PART I

Cultures and identities

1 Culture, identity and power

> Quintus Ennius used to say he had three hearts, because he knew how to speak in Greek and Oscan and Latin.
>
> (Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights* 17.17.1)

> In this respect he [Favorinus] seems to have been equipped by the gods themselves for this very purpose: to give a model to the locals of Hellas that there is no difference between education and birth; to teach the Romans that not even those with high social standing can overlook the standing brought by education; and to teach the Celts that none of the barbarians should feel alienated from Hellenic culture, with him as their model.
>
> (Dio of Prusa, Oration 37, 26–7)

Two literary figures, spanning the period with which this book is concerned, embody the complex layering of Roman cultural identities. Ennius, whose epic vision of Roman history in the *Annales* was among the pioneering works of the new Latin literature, came from Rudiae in the heel of Italy, the Salento, close to the modern Lecce.[1] Though in an area heavily colonised by the Greeks since the seventh century, in the ambit of Tarentum, it was in origin a settlement of the local tribe, the Messapi, one which spoke its own distinctive variant of the Italic language. By Ennius' birth in 239 BCE, the town had been under Roman control for half a century; but the Romans acknowledged South Italy, or 'Magna Graecia' as a Greek-speaking territory.[2] In a famous anecdote transmitted by the second-century CE antiquarian, Aulus Gellius, Ennius is reported to have described himself as having three hearts, *tria corda*, because he knew how to speak in Greek and Oscan and Latin.[3] What is so striking is not his trilingual skill, but the fact that he felt that these languages represented *hearts*: what should be unique was triple. It went to the core of his identity. There are puzzles about this saying. Oscan is treated by linguists as a separate language group from Messapic. Perhaps because Oscan was the most dominant of the central Italian languages, it

[1] See Skutsch (1985), Rawson (1989) 444–8. [2] Lomas (1993), Crawford (1996a) 981–3.
[3] Aulus Gellius 17.17.1; see Skutsch (1985) 749–50.

stood proxy for any local dialect; or perhaps Ennius actually was brought up in a family of Oscan speakers, though in Messapian territory. In any case, 'Oscan' stands for the local Italic language, neither Greek nor Roman. His Greek came from his education, probably at Tarentum, his Latin from the realities of Roman domination: he is said to have been taken to Rome under the wing of no less a figure than Cato, the future Censor, and his writings show ample proof not only of his mastery of Latin, but his ability to represent the Romans to themselves with pride. He became a Roman citizen in 184 BCE, and celebrated his change of citizenship in the line

Nos sumus Romani qui fuimus ante Rudini
We are Romans who were once Rudians.[4]

His pride in being Roman, correctly defined by citizenship, was no impediment to retaining his Oscan heart.

The second figure is Favorinus of Arelate (modern Arles): the Romans called this area Provincia Nostra, *our* province, though indeed Greek influence goes back to the foundation of the Greek colony of Massilia. Prominent as a member of the Greek literary movement which adopted the label of 'sophists', called in modern scholarship the Second Sophistic, he moved among the notable literary figures of Hadrianic Rome, including Plutarch and Herodes Atticus on the Greek side, Cornelius Fronto and Aulus Gellius on the Latin.[5] The biographical sketch of him in Philostratus' *Lives of the Sophists* (8) reports the three 'paradoxes' he claimed to have marked his life: that though a Gaul he spoke Greek (ἑλληνίζειν/*hellēnizein*), though a eunuch he had been tried for adultery, and though he had quarrelled with the emperor Hadrian, he was still alive.

On the first of these paradoxes, he has more to say in the speech that survives among the works of his teacher, Dio of Prusa (*Oration* 37, the 'Corinthian Oration'). Indeed, the phrasing of the paradox is opaque, for it is not immediately clear how far *hellēnizein* shades beyond its root sense of 'speaking Greek' to one more charged with cultural identity, of 'behaving/living like a Greek'. Trying to persuade the Corinthians not to take down the statue erected in his honour, now that he is out of favour with the emperor, he points to the model of a Lucanian who was honoured with a statue by the people of Tarentum because his Doric dialect was so pure. The Messapian Ennius, of course, would equally have needed to prove his linguistic purity to the Tarentines, whose purist intolerance was also shown by their abuse of

[4] Fr. 525, see Feeney (2007) 143.
[5] Illuminatingly discussed by Gleason (1995) 3–20, 131–68; also Whitmarsh (2001a) 119–21.

a third-century Roman ambassador for his poor Greek.[6] As for Favorinus himself, surely he deserves a bronze statue:

> If someone who is not a Lucanian, but a Roman, not one of the plebs, but of the equestrian order, and who has imitated not only the language, but the thinking and way of life and dress of the Greeks, and has done so with such conspicuous mastery as to have no rival either among the Romans before him or the Greeks of his own day . . . should he not have a bronze statue set up by you? Yes, and city by city: by you [Corinthians], because though a Roman he has become perfectly Hellenic (*aphēllēnisthē*), just as has your city; by the Athenians, because he speaks Attic dialect; by the Spartans because he is devoted to gymnastics; by all because he philosophises and has already inspired many of the Hellenes to philosophise with him, and has in addition pulled in no small number of barbarians. (25–6)

He makes quite clear that it is an issue of cultural identity. He is more Greek than any Roman, even more Greek than any Greek of his day (he would naturally concede superiority to the classics of the past) because his *hellēnizein* goes beyond language to an entire way of life. His Roman identity is guaranteed by his membership of the *ordo equester*. Here he is not a Gaul who has made himself a perfect Greek (*aphēllēnisthē*), but a Roman. Similarly the Corinthians represent a colony of Roman citizens who nevertheless have learned to live like perfect Greeks. His philosophical activity as a sophist makes him not merely a good convert, but a notable recruiter for the cause of hellenism.

His enthusiasm for his own cultural ambidexterity carries him to higher extremes: he goes on to assert (in the passage cited at the start), that the gods themselves have given him a role as model to all three cultures. He can teach the Greeks the importance of their own *παιδεία/paideia*, because he is an example of being Greek through education not birth. He can teach the Romans the same lesson – because, despite his social standing as an *eques Romanus*, he acquires more standing through his fame as a man of learning. He can teach his own Gauls that the barbarian has no need to feel inferior: the standing and achievements brought by *paideia* are open to all. Thus he drives home the idea that *paideia*, the education at the heart of hellenic culture, gives the barbarian a claim to hellenic identity no weaker than that of the native. It is not enough to be born hellenic: you must make yourself so by education. Equally, it is not enough to be born to Roman social rank: you must acquire standing through education.

What Ennius and Favorinus have in common is a form of cultural triangulation that is one of the most remarkable features of the Roman world,

[6] See ch. 2, p. 59.

whether of the second century BCE or of the second century CE. This goes beyond bilingualism. Because both Roman and Greek represent universal cultural poles, they need to triangulate their local identity, as Messapians, Lucanians, Gauls, or whatever, with both the world of Greek culture and that of Roman power. They reveal no sense (let alone fear) that in 'hellenising' they are sacrificing their local identity. You can have three hearts. You can be more Greek than the Greeks, and more Roman than the Romans, without ceasing to be a Gaul from Arelate. Above all, identity is seen as a process. The Greek termination (*ζειν-/-izein*) suggests not *being* something but *becoming* it by repetitive action, what Bourdieu calls *habitus*.[7] If you *hellēnizein*, you make yourself continuously into a hellene by behaving like a hellene, in language and culture. The passive form with the prefix *ἀπο-/apo-* indicates completion of a process: you have made yourself fully hellenic (without ceasing to be Roman or Gallic). The instrument of this process is education, *paideia*: it is by practising, not just language, but ways of thinking, ways of living, ways of dressing, that you make yourself into a perfect hellene. There is always hope for the barbarian: the gods want him to know as much. It is a providential order with racist roots, but some refreshingly un-racist aspirations.

Those who study the Second Sophistic, the movement of Greek literary revival under the Roman empire to which Favorinus belonged, draw attention to the complexities of Greek identity under Roman rule, to dialogue and multiple identities rather than fusion.[8] Ewen Bowie, in a ground-breaking paper, suggested that in reaction to Roman dominance, Greeks relocated identity in their prestigious past, in a way that also appealed to a Roman construction of the Greek.[9] Simon Swain pointed to the linguistic model of code-switching for the bilingual fluency between which the Greek elite of the second century CE shuttle between Greek and Roman identities.[10] Tim Whitmarsh has explored the use of *paideia* by Favorinus and his contemporaries to redefine Greek identity.[11] Greg Woolf has examined strategies of staying Greek while becoming Roman.[12] Nobody looking at the Greece of the high Roman Empire could imagine that Roman conquest swamped hellenic culture, though it impacted on it deeply, as Susan Alcock's study of the Greek landscape under Roman rule has shown.[13]

[7] Bourdieu (1977). [8] In general, see Goldhill (2001).
[9] Bowie (1970), reprinted as Bowie (1974).
[10] Swain (1996), see also Adams, Janse and Swain (2002).
[11] Whitmarsh (2001b), and see now Borg (2004).
[12] Woolf (1996), cf. Woolf (1997). [13] Alcock (1993), Alcock (1997).

The Roman world is a rewarding space (surprisingly so to those who think Roman culture dull and monotonous) in which to reflect on the complexities of cultural identity, especially the subtle layering of identities in the wake of passages of conquest and colonisation. The ancient world has its contribution to make to the burgeoning literature on 'cultural identity'.[14] Favorinus' Provence, like Ennius' Salento, was colonised by Greeks long before its conquest by Rome. Ancient Mediterranean cultures are as stratified as any archaeological sequence, and the traces of each episode could remain for many centuries: the Phoenician/Punic colonisation of North Africa and the west, the Greek colonisation of South Italy, Sicily and southern France form visible substrates under Roman rule, and at some points like western Sicily and Malta many layers intersect. These progressive waves do not wash out what has gone before, nor churn up new and old to form a homogeneous new entity, but remain in superimposition, in a coexistent complexity.

Too often in cultural history, recourse is made to one of two metaphors: the metallurgical 'fusion', or the biological 'hybridity'. In fusion, two metals form an alloy, a new and distinct metal which takes characteristics from its components but blends them completely to become a new chemical compound. In hybridisation, different species from the animal or plant kingdom are cross-fertilised: their offspring is genetically different from both parents, while retaining characteristics of both – though the hybrid is provisional, normally sterile in the animal kingdom, and taking as many as fifty–sixty generations to form a new species in the plant kingdom.[15] The strata of archaeology may intersect, but they never fuse; and human history suggests that successive cultural influences rarely cancel the traces and memories of the past. The survival of minority languages or religions centuries after conquest suggests that the production of a rapid and homogeneous fusion after conquest is certainly not to be taken for granted, if indeed it ever happens.

The archaeology of cultural identity

There has been enormous debate in recent years, in rather different fields, about both hellenic culture and identity and about the Roman cultural impact in Italy and the provinces. Both debates take their impulse from broader debates, in anthropology, in archaeology and in the emergent field of cultural studies. Cross-over between disciplines, like other forms of cultural contact takes place at specific points and times, and it is the debate in

[14] Cf. Goldhill (2001) 15, and now particularly Dench (2005). [15] Cf. Young (1995).

British (non-classical) archaeology, that stimulated a reassessment of Roman provincial archaeology.

For archaeologists, the issue of culture and national identity is particularly fraught.[16] As a corollary of the anthropological view that each people has its own culture, twentieth-century archaeologists widely assumed that each people had its own distinctive material culture, and that a distinctive material-culture therefore indicated ethnic boundaries. The very early use of the idea by Gustav Kossinna, based on the premise that 'sharply defined archaeological culture areas correspond unquestionably with the areas of particular peoples or tribes', enabled a prehistory of the Germani that directly served the First World War *Kulturpropaganda* of German cultural superiority, and led after his death to fuel Nazi racist theory.[17] Even though Kossinna was discredited along with Aryanism, the underlying premise was widely shared. V. Gordon Childe was widely influential in his definition of an archaeological culture:

> We find certain types of remains – pots, implements, ornaments, burial rites, house forms – constantly recurring together. Such a complex of regularly associated traits we shall term a 'cultural group' or just a 'culture' . . . We assume that such a complex is the material expression of what would today be called a 'people'.[18]

Apart from the obvious dangers of using such material to fuel nationalist claims, there are a number of basic objections to the theory of the coincidence of 'archaeological cultures' with ethnic boundaries. First, the groupings involved are not necessarily ethnic, and it is a product of modern nationalism to construct such closed boundaries for the past. Second, the material record normally shows a flux of change, and it may be impossible to distinguish whether an important change (e.g. in burial customs) reflects the arrival of a new people, or the dissemination of new ideas, and what power relations may lay behind the latter (conquest, commercial contact, internal changes in social structure, etc.). Third, the assemblage of an archaeological culture is not so much a set of unique types as variations on widely shared types, and distinctive associations of those types, which may occur elsewhere but not in that precise association: that can make the identification of a separate 'archaeological culture' more or less arbitrary.[19]

These difficulties may be particularly acute for prehistory in the absence of evidence outside the material record for the nature of groupings. It is absolutely clear that archaeological cultures may fail to overlap with linguistic

[16] See Shennan (1989a), Graves-Brown, Jones and Gamble (1996), Jones (1997).
[17] Veit (1989). [18] Childe (1929) v–vi. [19] Wiessner (1983), cf. Shennan (1989b).

boundaries, as Colin Renfrew has demonstrated for the Celts,[20] and may also fail to coincide with tribal boundaries recorded by ethnographers.[21] Ethnic identity is by no means easy to define, and relies on various combinations of common factors – shared land, descent, language, customs, religion, name and history – but above all the prerequisite is a self-awareness and wish to identify the participants as an entity, a condition not satisfied either by the imposition of identity from outside, whether in the past or by ourselves now.[22] We can express this by saying, with Jonathan Hall, that ethnic identity, and surely identities in general, are 'discursively constructed', created by the discourse of the participants themselves.[23]

How can such self-identification be inferred from the material record alone? The question is helped, but not resolved, by the distinction of cultural artefacts which aim explicitly to mark identity from those which may be taken to reflect it. So Polly Wiessner proposed the category of 'emblematic style' to distinguish 'formal variation in material-culture that has a distinct referent and transmits a clear message to a defined target population about conscious affiliation or identity'.[24] But, again, how is one to distinguish artefacts that mark ethnic, as opposed to other sorts of identity?

While these points create a difficulty for the archaeologist who has only material culture as a guide to human groupings, they also have relevance in the historical period when we are much better informed about what self-definitions of identity the participants offered. Tonio Hölscher rightly and articulately remonstrates against simple equations of culture and identity on the grounds that, even within a defined political unit, identity is not simple and bounded. He prefers to speak of a multiplicity of competing identities, ethnic, social, religious and so on, which may intersect without coinciding.[25]

The 'romanisation' debate

At this point, we need to confront the difficulties inherent in the framework by which cultural change in the Roman world has been approached. Our

[20] Renfrew (1996). [21] E.g. Bursche (1996) on the Vistula mouth.
[22] For the definition, see Renfrew (1996) 130. For an example of the difficulties of accepting an external imposed identity in the case of the identification by Romans of the 'Samnites', see Dench (1995).
[23] Hall (1997) 2. [24] Cited by Shennan (1989b) 18.
[25] Hölscher (2000), Hölscher (2008). For the history of the concept of identity, see Gleason (1983); for an attack on modern usage, see Niethammer (2000).

standard terminology implies a dual process, whereby the values of Greek culture are first absorbed by the Romans ('hellenisation') and then diffused through Roman conquest across the western Mediterranean ('romanisation'). The vocabulary is implicated in a whole view of the place of Greek and Roman culture in the building of modern Europe, for which Greek culture is the foundation of western civilisation, the transmission of this culture to Rome appears a necessary step, the value of which to the Romans must be self-evident, just as the value of Roman civilisation to the western barbarians is self-evident.

As Martin Millett and a growing number of voices working on Roman provinces have pointed out, the language of 'romanisation' that seemed self-evident to Francis Haverfield at the beginning of the twentieth century incorporated models of European colonialism which are no longer easy to accept.[26] It is not enough to redress the balance by pointing out the survival of 'native' elements and locating in them either a sense of local identity or of 'resistance' to external domination.[27] Acculturation cannot be taken as an either/or process whereby individual aspects of 'native' culture either are or are not replaced by elements of Roman culture. The interest lies rather in understanding the dialectic of appropriation by which cultural goods and traits of the conquering power are taken on by the conquered to serve specific ends, and one may add reciprocally the process whereby the conquering power takes over traits from the conquered to accommodate conquest.

Millett's rethinking of romanisation in Britain takes distance from any assumption of inherent Roman cultural superiority, and of any model which sees acculturation as a top-down imposition by the conqueror on the conquered.[28] Instead, he emphasises how local elites embraced certain elements of Roman culture for their own purposes. The choices flow from the structures of pre-existing late Iron Age societies. Roman culture is re-contextualised in the structures of power-relations, not just between Roman and native, but between native elites and the societies they sought to dominate. But though Millett thus distances 'romanisation' from the colonialist mould in which the concept was formed, he has opened a Pandora's box. Given the outdated ideology from which 'romanisation' springs, would we not do better to abandon the concept, as David Mattingly has repeatedly urged?[29] But, if so, what language can we use? 'Acculturation', too, is

[26] On problems of the concept of 'romanisation' in provincial contexts, see e.g. Millett (1990), Metzler *et al.* (1995), Terrenato (1998), Woolf (1998) 4–7, Keay and Terrenato (2001).
[27] Bénabou (1976). [28] Millett (1990).
[29] Barrett (1997), Mattingly (2002), Mattingly (2004), Mattingly (2006) 14–17.

suspect: its Eurocentric parentage presupposes too easily a model whereby the superior (Roman/European) culture spreads by osmosis over the native (barbarian/third world).

A recent case has been made for 'creolisation'.[30] As an instrument for reassessing the culture of the colonised, 'hybridity' has proved powerful in the field of post-colonial studies. Critics like Homi Bhabha or Gyatri Spivak have shown a way to recover the subaltern voice, and recreate a 'third space' between coloniser and colonised, in which the coloniser does not simply destroy existing cultures and impose his own, and the colonised is not simply passive victim, or stubbornly resistant, but which rather, in the partial appropriation and partial subversion of the colonist culture, creates a hybrid that articulates his ambivalence.[31] 'Creolisation' is a specific example of hybridity that has been developed in studies of the Caribbean and the southern slave-owning states of America. Its point of departure is linguistic studies: the creation among those of African origin of new language formed from elements both of French and African.[32] As often, language offers a model for study of material-culture, and it has been shown that European forms are reappropriated into African ritual practices, and that a new form of religious practice is created by the deliberate juxtaposition of certain Catholic elements with others of African origin. What this model offers is a 'bottom-up' view of culture, which allows popular elements of the native to reassert themselves against the 'top-down' model implicit in romanisation.[33]

But this view in turn runs into numerous objections. Replacing the word 'romanisation' with 'creolisation' scarcely enables by itself the sub-elite populations of Britain or Gaul to recover their voices. The Caribbean analogy leaves room for a significant misfit, with a starting point of a historical situation of two colonising populations, distinguished by origin (Europe/Africa), status (master/slave), and the construction of race that justifies the inequality (white/black). The Roman provincial situation is only partly analogous. Conquest does not reduce the native population to slavery: Rome recruits the existing Iron Age societies to its own support. Those societies come complete with their own social structures and inequalities, which the Romans deliberately promote. This sort of 'top-down' is the product of Roman power structures, not of a failure in modern analysis.

But we might go further and question whether the implicit structure of 'romanising' behaviour as elite, and 'creole' as sub-elite, in fact holds.

[30] Webster (2001), Webster (2003). [31] Bhabha (1990), Bhabha (1994); Spivak (1987).
[32] Abrahams (1983).
[33] For the use of the Creole analogy in the early nineteenth century by Niebuhr, see p. 20.