

## COMPARING THE PTOLEMAIC AND SELEUCID EMPIRES

The Ptolemaic and Seleucid empires are usually studied separately, or else included in broader examinations of the Hellenistic world. This book provides a systematic comparison of the roles of local elites and local populations in the construction, negotiation, and adaptation of political, economic, military, and ideological power within these states in formation. The two states, conceived as multiethnic empires, are sufficiently similar to make comparisons valid, while the process of comparison highlights and better explains differences. Regions that were successively incorporated into the Ptolemaic and the Seleucid state receive particular attention and are understood within the broader picture of the ruling strategies of both empires. The book focuses on forms of communication through coins, inscriptions, and visual culture; settlement policies and the relationship between local and immigrant populations; and the forms of collaboration with and resistance of local elites against immigrant populations and government institutions.

CHRISTELLE FISCHER-BOVET is Associate Professor in the Departments of Classics and History at the University of Southern California. She specializes in the social and cultural history of the Eastern Mediterranean from Alexander to the Romans, with a particular interest in Greco-Roman Egypt. Her book *Army and Society in Ptolemaic Egypt* (Cambridge, 2014) combines documentary evidence with social theory to examine the role of the army in Hellenistic Egypt.

SITTA VON REDEN is Professor of Ancient History at the University of Freiburg. She is a specialist in ancient Greek economic history, and her books include *Money in Ptolemaic Egypt: From the Macedonian Conquest to the End of the Third Century BC* (Cambridge, 2007) and *Money in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, 2010). In 2017 she won an Advanced Grant of the European Research Council for the Project 'Beyond the Silk Road: Exchange, Economic Development and Inter-Imperial Relationships in the Afro-Eurasian World Region (300 BCE–300 CE)'.

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-47925-7 — Comparing the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires  
Edited by Christelle Fischer-Bovet, Sitta von Reden  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

---

COMPARING THE  
PTOLEMAIC AND SELEUCID  
EMPIRES

*Integration, Communication, and Resistance*

EDITED BY  
CHRISTELLE FISCHER-BOVET  
*University of Southern California*

SITTA VON REDEN  
*University of Freiburg*



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press  
 978-1-108-47925-7 — Comparing the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires  
 Edited by Christelle Fischer-Bovet, Sitta von Reden  
 Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom  
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
 314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,  
 New Delhi– 110025, India  
 103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108479257](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108479257)

DOI: 10.1017/9781108782890

© Cambridge University Press 2021

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2021

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

NAMES: Fischer-Bovet, Christelle, 1977– editor. | Reden, Sitta von, editor.

TITLE: Comparing the Ptolemaic and Seleucid empires : integration, communication, and resistance / edited by Christelle Fischer-Bovet, University of Southern California, and Sitta von Reden, Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg, Germany.

DESCRIPTION: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 2021. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

IDENTIFIERS: LCCN 2021029017 | ISBN 9781108479257 (hardback) | ISBN 9781108749527 (paperback) | ISBN 9781108782890 (ebook)

SUBJECTS: LCSH: Egypt – History – 32–30 B.C. | Ptolemaic dynasty, 305 B.C.–30 B.C. | Seleucids – History. | BISAC: HISTORY / Ancient / General | HISTORY / Ancient / General

CLASSIFICATION: LCC DT92 .C66 2021 | DDC 932/.021–dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2021029017>

ISBN 978-1-108-47925-7 Hardback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

## *Contents*

<i>List of Contributors</i>	<i>page</i> vii
<i>Preface</i>	xiii
<i>Note on Abbreviations</i>	xiv
Introduction	I
<i>Christelle Fischer-Bovet and Sitta von Reden</i>	
PART I CITIES, SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION	15
1 Imperial <i>metropoleis</i> and Foundation Myths: Ptolemaic and Seleucid Capitals Compared	17
1A Alexandria	18
1B Seleucid Royal Cities	33
<i>Sitta von Reden and Rolf Strootman</i>	
2 Reassessing Hellenistic Settlement Policies: The Seleucid Far East, Ptolemaic Red Sea Basin and Egypt	48
2A Reassessing Settlement Policies in the Hellenistic Far East	49
2B Reassessing Ptolemaic Settlement Policies: Another Look at the <i>poleis</i>	64
<i>Rachel Mairs and Christelle Fischer-Bovet</i>	
3 The Integration of Indigenous Elites and the Development of <i>poleis</i> in the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires	86
<i>Philippe Clancier and Gilles Gorre</i>	
4 Contextualizing a Ptolemaic Solution: The Institution of the Ethnic <i>politeuma</i>	106
<i>Patrick Sänger</i>	

vi	<i>Contents</i>	
	PART II COMMUNICATION AND EXCHANGE	127
5	Imperial and Indigenous Temporalities in the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Dynasties: A Comparison of Times	129
5A	The Seleucid Horizon and Indigenous Elites	129
5B	Indigenous Elites and Ptolemaic Dynastic Time	146
	<i>Paul Kosmin and Ian Moyer</i>	
6	The Visual Representation of Ptolemaic and Seleucid Kings: A Comparative Approach to Portrait Concepts	164
	<i>Ralf von den Hoff</i>	
7	Monetary Policies, Coin Production, and Currency Supply in the Seleucid and Ptolemaic Empires	191
7A	The Seleucid Empire	192
7B	The Ptolemaic Empire	210
	<i>Panagiotis P. Iossif and Catharine C. Lorber</i>	
	PART III COLLABORATION, CRISIS, AND RESISTANCE	231
8	Legitimizing the Foreign King in the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires: The Role of Local Elites and Priests	233
8A	The Egyptian Priests and the Ptolemaic King	235
8B	The Babylonian Priests and the Seleucid King	246
	<i>Stefan Pfeiffer and Hilmar Klinkott</i>	
9	Antiochus III, Ptolemy IV, and Local Elites: Deal-Making Politics at Its Peak	262
9A	The Greek Elites and the Crisis of the Ptolemaic Empire	264
9B	The Greek Elites Before and During the Seleucid-Roman War	284
	<i>Boris Dreyer and François Gerardin</i>	
10	Regional Revolts in the Seleucid and Ptolemaic Empires	301
	<i>Sylvie Honigman and Anne-Emmanuelle Veisse</i>	
	<i>Bibliography</i>	329
	<i>Index</i>	386

## *Contributors*

PHILIPPE CLANCIER is HDR Lecturer at the Pantheon-Sorbonne University. His doctoral dissertation focuses on Babylonian libraries during the Hellenistic and Parthian periods. He is now working on the political history of Babylon during these periods as well as on the history of the Middle Euphrates in the Middle and Neo-Assyrian periods. He is also one of the epigraphists of the archaeological mission at Kunara in Iraqi Kurdistan.

BORIS DREYER is Professor of Ancient History at the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg. His doctoral dissertation focuses on the democracy of Athens in late Classical and Hellenistic periods, while his Habilitation explores the development of the internal system of the Roman Republic in the early second century BC. He was fellow at the Center for Hellenic Studies in Washington, DC, and Fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study. He is also cooperating with several Turkish excavations (Magnesia, Metropolis, Nikaia) and specializes in epigraphy, Roman administration, especially in Asia Minor, and on the Germanic–Roman frontier conflicts.

CHRISTELLE FISCHER-BOVET is Associate Professor of Classics and History at the University of Southern California. She specializes in the social and cultural history of the eastern Mediterranean from Alexander the Great to the Romans, with a special interest in Greco-Roman Egypt. Her book *Army and Society in Ptolemaic Egypt* (2014) combines documentary evidence with social theory to examine the role of the army in Hellenistic Egypt. She has also published several articles exploring state formation and ethnic interaction, for instance “Social Unrest and Ethnic Coexistence in Ptolemaic Egypt and the Seleucid Empire” (*Past and Present* 229, 2015).

FRANÇOIS GERARDIN is a postdoctoral assistant at the University of Basel. His first book, which comes out of his doctoral dissertation, is currently

under review. In it, he uses ancient documents (mostly papyri and inscriptions) to elucidate the importance of cities for state formation in Egypt and western Asia in the Hellenistic period.

GILLES GORRE is Lecturer at the University of Rennes and specializes in the relationship between temples and the Hellenistic political authority. His work examines the integration of local elites in the Hellenistic states both through the strategies adopted by local elites towards the Crown and through the royal policy put in place to ensure control of the territory. He is the author of *Les relations du clergé égyptien et des Lagides*, *Studia Hellenistica* 45 (2009).

SYLVIE HONIGMAN is Professor of Ancient History at Tel Aviv University. She is the author of *Tales of High Priests and Taxes: The Books of the Maccabees and the Judean Rebellion Against Antiochus IV* (2014) and of several articles on the Maccabean revolt.

PANAGIOTIS P. IOSSIF is Professor of Ancient and Medieval Numismatics at the Radboud University, Nijmegen, and Deputy Director of the Belgian School of Archaeology at Athens. His research focuses on Hellenistic numismatics, economy and statistical models using hoard evidence and excavation finds, fields in which he has extensively published. He is also interested in new approaches of coin iconography and recently co-edited three volumes: *TYPOI. Greek and Roman Coins Seen through Their Images. Noble Issuers, Humble Users* (2018), *Greek Iconographies*, *Pharos* 26.1 (2018) and *Charon's Obol: the end of a myth?*, *JAN* 9 (2019).

HILMAR KLINKOTT is Professor of Ancient History at the University of Kiel. His main fields of research are the history and administration of the Achaemenid, Ptolemaic and Seleucid empires, as well as the late Roman Republic. His publications include *Der Satrap, ein achaimenidischer Amtsträger* (2002) and several articles, such as “Alexandria – Polis ohne Metroiten? Möglichkeiten sozialer Mobilität bei alexandrinischen Politen,” in L.-M. Günther, *Migration und Bürgerrecht in der hellenistischen Welt* (2012); “Parther – Pest – Pandora-Mythos: Katastrophen und ihre Bedeutung in der Regierungszeit Marc Aurels,” in V. Grieb, *Marc Aurel – Wege zu seiner Herrschaft* (2017), and with N. Kramer “Zwischen Assur und Athen. Altorientalisches in den Historien Herodots,” *SpielRäume der Antike* 4 (2017).

PAUL J. KOSMIN is Philip J. King Professor of Ancient History at Harvard University. He is the author of *The Land of the Elephant Kings: Space,*

*List of Contributors*

ix

*Territory and Ideology in the Seleucid Empire* (2014) and *Time and Its Adversaries in the Seleucid Empire* (2018) and co-editor (with Andrea Berlin) of *Spear-Won Land: Sardis from the King's Peace to the Peace of Apamea* (2019) and *The Middle Maccabees: Archaeology, History, and the Rise of the Hasmonean Kingdom* (2021). His work examines, broadly, the relationship between ancient empires and systems of knowledge and practice, and the interaction between the Greek world and its Near Eastern neighbors.

CATHARINE C. LORBER is an independent scholar specializing in ancient numismatics, particularly the coinages of the Seleucid and Ptolemaic dynasties. Her interests also include political and economic history, iconography, and ruler cult. She is a coauthor of the standard reference on Seleucid coinage, *Seleucid Coins: A Comprehensive Catalogue* (Part I 2002, Part II 2008). She has written a similar work on Ptolemaic coinage. *Coinage of the Ptolemaic Empire, Part I: Ptolemy I through Ptolemy IV* appeared in 2018. Part II, covering the rest of the dynasty, is in press.

RACHEL MAIRS is Professor of Classics and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Reading. Her research focuses on questions of ethnicity and multilingualism in Hellenistic Egypt and Central Asia. She has also published on the colonial history of archaeology in the Middle East. Her publications include *The Hellenistic Far East: Archaeology, Language and Identity in Greek Central Asia* (2014), *Archaeologists, Tourists, Interpreters* (with Maya Muratov, 2015) and *From Khartoum to Jerusalem: The Dragoman Solomon Negima and His Clients* (2016).

IAN MOYER is Associate Professor in the Department of History at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. His interests include the ancient history and modern historiography of cross-cultural interaction, magic and religion, and the politics of race and ethnicity in classical receptions. He is the author of *Egypt and the Limits of Hellenism* (Cambridge, 2011), co-editor (with Celia Schultz) of a special issue of *Archiv für Religionsgeschichte* on “The Religious Life of Things” (2016) and co-editor (with Adam Lecznar and Heidi Morse) of *Classicisms in the Black Atlantic* (2020).

STEFAN PFEIFFER is Professor of Ancient History at the University of Halle-Wittenberg since 2013. His areas of specialization are the history of Greco-Roman Egypt, ruler cult in antiquity and Judaism in Alexandria. He has, among other aspects, published books on multilingual texts from Egypt (the Decree of Canopus and the victory stela of C.



Cornelius Gallus). Furthermore, he has published a study-book on Greek and Latin epigraphical records from Egypt (2015) and a general overview on the Ptolemaic Empire (2017).

PATRICK SÄNGER is Professor of Ancient History at the University of Münster. His main interests are the administrative, legal and social history of the eastern Mediterranean, especially of Egypt from the Hellenistic to the Late Antique period. He has also worked on the editing of documentary papyri and of Ephesian inscriptions. His most recent book examines a particular Ptolemaic form of organization called *politeuma* (2019).

ROLF STROOTMAN is Associate Professor of History at the University of Utrecht. His research focuses on imperialism, court culture and cultural interactions in the Achaemenid and Seleucid empires. He is the author of *Courts and Elites in the Hellenistic Empires* (2017) and *The Birdcage of the Muses: Patronage of the Arts and Sciences at the Ptolemaic Imperial Court* (2017), and co-editor of the volumes *Persianism in Antiquity* (2017), *Feasting and Polis Institutions* (2018) and *Empires of the Sea: Maritime Empires in World History* (2019).

ANNE-EMMANUELLE VEÏSSE is Professor of Ancient Greek History at the University of Paris Est Marne la Vallée. Her research focuses on the political and social history of Hellenistic Egypt. She is the author of *Les « révoltes égyptiennes ». Recherches sur les troubles intérieurs en Égypte du règne de Ptolémée III à la conquête romaine* (2004) and the co-editor of *Identité ethnique et culture matérielle dans le monde grec* (2014), *L'armée en Égypte aux époques perse, ptolémaïque et romaine* (2014) and *L'identification des personnes dans les mondes grecs* (2019).

RALF VON DEN HOFF is Professor of Classical Archaeology at the University of Freiburg. His research interests include the visual culture of ancient Greece and Rome and ruler representation in antiquity. Among his recent publications are *Divus Augustus. Der erste römische Kaiser und seine Welt* (together with M. Zimmermann and W. Stroh, 2014) and “Ruler Portraits and Ruler Cult in the Pergamon Gymnasium”, in Mania and Trümper (eds.), *Development of Gymnasia and Graeco-Roman Cityscapes* (2018).

SITTA VON REDEN is Professor of Ancient History at the University of Freiburg. Her academic interest focuses on the economic history of

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-47925-7 — Comparing the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires  
Edited by Christelle Fischer-Bovet, Sitta von Reden  
Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

---

*List of Contributors*

xi

Classical Greece and the Hellenistic empires. She is author of *Money in Ptolemaic Egypt* (2007) and *Antike Wirtschaft* (2015). Currently she has an interdisciplinary research project on the economic history of ancient Eurasian empires and their inter-imperial relationships. The first volume of this collaborative project has appeared as *Handbook of Ancient Afro-Eurasian Economies (300 BCE–300 CE)*, vol. 1 (2019).

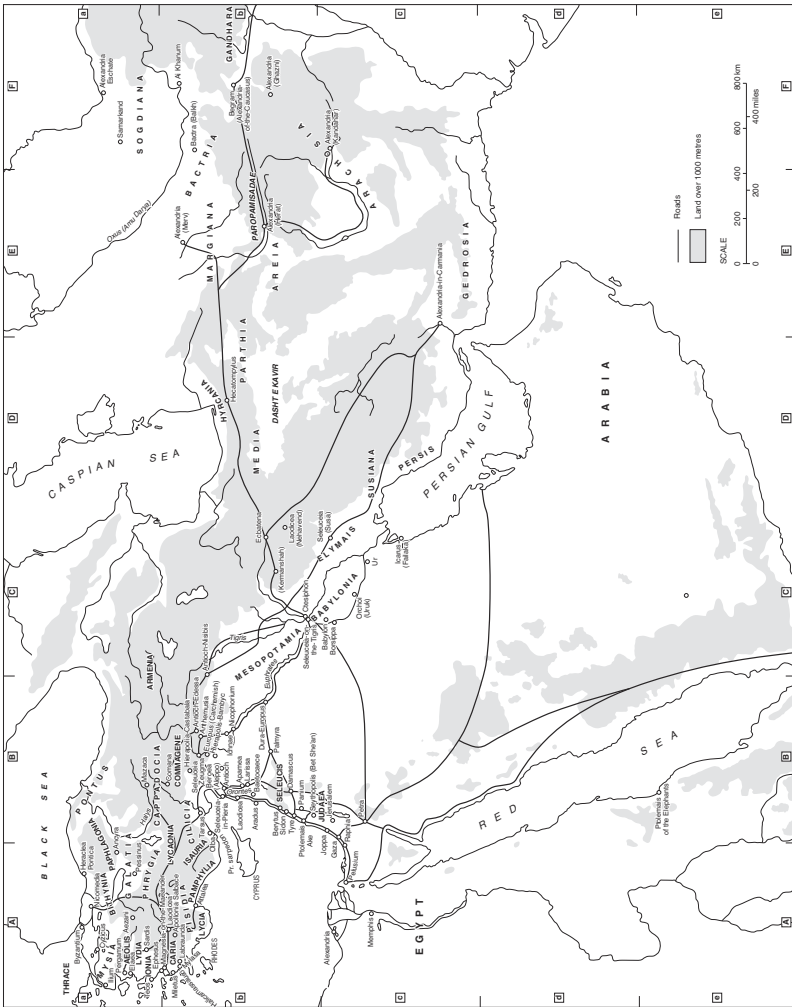
## *Preface*

We have the pleasant task of expressing our gratitude to several people who supported this project. We wish to thank all contributors for their collaborative effort and their willingness to communicate and cooperate intensely, in some cases over long distances. We also thank the respondents, Dorothy Thompson (Cambridge), Christopher Tuplin (Liverpool) and John Ma (Columbia) who encouraged us to explore further ideas and made helpful suggestions for the revision of the papers, as well as the anonymous reviewers and Michael Sharp at Cambridge University Press. We also wish to thank Boris Chrubasik (Toronto), Peter Eich (Freiburg), Ole Johannsen (Freiburg) and Benjamin Wieland (Freiburg) for contributing stimulating papers to the conference preceding this book yet not converting their talks to chapters in this volume. We are indebted to several funding bodies who generously contributed to the funding of the conference, in particular the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, the Humanismus Heute Foundation Baden-Württemberg and the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft and the American Friends of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. Finally, special thanks to Clara Hillebrecht, Stephan Neitmann, Alison Weaverdyck and Deirdre Klokow who helped to prepare the manuscript for publication.

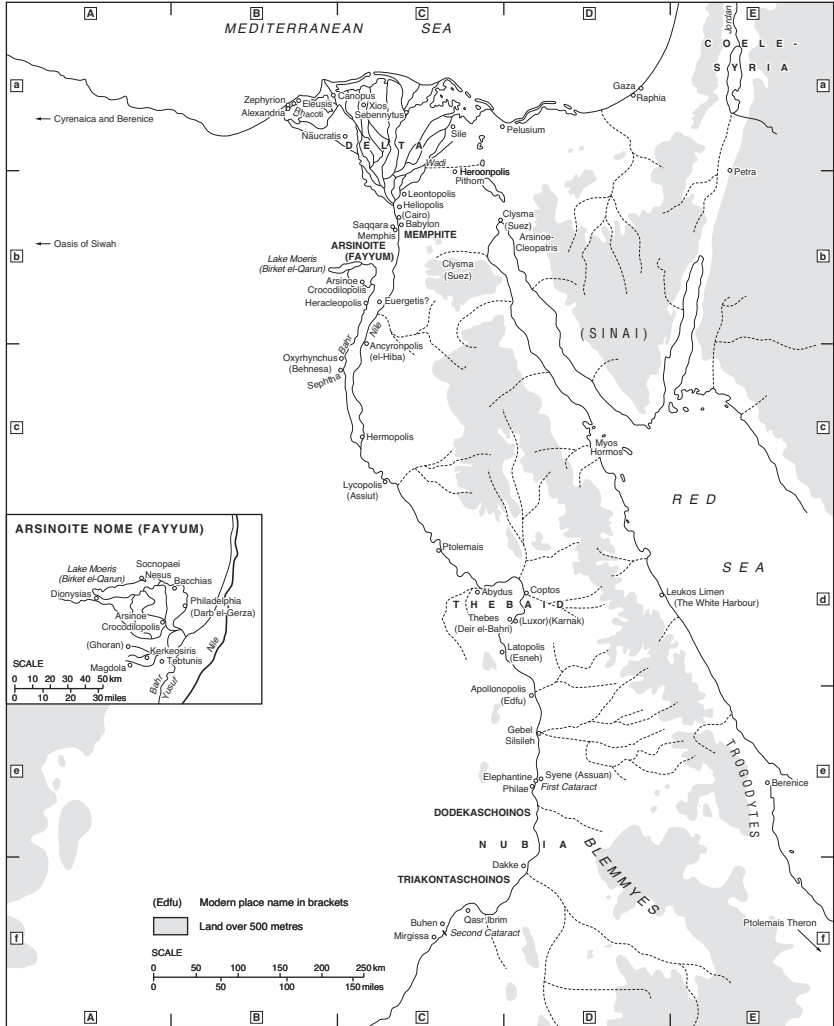
## *Note on Abbreviations*

We refer to editions of papyri and ostraca according to the abbreviations used in the *Checklist of Editions of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets*, available online at [papyri.info](http://papyri.info). Abbreviations of epigraphic corpora generally follow the list of the *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*, and C. Lorber, *Catalogue of Ptolemaic Coins. Part 1: Ptolemy I to IV* (New York, 2018) serves as the reference for numismatic abbreviations. Unless specific comments from editors are mentioned, editions of all such texts and coins are not included in the bibliography. For ancient authors we follow the abbreviations used in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 4th edition. Finally, Greek names and proper names are given Latinized forms for well-known historical figures and places but a more authentic transliteration for lesser-known people and places.

Cambridge University Press  
 978-1-108-47925-7 — Comparing the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires  
 Edited by Christelle Fischer-Bovet, Sitta von Reden  
 Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)



Cambridge University Press  
 978-1-108-47925-7 — Comparing the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires  
 Edited by Christelle Fischer-Bovet, Sitta von Reden  
 Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)



Cambridge University Press  
 978-1-108-47925-7 — Comparing the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires  
 Edited by Christelle Fischer-Bovet, Sitta von Reden  
 Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)

