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DIVINELY SANCTIONED DOMINATION: ACCOMMODATING ROMAN AND NATIVE IDENTITIES IN DIONYSIUS'S *ROMAN ANTIQUITIES* AND JOSEPHUS'S *JEWISH WAR*

Marika Rauhala

Abstract

In the early imperial period, many local people perceived the Roman rule in the eastern Mediterranean as unstable and unjust. Attempts to achieve a positive social identity may have fuelled social competition and hostility towards the Romans. Both Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Flavius Josephus adopted a different strategy of identity building: social mobility. Their accounts of historical events sought to defuse antagonism by embracing hybrid Greco-/Judeo-Roman identities and allowing fluid transitions between their native identities and the overarching Romanness. In doing so, they also promoted perceptions of the legitimacy and stability of Roman rule. Both authors used history to illustrate Roman piety, virtue, and consequent divine favour to justify Roman domination. Dionysius constructed a superordinate idea of idealized Greekness that subsumed the Romans as the torchbearers of ancient Greek values, while Josephus saw a divine hand at work in the Roman military triumph. Since the Romans had earned their divinely sanctioned rule either by adhering to Hellenic traditions or by being part of God's great plan, Dionysius and Josephus managed to retain the positive social identities of Greeks and Jews under the Roman imperial umbrella.

Au début de la période impériale, de nombreuses populations locales estimaient que la domination romaine en Méditerranée orientale était instable et injuste. Les tentatives de construire une identité sociale positive ont peut-être attisé la concurrence sociale et l'hostilité à l'égard des Romains. Denys d'Halicarnasse et Flavius Josèphe ont tous deux adopté une stratégie différente de construction de l'identité : la mobilité sociale. Leurs mises en récit d'événements historiques cherchent à désamorcer la tension. Elles adoptent des identités hybrides Gréco-/Judéo-romaines et en favorisent des transitions fluides entre leurs identités d'origine et la romanité surplombante. Ce faisant, les deux auteurs ont également encouragé l'impression d'une autorité romaine légitime et stable. Ils ont utilisé l'histoire pour illustrer la piété romaine, la vertu et la faveur divine qui en découle, afin de justifier la domination romaine. Denys construit une idée supérieure de l'identité grecque idéalisée qui a absorbé les Romains comme se faisant les passeurs des anciennes valeurs grecques, tandis que Josèphe identifie la main de Dieu agissant dans le triomphe militaire romain. Puisque les Romains ont mérité leur autorité divinement approuvée en adhérant aux traditions helléniques, ou en faisant partie du grand plan de Dieu, Denys et Josèphe réussissent à préserver les identités sociales positives des Grecs et des Juifs tout en les plaçant sous l'égide de l'empire romain.

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History is what the present *thinks* about the past. Note here that I specifically do not say that history is what *happened* in the past; rather I stress that history is what a living society *does* with the past. Events of the past which are not studied and are not thereby incorporated into a culture's vision of itself—most particularly its vision of itself in time and a changing world—are not part of history. They happened, yes, but they are not a part of history until a historian, with a specific purpose which is related to his or her own time and culture, picks up those facts and uses them."[1]

— T. Young 1988, 7

"Writing history, therefore, does not simply mean *recording* the past but *creating* it: it is the historiographer who is in control of which events are remembered and how, and which are passed over in silence and, thus, will never be part of the collective memory of later generations."[2]

— Wiater 2011b, 67

Introduction

In this article, I will explore how two authors writing in the early imperial period harnessed past events to support the positive self-perception of their native cultures as part of the Roman Empire. They picked up certain facts, interpreted them in the light of their agenda, and thus gave the events a meaning and rendered them a part of the historical narrative. The writers that I will discuss are Dionysius of Halicarnassus and his *Roman Antiquities* and Flavius Josephus and his *Jewish War*. Even though nearly a hundred years separates their writings, the stated purposes of their works offer interesting parallels—as well as telling differences—that will shed light on the adjustment of local and global identities in the early imperial Roman East.

Josephus's debt to Dionysius is often discussed with regard to his magnum opus, *Jewish Antiquities*, which parallels the title and literary aim of Dionysius's *Roman Antiquities*. Whereas Dionysius's objective was to demonstrate that Roman culture was superior only insofar as it was genuinely Greek (thus proving the precedence of Hellenicity), in *Jewish Antiquities* Josephus's aim was to establish the primacy of

[2] Cf. Wiater 2011b, 63: "Dionysius' approach to historical writing is oriented towards the present rather than the past: it is not the *factual value* of a narrative that is relevant to him but the *emotional reaction* which it provokes. For Dionysius the access to the past is primarily an emotional one that is based on the readers' interaction with the text and their experience of the past through reading."

Jewish traditions in relation to Roman ones. It is likely that Josephus was aware of Dionysius's work and was even attempting to outdo it.[3] As regards identity politics, however, Josephus's earlier work, *Jewish War*, is worth considering in relation to Dionysius's strategy. Both authors embraced a hybrid Greco-/Judeo-Roman identity—Dionysius being a Carian Greek who adopted Roman values and attitudes, and Josephus being a Hellenistic Jew who praised Roman ideals—and both sought to communicate the advantages of this wider perspective while still appreciating their native cultural heritage. Such negotiated social identities are novel mixtures of cultural values and attitudes, a kind of hybrid identity. Hybrid identities often emerge in pluralistic societies where cultural exchange is commonplace and people move around with ease, and where different social contexts call for different identities and group allegiances. Hybridity blurs the boundaries of sameness and difference, in this case the difference between "us" and the Roman "others."[4] It could be argued that Dionysius and Josephus both adapted their historical narratives to make their message acceptable to dual audiences (see next section) and modified their respective native identities to allow for fluid transitions between local and superordinate identifications.

In the following, I will first sketch the historical context of Dionysius's and Josephus's writings and the apparent problems that these two authors faced in trying to reconcile their native ethnic and cultural identities with Romanness. Second, I will discuss the strategies that, on the one hand, Dionysius employs in order to bridge the inner tensions of being a Greek under Roman rule and, on the other hand, how Josephus

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[3] The idea of Dionysius's work as the model for *Jewish Antiquities* was already featured in Thackeray 1929; for a recent review of the evidence, see Cowan 2018, which concludes that significant similarities are found in the analogous themes and apologetic motives of the writers. It is notable, however, that whereas Dionysius seeks to mitigate the tensions between the proud, self-respecting Greeks and the ruling Romans, Josephus's elevation of Jewish traditions works for the opposite effect. See also Balch 1982, which argues that Dionysius's *Antiquities* and Josephus's *Against Apion* both follow the skeletal outline for an encomium of a city described by Menander of Laodicea.

[4] For an overview of the development of the concept of hybridity, see R. Young 1994, 1–26; Ackermann 2012, 6–14.

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chooses to rationalize and justify the Roman victory over the Jews. Third, I will discuss the role of the moral and religious rationales that both historians use in their construction of hybrid identities and in adjusting their native feelings of distinction to accommodate their exhorted loyalty toward the Romans.

Two Historians of Foreign Supremacy

Dionysius of Halicarnassus was a Greek historian of the Augustan period.[5] His exact birth and death year are not known, but assumedly he was born around 60 BCE or shortly after that, and he died sometime after 7 CE. He was born in Caria, in southwestern Asia Minor, which had been part of the Seleucid Kingdom until it passed to Roman control with the Treaty of Apamea in 188 BCE. Even though the Romans had been the effective rulers of the area since the lineage of the client kings of Pergamon came to an end in 133 BCE, their rule had faced a serious challenge just a generation before Dionysius's time. As Roman leaders were occupied with the Social War raging in Italy, King Mithridates VI of Pontus defeated King Nicomedes IV of Bithynia and the remaining Roman legions of Asia in 89 BCE. In the following year, Mithridates devised a mass slaughter of Roman and Italian settlers in various Asian cities, which apparently was welcomed by many locals. As a result, tens of thousands of men, women, and children who were deemed to represent Roman power were killed, and the Roman presence in the area was annihilated. The efficiency and sheer ruthlessness of the massacre—which also entailed many grave violations against the requirements of piety—bespeaks a deep aversion to Roman rule.[6]

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[5] Dionysius's Augustan literary context has been recently highlighted in the compilation *Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Augustan Rome* (2019); see esp. de Jonge and Hunter 2019. For a similar contextualization of Josephus in Flavian Rome, see, e.g., Edmondson et al. 2005; Sievers and Lembi 2005; Curran 2011.

[6] On the "Asian Vespers," see App. *Bell. Civ.*, 22–23 (cf. 54, 62); Matyszak 2008, 44–47; Mayor 2009, 13–24, 170–75. The ancient estimates of the victims range

In the following decades, Asia Minor became a battlefield between Mithridates and various Roman military leaders, but Roman rule was firmly reinstated by General Sulla, who defeated Mithridates in 85 BCE. Sulla imposed a heavy fine upon the rebellious communities, and carried out a reorganization of the province by establishing fiscal districts that followed the territories of urban settlements. Communities that had proven treacherous were also punished by having their status demoted, and many previously free cities were subjected to the direct control of the provincial governor. The position of Halicarnassus is not certain but the honors that the citizens bestowed on Sulla suggest that it may have been one of the free cities. One major outcome of Sulla's arrangements was that, in order to survive, the local communities had to learn how to establish beneficial relations with the Roman elite.[7] The Mithridatic Wars, however, show that Roman rule over Asia Minor was not unwavering, and that the local population may have still held grudges against their conquerors and the heavy financial burdens they had imposed, even though the chances of changing the regime may have seemed more and more improbable as the century drew on.

For Dionysius, Roman rule appeared to be a cultural constant, and he saw many more opportunities in it than threats. Around 30 BCE, he moved to Rome and spent the following decades teaching rhetoric, learning Latin, studying earlier works on Roman history, and preparing his own multivolume work on early Roman history (*Ant. Rom.* 1.7.2–3). The stated reason for his undertaking was to choose a subject that would be noble and instructive for the readers (*Ant. Rom.* 1.1.2). The unsurpassed achievements of the Roman Empire, including its extent and enduring nature, justified the inquiry into the early phases of Rome— not the least because, according to Dionysius, the previous accounts did not discuss the matter as extensively and accurately as it deserved

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from 80,000 (Val. Max. *Fact. et Dict. Memor*. 9.2 *ext.* 3; Memnon 22.9 [*FGrHist* 434 F 1]) up to 150,000 (Plut. *Sulla* 24.4).

[7] On the rearrangement of Roman rule in the Asian province, see Santangelo 2007, 107–33; the homage paid to Sulla by the Halicarnassians is recorded in *ILS* 2.2 no. 7881.

(*Ant. Rom.* 1.2.1, 1.3.3–6; cf. 1.31.3).[8] On the other hand, Dionysius explicitly sets out to educate his fellow Greeks on the magnificence of Rome, as many of them falsely assume that Rome had become a world power "not through reverence for the gods and justice and every other virtue, but through some chance and the injustice of Fortune, which inconsiderately showers her greatest favours upon the most undeserving. And indeed the more malicious are wont to rail openly at Fortune for freely bestowing on the basest of barbarians the blessings of the Greeks" (*Ant. Rom.* 1.4.2).[9] Dionysius continues to explain that he has taken upon himself the task of dispelling these false assumptions by telling the truth about Rome's origins, so that the Greeks would not be vexed by their subjugation, considering it a twist of fate. For the eternal law of nature dictates that the stronger will rule the weaker (ἄρχειν ἀεὶ τῶν ἡττόνων τοὺς κρείττονας), and thus the Roman domination over Greece is reasonable (κατὰ τὸ εἰκός). The Greeks would learn from Dionysius's history that "Rome from the very beginning, immediately after its founding, produced infinite examples of virtue in men whose superiors, whether for piety or for justice or for life-long self-control or for warlike valour, no city, either Greek or barbarian, has ever produced" (*Ant. Rom.* 1.5.1–3).[10]

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[8] On Dionysius's use of earlier historians and his detailed account of early Roman history, see Oakley 2019. Dionysius's extensive retelling is also meant to reflect the significance of this period, which has been previously overlooked and has thus led to the (Greek) misconception that Rome had no past worth mentioning (Wiater 2011a, 189–93; Wiater 2011b, 79). Cf. Jos. *Bell. Jud.* 2.367–387, where King Agrippa II invokes Rome's unparalleled military success.

[9] οὐ δι᾽ εὐσέβειαν δὲ καὶ δικαιοσύνην καὶ τὴν ἄλλην ἀρετὴν ἐπὶ τὴν ἁπάντων ἡγεμονίαν σὺν χρόνῳ παρελθούσης, ἀλλὰ δι᾽ αὐτοματισμόν τινα καὶ τύχην ἄδικον εἰκῇ δωρουμένην τὰ μέγιστα τῶν ἀγαθῶν τοῖς ἀνεπιτηδειοτάτοις· καὶ οἵ γε κακοηθέστεροι κατηγορεῖν εἰώθασι τῆς τύχης κατὰ τὸ φανερὸν ὡς βαρβάρων τοῖς πονηροτάτοις τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων χαριζομένης ἀγαθά. Translations of Dionysius follow Cary 1937–1950.

[10] μυρίας ἤνεγκεν ἀνδρῶν ἀρετὰς εὐθὺς ἐξ ἀρχῆς μετὰ τὸν οἰκισμόν, ὧν οὔτ᾽ εὐσεβεστέρους οὔτε δικαιοτέρους οὔτε σωφροσύνῃ πλείονι παρὰ πάντα τὸν βίον χρησαμένους οὐδέ γε τὰ πολέμια κρείττους ἀγωνιστὰς οὐδεμία πόλις ἤνεγκεν οὔτε Ἑλλὰς οὔτε βάρβαρος" (at 1.5.3).

When we analyze Dionysius's stated reasons for writing *Roman Antiquities*, three things become apparent. First, Dionysius not only wishes to offer useful lessons on Rome's glorious history to sophisticated Roman readership, but also to provide the Greeks with what he considered to be truthful information about their Roman conquerors and the latter's achievements (*Ant. Rom.* 1.5.4; 1.6.4). In other words, Dionysius addresses a dual readership, but he constructs his imagined Greek audience as a unified group, overriding many internal differences, not least in their allegiance to Rome.[11] Second, Dionysius adamantly maintains that Rome had power over Greece deservedly and legitimately, since the Romans excelled in virtuousness, piety, prudence, and military prowess, which made them natural rulers. Therefore, the Greeks had no reason to be resentful about their current subordinate status, but had better accept it and keep an open mind to the lessons of history that Dionysius offers. Third, Dionysius clearly suggests that many Greeks looked nostalgically back on the past greatness of Greece, and considered that the Romans were their inferiors. This haughty attitude had deep roots in Greek thinking, and Dionysius did his part to immortalize the predominance of Greekness by setting it as the paradigm of justified power. But unlike his implied compatriots, Dionysius portrayed the Romans as the upholders, not the barbarian enemies, of this legacy.[12] Dionysius was explicitly aware that his role as a historian was to remodel and represent the past so that it would shape

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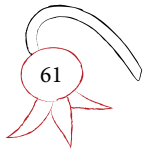
[11] Nino Luraghi (2003, esp. 273–76, 281, 283–84) has argued that Dionysius's long address to his Greek audience is actually part of his construction of an indirect message that would be acceptable to his Roman audience. According to Luraghi, Dionysius's actual message is directed at the contemporary Romans who have strayed from their virtuous beginnings; thus, Dionysius urges them to resume their original Greek identity. Cf. Bowersock 1965, 131. Even though many scholars have also considered that Dionysius primarily wrote for a Greek readership (e.g., Gabba 1991, 79–80), I see no compelling reason to prefer one to the other. See the discussion of Casper de Jonge and Richard Hunter (2019, 31–34) that summarizes earlier scholarship and supports a mixed readership. See also Delcourt 2003a, 133; Delcourt 2003b, 47–48; Wiater 2011a, *passim*; Wiater 2011b, 62 n. 5, 70, 85; Engels 2012, 172–74; Wiater 2018, 211 n. 11.

[12] See also Wiater 2011a, 100–2, 186–87, 220–23; Wiater 2011b, 72–76.

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the self-perception of readers by emotionally connecting them with the uplifting achievements of their history (see Wiater 2011b, 63–69). As the alleged condescending attitude of the Greeks would have effectively made it impossible to accept Roman dominance or, indeed, to identify with their rulers, Dionysius took it as his task to resolve this apparent conflict between being positively identified as Greek and being under negatively perceived Roman rulers.[13]

The Romano-Jewish historian Yosef ben Matityahu, better known by his Roman name Titus Flavius Josephus, was born in Jerusalem roughly a century after Dionysius in around 37 CE, and he died around 100 CE. Even though Josephus can be distinguished from Dionysius by the era in which he lived, by his cultural background, and by his personal experiences of Roman rule, as authors, their relationship to Roman dominion exhibits interesting parallels. Josephus was of noble Jewish descent: his paternal ancestors belonged to the priestly elite, and his mother was of royal blood (*Vita* 1–6). His homeland, Judea, had been under Roman rule for over a century when he composed his first work, *Jewish War*. The area had secured a period of relative if not even absolute independence during the Hasmonean Dynasty, until the Roman intervention led by Pompey the Great reduced the kingdom to a client state in 63 BCE, and since 6 CE Judea had been a Roman province.

The Judeans were even more willing to resist Roman rule than the Greeks in Asia Minor, and the personal involvement of Josephus in the rebellion against Rome makes his position very interesting. He had led the Judean rebels of Galilee during the siege of Jotapata in 67 CE. After the town fell, Josephus hid in a cave with 40 other notable Jewish leaders and, after a heated debate following the Roman discovery of their whereabouts, they decided to kill each other. Josephus, however, survived this collective suicide and was taken prisoner.[14] Josephus proph-

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[13] Cf. Wiater 2018, 211: "Dionysius … invites his Greek readers to follow his own journey (in the literal and metaphorical sense) from Halicarnassus to Rome to adopt a new paradigm of Greekness that is as much indebted to their origins as it requires them to transcend them; he invites them to become Roman Greeks."

[14] Josephus's hiding and escape from death in Jotapata are narrated in *Bell. Jud.* 3.340–391.

esied that Vespasian, who was the commander of the Roman troops at Jotapata, and his son Titus would become emperors, and having thus gained credibility in their eyes, Vespasian and Titus became favorably disposed toward Josephus (*Bell. Jud.* 3.400–408). When Vespasian was proclaimed emperor in 69 CE, he liberated Josephus from captivity (*Bell. Jud.* 4.622–629). In 71 CE, Josephus settled in Rome in Vespasian's previous residence, obtained Roman citizenship and a pension (*Vita* 423), and under Flavian patronage composed his account of the Jewish War.[15]

Josephus's stated purpose for writing his account of the Jewish War was to offer a truthful report of the events, as he had firsthand experience and knowledge, and he succumbs to neither malice nor fawning (*Bell. Jud.* 1.1–3, 7–9; cf. *Vita* 47–50). Like Dionysius, he seems to be addressing a dual readership. We may perceive his efforts as an attempt to make his account acceptable to the Romans while defending the ordinary Jewish people against Roman antipathy. On the other hand, he attempts to vindicate himself in the eyes of those compatriots who considered his surrender to the Romans to be an act of treachery. This is particularly evident in his composition of the aforementioned episode relating to his capture at Jotapata (see Jonquière 2011, esp. 224–25).

In the *Jewish War*, Josephus appears as a Roman historian who has assumed the conventions of historiography (see Mason 2016a, 98–102),[16] and who is an active member of the contemporary literary circles (Mason 2016a, 95–97).[17] His polished and Atticizing Greek, and a literary style that complies with the requirements of rhetorical training, bespeak an erudite readership. The immediate social context for the circulation of his writings was Rome, and he often assumes that his

[15] Josephus started writing the history of the Jewish War after he had arrived in Rome, and he probably finished his work before Vespasian's death in 79 CE (see, e.g., Mason 2016b, 14–15), even though some episodes in book 7, or perhaps even the entire text of book 7, may be later additions by Josephus (see Schwartz 2011, 331–44).

[16] For instance, Josephus's distanced references to divine providence in the *Jewish War* are suited to a historian and differ from the approach he assumes in *Jewish Antiquities* (Schwartz 2011, 337–42).

[17] Against the picture of Josephus as a solitary and outside figure painted by Hannah Cotton and Werner Eck (2005).

readers are better informed about events and notable figures in Roman history than about the intricacies of Jewish customs or Judean politics (see Mason 2005).[18] Yet, Josephus never sheds his Judean identity. While making his writings approachable to the Romans, he also engages in discussions with his fellow diaspora Jews (Curran 2011, 76–81).[19] Josephus mentions that he had written an earlier version of his *Jewish War* in his ancestral tongue, which he had then dispatched to the upper barbarians (*Bell. Jud.* 1.3), later specified as the Parthians, Babylonians, Arabs, the Judeans beyond the Euphrates, and the Adiabenians (*Bell. Jud.* 1.6). Even though this work almost certainly was considerably briefer than the Greek text (see, e.g., Mason 2016b, 15–17)—and Josephus undoubtedly embellishes its reach—it nonetheless suggests that Josephus was interested in communicating with a wider audience, including scattered Jewish communities. Josephus asserts that he often faced hostility from the Jews in Rome who were envious of his position (*Vita* 424–425, 428–429), but his writings may have also contributed to the grudge. All in all, Josephus's work can be seen as a contribution to the ongoing debate on the essence and future direction of Judaism after the fall of Judea and the destruction of the Temple. With his self-presentation as a well-learned priest of notable descent and prominent connections, Josephus was building up his credentials as an authority within the Jewish community.[20] Josephus's personal and national apology is inter-

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[18] Mason, however, does not consider the possibility that Josephus would have also written with the lettered Jewish community in Rome on his mind. The emperors Vespasian and Titus and King Agrippa II certainly featured among Josephus's addressees, but he also mentions having sold books to many of his compatriots (*C. Ap.* 1.50–52 [πολλοῖς δὲ τῶν ἡμετέρων at 51]; *Vita* 361–364).

[19] In particular, Josephus's attempt to rationalize the outcome of the war—as will be discussed below—seems to primarily address the concerns of the Jewish audience. Tessa Rajak (2005) has argued that, besides being involved with the expatriate Judeans in the city of Rome, Josephus probably also maintained active contacts with various Jewish communities in the eastern Mediterranean.

[20] Curran 2011, 75, 81, 84; Tuval 2011, 400, 402–4. As Michael Tuval (2011, 405, 407–8) points out, by laying emphasis on his priestly status, Josephus also seeks prestige in Roman eyes by taking advantage of the positive imagery that the Romans associated with priesthood and expertise in age-old religious traditions.

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twined with a message to his compatriots: one can simultaneously be a devoted Jew and a loyal Roman.

The Quest for Positive Distinction in a Subordinate Status

Forging a positive perception of oneself and one's relevant reference group(s) is an important motive for self-representation. Empirical research conducted in social psychology has demonstrated that group-based identifications and the perception of intergroup relations are significant factors in human interactions. These findings led to the formulation of social identity theory, according to which people seek to establish a positive sense of distinction through a group or groups whose membership is salient for them.[21] The sense of belonging to a group (the group with which one identifies is called the ingroup) has cognitive and emotional significance for the individual. The mere knowledge of group membership has been shown to motivate people to differentiate their group positively. This often leads to a phenomenon known as the "ingroup bias," which causes people to favor the ingroup over outgroups, that is, groups with which they do not identify. Ingroup bias operates at several levels, affecting, for example, perceptions, inferences, evaluations, and (discriminatory) behavior. The drive to improve self-perception through one's ingroup(s) also involves evaluative comparisons with relevant outgroups. In order for groups to establish a positively distinctive social identity, they must positively differentiate themselves from outgroups on the available dimensions of comparison.[22]

In the Greco-Roman world, ethnic groups—further divided into subgroups based on residence in certain regions or urban settlements—were an important object of identification. Although sweeping gener-

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[21] The fundamental studies are Tajfel 1978 and Tajfel and Turner 1979, esp. 40–47.

[22] See, e.g., Abrams and Hogg 1990; Hogg and Abrams 1990; Hogg and McGarty 1990; Abrams and Hogg 2001, 433–37, 442–47; Reicher 2004, 928–30, 933–37; Schneider 2004, 233–45; Abrams and Hogg 2010, 180–86; Reynolds et al. 2011, 55–58.

alizations such as "Greeks" or "Romans" or "Judeans" do not do justice to the plurality of distinct communities often subsumed under generalizing terms, they did exist as meaningful objects of identification. The communality, solidarity, and shared values of each of these groups were evoked in public arenas, and their common ancestral origins and glorious history were recounted in numerous writings. In addition, religious affiliation, including ancestral traditions, religious practices, and worshipping communities, was generally linked to one's culture and place of origin, adding an important component to ethnic identity.[23] Yet, as Dionysius's and Josephus's accounts readily show, ethnic identities are not fixed but are socially constructed and can therefore be adapted to changing social circumstances. Moreover, the Roman Empire offered the unique chance for a conquered people to embrace a wider Roman identity by allowing intergroup boundaries to be permeable, at least to some extent. Nonetheless, in my view, at least during the early imperial period the idea of discarding one's local "provincial" identity completely would have been inconceivable. Therefore, the question of accommodating these two dimensions, the long-standing local identity and the Roman imperial identity, became crucial, especially for the local elites who wished to enjoy the fruits of Roman power to the fullest.

The Asiatic Greeks and the Judeans belonged to subjugated groups who had tested Roman power and been defeated in the recent past; thus, it would have been hard to escape a certain sense of inferiority in comparison to the victorious Romans. Social comparisons raise awareness of the relative position of groups, and the (perceived) low status of the ingroup poses a threat to social identity. However, there are three main strategies for low-status groups to achieve a positive self-perception in relation to groups of higher social standing: social creativity, social competition, and social mobility.[24] When we consider what Dionysius and Josephus relate about their compatriots, social creativity and social

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[23] For a brief appraisal of the different criteria for ethnic identity, see Hall 1997, 19–29; Hall 2002, 9–19; cf. Farney 2007, 27–34. See also the articles in Derks and Roymans 2009.

[24] On the strategies, see Reynolds and Turner 2001, 166–67; Reicher 2004, 931–32; Brown 2010, 156–57; Reynolds et al. 2017, 55–56.

competition arise as their principal strategies for maintaining a positive self-conception under the Roman yoke. The essence of social creativity is that the status quo is accepted but the negatively perceived features are reinterpreted as positive, or the paradigms of comparison are changed. Therefore, instead of comparing one's own group to the dominant group on those dimensions that reinforce the subordinate status, alternative dimensions that reflect positively on one's own group are raised as points of comparison. For example, the Greeks and Judeans could downplay the merits of political power or military performance, and highlight such dimensions as the antiquity of their traditions, sophistication, learning, and age-old wisdom, which are thus elevated as the measures of true value.

For the Greeks, this was an obvious strategy. When Rome had been just an insignificant village, the Greeks had produced insurmountable works of art and architecture—which their Roman conquerors eagerly looted; they had composed timeless epics and tales that the early imperial Roman poets were still emulating; they had laid the foundations of historiography, drama, and philosophy, after which the Roman writers had modeled themselves; they had honored the gods with glorious gifts and complex myths, and the Romans had gladly assumed many Greek elements as part of their ancestral religion; and they had fought and won epic battles that still served as exemplars of valor. Therefore, the creation of a positively distinctive local identity included, for instance, highlighting the antiquity of one's customs and cultural achievements and celebrating the feats of one's virtuous ancestors, who had enjoyed unparalleled closeness to the gods. Since the appreciation of antiquity was not limited to the Greeks alone, the question of Greece's antecedence also caused unease among the Romans. The development of Roman culture was in many ways indebted to Greek influences, and, in addition, Greek cultural achievements continued to outshine Roman efforts in many respects.[25] As Dionysius complains that many Greeks still think that the Romans are the descendants of barbarians upon whom capricious Fortune had unjustly bestowed world

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[25] See Rauhala 2018 with further references.

domination,[26] he indicates that this kind of sense of superiority was a common marker of contemporary Greek identity. As Dionysius's remarks show, this strategy could lead to feelings of disdain for the Romans, which could in turn effectively hamper the interplay between Greeks' native identities and their superordinate identification as Romans (*Ant. Rom.* 1.5.2–3).[27]

In many ways, these views also approach the second strategy, social competition. Whereas in the cases of social creativity and social mobility the established social hierarchies largely remain unchallenged, social competition strives for social change. In other words, the status quo is perceived as illegitimate and unstable, and intergroup differences are stressed, which increases the likelihood of prejudice and social antagonism, and motivates attempts to change the social status quo. In the past, the Greeks had certainly challenged the Roman presence in the eastern Mediterranean; however, by Dionysius's time they no longer actively resisted Roman dominance. Self-complacent attitudes aside, the local elites also saw tempting possibilities for social mobility.

As regards Josephus's reference group, the antiquity of Jewish traditions was also a widely recognized feature of their culture, and one of the cornerstones of their distinctive native identity. Indeed, the Israelites had enjoyed their fair share of particularism. The basis of the distinctive Jewish identity was their perceived privileged relationship with the divine, that is, their status as God's chosen people. This fed the sense of uniqueness and superiority, which often led to disparaging representations of other peoples. It also appears that, as a reaction to the cultural melting pot of the Hellenistic world, many Jewish authors started denouncing the previously acceptable practice of exogamy, which underscored their isolationist tendencies.[28] Studies have shown

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[26] *Ant. Rom.* 1.4.2 cited in note 9. Dionysius implicitly admits that not all Greeks were equally critical of the Romans, but the emphasis on a unified view fits in with the aims of his work.

[27] See also Miller 1997, 32–33, 214–15, 217, 220–25.

[28] See Gruen 2011, 279–86, cf. 287, 291–92, 296–99. Correspondingly, the surrounding Greco-Roman society largely considered the Jewish community to be inward-looking and reclusive (Gruen 2011, 277–78).

that members of dominant groups are less likely to define themselves in terms of their group membership, whereas members of subordinate groups often perceive themselves in terms of the characteristics that define the group. In other words, the members of subordinate groups, such as Jews living under Hellenistic or Roman rule, tend to place emphasis on their collective identity.[29] Promoting cohesiveness would be one way of positively distinguishing the low-status group from the dominant group.

Another way of achieving positive distinction, in line with the social creativity strategy, is to compare the ingroup with a group that is even lower in the status hierarchy.[30] For example, Philo of Alexandria, who lived in Augustan times, uses this method when he makes disparaging remarks about the Egyptians in his description of the violent hostilities that the Greeks launched against the Jews in Alexandria in 38 CE. At the time, the Romans were the supreme authority in the area, destabilizing the status hierarchy that the Greeks had dominated for three centuries. Philo's passing comments on the godlessness of the Egyptians, their worthless race, in whose souls are mixed the venom and temper of the native crocodiles and asps, and their nature bewitched by malice firmly establish the Jews' higher rung on the social ladder.[31]

Even though the idea of their own distinctiveness did not stop the Jews from seeking and elaborating on connections to other cultures, it primarily served the purpose of highlighting the primacy and superiority of their own traditions. In particular, the authors exploited the

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[29] See Lorenzi-Cioldi and Clémence 2001, 321–22; see also Hall 1997, 32.

[30] Abrams and Hogg 2010, 181. Studies in Western societies suggest that intergroup bias tends to cumulate, creating consensual ethnic hierarchies. The need to establish positive distinctiveness seems to motivate subordinate groups to maintain the hierarchy. See Hagendoorn 1995.

[31] *Legat.* 163, 166; *Flacc.* 29. The outbreak of Greek violence in a situation where their status had not only been diminished by Roman rule but was also threatened by the relative rise in status of their former subjects, the Jews, supports the contention that it is high-power groups who are likely to react forcefully to any threat to their position, not only because they have the most to lose but also because they have the means to do so (Stephan and Stephan 2017, 135). On the situation in Alexandria, see, e.g., Leon 2016, 43–45.

Greek readiness to associate Jewish teachings with Oriental wisdom by representing the development of Greek philosophy as dependent upon Jewish texts. For instance, *The Letter of Aristeas*, probably written in the second century BCE, represents the Jewish sages summoned from Jerusalem to the court of Ptolemy II Philadelphus as conversing in the manner of Greek philosophers, and their measured and pious words win the uncritical acclaim of the Greek literati.[32] Thus, Jewish traditions and wisdom not only appear as attractive to the Greek elite, but also clearly outshine the Hellenic mode of thinking. Both Aristobulus (second century BCE) and Philo of Alexandria were eager to prove that famed Greek philosophers from Pythagoras and Heraclitus to Plato and Zenon had merely voiced ideas that either could be found earlier in the Jewish scriptures, or were directly borrowed from them.[33] This theme is not prominent in Josephus's *Jewish War*, but in his polemic *Against Apion* (2.168–169, 281–282) he asserts that nearly all Greek philosophers from the Presocratics to the Stoics learned their doctrines on the nature of God from Moses, and that their precepts followed Mosaic Law. These writers represent the pre-eminence of the Jews as a matter of course, and, as a commonplace attitude, it would have been liable to provoke arrogance toward the Gentiles.[34] Patently, the uprising in Judea and surrounding regions—in which Josephus also had played his part—shows that a considerable proportion of the local elite and populace considered the dominant status of the Romans to be both unjustified and unsecure.

[32] *Let. Arit.* esp. 200, 235, 295–296. See also the discussion in Gruen 2011, 315–16, 333–37.

[33] Aristobulus cited in Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 1.22 and Euseb. *Praep. Ev.* 9.6.8, 13.12.1–8; see also Philo *Her.* 43.214; *Leg.* 1.33.108; *Aet.* 5.17–19; *Prob.* 8.57; Gruen 2011, 317–20, 331–32.

[34] It is difficult to assess how widespread these views were among the Judeans of the early Roman period. For example, Josephus emphasizes at every turn that some rebellious individuals and their followers fomented the war against the Romans, while the Jewish population at large was peace-loving and in fact the greatest sufferers of the rebels' murderous rage. On the other hand, Josephus's apologetic aim certainly influenced this message.

Now, if we consider the identity strategies that Dionysius lays out in *Roman Antiquities* and Josephus in the *Jewish War*, social mobility is notably featured in their literary agendas. They represent the Roman supremacy as legitimate and stable (Dionysius even underlined its unprecedented permanence), and—as shall be discussed below—moral and religious reasoning plays an essential role in their attempts to persuade their compatriots to accept Roman dominance. Moreover, Dionysius and Josephus perceive social boundaries as permeable, and they themselves eagerly embraced the possibility of being incorporated into the Roman literary elite.[35] As a rule, social mobility entails the adoption of the norms and values of the high-status group, and the concomitant abandonment of the beliefs and precepts of the low-status group. Thus, in keeping with their Roman patrons, both of the historians accommodated their way of presenting things to satisfy the expectations of their Roman audience.[36] However, as will be elaborated below, neither Dionysius nor Josephus suppressed their commitment to their fellow Greeks or Judeans, but rather projected their traditional values onto the Romans, and represented them as the torchbearers of their ancestral principles. Even though the values of the conquered peoples as such are not denigrated, Dionysius's Greeks and Josephus's Judeans often fall short of living up to their own ideals.

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[35] Augustus, as well as the Flavians, appreciated the members of non-Roman elites as mediators of Roman power to their own peoples (see Bowersock 2005).

[36] For instance, Josephus's effort to present himself as a successful military leader and strategist (features that were highly appreciated by the Romans, but less so by the Jews) indicates his willingness to assume Roman values (Rappaport 2007, 77). On the other hand, Dionysius's representation of Rome's civilizing mission echoes contemporary Roman discourses, but the historian's insistence on the Greek basis for civilization (including Roman) gives it a distinctive flavor (Fox 2019, 196).

Dionysius's Romans as the Upholders of Hellenic Piety and Virtue

Dionysius in many ways embraced Roman identity discourses, and he recognized no conflict between being a Greek and being a Roman; he offers his readers an identity that is a mixture of idealized Hellenicity and Roman values and morality. In fact, his main argument is that the Romans are Greeks and, since they have surpassed Greek achievements in many ways, it is only natural that they should rule over the Greek world. Unquestionably, Greek influences had contributed to the development of the nascent Roman culture. At this early stage, it was important for the Romans to show that they belonged to the civilized world, which was all but synonymous with Greek culture. By the third century BCE, the Romans had to some extent adopted the suggestion of some Greek writers that they were the descendants of the legendary Trojans. This supported the growing sense of a distinctive Roman identity, since it incorporated the Romans into the Greek cultural heritage while also offering them a distinctive identity that was independent from any contemporary Greek community (see Gruen 1992, 26–31).[37] The Romans had then conquered Greek territories little by little, starting from the Pyrrhic Wars in South Italy in the early third century and ending with the defeat of the Achaean League in the middle of the second century BCE.

This new configuration of power called for a distinctive Roman identity that would duly emphasize the Romans' superiority while also accommodating their rich cultural borrowings. As a result, the Roman image of Greece as the cradle of outstanding cultural achievements was

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[37] The myth of Trojan origins was particularly exploited in the propaganda of the Iulii, who claimed to be descended from Aeneas and, through him, from Venus. Because the contemporary preoccupation with the myth dominates our extant sources, including Dionysius, it is difficult to get an accurate picture of the weight given to Rome's Trojan origins during the Republic. See the discussion of Andrew Erskine (2001, 15–43).

supplemented by an image of corrupted contemporary *Graeculi*.[38] The effort to distinguish the Romans positively from the Greeks also led to views that the original Roman customs and institutions were better than those upon which the Greeks prided themselves, and that the Romans had surpassed the Greek accomplishments in many ways and even developed some Greek ideas further.[39] Yet, the Roman authors could still exploit the image of noble Greeks—and the concomitant Greek image of base Asiatics—when it suited them, as Cicero shows in his speech *For Flaccus* (59 BCE). Cicero contrasts the illustrious Athenians, stout Spartans, and well-ordered people of Marseilles to the greedy and untrustworthy people residing in Asia Minor, that is, in Phrygia, Mysia, Caria, and Lydia. As a sweeping reminder of the unreliability of the Asiatic Greeks, Cicero drags up their recent treachery—their banding together with King Mithridates and carrying out the massacre of the Romans.[40] Nearly three decades later, this episode was still gnawing away at the Roman trust in the Eastern Greeks.

Now, if we consider Dionysius's views on the coexistence of Greek and Roman identities, he resolves the apparent discrepancy by creating a superordinate idea of idealized Greekness that subsumes the Greeks as well as the Romans. Dionysius's construction of Greekness was essentially about origins and descendance, but was also, at least as importantly, about subscribing to and complying with a set of values interpreted as Hellenic.[41] Dionysius's first task was to fashion the Greek pedigree of the Romans. Greek authors had long been inventive in tracing Roman origins to a variety of Hellenic (or Trojan) founders, and the idea of a Greek Rome was well established by the end of the fourth century BCE; the Hellenistic period had, if anything, added to the appeal of the stories.[42] Dionysius could therefore draw on a long tradition in developing his own version. He accepted the belief about the Romans'

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[38] Gruen 1992, 52–55, 75–83, 260–65, 270–71; Woolf 1994, 120–21, 132; Rauhala 2018, 133–39.

[39] See, e.g., Cicero, *Tusc.* 1.1–3.

[40] Cicero, *Flac.* 60–66. See also Tahin 2013, 82–85.

[41] On Dionysius's understanding of Greekness, see Delcourt 2003a.

[42] See the discussion in Gruen 1992, 7–21.

Trojan ancestors, but for him they represented only the last of the five subsequent waves of Greek settlers who had laid the foundations of Rome. The first of these were the Aborigines, who descended from a tribe coming from the area known in Dionysius's time as Arcadia. The second wave of Greeks consisted of the Pelasgians, who were originally Argives from the Peloponnesus. Third, under the command of Evander, a group of settlers from the Arcadian town of Pallantium built a village on the hill later known as the Palatine; soon after this, Hercules led an expedition to the area, and some of his men, predominantly Peloponnesians, settled the hill later called the Capitolium. Last but not least, a group of Trojan refugees following Aeneas landed in Italy, and their descendants took an active part in the foundation of the city of Rome.[43] Thus, Dionysius reckons to have proven his point that the Romans "were Greeks and came together from nations not the smallest nor least considerable" (*Ant. Rom.* 1.5.1–2).[44]

Dionysius emphasizes repeatedly that the Greek colonists originated from the Peloponnesus, and especially from Arcadia, which he views as the heart of Greece.[45] In Dionysius's classicizing outlook, the Hellenistic kingdoms represent the decay of Greek ideals. In the preface to his *On the Ancient Orators*, Dionysius echoes Cicero's words as he deplores how his eastern Greek home region, embodied in the form of a Mysian, Phrygian, or Carian nuisance, had usurped the throne of the ancient and autochthonous Attic Muse. With this reference, he states his firm support of the Attic rhetorical style as opposed to the

[43] Dionysius elaborates the Greek ancestry of the Romans throughout the first book of his *Roman Antiquities*; see esp. 1.11.1; 1.17.1–2; 1.31.1–4; 1.33.4–5; 1.34.1–2; 1.44.2; 1.60.3; 1.89.1–4; 2.1.1–4; 2.2.1–2. He devotes a lengthy piece to a narrative of the Trojans' arrival in Italy and the foundation of Lavinium and Alba Longa (1.45–70), followed by his preferred version of the founding of Rome (1.76–88).

[44] Ἕλληνάς τε αὐτοὺς ὄντας … καὶ οὐκ ἐκ τῶν ἐλαχίστων ἢ φαυλοτάτων ἐθνῶν συνεληλυθότας. Cf. 7.70.1.

[45] Delcourt 2003a, 118–20, 122; accordingly, Dionysius affirms that the Trojans were also of Arcadian origin (*Ant. Rom.* 1.61–62). The contributing Greek settlers are discussed extensively in Delcourt 2003b, 113–47; see also Schultze 2012, 116–20, 125–26.

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Asian style, which was especially associated with the Hellenistic cities of Asia Minor. However, much more than eloquence was at stake. At the end of the Republic, referencing Asiatic style had developed into a term of abuse, which was used to tarnish one's opponents not only as loquacious and excessively impassionate but also as morally depraved, thus following a long tradition about the depravities of Oriental barbarism. In the Augustan milieu of Dionysius's time, the decadence and lavishness of Asian style was notably associated with Marcus Antonius and his rule in the eastern part of the Empire. First, by aligning with Atticism, Dionysius attempts to shed the depreciative connotations of his home region and instead associate himself with a lofty vision of an idealized classical Athens that coincided with the Roman ideals of austerity and moderation. Second, Dionysius also declares his loyalty to the Augustan regime, which has enabled the desired resurgence of political, moral, and aesthetic values.[46]

Dionysius's re-creation of a Greek Rome seems to have a personal motivation: whereas the Carian Dionysius might appear as a peripheral upstart, he builds an impeccable pedigree for his adopted Greco-Roman identity.[47] Furthermore, Dionysius made the Romans seem more dependent on their Greek heritage, which offered a balm to the sensibilities of the subjugated Greeks—but might have been hard to accept for many Romans;[48] however, he also made the Greek ancestry of the Romans more ancient and more significant. This was in accordance with Dionysius's objective of demonstrating the legitimacy of Roman power by Greek standards and make it acceptable from the Greek point of view.[49] While Dionysius's fervent endorsement of Atticism shows that he was immersed in contemporary Roman discourses, his promotion of classical Greece as the model for all contemporary Greeks to strive for and to identify with also mediates between the social mobility and social creativity strategies: Greeks from around the Empire could

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[46] *Ant. Or.* 3. See Spawforth 2012, 20–26; Yunis 2019, 85–88.

[47] Wiater 2011b, 88; cf. Wiater 2018, 232.

[48] Cf. Wiater 2011a, 108, 217–18; Wiater 2011b, 84, 90.

[49] On Dionysius's undertaking to explicate Roman supremacy with respect to Greek requirements, see Wiater 2011a, 169, 189–93.

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recognize the best values of the Athenian golden age in the contemporary Augustan Rome and take part in the revival of that heritage as its rightful representatives.

On the one hand, Dionysius's idea of Greekness was thus rooted in bloodlines, but ethnic origins alone did not ensure true Hellenicity. Far away from home, immersed in the riptide of foreign peoples, the Greek immigrants had established in Rome a more durable legacy than a fluctuating gene pool: values and institutions. These steady Greek moral foundations had created the greatness of Rome, and ultimately allowed her to surpass the standards set by Hellas; they were also the primary justification for her current hegemony.[50] Dionysius assures his Greek readers that, since the very beginning, the Romans had embodied the Greek ideals of freedom, piety, justice, self-governance, and martial spirit (*Ant. Rom.* 1.5.3 cited in note 10), and marvels that they have managed to hold on to their Greek traditions despite having taken in so many barbarians (*Ant. Rom.* 1.89.3). "For many others by living among barbarians," Dionysius continues, "have in a short time forgotten all their Greek heritage, so that they neither speak the Greek language nor observe the customs of the Greeks nor acknowledge the same gods nor have the same equitable laws (by which most of all the spirit of the Greeks differs from that of the barbarians) nor agree with them in anything else whatever that relates to the ordinary intercourse of life" (*Ant. Rom.* 1.89.4).[51] Only the Roman pronunciation has deteriorated but, in other respects, they have preserved their Hellenic ways better than any other colonists, and they had always lived a Greek life (βίον Ἕλληνα ζῶντες; *Ant. Rom.* 1.90.1).

Dionysius traces the origins of many Roman institutions to Greek models more eagerly than the Romans did;[52] but, in doing so, Dionysius

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[50] Cf. Delcourt 2003a, 128–29; Peirano 2010, 42; Wiater 2011a, 189.

[51] ἐπεὶ ἄλλοι γε συχνοὶ ἐν βαρβάροις οἰκοῦντες ὀλίγου χρόνου διελθόντος ἅπαν τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν ἀπέμαθον, ὡς μήτε φωνὴν Ἑλλάδα φθέγγεσθαι μήτε ἐπιτηδεύμασιν Ἑλλήνων χρῆσθαι, μήτε θεοὺς τοὺς αὐτοὺς νομίζειν, μήτε νόμους τοὺς ἐπιεικεῖς, ᾧ μάλιστα διαλλάσσει φύσις Ἑλλὰς βαρβάρου, μήτε τῶν ἄλλων συμβολαίων μηδ᾽ ὁτιοῦν.

[52] Esp. Cic., *Tusc.* 1.2; see also Wiater 2011a, 182–85, 213–16.

assures the reader that the Romans have chosen the best Greek institutions and customs, rejecting many doubtful features that the Greeks themselves had embraced. For example, he relates that Romulus divided the populace into high-born patricians and common plebeians after the Athenian model, and assigned each group their duties. Then he established the *clientela*, which allowed the plebeians to choose a patrician as their patron. Dionysius traces this institution to the customs of the Athenians and the Thessalians, but emphasizes the superiority of Romulus's system, since the alliance was based on befitting tasks and mutual benevolence, whereas in the Greek antecedents the more powerful abused the disadvantaged, assigning them degrading nominations and treating them in undignified ways (*Ant. Rom.* 2.8.1–2; 2.9.2–3).[53]

Dionysius ascribes a fundamental and lasting role to Romulus's constitution in shaping Rome's future success: it established the decisive Greek virtues as the foundation of distinctive Roman identity.[54] As regards the merits that enabled Rome's rise to prominence, Dionysius expressly praises the Romans' superior hospitality and willingness to extend their citizen rights to different parties. Whereas the Greeks tended to slaughter or enslave the conquered, the Romans established colonies in the seized areas and even granted citizenship to defeated communities, and in doing so the Romans capitalized on their victories to the greatest extent.[55] The Greek approach had been very conceited and short-sighted: because of their vainglorious pride, the Spartans, the Thebans, and ultimately the Athenians had lost their hegemony—and even their freedom—after a single defeat, but the magnanimity of the Romans had enabled them to weather the many catastrophes of

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[53] On the Greek roots of other Roman institutions, see, e.g., *Ant. Rom.* 2.12.3, 2.14.2 (the Senate); 2.13.4 (the king's guard); 2.23.2–3 (common meals); 5.73.3 (the appointment of dictators); 10.51.5 (legal reform); cf. 2.30.5 (the abduction of women); 3.11.4 (openness); 5.47.2 (the *ovatio*). At 7.70–73, Dionysius elaborates the Greekness of Roman religious practices.

[54] For example, *Ant. Rom.* 2.3.3–4; 2.24.1; see also Wiater 2011a, 172–180, 214, 216.

[55] *Ant. Rom.* 1.6.4, 2.16.1; cf. 1.89.1; 3.11.4–5; 14.6.3. On the ideal of *humanitas* in Roman imperial discourse, see Cic., *Quint. fratr.* 1.1.27; Woolf 1994, 119–20.

the Second Punic War (*Ant. Rom.* 2.17). As a Greek writer in Rome, Dionysius had good reason indeed to celebrate the Roman policy of mostly being lenient toward the conquered and enabling social mobility.

The celebration of Roman customs also brings us to the question of piety, and how Dionysius and Josephus harnessed it to justify Roman dominance. Dionysius claims that in religious matters the Romans had also followed the best Greek customs but had rejected those traditions that were shameful or unworthy. The institution of religious customs also rested with Romulus, who acknowledged that the favor of the gods was crucial for all human efforts. Therefore, the organization of religious life was central to his endeavor to encourage the virtues and piety of the citizens. Dionysius attributes to Romulus not only the Homeric task of specifying and arranging the divine world, but also the concrete establishment of the framework for worship, including sanctuaries, altars, and the composition of the sacred calendar (*Ant. Rom.* 2.18.1–2). In all this, Romulus followed the best Greek customs (τοῖς κρατίστοις τῶν παρ᾽Ἕλλησι νομίμων [2.18.2]), but "he rejected all the traditional myths concerning the gods that contain blasphemies or calumnies against them, looking upon these as wicked, useless and indecent, and unworthy, not only of the gods, but even of good men" (*Ant. Rom.* 2.18.3).[56] These offensive myths included Greek tales of divine succession and disappearing or enervated gods, and Dionysius equally frowns upon the rituals and festivals that emulated such myths. Fawningly, he claims that, up until his days, the Romans have managed to ward off divine possession and begging on behalf of the gods, Corybantic and Bacchic revelries, secret initiation rituals, nightly orgies where men and women mingle, and all such charades (*Ant. Rom.* 2.19.1–2). The Romans, Dionysius boldly states, show such deep respect to the gods in words and deeds that it outshines the Greeks and the barbarians (*Ant. Rom.* 2.19.2). Furthermore, he emphatically marvels that not even the inflow of countless peoples with their native cults has made the Romans

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56 τοὺς δὲ παραδεδομένους περὶ αὐτῶν μύθους, ἐν οἷς βλασφημίαι τινὲς ἔνεισι κατ᾽ αὐτῶν ἢ κακηγορίαι, πονηροὺς καὶ ἀνωφελεῖς καὶ ἀσχήμονας ὑπολαβὼν εἶναι καὶ οὐχ ὅτι θεῶν ἀλλ᾽ οὐδ᾽ ἀνθρώπων ἀγαθῶν ἀξίους, ἅπαντας ἐξέβαλε. See also Beard et al. 1998, 172–73.

adopt foreign customs by public consent; even as they have piously introduced certain sacred rites from abroad, they have observed them according to their own traditions and staved off all nonsense (*Ant. Rom.* 2.19.3).

As a telling example, Dionysius mentions the cult of the Idaean Mother (*Ant. Rom.* 2.19.3–4), which was introduced to Rome at the end of the third century BCE and involved practically all the elements that he claimed the Romans had rejected. However, the historian makes a strict division between the "Phrygian" rituals, whereto all the questionable features are shunted, and the "Roman" cult, which abides by the Roman customs of propriety. Thus, he approvingly claims that none of the native Romans march through the city to the strains of the flute, wearing multicolored robes, begging and celebrating the goddess's Phrygian orgies; furthermore, he notes that in avoiding these "Phrygian" practices they are acting according to the law and the Senate's decree (*Ant. Rom.* 2.19.5).[57] Although many of these "Phrygian" features that the historian mentions rather belong to the Greek cult of the goddess, Dionysius is willing to follow and even strengthen the Roman division, which reinforces the negative connotations of Asia Minor while protecting the pristine image of Roman piety and judiciousness. As a result, the Greeks are not represented as the originators of questionable rituals, even though the Romans have been more prudent in keeping such excessive practices at arm's length.

In elevating piety and high morality as the leading characteristic of the Romans and as the cornerstone of their military success, Dionysius echoed the Roman self-image of the late republican and early imperial periods. Cicero, for example, could acknowledge the superiority of other peoples in other areas of life, but in piety and the proper worship of the gods he thought the Romans were far superior.[58] Dionysius's em-

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[57] Ῥωμαίων δὲ τῶν αὐθιγενῶν οὔτε μητραγυρτῶν τις οὔτε καταυλούμενος πορεύεται διὰ τῆς πόλεως ποικίλην ἐνδεδυκὼς στολὴν οὔτε ὀργιάζει τὴν θεὸν τοῖς Φρυγίοις ὀργιασμοῖς κατὰ νόμον καὶ ψήφισμα βουλῆς. See also Borgeaud 1993; Beard 1994; Roller 1999, 293–96; Šterbenc Erker 2009, 85–86; Rauhala 2013, 300.

[58] See, e.g., Cic., *Har. Resp.* 19; *Nat. D.* 2.7–9.

phasis on Roman piety also fit in well with Augustus's religious policy and his desire to present himself as a restorer of ancestral practices.[59] Furthermore, Dionysius drew on Roman precedents in distinguishing between Roman and foreign religious elements. The identification of certain religious practices as non-Roman had its origins in the third and second centuries BCE in the need to accentuate the distinctiveness of Roman religion, and thereby the distinctiveness of Roman collective identity.[60] As well as helping to promote early imperial Roman identity, Dionysius also paved the way for Greeks to see themselves in a positive light by emphasizing the ultimate Greekness of Roman virtues.

Dionysius divided the world into two camps, the Greeks and the barbarians, and made a case for incorporating the Romans into the Greeks. Yet, it was precisely the Romans' compliance with the Greek moral code that enabled their elevation as the leaders of the civilized world. According to Dionysius, behavior ultimately established the borderline between the Greeks and the barbarians (*Ant. Rom.* 14.6.5), and while the Romans lived up to ancestral expectations, the Greeks often found themselves on the wrong side of the border. The Romans' magnanimity set them above the once leading Greek states of Athens and Sparta, who sank into barbarism in their ruthless treatment of their kindred peoples (*Ant. Rom.* 14.6.3–4).[61] When the Greek colonists of Tarentum first encountered the Romans, they disparaged the "barbarity" of the ambassador, but their frivolous, insolent, and degenerate behavior, which infringed upon all decencies, bluntly illustrated their own barbarism.[62]

The piety and moral rectitude of the Romans also brought the blessings of divine providence to them,[63] and serves to explain why King Pyrrhus of Epirus was unable to defeat the Romans despite his great abilities as a military leader and his well-trained, experienced, and

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[59] See, e.g., Beard et al. 1998, 167–68; Galinsky 2007, 73–78; Scheid 2007, 177–92.

[60] Orlin 2010, 24–26.

[61] See also Wiater 2018, 228–29.

[62] *Ant. Rom.* 19.5; Peirano 2010, 43–44.

[63] For example, *Ant. Rom.* 5.54.1; 8.26.3; 7.12.4. See also Engels 2012, 154–55. Dionysius's argument about the well-deserved divine favor counters the accusations of erratic Fortune being the architect of Rome's success.

more numerous troops. The king confessed that waging war against the most pious and just among the Greeks is likely to turn grievous (*Ant. Rom*. 20.6.1).[64] Indeed, Pyrrhus even made the fatal mistake of violating sacred property; his desperate lack of funds led him to plunder the treasury of Persephone's temple in Locri, and this sacrilege brought divine wrath upon him. It was because of this, Dionysius concludes, that the Romans defeated the Greek troops (*Ant. Rom*. 20.9–10).[65]

Romans as the Implementers of God's Will in Josephus

In the preface to his *Jewish Antiquities*, Josephus states that the history of the Jews illustrates that those who follow the will of God will earn immeasurable benefits, while the offenders' efforts will run into the sand (*Ant. Jud.* 1.14). Yet, in the *Jewish War* it is the Romans who realize the fruits of divine benevolence, while the Judeans reap the bitter harvest of their transgressions. Thus, the question of piety and divine providence that rationalizes Rome's dominance in Dionysius's historical account is also a key explanatory factor in Josephus's version of the lost war in Judea. Even though Josephus may well have envisaged Roman rule as a passing divine punishment (Cowan 2018, 485–86), just like Dionysius's *Roman Antiquities* the *Jewish War* reads as a defense of the Roman ascendancy and hyphenated Greco-/Judeo-Roman identity. According to

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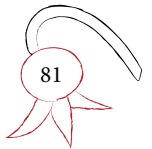
[64] ἀνθρώπους ὁσιωτάτους Ἑλλήνων καὶ δικαιοτάτους.

[65] On Dionysius's description of Pyrrhus, see also Peirano 2010, 47–51. Pyrrhus's troops were also involved in the looting and desecration of the royal tombs in the ancient Macedonian capital of Aegae, but Dionysius does not address this point. One reason may be that the outrage was committed by Pyrrhus's Galatian mercenaries, although other Greek historians chided Pyrrhus for not punishing them properly (Diod. Sic. *Bib. Hist.* 22.12.1; Plut. *Pyrrh.* 26.6–7). Another reason for Dionysius's omission may be that the reference to Aegae might have evoked the utter destruction of the city at the hands of the Roman troops after the Battle of Pydna in 168 BCE—a memory that would not have served Dionysius's argument. In any case, the focus on southern Italy neatly captures the passing of the baton from the Greeks to the Romans.

Josephus, God has sanctioned Roman dominance, and pious Jews can also identify themselves as Romans.

In keeping with Roman self-perception, both historians paint a picture of the Romans' superior piety and unwavering respect for religious principles, which grants them divine favor. Even though Josephus does not attempt to merge the Jewish and Roman identities in the same fashion as Dionysius did with the Greeks, he repeatedly emphasizes that to succumb to Roman rule is not only in the best interest of the Judeans but also a pious thing to do, since the unparalleled Roman achievements show that God is on their side. Josephus emphasizes the leniency of the Romans: they were reluctant to wage war against the Judeans and took pity on the suffering of the people. Further, Josephus stresses that the greatest atrocities his people suffered were because of domestic tyrants and internal seditions, and that the Roman aggression that put an end to the rabble-rousers ultimately came as a blessing.[66] Josephus admits that there had been many Roman provocations before the outbreak of the rebellion, but he puts the blame on corrupt procurators, who wanted to incite a revolt to serve their personal ambitions.[67] In doing so, Josephus asserts that the misconduct does not represent the Roman regime as a whole, thus mitigating the boundary between the Judeans and Romans as a people. Instead, he claims that the Judean rebel leaders and those susceptible to their agitation consistently committed massacres, impieties, and other immeasurable outrages. It was they who destroyed Jerusalem—the Romans merely implemented the divine revenge.

As noted above, the pursuit of a positive social identity often gives rise to ingroup bias that, among other things, leads one to evaluate ingroup members more favorably than outgroup members. However, because ingroup members are expected to excel on those dimensions that are perceived as positively differentiating the group, a failure to live up to these expectations leads one to judge the poor performance of an ingroup member even more harshly than comparable performance

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[66] For example, *Bell. Jud.* 1.10; 1.27; 5.255–257; 5.443–444.

[67] *Bell. Jud.* 2.272–276 (on Lucceius Albinus; cf. *Ant. Jud.* 20.9.3, 5), 2.277–283; 292–308; 318–320; 326–333 (on Gessius Florus; cf. *Ant. Jud.* 20.11.1).

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by outgroup members. This so-called "black sheep effect" is particularly severe for ingroup members who deviate from the defining group norms, because they are seen as jeopardizing the positive distinctiveness of the group.[68] This is also evident in Josephus's assessment of those who are to blame for the degradation of Judea. Since the idea of an exclusive covenant with God was a key component of the positively distinct Jewish identity, Josephus lashes out most severely at those Judeans who had violated crucial moral and religious norms and whom he held responsible for divine punishment—more severely than at the Romans.

In Josephus's interpretation of historical causality, the Judeans' road to perdition was paved with their own failure to observe religious laws. Since Josephus sought to represent the majority of the Jews as devout, virtuous, and peace-loving, the Jewish rebels and their sacrilegious behavior had to be the real reason behind the defeat. Josephus lists countless massacres of fellow Jews that the rebels had committed throughout the uprising, but many of their violations also had a religious dimension, which in Josephus's view brought divine vengeance upon the Jews.[69] To begin with, waging war necessarily led to violations of religious rules, such as the observation of the Sabbath.[70] Second, Josephus relates that the Zealots violated the customary procedure for electing the high priest based on hereditary succession. As a member of the priestly nobility, Josephus expresses his abhorrence at this affront, claiming that the rebels appointed their henchmen to this honorable position so that they could continue their impieties (*Bell. Jud.* 4.147–148, 153–157). The Idumean troops supporting the Zealots even murdered high priests and left their bodies unburied.[71] Josephus emphasizes that the insurgents trampled on human and divine laws alike (*Bell. Jud.* 4.386); yet,

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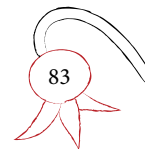
[68] See, e.g., Marques 1990; Marques et al. 2001, 407–9; Abrams and Hogg 2010, 185–86.

[69] See also Regev 2011, 280–84.

[70] *Bell. Jud.* 2.391–394, 456, 517. Josephus claims that the rebel leader John of Gischala deliberately neglected ancestral customs and purity regulations, as if he had risen against God (7.263–264).

[71] *Bell. Jud.* 4.315–317; 7.267; cf. 4.381–383 (the Zealots' denial of burial on pain of death); 5.33. In a peculiar episode (*Bell. Jud.* 4.561–563), Josephus also relates how the Galileans preened and dressed up like women and succumbed to

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the most fatal offense was the defilement of the Temple. In numerous accounts, Josephus refers to the impurity of the Zealots, who pollute sacred spaces with their blood-stained hands;[72] they do not even hesitate to appropriate sacred property for their bellicose purposes (*Bell. Jud.* 5.8, 36, 562–565). To top it all off, the internecine fighting extended into the Temple itself, and people were killed there, many of them innocent worshippers (*Bell. Jud.* 5.10, 14–19, 102–103). Josephus refers to a prophesy presaging that the city would fall into enemies' hands and fire would consume the Temple if sedition fell upon the sacred precinct and its own people tainted it; thus, Josephus argues that the Zealots became the instruments of doom (*Bell. Jud.* 4.388).

The greatest concern for Josephus—and undoubtedly other Jews—was the destruction of the Temple. The rebellion originated from a dispute over the sacrifices in the Temple, and the burning of the Temple marked the victory of the Romans. Apparently, controversy over the control of the Temple and the sacrificial cult was a central motive for the uprising; while the Zealots strove to purge the cult from any Roman influences, Josephus argues for the opposite side, accusing the Zealots of polluting the Temple (Regev 2011, 288–89).[73] From their point of view, the Roman leaders had a legitimate reason to seek the destruction of the Temple and with it the sacrificial cult that was central to Jewish social identity and anti-Roman social competition. For example, James Rives has argued for a conscious Vespasianic policy that aimed at suppressing the Jewish Temple cult following the capture of Jerusalem.[74] The Temple spoils were prominently displayed in Vespasian and Titus's triumph in 71 CE (*Bell. Jud.* 7.148–150) and the triumphal arch, and some of these items were placed in Vespasian's Temple of Peace (*Bell.*

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lasciviousness and illicit pleasures while still carrying on their ruthless violence and murders.

[72] For example, *Bell. Jud.* 2.242; 4.150, 159, 163, 171, 183, 242; 5.100, 380–381; 6.95, 122. The rebels also shed their own blood in the Temple, not concerning themselves with whether they should die there (4.201, 215).

[73] On Josephus's tendency to downplay and distort religious and ideological motives for the uprising, see Mader 2000, 10–17 and *passim*.

[74] See Rives 2005, 152–54, 161–65.

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Jud. 7.161–162), which shows that the containment of the Temple cult was represented as important to the Roman victory. Furthermore, Vespasian's decisions, first to redirect the tax that all Jews had paid to the Temple to the Capitoline cult (*Bell. Jud.* 7.218) and second to close the Jewish temple of Onias in Egypt (*Bell. Jud.* 7.421), suggest a determined effort to suppress the Temple cult for good. The sacrificial cult that centered on the Jerusalem Temple brought together Jews across regional borders and served as the focal point of their ethno-religious identity. From the Roman perspective, as long as the Temple cult was allowed to continue, it would form a competing basis of allegiance and remain as a potential source of future unrest.

Yet, Josephus toils to exonerate the Romans and, in doing so, puts the blame on the Jewish rebels. Besides attesting to Josephus's attempt to kowtow to his Roman patrons, it also opens up a twofold strategy for constructing a positive Jewish identity under the Roman yoke. On the one hand, Josephus associates the Romans' values with those of the Jews, thus opening up a path to social mobility: Judeans may also identify themselves as Romans without compromising the beliefs and practices at the core of their distinctive identity as Jews. On the other hand, by castigating the wickedness of the rebels and downplaying the offenses of the Romans, Josephus works to ensure that his idea of Jewishness will remain intact despite the challenge from within.[75] Like Dionysius before him, Josephus purports that the success of the Roman Empire resulted from divine providence. He emphasizes the Romans' respect for Jewish customs and laws, which they heeded better than the rebels did.[76] Even though Roman soldiers admittedly burned down and

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[75] Assuming that the rebels criticized the observance of religious customs by the priestly authorities, this would have questioned the basis of positive distinctiveness that the Judean ruling elite advocated (cf. *Bell. Jud.* 7.255); since Josephus belonged to this establishment and aimed at its rehabilitation after the war, his fervent reaction against the rebels is unsurprising.

[76] *Bell. Jud.* 2.391; 4.182–184; 5.362–363, 368, 402; 6.101–102, 122–128; cf. 4.262 and 6.333–336 where Titus blames the rebel leaders for taking advantage of Roman permissiveness. In his account of Pompey's capture of Jerusalem (*Bell. Jud.* 1.148–153), Josephus stresses Pompey's admiration for the priests' strict observance of religious practices even when their lives were at stake. Albeit

plundered the Temple during the siege of Jerusalem, Josephus portrays them as mere instruments of divine will. God had long ago condemned the Temple to the fire (κατεψήφιστο μὲν τὸ πῦρ ὁ θεὸς πάλαι; *Bell. Jud.* 6.250; cf. 4.323–324), and a certain Roman soldier, experiencing a divine impulse (δαιμονίῳ ὁρμῇ τινι χρώμενος), set the building ablaze (*Bell. Jud.* 6.252). According to Josephus, Titus Flavius, who led the Roman troops in the last phase of the war, did everything in his power to save the Temple, even against the advice of other Roman commanders, but his efforts failed.[77]

In general, Josephus portrays the atrocities of the insurgents as heralding upcoming divine punishment (e.g., *Bell. Jud.* 2.455, 5.377–378, 401–403), and he then represents the Romans as accomplishing the will of God by implementing his retribution (*Bell. Jud.* 5.395–398, 408–412). The Romans will purge the seditious pollution with fire, the historian declares (*Bell. Jud.* 5.19). Throughout his narrative, Josephus draws attention to the divine hand that can be seen directing the course of the war. On several occasions, Josephus relates how God uses the Romans to realize His plan, and aids their marching onward to capture cities (e.g., *Bell. Jud.* 3.292–293, 4.76–77, 5.39). God even turned arrows away from the future emperor Titus as he inspected the walls of Jerusalem (*Bell. Jud.* 5.60–61). Divine will is also the justification that Josephus offers for allying himself with the Romans. He purports that God aided his survival in Jotapata, and that his wish to carry out God's will

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admitting that Pompey had entered the forbidden innermost part of the Temple, Josephus underlines that he did not touch any of the sacred objects or money kept there. See, however, *Bell. Jud.* 2.50. Similarly, in *Jewish Antiquities* Josephus represents Alexander the Great as a mythical king and conqueror who honors the god of the Jews and whose authority emanates from this recognition (Johnson 2005, 75–76).

[77] *Bell. Jud.* 6.236–242, 254–256, 262–266; cf. 6.328, 346–347 where Josephus's Titus blames the rebels for ruining the Temple. As Miriam Pucci Ben Ze'ev (2011, 58–63; cf. Rives 2005, 148–50) points out, the number of fires lit by the Romans, together with the looting of the Temple and the final order to raze it to the ground (*Bell. Jud.* 7.1), imply that Titus annihilated the Temple more purposefully than Josephus suggests.

made him shun the collective suicide orchestrated by his companions.[78] Josephus asserts that it was his duty to pass on the divine message he had received about the future emperorships of Vespasian and Titus. In this way, Josephus declared himself as a mediator between the Jews and the Romans, and took it as his mission to show that one can be a devout Jew as well as a loyal Roman citizen.[79]

The words that Josephus addresses directly to his readers seem to summarize his views: God has always helped the Jewish people subdue foreign invaders and avenge the wrongs committed on them. However, the Jewish factions had violated the laws of God and polluted the holy Temple. Since the Romans had shown greater respect for Jewish traditions than the bloodthirsty rebels, God had chosen them as the instruments of his greater design (*Bell. Jud.* 5.376–378). To fight the Romans is the same as fighting against God himself, whereas following Jewish customs and being a loyal Roman subject are reconcilable.

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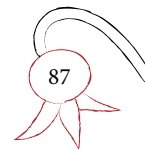
Conclusion

At the time when Dionysius and Josephus were writing their histories, their home countries had been under Roman rule for over a century. However, Roman power was not yet so embedded that it could not be challenged—Josephus had even been a prominent leader during the recent revolution. Thus, in the eastern Mediterranean, local identities were probably more salient than any concept of overarching Romanness, and the Romans could be perceived as conquerors and occupiers rather than as objects of identification. Consequently, the Romans would have mainly been perceived as a high-status group that held political and military power, whereas the local population would have appeared as

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[78] For example, *Bell Jud.* 3.361; cf. Rappaport 2007, 75.

[79] Josephus's retelling of the story of the Tobiads in *Jewish Antiquities* (12.154–236) also equates obedience to a foreign ruler with piety and loyalty to the Jewish community: the Tobiads work together with the Ptolemies to further the well-being of their fellow Jews, while the protestors only pursue their self-centered interests (Johnson 2005, 87–88).

a low-status group in comparison to the Romans. In order to achieve a positive social identity as Greeks or Carians, as Jews or Judeans, one solution was social creativity, which emphasized those qualities and cultural achievements that set those groups above the Romans. These kinds of comparisons might also fuel social competition that questioned the justification of Roman rule. On the other hand, both Dionysius and Josephus exploited the possibilities that the permeability of intergroup boundaries in the Roman Empire offered—that is, social mobility.

Dionysius and Josephus aligned themselves with the Romans and, while retaining their native identities, they also embraced Roman imperial discourses. Dionysius even denied that there would or should be any conflict between Greek and Roman identities, since Romans were among the most ancient and virtuous Greeks. The creation of hybrid identities was deliberate, aimed at reinforcing the positive social identities of Greeks and Jews, respectively, but it also served the interests of the Roman regime. If the conquered peoples were to identify themselves more and more as (also) Romans, the salience of lower-level local identities would diminish, and so would ingroup bias.[80] Moreover, Dionysius and Josephus not only mediated Roman knowledge practices to Greek and Jewish audiences, but also promoted perceptions of the legitimacy of Roman imperial rule and the stability of the existing status hierarchy, which was likely to discourage social competition and antagonism. As a result, a key theme in Dionysius's *Roman Antiquities* and in Josephus's *Jewish War* is the justification of Roman dominance. According to system justification theory, people are motivated to perceive the current social order as fair and legitimate. Although the benefits of maintaining and justifying the status quo through various strategies and institutional structures are obvious to high-status groups, low-status groups are also seen as supporting the stability of the system that produces their disadvantaged position. The need to present the group in power as deserving

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[80] It has been found that self-categorization at a higher level (that is, a higher level of inclusiveness, such as being a Greek as opposed to being a Halicarnassian) makes identities at a lower level (relatively) less salient, as the comparative identity becomes either low or negative. This also affects the level of ingroup favoritism. See Ros et al. 2000.

of its dominance is particularly pressing when the subordinate group is unable to change the social hierarchy.[81] Accordingly, both historians try to convince their readers that the unforeseen success of the Romans is a sign of divine support. The Romans implement divine will, either because of their superior virtues and piety, or because God uses them to punish impious deeds.

Nevertheless, the acceptance of Roman domination did not prevent Dionysius and Josephus from using strategies to create positive social identities. Both Dionysius and Josephus argue for the compatibility of their native identities and the imperial Roman identity, using history as evidence to support their cases. For Dionysius, Greekness is not just about ethnic origins but, more crucially, about adhering to Hellenic values and customs. Therefore, the mixture of foreign peoples with the Greek stock in Rome did not dilute their Hellenicity as long as they kept to their ancestral Greek practices. Dionysius's message for his Roman readers, thus, entailed an exhortation to nurture their Greek heritage, lest they lose the foundations of their power and civilization and sink into barbarism.[82] In doing so, Dionysius also illustrates the Romans' continuing dependence on Hellenic tradition, which further ameliorated the Greeks' *amour propre*.[83] While the Greeks themselves had failed to follow their age-old principles, the Romans had carried on the classical legacy and eventually surpassed it. Therefore, Dionysius's Romans were the rightful leaders of the Greek world, just as Josephus's Romans were by the will of God the justified rulers of Judea.

History is a powerful tool for identity formation. Certain historical events become the focal points of society's collective memory; they are reproduced in writings, monuments, and rituals, and they are interpreted and exploited in a way that renders them meaningful in a given time. This transmitted and construed knowledge of the past forms the

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[81] See Fiske and Russell 2001, 122 and the general discussion in Jost et al. 2004.

[82] See esp. Delcourt 2003a, 133; Luraghi 2003; Peirano 2010, 51–52; Wiater 2011a, 201–4; Wiater 2011b, 82–83.

[83] Wiater 2011b, 84–85, 89–90; cf. Wiater 2011a, 217–23.

basis of cultural identity.[84] Josephus picked out events from the recent past that had proven momentous for the Jews residing in Palestine, and with his chosen vantage point he made a case for a Roman Jewish identity that rose above the damaging internal factionalism. Dionysius, in his turn, chose events from a distant past that the Romans had already long retold, and reproduced them as a part of their collective identity. However, the leading argument of Dionysius is that these events should also form part of the cultural identity of his fellow Greeks. The Greeks could thus embrace the achievements of the Romans as their own, and they could declare themselves as Romans by virtue of their Greekness. Josephus, on the other hand, reassured his fellow Jews that the lessons of history showed that the Romans were part of God's great plan, and therefore there was no conflict in adopting both Jewish and Roman identities.

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[84] That is, the awareness of the unity and distinctiveness of a certain group. See, e.g., Assmann 1995; Steinbock 2013, 2–3, 7–18.

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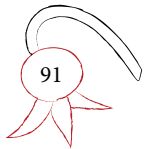
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