Tsetskhladze (ed.), *Greek Colonisation: An Account of Greek Colonies and Other Settlements Overseas*, vol. 2, Leiden 2008, pp. 289–382.

tion is inadequate: The cultural and technological gap was not as pronounced as suggested by the analogy with modern colonial stereotypes. There were rather heterogeneous forms of contacts, often without a dominant partner.²⁹ Furthermore, excavations of the earliest phases of settlement indicate instances of cohabitation – what this meant in relation to the constitution of the citizen body is, however, difficult to determine: Once again, the question is whether later practices can be retrojected onto the Archaic period. Heterogeneous contacts are mirrored in the extant sources when they discuss the acquisition of land: We find different possibilities ranging from the forceful expulsion of a local population to the granting of land by local rulers. In any case, the area controlled was at first locally restricted. An occasional extension of this control, as in the case of Syracuse in Sicily, was only a secondary development. This was done to the detriment either of local populations or other Greek *apoikiai*.

The classical period was marked by the struggle for hegemony between Greek *poleis*: Accordingly, bonds with already-existing *apoikiai* were tightened and exploited for the purposes of power politics, and there were also some new foundations, a great part of which were re-foundations of already-existing cities.³⁰ This was a policy which was, for instance, used by tyrants in Sicily, where the above-mentioned Syracuse, in particular, extended its domination by means of extensive resettlements.³¹ In this connection, one could also mention the Cleruchies of the so-called Athenian Empire (i.e. Athens at the height of its power between the Persian Wars and the end of the Peloponnesian War in 404 BC), although in a strict sense no foundation occurred.³² *Cleruchs* (literally “lot-holders”) obtained land, which could also be annexed from rebellious allies of Athens. They did not necessarily settle these plots, but could stay in Athens as rentiers.

The creation of a bond between a founder, who was also the ruler of the realm, and its (re)foundation was also the basis for the establishment of cities in the Hellenistic period, only now as part of the process of conquering and controlling territories.³³ The intentions and hence the outlay of these foundations varied: There was the strategic settlement of veterans by Alexander and his epigones, the Diadochi, the establishment of cities as administrative and economic infrastructure or the creation of royal residencies. Although, formally, the king was the founder, the initiative to establish a city could also come from his entourage (there are, for instance, also cases of queens who founded cities) or even from communities which were interested in acquiring the status of a *polis*. An incentive was provided by the fact that the rights of the town were negotiated directly with the ruler, including a certain degree of self-government. The composition of the

29 See C. Ulf, Rethinking Cultural Contacts, in: AWE 8 (2009), pp. 81–132.

30 See T. J. Figueira, Colonisation in the Classical Period, in: G. R. Tsetschkladze (ed.), Greek Colonisation: An Account of Greek Colonies and Other Settlements Overseas, vol. 2, Leiden 2008, pp. 427–523.

31 See K. Lomas, Tyrants and the *polis*: Migration, Identity and Urban Development in Sicily, in: S. Lewis (ed.), Ancient Tyranny, Edinburgh 2006, pp. 95–118.

32 See A. Moreno, “The Attic neighbour”: The Cleruchy in the Athenian Empire, in: J. Ma/N. Papazarkadas/R. Parker (eds.), Interpreting the Athenian Empire, London 2009, pp. 211–221.

33 See G. M. Cohen, The Seleucid Colonies: Studies in Founding, Administration and Organization, Wiesbaden 1978; A. Mehl, Hellenistische Kolonisation, in: AWE 10 (2011), pp. 209–226.

population was quite heterogeneous, ranging from Greek and Macedonian military settlements to “foundations” in which there was no installation of Greek and Macedonian settlers, which actually made them titular. Moreover, relations among the settlers varied: There could be different citizen-statuses, in the case of mixed settlements according to ethnicity – with the possibility of an eventual integration (through acculturation or intermarriage) – while, in other cases, no legal distinctions can be discerned.

4. Roman Colonization

The fortunes of the Greek colonies were quite different: Some prospered and grew into regional powers, like Syracuse, while others vanished or were taken over. The Greek historian and geographer Strabo wrote in the first century BC: “Today all of it [Magna Graecia] – except Taras, Rhegion, and Neapolis – have become thoroughly barbarized, and are possessed by the Leukanians, Brettians, and the Campanians (in name, but in fact by the Romans, as they have become Roman).”³⁴

The situation Strabo describes here is the product of the process of taking control of the Italian peninsula by Rome, with the founding of *coloniae* being one means of administering this expansion.³⁵ Consequently, and in contrast to the Greek colonization, Roman colonization was assigned an archetypical role from the very beginning of the modern colonization process.³⁶

The early stages of Roman history are shadowy: As in the case of the early Greek colonies, we have at our disposal only sources which were written centuries later. In the Early Republic there seem to have been two options: A colony was founded either jointly by the Latin League, a league of Latin cities including Rome, or by one of the members itself. These first Roman colonies, which consisted of a small number of Roman settlers (the traditional number given by the sources is 300), were established inside Roman territory and probably served to promote urbanisation and protect the coastline, where they were predominantly settled.

After 338 BC, Rome took control over Latium and consequently the initiative to found Latin colonies (the sources provide different numbers, ranging from about 2,000 to 5,000 settlers). A distinction between Latin colonies and colonies of Roman Citizens seems to have been upheld, which had consequences for the legal status of the colonists relative to Rome: Those Romans who were sent out to Latin colonies lost their citizen rights (except for when they returned to Rome). Latin colonies were established outside Roman territory on conquered land, had an autonomous status and were treated as allies, as a result of which the colonists also served in the Roman army. Their positioning be-

34 Strabo 6. 1. 2 (trans. D. W. Roller).

35 A dated yet still useful overview is provided by E. T. Salmon, *Roman Colonization under the Republic*, London 1969; for a recent evaluation, see T. D. Stek/J. Pelgrom (eds.), *Roman Republican Colonization: New Perspectives from Archaeology and Ancient History*, Rome 2014.

36 See A. Pagden, *The Burdens of Empire: 1539 to the Present*, New York 2015, esp. pp. 1–44.

trays strategic aims; whether there was also a socio-political agenda (i.e. care for landless citizens), as suggested by the later extant sources, is debated in the scholarship.³⁷ With the growth of territory under Roman control, the distribution of colonies throughout Italy also expanded. Citizen colonies, by contrast, were smaller in size; the colonists remained Roman citizens and were governed by Rome, since these colonies were established on Roman territory with an uninterrupted connection to Rome.

In order to better understand this situation, some background information on the Roman political system is helpful: Each year, two consuls were elected as the highest magistrates in Rome. They were bestowed with *imperium*, the authority to exercise command, including the command of troops.³⁸ In the case of successful military campaigns against neighbouring groups, land was annexed. This land could either be distributed to Romans, let for rent to create public income, remain in public ownership for possible later assignments (to future colonies, for instance) or provide the basis for a new community, a *colonia*, in which case it was allotted to the settlers.

These settlers did not necessarily consist only of Romans, especially if there were not enough volunteers. Their ranks could be filled with members of non-Roman or even non-Latin communities. Hence, Latin colonies, in particular, also served to increase the manpower of the Roman military: Outgroup members were incorporated into the troops a colony was obliged to provide and landless Romans became landholders (military service required a certain amount of income, since soldiers needed to equip themselves).³⁹ *Coloniae* were founded either on virgin soil or as part of an existing settlement. In the latter case, the former inhabitants were either expelled or incorporated – their legal status being dependent on circumstances.

Colonies played an important role in the unification of Italy, not least as an integrating factor: Becoming part of a colony provided outgroup members with the possibility to eventually acquire Roman citizenship. Especially for local elites the threshold for integration into the Roman citizen body was low. At the same time, there are indications that local populations were used as labour force on the land possessed by the colonists.⁴⁰ Thus, social strata too must be added to the equation when determining the degree of integration.

How rigidly the distinction between Latin and citizen colonies was maintained and to what extent the basic properties that have been reconstructed were mandatory in practice is, however, debated: Scholars are divided about how seriously we should take categorisations which occur only in later sources, especially in relation to the Early Republic. Hence, as in the case of Greek colonization, modern reconstructions relied for a long

37 See Bradley, *Colonization and Identity in Republican Italy*, pp. 169–171.

38 See E. Meyer-Zwiffelhofer, *Imperium Romanum. Geschichte der römischen Provinzen*, München 2009, pp. 11–13.

39 On the integrative role of the Roman military, see M. Jehne, *Römer, Latiner und Bundesgenossen im Krieg. Zu Formen und Ausmaß der Integration in der republikanischen Armee*, in: M. Jehne/R. Pfeilschifter (eds.), *Herrschaft ohne Integration? Rom und Italien in republikanischer Zeit*, Frankfurt a.M. 2006, pp. 243–267.

40 See Bradley, *Colonization and Identity in Republican Italy*, pp. 171–177.

time on these later sources, which suggest a “state”-led colonization from the beginning.⁴¹ It is, however, possible that, for instance, members of the Roman elite founded colonies on their own initiatives.⁴²

The decades after the Second Punic War witnessed a new phase of Roman colonization: Instead of Latin colonies, it was increasingly citizen colonies with a similar number of settlers that were founded. This may have been a reaction to problems recruiting Romans for the foundation of Latin colonies: Among the possible reasons for this is an unwillingness to give up citizenship, as well as a reluctance to settle in now more distant and hostile parts of Italy. Additionally, the Second Punic War left its imprint on the Latins and other allies, too. Next to the retention (or acquisition) of Roman citizenship, an increase in the size of allotted land was another incentive for joining a *colonia*.⁴³

In the last decades of the second century BC, colonization acquired a new aspect. Since Rome now controlled Italy, the strategic role of colonies became less relevant: The founding of *coloniae* – now increasingly taking place outside of Italy as well – served to provide land for the Roman proletariat. In this era, participation in the establishment of colonies was more rigorously restricted to Roman citizens.

After the Punic Wars there existed another tool for managing conquered regions, especially as their distance from Rome grew: A *provincia* could be established in lieu of the imposition of individual agreements on populations which came under Roman domination, often backed by the establishment of colonies. The term *provincia* originally denoted the task a magistrate was assigned with, including its geographical scope. Only gradually did it develop into the “province” we are familiar with: a conquered region, transformed into an administrative unit and temporarily assigned to a magistrate. This became regular practice only from the second half of the second century BC onward.⁴⁴

In the first century BC, the in-trite elite struggle, which was embedded in the political system of the Roman republic, culminated in civil wars between powerful individuals. This also affected the establishment of colonies. *Coloniae* had already been used as a tool for internal power politics in the past: The powerful families of Rome competed for the highest magistracies of the Republic, since power, wealth, prestige and followers were acquired through such positions – especially when successfully leading military campaigns or establishing colonies. As military campaigns were undertaken in more and more distant regions and for longer periods of time, relations between generals and “their” legions became closer. One consequence of this development was that the returning generals sought to establish colonies for their veterans (whose social composition relative to the former citizen armies had changed through the increasing recruitment of volunteers). These colonies were established both inside of Italy, on land taken from political enemies

41 See Bispham, *Coloniae deducere*, pp. 81–83.

42 Patterson, *Colonization and Historiography*, p. 195.

43 See Patterson, *Colonization and Historiography*, pp. 199–202.

44 See Meyer-Zwiffelhofer, *Imperium Romanum*, pp. 12–24.

(Roman politicians, as well as allied Italians) or sometimes even bought, and outside of Italy, on conquered land in the provinces.

Both, *provinciae* and *coloniae*, were extensively used to expand and strengthen Roman control under Augustus, the first Roman emperor and the result of the metamorphosis of Octavian, who emerged victorious from the civil wars. It was only in the first century BC that the term *imperium* came to refer to the entirety of those regions over which the Romans exercised control (*imperium populi Romani*).⁴⁵ Augustus' successors followed his example: They settled veterans (but not only) in *coloniae* for strategic or economic reasons. Colonies continued to play an important role in the Romanisation of the Empire, by continuing to provide the possibility of obtaining Roman citizenship – a process which was ended when the emperor Caracalla extended citizenship to all free inhabitants of the Empire in 212 AD.

Although the beginning of this practice can already be found in the first century BC, it was the Roman emperors who increasingly granted the title *colonia* to already-existing cities without installing new settlers. This act brought prestige – by demonstrating closeness to Rome as its titular offspring – and certain privileges (e.g. the cities' elites could become eligible for election to the Roman Senate or the city could be exempted from taxes). Over time, this practice became more common than the “actual” foundation of *coloniae* and it is worth noting that the initiative to nominate titular colonies passed from the Emperors to the candidate cities themselves.

5. Conclusion

Colonization in Greek and Roman Antiquity primarily consisted in the establishment of cities. At least down to Classical era – and, in some cases, maybe even starting earlier – this act was able to serve the aim of political domination, as a tool which was constantly adapted to contemporary needs and conditions. Our knowledge concerning of the earliest phases of Greek and Roman colonization is, however, lacunary. What we know suggests more differences than similarities when compared with modern European colonization, especially in the Greek case. This is particularly true when it comes to relations with the local populations. Moreover, in contrast to our modern understanding, colonies were not exclusively planted among “others”, but also on territory belonging to the ingroup. “Othering” followed a complex and changing interrelation of self-perception and the demarcation of outgroups, which was never as pronounced as in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: The integration of outgroups occurred regularly, although it was more pronounced in some eras and areas than in others. In this sense, ancient colonies were able to exercise a highly integrative function, furthering processes of Hellenisation and Romanisation.

45 See Meyer-Zwiffelhofer, *Imperium Romanum*, pp. 11–13.

The focus on the foundation of cities was quite coherent from an ancient perspective, since it concerned the relation of a colony to its origin, that is, its founder. This is even true for titular colonies – i.e. those not involving the installation of new settlers – since they were, at least symbolically, seen as foundations, initiating a specific relationship with their creator. When transposed onto Modernity and integrated into a modern colonial typology, things become complicated. In the Greek case, colonization as it was actually practiced in the Archaic period poses a problem, since the defining criterion of political domination is hard to find: The later foundations of the Classical and Hellenistic period would, however, qualify. Similarly, titular colonies become awkward, if we take the migration of settlers as another defining aspect of “colonization”.⁴⁶ One of the roots of this incoherence is a mistranslation of ancient terminology: Even in the heyday of ancient imperialist policies, the phenomenon only indirectly pertained to the domination of conquered regions, referring more specifically to the establishment of cities inside it. The terms *apoikia* and *colonia* referred in a way to the (legal) status of those territorially restricted settlements in relation to the metropolises, or rather rulers. The Romans, in particular, had in *provincia* a different institution for territorial rule. In Modernity, however, the term “colony” became to denote the occupied territory as well (while “plantation”, a possible alternative for colonial settlement, was relinquished).

46 See M. I. Finley, Colonies – An Attempt at a Typology, in: TRHS 26 (1976), pp. 167–188 concerning these issues. See also the “update” by M. Sommer, Colonies – Colonisation – Colonialism: A Typological Reappraisal, in: AWE 10 (2011), pp. 183–193.