Welcoming Newcomers: Lessons for our Times from Ancient Rome

by

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Abstract

At a time of rising anti-immigration sentiment in much of the modern Western world, this project explores what we can learn about welcoming from ancient Rome, which was considered remarkable for its openness to newcomers even by its contemporaries. Through Rome's founding myths as described in Virgil's *The Aeneid* and Livy's *The Early History of Rome,* as well as through numerous ancient and modern historians, this project explores why and how ancient Rome was so welcoming, and the results of that attitude. The purpose throughout is to extract ideas that usefully apply to dilemmas surrounding modern migration. Roman society and sensibilities were very different from our own, so we can't expect to import ancient ideas wholesale. But this project concludes that the attitudes and principles that made Rome so remarkably open to newcomers can point us toward potential actions, deeper understandings, and useful questions about our own approach to welcoming in an era of increasing negativity toward migration.

Keywords: Ancient Rome; Migration; Citizenship; Welcoming; Multiculturalism; Diversity

Dedication

To John, the most patient of partners

And to Linda, the most understanding of friends

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the help and support of the professors who bravely took on this project with me. Emily O'Brien, my senior supervisor, asked the detailed and probing questions that turned this paper into what it is, and along the way taught me another kind of writing and thinking. Through this project and through a previous course in the GLS program, she opened my eyes to the limitless trove of ancient Rome, whose characters, literature and history will remain with me always. Stephen Duguid, my second supervisor, took on this project even though he was retiring, and provided steadfast support throughout. Sasha Colby was the force behind the research grant that sent me to Rome for a month in the spring of 2018 so I could experience its sites, streets and people first-hand. Her graceful enthusiasm has been an inspiration throughout the program, ever since the summer afternoon of 2014 when she introduced my cohort to *The Bacchae*, proving in one class that the ancient world is ours as well.

One of the most valuable aspects of the GLS program is the people who sign up for it. Drawn by similar interests, participants often find a new world of fellow-thinkers. My class introduced me to Andre Gerard and Georgeann Glover, now-treasured friends and fellow literary travellers whose laughter and support helped see me through this process. Our weekly meetings to discuss our latest readings are among the best and continuing rewards of my time in GLS.

Finally, at a time when humanities are not at the top of the list of priorities for education in general, I would like to thank Simon Fraser University for keeping the flame alive through programs like Graduate Liberal Studies. Exploring the great works of the past through the lens of the present is a valuable way of understanding today's issues. Through the faculty, staff and students of GLS, the world is a richer place.

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Introduction

A rubber dinghy, its orange-life-jacketed passengers so tightly packed that some are only half-aboard, struggles toward a deserted shore in Italy. A toddler's body lies face down on a Turkish beach. A column of Central Americans stretches far down a highway as they trudge through Mexico toward the U.S. border. Children separated from their parents at the border peer out of cages after being detained under the Trump administration's "zero-tolerance" policy for illegal border crossings.

Images like these are the drum-beat of our times, reflecting a world awash in displaced and transient people. Nearly 71 million were forcibly displaced as of the end of 2018, the highest number in the almost 70-year history of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, according to a June 2019 UNHCR report. Almost two-thirds of the total were internally displaced people, who have not left their homelands, but the increased global figure confirms a "longer term rising trend in the number of people around the world needing safety from war, conflict and persecution,"[1] according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi, the report noted.

In an era when images – children in cages, blanket-wrapped migrants stuck on a boat that can't dock, a transport truck containing the bodies of migrants who died trying to reach England – flash around the world in seconds, migration is a volatile issue. Fears of being swamped by the needy poor have sparked an anti-immigrant tsunami in the richer developed world that has reshaped it politically, socially and economically. Brexit, the election of U.S. President Donald Trump, and the rise of populist, anti-immigrant parties throughout Europe can all be pinned at least partly on fears of the impact of these newcomers. "One of the dominant, but empirically unjustified, images in highly developed countries today is that of masses of people flowing in from the poor South and the turbulent East, taking away jobs, pushing up housing prices and overloading social

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[1] Adrian Edwards, "Global forced displacement tops 70 million," UNHCR Global Trends report, June 19, 2019. https://www.unhcr.org/news/stories/2019/6/5d08b6614/global-forced-displacement-tops-70-million.html.

services,"[2] according to *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*. Immigration "often leads to strong reactions from some sections of the population,"[3] the authors noted, especially if it occurs at times of economic restructuring and social change: "People whose conditions of life are already changing in an unpredictable way may see the newcomers as the cause of insecurity."[4] But the authors emphasized that migration is an intrinsic part of the human story – the way, in fact, that humans spread around the globe:[5] "Population movements have always accompanied demographic growth, economic transformations, technological change, political conflict and warfare."[6]

This paper was sparked by the remarkable contrast between today's growing hostility toward migrants and the attitude of a different civilization during another era of mass relocation and change. Two millennia ago, as ancient Rome – city, republic and empire – changed from a tiny collection of huts along the Tiber River to an empire that encircled the Mediterranean Sea, it became famous for its welcoming attitude. Rome's "extraordinary openness and willingness to incorporate outsiders"[7] set it apart from every other ancient Western society, according to historian Mary Beard: "No ancient Greek city was as remotely incorporating as this; Athens in particular rigidly restricted access to citizenship."[8] Rome's policy of welcoming was so unusual that it drew attention at various points through the ages. Historian Emma Dench noted that in 214 BCE, Philip V of Macedon wrote in a message to the people of Larissa in Thessaly that when the Romans freed their slaves, they welcomed them to citizenship, "and in this way have not only enlarged their country but have sent out colonies to nearly 70 places."[9] He

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[2] Stephen Castles, Hein De Haas, and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration*-5th ed., (New York, NY: The Guilford Press, 2014), 19

[3] Castles et al., *Age*, 19.

[4] Castles et al., *Age*, 19.

[5] Castles et al., *Age*, 84.

[6] Castles et al., *Age*, 317.

[7] Mary Beard, *SPQR:A History of Ancient Rome*, (New York, NY: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2015), 67.

[8] Beard, SPQR, 67.

[9] Emma Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*. (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), 93.

recommended the Larissans do the same. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, a Greek historian writing in the time of Augustus, cited Rome's welcoming policy as the reason for its triumph over Greek cities: The Romans rose from obscurity to greatness "not only by their humane reception of those who sought a home among them, but also by sharing the rights of citizenship with all who had been conquered by them in war after a brave resistance, by permitting all the slaves, too, who were manumitted among them to become citizens, and by disdaining no condition of men from whom the commonwealth might reap an advantage. . . ."[10] In his 144 CE, *Roman Oration*, Publius Aelius Aristides lauded Rome's openness:

> I mean your magnificent citizenship with its grand conception, because there is nothing like it in the records of all mankind. Dividing into two groups all those in your empire. . .you have everywhere appointed to your citizenship, or even to kinship with you, the better part of the world's talent, courage, and leadership. . . Neither sea nor intervening continent are bars to citizenship, nor are Asia and Europe divided in their treatment here. In your empire all paths are open to all. No one worthy of rule or trust remains an alien, but a civil community of the world has been established as a free Republic. . . .[11]

Aristides' praise, delivered in front of the emperor Antoninus Pius, is often mocked as ridiculously over the top – Beard called it "a fairly sickening read"[12] – but it's a mark of the continuing attention that Rome received over many centuries for its openness to outsiders. But how welcoming was it in reality? There's the obvious question of whether it could be described as welcoming at all when most of its subjects were only there by force. One answer would be that while it certainly could not be considered welcoming to enslave and subjugate people, once that had happened – and it was not unusual in ancient times – the term applies to how they were treated afterwards. Perhaps it is a stretch to apply the OED definition of welcoming – "behaving in a polite or friendly way to a guest or new arrival" – to the treatment of any involuntary newcomers,

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[10] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, trans. Earnest Cary in the Lobe Classical Library (Harvard University Press, 1937-1950), 1.9.4. http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Dionysius_of_Halicarnassus/home.html

[11] Publius Aelius Aristides, *Roman Oration,* https://www.bradford-delong.com/2017/11/aelius-aristides-the-roman-oration-it-is-a-time-honored-custom-of-travelers-setting-forth-by-land-or-sea-to-m.html

[12] Beard, *SPQR*, 500.

but Rome's behaviour drew notice because it was so unusual. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, for example, made a point of how differently the Romans and the Greeks treated conquered peoples: When the Romans captured cities, they did not kill all the men of military age or enslave the rest of the population, but rather turned the cities into Roman colonies and even granted citizenship to some.[13] However, there are many degrees of welcoming, and Rome certainly welcomed some people more warmly than others. The admired Greek tutors, philosophers and doctors brought to Rome as slaves received a warmer welcome, and would have lived far more comfortable lives, for example, than many other slaves. It would be hard to apply the term "welcoming" to the treatment of agricultural slaves sent to work in the fields on chain gangs, or those who died quickly in the terrible conditions of Roman mines. The free-born poor who migrated to Rome after losing or giving up their land were citizens, so they had to be welcomed to some degree, but this amounted to subsistence rations of free grain to keep them alive and regular entertainments to stave off riots and discontent. In fact, historians say that in practice, many slaves "enjoyed better living conditions, security, and prospects than many of the free."[14] Many of Rome's so-called newcomers did not actually migrate, but suddenly found themselves Roman subjects when their territories succumbed, willingly or not, to the Roman behemoth. In those cases, as I will discuss later, the Romans tended to welcome the provincial aristocrats who could help them govern subjugated territories, in return for the Roman citizenship and the potential of climbing in Roman society. But as long as the rural masses caused no trouble, the Roman "welcome" often amounted to leaving them alone.[15] Thus we can see that welcoming is a broad term that can involve many behaviours and many degrees of warmth, a point that is important to bear in mind as we look at both ancient and modern responses to strangers.

The first part of this project will examine how and why ancient Rome adopted an attitude of welcoming newcomers, as well as the implications of that policy. It will

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[13] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.16.1.

[14] Neville Morley, "Social Structure and Demography," in *A Companion to the Roman Republic,* eds Nathan Rosenstein and Robert Morstein-Marx (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 313.

[15] Peter Garnsey and Richard Saller, *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture.* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987), 194.

include a dissection of Rome's founding myths, which established the importance of outsiders to Roman traditions and identity. It will also examine how the real Romans – as far as we can discern from historians – carried out this process of welcoming, using the strategies of social mobility, unity and flexibility. Throughout, I will be exploring what welcoming looked like in ancient Rome, the extent of Roman welcoming of outsiders, and which outsiders they were more likely to welcome. I will also be asking how the Roman strategies might address modern migration issues, through questions such as: Why were the Romans so willing to accept newcomers when there is such reluctance today? How did they successfully absorb large numbers of new arrivals, a problem that host countries struggle with in modern times? What can they tell us about diverse cultures getting along together, given their mostly harmonious experience on that front? And, what would they say to modern fears that newcomers will change a country culturally, economically, socially and politically or threaten its identity and unity?

In the second part of this project, I will apply my findings from ancient Rome to modern migration issues and dilemmas. For example, my look at ancient Rome indicated that there were certain principles of how that society operated that made it more likely to welcome newcomers. That prompted me to ask, what is the equivalent principle in modern societies, and how does that affect welcoming? Some of my findings from ancient Rome can lead to broadening and deepening our understanding of current attitudes toward migration. Sometimes Roman principles and approaches may spark ideas for modern projects that could make our society more welcoming to newcomers. Sometimes the ideas from ancient Rome may simply be the basis for questions that modern societies should be asking about how and why we welcome – or don't welcome – people today. When we bring together ancient Rome and the modern Western democracies I will be focusing on in the second part of my project, we must acknowledge that we are talking about vastly different societies, with different expectations and sensibilities. The geographical situation of the Roman Empire, with its huge landmass and incorporation of many diverse peoples, cultures and territories within it, is also very different from smaller modern nation-states receiving diverse groups of migrants. Another difference is that Rome's newcomers often arrived involuntarily, while modern migrants are choosing to do so. Modern times and circumstances are very different from

Roman ones, but the bigger questions, about how we treat outsiders and how they fit into a new society, remain the same.

Timeframe

This paper will focus on the era of the main expansion of the Roman Empire, from the beginning of the republic in 509 BCE through the start of the imperial era under its first emperor, Augustus, who ruled from 31 BCE to 14 CE. But because everything is connected, it will also refer back to the founding of Rome, traditionally set at 753 BCE, and to later emperors who kept the Western Roman Empire going until approximately 500 CE.

Structure

Aside from an introduction and conclusion, this project will include two main parts. Part I will look at why ancient Rome was so welcoming to outsiders, and how its openness affected its behaviour, society and future. Part II will look at what modern Western societies, built on ideas and principles that I suggest have led to a less welcoming attitude to outsiders, can learn from the Roman experience.

Sources

Any discussion of ancient Rome must confront the fact that the first Roman to write about the city's history, Q. Fabius Pictor, lived as late as 200 BCE, 300 years after the beginning of the republic in 509 BCE and half a millennium after the city's mythical founding in 753 BCE. He and his successors in the second century BCE had only incomplete evidence about Rome's earliest days, and there was a tendency to distort what little material they had and reconstruct it based on current events,[16] according to historian Stephen P. Oakley. Livy, who produced the main history of Rome, "unfortunately based his account on these writers rather than on the original evidence."[17] While modern

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[16] Stephen P. Oakley, "The Early Republic," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Republic*, edited by Harriet I. Flower (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 15.

[17] Oakley, "Early," 16.

scholars agree the details of Livy's political and military narrative are unreliable, amounting to "reconstruction or plausible invention,"[18] once the inventions are stripped away, they are based on real events. For example, the Roman defeat of Veii in 390 BCE actually happened, but probably very differently from Livy's elaborately detailed description.[19] Then there is the Greek influence. In his introduction to Livy's *The Early History of Rome*, Robert Ogilvie pointed to the apparent lack of their own mythology as the reason the Romans borrowed heavily from the Greeks when it came time to reconstruct their own history in the centuries before Pictor: "There is practically no extensive story from early Roman history which cannot be proved to be Greek in origin."[20]Most of the ancient works I will be referring to – by Livy, Virgil, Horace and Dionysius of Halicarnassus – were written during the time of the first emperor Augustus, which raises another issue. Given that the poet Ovid was exiled by Augustus for writing something that displeased him (exactly what has never been established), we have to consider how much other writers were influenced by the emperor's agenda. At that time, Augustus was attempting to resurrect what he saw as the lost Roman values of sacrifice, piety and simplicity in a society of extravagance, ambition and family breakdown that had emerged from a century of vicious internal wars. Livy, Virgil and Horace all had connections with Augustus, but it is not known how much their ideas were influenced by their proximity to the emperor. Ogilvie contended that Livy "retained an uninvolved independence," [21] but he did hold off publishing books about Augustus' reign until after the emperor's death, "for fear, we may assume, that they might give offence."[22]

I made extensive use of Livy's *Early History of Rome,* Virgil's *The Aeneid,* and Dionysius of Halicarnassus' *Roman Antiquities* for my exploration of the founding myths and earliest Roman history, but I am aware that all of these tales are from a very Romano-centric point of view, with all the authors aware of Augustus looking over their shoulders. We haven't heard the Sabine side of the story about the rape of the Sabine

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[18] Oakley, "Early," 16.

[19] Oakley, "Early," 16.

[20] Robert Ogilvie, "Introduction," in *The Early History of Rome* by Livy (London: Penguin, 2002), 8.

[21] Ogilvie, "Introduction," 1.

[22] Ogilvie, "Introduction," 1.

women or the subsequent peace treaty with the Romans, for example. Aside from these early authors, I used modern scholars on Roman history, journalistic reports about migration in the recent past, and several books about modern migration. These included *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World* (2014)*, written by professors based in Australia, England and the U.S., all of whom specialize in migration issues. Another text is *Exodus: How Migration is Changing our World* (2015), by Paul Collier, a professor of economics and public policy at Oxford University who has also written a book on the world's poorest countries. A third is *Whiteshift: Populism, Immigration, and the Future of White Majorities* (2019), by Eric Kaufmann, a professor of politics at the University of London, Birkbeck College, who researches immigration, religion and national identity. I also drew from *The New Odyssey: The Story of Europe's Refugee Crisis* (2017), based on material collected by journalist Patrick Kingsley when he was the *Guardian* newspaper's first migration correspondent.

Terminology

Throughout this project, I have used the terms "migrant" and "newcomer" interchangeably, to refer to people who have moved from one place of settlement to another. I view these as neutral terms conveying the idea that people are in a new place, without indicating the reasons for their movement. These could include people arriving in a new country under regular immigration programs, or those arriving irregularly. According to a UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) website for frequently asked questions,[23] there is no uniform legal definition of the term migrant at the international level, so it could refer to people who have left their countries for education, family reunion, or to escape hardships such as poverty, famine or natural disasters. By contrast, there is a legal definition of refugees as people outside their country of origin because of feared persecution, conflict, violence or other circumstances and who cannot return home because it is too dangerous. Under the 1951 Convention related to the Status of Refugees, refugees cannot be expelled or returned to situations where their lives or

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[23] UN High commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "Refugees' and 'Migrants' –Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)." https://www.refworld.org/docid/56e81c0d4.html.

freedom is under threat. The UNHCR recommends against using the terms refugee and migrant interchangeably, on the grounds that it is confusing and can diminish the seriousness of the situations faced by refugees.[24]

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[24] UNHCR, "Refugees".

Part I.

Dissecting Roman welcoming

If we want to know what welcoming looked like in ancient Rome, a good place to start would be the wide, well-lit halls of the Capitoline Museum, the Baths of Diocletian, or the Villa Giulia Etruscan museum in the modern-day city. There, in the midst of endless copies of Greek statues, hallway-length glass cases of Etruscan grave houses and vessels, a serpentine marble dog with Egyptian influences, and a bulbous vessel with Greek hen-scratches believed to be the oldest evidence of writing found in Italy, a question may well begin to arise. In this most Roman of all places, where are all the mentions of *Rome*? There's the Praeneste Fibula, a seventh-century BCE gold brooch with an inscription in the letters of the Latin archaic alphabet and wording influenced by the Etruscan, Sabellian and Faliscan languages. There are sixth-century BCE cups and bronze figurines from a sanctuary dedicated to Aeneas of Troy, whose move to Italy was the legendary beginning of the Roman race. Workmanlike and beautiful at the same time, there are an anatomically correct bronze breastplate and parade helmet with little eyes peeping above the brim from the 475 BCE tomb of the Warrior from Lanuvium. The military and athletic equipment in the tomb points to a Greek cultural influence, the explanatory material says. In the Capitoline Museum, there's a transparent model of a huge sixth-century BCE temple, the work of Tarquinius Priscus and Tarquinius Superbus, two Etruscan kings who ruled Rome in that era. They, along with a third king, Servius Tullius, oversaw the extraordinary urban development that transformed Rome from a village into an important urban centre that could compete with contemporary Etruscan centres, the explanatory material says. What the museums are making clear is that Rome, from the start, was a great sloshing stew of ingredients from anywhere and everywhere. The museum artifacts may have been found in Rome and its environs, but their inspiration, and sometimes their creation, was from anywhere throughout the whole Mediterranean.

As with artifacts, so with people. The epigraphs in a long, cool tunnel lined with funerary markers under the Capitoline Museum reflect a similar diversity in the origins of

those who ended up in Rome. There is one for Ammias, "a Jew from Laodicea, who lived 85 years;" a dedication to Apollo "given by Tetes Syras originally from Marcianoplis (modern Provadija, Bulgaria);" a funerary inscription for Lucius Lutatius Paccius, a "(one time) slave of King Mithridates," of Pontus, who once occupied extensive territories around the Black Sea coast; and the strangely affecting epitaph of Menophilos, "a friend of the Muses, of Bacchus and of Aphrodite" who "arrived from Asia to Italy" and now rests among the dead "while still youthful."

The contents of the museums reflect what historian Harriet I. Flower called a "culture of fusion"[25] traceable in literature, art, architecture, law, rhetoric, philosophy and everyday life throughout the empire. Created by the Roman Republic, the Greco-Roman culture was "the result of a melding of Greek influences and native Italian and Roman traditions"[26] that spread throughout the Mediterranean world. When we walk the museum hallways, we are seeing tangible evidence of what a society based on welcoming looked like. The blending of many had created not only a unique new culture, but a populace made up of outsiders from everywhere.

But there is another aspect to what seems like the dramatically positive outcome of Roman welcoming. It's part of the question that arose amidst the museum splendours, and it's rising now in nations welcoming newcomers from all over the world. What happens to existing cultures when strong new ones arrive? In the Roman empire, what did communities lose when their culture and people were absorbed into the bigger Greco-Roman one? Did the presence of so many other cultures impede or minimize the development of a distinctive "Roman" art? According to historian Ann L. Kuttner, such art did exist, but tended to be unsigned and in less-lasting genres archeologically, such as monumental painting and bronze work.[27] Art and culture are just one of the many ways to look at how welcoming affects a host society, both in ancient times and modern ones. I

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[25] Harriet I. Flower, "Introduction," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Republic,* edited by Harriet I. Flower (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 1.

[26] Flower, "Introduction," 1.

[27] Ann L. Kuttner, "Roman Art During the Republic," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Republic,* edited by Harriet I. Flower (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 297.

will return to the topic in Part II, when I explore what the Romans might say to modern fears that newcomers will change a country culturally as well as in other ways. For those who fear the arrival of new cultures, I would suggest that the Roman museum showcases could evoke both concern and solace.

How geography can influence welcoming

Clues to the reasons for Rome's welcoming past lie in plain sight for even the most casual observer today. There's the Tiber River as it rushes through the city, interrupted by the curiously boat-shaped Tiber Island that divides the current in two. Nearby, there's the gentle path up to the pastoral greenness of the Palatine hill, thought to be the site of the first Roman settlement, which opens out to views of the Roman Forum in the flats beneath. It is geographic features like these – a strategic site on a land route from the Apennines to the sea, a major river with an island at a fortuitous spot, and a plain dotted with refuge-providing hills – that historians say shaped early Rome's attitude to strangers and set its course for the future. Unlike the Greek cities that were developing at the same time, mainly in isolation behind impassible mountains, the Romans lived in an open, very public place, exposed to both neighbours and wandering marauders: "It was not possible for a state to develop internally and remain isolated in the fashion of the Greek cities, which felt the inconvenience of isolation only when social order was far advanced."[28] Historians differ sharply on Rome's relationship with its closest neighbours, with A.N. Sherwin-White rejecting nineteenth-century classicist Theodor Mommsen's position that Rome had a policy of natural enmity with other communities until formal alliances were reached.[29] That would have been "most inconvenient for a community, however primitive, set at one of the great crossings of the Tiber,"[30] Sherwin-White argued. But historian Kurt A. Raaflaub contended that it was Rome's constant struggle for survival against unruly neighbours and invading mountain tribes in the fifth century BCE that strengthened both its aristocracy and the community as a whole. It developed a

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[28] A.N. Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship* 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press,1973), 5.

[29] Sherwin-White, *Citizenship*, 7.

[30]. Sherwin-White, *Citizenship*, 7.

"remarkable ability to solve even weighty internal conflicts by compromising within the existing structures and under the existing leadership."[31] By contrast, in Greece, "there was no need for strong and united leadership, for solidarity and cohesiveness." [32] The ability to pull together to repel outsiders may not seem very welcoming, but I would argue that in the long term, it was because of its resulting strength that Rome was even in the position to welcome, or not welcome, outsiders. Besides engaging in war, Rome was innovative in finding other ways of dealing with outsiders, creating various forms of alliances, treaties and networks that usually benefited Rome more than the others. It also created various types of colonies, and later devised various types and levels of citizenship for outsiders making the transition into Romans.

Rome's geography is also credited with the diversity of its population that some say predisposed it toward welcoming newcomers. Sherwin-White argued that the occupants of the hilltop villages such as Rome would have mixed and mingled on the Latium plain below, leading to intercommunal relationships that may have predated the rise of the city state.[33] According to Raaflaub, evidence indicates that Latins on the Palatine hill and Sabines on the Quirinal joined forces[34] and that Etruscans ruled as kings of Rome in pre-republican times,[35] meaning plenty of mixing was going on. Historian Gary Forsythe directly linked Rome's diversity and later openness to geographical features like the island that made it easy to ford the Tiber, and salt fields at the river's mouth that would have resulted in frequent travel from the Apennines through Rome and down to the sea.[36]

> [T]he geography of Rome's site is likely to have encouraged the coming together of Latins, Sabines and Etruscans from a relatively early date, thereby giving early Rome an ethnically and culturally diverse population;

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[31] Kurt A. Raaflaub, "The Conflict of the Orders in Archaic Rome: A Comprehensive and Comparative Approach," in *Social Struggles in Archaic Rome*, edited by Kurt A. Raaflaub (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 33.

[32] Raaflaub, "Conflict,*"* 33.

[33] Sherwin-White, *Citizenship*, 5.

[34] Raaflaub, "Conflict," 136.

[35] Raaflaub, "Conflict," 32.

[36] Gary Forsythe, *A Critical History of Early Rome: From Prehistory to the First Punic War* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 80.

and this early diversity may have contributed substantially to the relative openness of Roman social and political institutions so important to Rome's success as an imperial power in later times.[37]

What can we learn about welcoming from the earliest Romans and the site where they happened to live? I would argue that it shows how people's attitudes toward outsiders may be shaped by the solid physical realities of hills, plains and rivers. Forced to develop the strength to protect their open position, the Romans chose to be more welcoming than the isolated Greeks. They could have barred strangers from their river crossing, failed to develop the internal unity or military strength necessary to defend their territory, or even failed to learn anything valuable from their early interactions with outsiders. Had they made other choices about welcoming, we probably would not be writing about them today. Fast-forwarding over the millennia to the migration crisis of 2015-2016 in Europe, we can see how geography raises the same issues today as it did in early Roman times. Because of their location, Italy and Greece saw hundreds of thousands of migrants from Africa and the Middle East landing on their beaches during the crisis, forcing them to make difficult decisions about welcoming. Ancient Rome's situation was very different from any that of any modern nation, but in Part II, I will look at what we can learn about welcoming from Rome's response to its geographical position.

The myths and welcoming in Rome

The founding myths of Rome can be seen as a window into the city's unusually welcoming attitude toward newcomers. The myths involved Aeneas, the purported forebear of the Roman race, who came to Italy from far-away Troy; and city founder Romulus, himself a newcomer to the area, who filled up his new city by welcoming everyone, even undesirables, who wanted to settle there. In their portrayal of Roman origins, the myths painted a picture of who the first Romans were and the possible roots of their welcoming attitude. They emphasized that it was outsiders who founded Rome, that these outsiders welcomed other outsiders, and they recounted the conflicts and

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[37] Forsythe, *A Critical History*, 80-81.

consequences that resulted. As I have discussed, the myths must be seen as fictional; stories based on longstanding legends and retold according to agendas of the current day. Romans did not necessarily believe in the myths or the ideals they espoused, nor did they imitate the behaviour of their fictional predecessors. But they lived in a world shaped by the myths' ideas and ideals, so these foundational stories can help explain Roman attitudes toward welcoming in the period I am focusing on.

Historians, ancient and modern, see the myths as illustrating how unusual ancient Rome was in its welcoming attitude to outsiders, often contrasting it to less-open Greek cities of its time. A myth that went so far as to suggest a population originated in a foreign land altogether, like the Aeneas tale, "stands in glaring contrast to the foundation myths of many ancient Greek cities, such as Athens, which saw their original population as springing miraculously from the very soil of their native land,"[38] according to historian Mary Beard. Further, the myth that Romulus created an asylum in his city that admitted all comers – foreigners, criminals and runaways – reflected an extraordinary openness to incorporating outsiders, quite unlike the behaviour of the Greeks, Beard contended.[39] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, a Greek historian writing at the time of Augustus, also sharply contrasted the attitudes of the welcoming Romans and the snobby Greeks. The latter "pride themselves most on their wisdom; all of whom, jealous of their noble birth and granting citizenship to none or to very few (I say nothing of the fact that some even expelled foreigners), not only received no advantage from this haughty attitude, but actually suffered the greatest harm because of it."[40]

The Romulus myth's unconventional idea of basing a population on outsiders, and not very desirable ones at that, has had historians pondering its meaning ever since. Beard suggested Livy's "edgy"[41] description may have been a way of emphasizing Rome's unusual openness to all. Neville Morley conjectured that after the first-century BCE Social War had opened up citizenship to all free inhabitants of Italy, this tale of asylum

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[38] Beard, *SPQR,* 77.

[39] Beard, *SPQR*, 67.

[40] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, II. 17.1.

[41] Beard, *SPQR*, 66.

was a way of legitimizing the idea of a citizen body based not on birth but on desire to become Roman.[42] A. Momigliano suggested it was a way of portraying Roman society as one with "divine, but by no means pure, origins in which political order was created by the fusion of heterogeneous and often raffish elements, after a fratricide had marked the city's foundation."[43]He saw it as a foretaste of the Romans' future attitude to empire – the way they stubbornly defended their own identity against the Greeks and Etruscans "while declaring themselves a nation ready to assimilate foreigners without racial prejudices or even moral pretensions."[44] As for the emphasis on outsiders, Erich S. Gruen contended that the idea of autochthony, or indigenous origins, never made much headway in Rome:[45] "Distinctiveness of blood or heritage never took hold as part of the Roman self-conception."[46]

The myths help point to the complexity of welcoming, in that Romans themselves may not have liked all their implications. The asylum tale is one of many stories about Rome's beginnings with "potentially very unfortunate overtones that even in antiquity provoked both scorn and apology,"[47] according to historian Emma Dench. While Romulus' asylum "*could* be made to stand for 'traditional' Roman 'openness' to noble refugees, it was hard ever to write out entirely overtones of ignobility, the implication that Rome and the Roman citizen body were descended from slaves, sinners, a deeply uncomfortable mixture of races and classes that upset a socially and cosmically pleasing emphasis on distinction…."[48] Cicero notoriously sneered at those early inhabitants, referring to them in a letter to his friend Atticus as the "crap of Romulus."[49] And first and

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[42] Neville Morley, "Social Structure and Demography," in *A Companion to the Roman Republic*, edited by Nathan Rosenstein Robert Morstein-Marx (Malden MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 308.

[43] A. Momigliano, "The Origins of Rome," in *The Cambridge Ancient History* 2nd ed. Vol. 7, Part 2, edited by F.W. Walbank, A.E. Astin, and M.W. Frederiksen and R.M. Ogilvie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 58.

[44]Momigliano, "Origins," 59.

[45] Erich S. Gruen, "Romans and Others," in *A Companion to the Roman Republic*, edited by Nathan Rosenstein Robert Morstein-Marx (Malden MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 463.

[46] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 460.

[47] Emma Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 2.

[48] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 2-3.

[49] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 3.

second-century CE poet Juvenal concluded his *Satire 8* with a warning to those boasting about noble ancestors that if they traced them back far enough, they'd end up at Romulus' asylum:

> Where did it all begin? In a kind of ill-famed ghetto.
>
> Your first forefather, whatever his name, was either
>
> A shepherd – or something I'd really better not mention.[50]

In their emphasis on outsiders and the complexities that arose from welcoming strangers, these myths address many of the issues at the heart of this paper: Why were the Romans so welcoming to outsiders? What limits were there around this welcoming? What factors contribute to welcoming? How did the Romans cope with absorbing strangers, and what impact did those strangers have? There are many versions of these myths, but I will be focusing on Virgil's *The Aeneid,* Livy's *The Early History of Rome,* and the Greek writer Dionysius of Halicarnassus' *The Roman Antiquities*, all written in the Augustan era at the end of the republic. I see these myths as the source of timeless truths about many issues, including the puzzle of how and why human beings welcome each other. After brief summaries of the three foundation myths to be discussed, I will look at what they tell us about various aspects of welcoming – the underlying reasons for welcoming, the impact of non-welcoming and the use of welcoming and compromise as a strategy in resolving conflicts.

Summaries of founding myths

In Virgil's *The Aeneid*, defeated Trojan hero Aeneas led a band of fellow survivors from Troy on a tortuous seven-year search for the land where it was prophesied that he would found a race that would rule the world. Although initially welcomed on his arrival in Latium, resentment was churned up against him, and he had to fight a tremendous battle against the Latins to win the hand of the king's daughter Lavinia and fulfil his destiny. On winning the war, Aeneas gave up the Trojan culture in favour of the

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[50] Juvenal, "Satire 8," in *The Sixteen Satires*, translated by Peter Green, edited by Betty Radice (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1977), 186.

Latin one to ensure there would be harmony among the newly united populace. In a second founding myth, as described in Livy's *The Early History of Rome*, Romulus was the grandson of the deposed king of Alba Longa, who had been usurped by his brother. The brother ordered Romulus and his baby twin brother Remus set out in the flooding Tiber to die. The twins were saved, thanks to a wolf that suckled them and a herdsman who brought them up. As young men, the twins restored their grandfather to the throne and left his kingdom to found a new city on the spot where Rome now exists. An argument between the brothers resulted in Romulus killing Remus (at least in one version of the story), and Romulus, left as sole founder, made the bold move that could be seen as the heart of Rome's attitude toward newcomers from that time on. Wanting to fill up his new city, he threw it open as a sanctuary for one and all: "Hither fled for refuge all the rag-tag-and-bobtail from the neighbouring peoples: some free, some slaves, and all of them wanting nothing but a fresh start. That mob was the first real addition to the city's strength, the first step to her future greatness."[51] A third myth, which follows on the asylum legend, is the Rape of the Sabine Women. When newcomer Romulus asked neighbouring cities to allow intermarriage with Roman men, they rejected him, fearing "the growth of this new power in their midst"[52] and mocked his population of "runaways and vagabonds."[53] Romulus responded by staging a festival during which Roman men seized for their brides women from neighbouring communities. Wars followed, the first three easily won by Romulus, who laid the blueprint for future Roman strategy by inviting many of the defeated to move to Rome to become citizens and setting up colonies of Roman citizens in the defeated territories. The fourth group, the Sabines, were tougher in battle; they captured the citadel of Rome, and Livy's story was that the battle only ended when the abducted women came to the battlefield and pleaded with the armies to stop, as by then, they had relatives on both sides. The subsequent peace agreement was

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[51] Livy, *The Early History of Rome*, Books 1-V of The History of Rome from its Foundations, translated by Aubrey De Selincourt (London: Penguin Books, 2002), 40.

[52] Livy, *History*, 40.

[53] Livy, *History*, 40.

a compromise, with the Sabines and Romans united under a single government; Romulus sharing power with the Sabine king, and the new groups sharing customs and festivals.[54]

Myths and the complications of being Roman

The bare-bones versions of the myths I have recounted here may make it seem obvious why Romans, originally outsiders themselves, would be inclined to welcome other newcomers to Rome. But nothing was as simple as that. In fact, the myths themselves were complex and varied, speaking volumes about "alternative and contested senses of Roman cultural identity,"[55]according to historian Emma Dench. Efforts have been made to sort out the "chaos"[56] surrounding Rome's foundations and early history, she contended, but the "tensions and contradictions" [57]remain:

> Rome (or the site of Rome) is successively inhabited, founded and/or improved by indigenous Aborigines, indigenous and/or Lacedaemonian Sabines, Latins descended from Saturn, Trojan exiles, twins fathered by Mars and nursed by a she-wolf, Arcadian exiles, Herakles, Trojan exiles and Etruscan kings.[58]

With such stories being told about where they came from, it wouldn't be surprising if Romans' ideas about themselves, others, and the welcoming of outsiders was affected. According to Dench, the Romans had a strong sense of estrangement – "they loved to tell themselves stories in which they viewed themselves, or aspects of themselves, as an 'other' people."[59] They were not Greeks, for example, even though they adopted much from the Greek world.[60] And even as they grew richer and descended into luxury themselves, they admired the simplicity and primitivism of their roots.[61] We don't know exactly what impact this would have had on their attitude toward outsiders,

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[54] Livy, *History*, 46.

[55] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 63.

[56]Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 63.

[57]Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 63.

[58]Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 63.

[59]Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 62.

[60]Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 62.

[61] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 62.

but I suggest that openness to the idea of being "other" yourself would likely make you less exclusive about welcoming outsiders.

Other aspects of Roman identity that would have affected welcoming, and that were evident in the myths, were the concepts of transformation and what Dench called mobility and metamorphosis, themes she argued were "part of the very structure of Rome in Livy's authoritative history."[62] I will deal with mobility and metamorphosis in a later section on social mobility, but here I would like to point out the transformations that occurred even within the bare outlines of the myths I summarized. Initially outsiders themselves, Aeneas and Romulus switched roles, becoming the ultimate insiders with the power to bestow welcome instead of seek it. The established Latins and Sabines could be thought of as undergoing transformations, becoming the new elements of an emerging Rome following their encounters with respectively, the Trojans and Romans. Originally independent groups with the ability to welcome others or withhold a welcome, they were absorbed into new entities that included their former enemies. Nor was it just people who were transformed by outsiders; cultures were changed too. The Trojans gave up their own culture to assume the togas and language of the Latins. The unification of the Sabines and Romans resulted in the exchange, blending and expansion of both of their cultures.

The transformational aspect of welcoming is an important part of the modern conversation about migration that I will deal with in Part II. Some of the hostility toward modern migration stems from fears that strangers will change a nation culturally, socially, economically or politically. The myths tell us that welcoming is all about transformation and changes – for the newcomers and the indigenous alike.

What the myths say about the why and how of welcoming

Why do people welcome others? And, for those soliciting a welcome, what's the best way of going about it? At a time of increased negativity toward newcomers, and as the number of people seeking new homes is bigger than ever, these questions are as relevant today as they were two millennia ago. This section will look at how the ancient

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[62] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 143.

myths, which dealt with outsiders searching for a place to settle, answered these questions. Even though we live in very different times than the Romans, I think the underlying issues surrounding welcoming are much the same, and the ancient answers may help with some modern questions.

The underlying reasons for welcoming

In *The Aeneid*, the welcoming was all about connections. Whenever Virgil's heroes landed at a place where they had kinfolk, friends or fellow countrymen, they were welcome. Sometimes the connection was as thin as simply having been heard about; and it helped to combine this with looking just the right way. Aeneas, who had noble blood, came from a famous father, and was described as extremely handsome, did well under these criteria. When he first met Queen Dido of Carthage, her positive response was partly because she had long known about him, his parents, and about the fall of Troy. But it didn't hurt that he looked "like a god. . . His beauty fine as a craftsman's hand can add to ivory."[63] Another reason for her warmth was that she had experienced similar hardship: "Schooled in suffering, now I learn to comfort those who suffer too."[64] But usually it was family connections or reputations that earned the Trojans their welcome. Aeneas recounted to Dido, for example, his greeting from the son of the late Trojan king, who, "recognizing his kin. . . gladly leads us home,/each word of welcome breaking through his tears."[65] When the Trojans finally got to their destination, King Latinus greeted them with: ". . . we know your city,/your stock, and we heard that you were sailing here,"[66] and referred to Dardanus, an ancestor of Aeneas' originally from Latium. When Aeneas showed up unexpectedly at the site of what is now Rome to seek military help from the Arcadian king Evander, his Dardanian connection won him instant acceptance. Aeneas told Evander that they were blood kin through their fathers, which "binds me to you."[67] Evander in turn "had marked/ his eyes, his features, his whole

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[63] Virgil, *The Aeneid*, translated by Robert Fagles (New York NY: Penguin Books, 2006), 67.

[64] Virgil, *The Aeneid,* 68.

[65] Virgil, *The Aeneid,* 115.

[66]Virgil, *The Aeneid,* 219.

[67]Virgil, *The Aeneid,* 245.

frame,"[68]and said his face, words and voice reminded him of Aeneas' father, who had impressed him as a youth: "So the right hand you want is clasping yours. We are allies bound as one."[69]

The tales of Romulus' asylum and the rape of the Sabine women point to very different underlying factors in welcoming than the friendship, familiarity and empathy that Virgil's tale emphasized. In these myths, welcoming was based on very practical reasons. Romulus had a new city he needed to fill up, so he created an asylum that welcomed even the lowly. Dionysius of Halicarnassus was quite explicit about the practical reasons for this – it was to increase "the power of Romans and lessen that of their neighbours."[70]. We could not call the abduction of neighbouring women under the ruse of a festival as 'welcoming' in any way, but it was a practical means of adding people to a city, comparable to the huge number of slaves who were brought involuntarily to Rome in real life. Also practical was the common Roman strategy– described in the myths and practised in real life – of welcoming the people of defeated territories to settle in Rome and giving them Roman citizenship. This expanded the size of the city while also turning former enemies into Roman citizens, a policy so advantageous to Rome that Dionysius of Halicarnassus described it as the reason Rome became an empire while the far less welcoming Greek cities fell under its thumb. In Dionysius' opinion, the Greeks would have done well to follow some of Romulus' policies, including:

> . . .not to slay all the men of military age or to enslave the rest of the population of the cities captured in war or to allow their land to go back to pasturage for sheep, but rather to send settlers thither to possess some part of the country by lot and to make the conquered cities Roman colonies, and even to grant citizenship to some of them.[71]

Dionysius argued that it was because of Greek restrictiveness that the Spartans couldn't re-establish their supremacy after losing 1,700 men at Leuctra; and that the

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[68] Virgil, *The Aeneid,* 246-247.

[69] Virgil, *The Aeneid,* 246-247.

[70] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.15.3

[71] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.16.1.

Thebans and Athenians lost the leadership of Greece and their liberty to the Macedonians.[72] Meanwhile, Rome was facing wars and dangers on many fronts – including rebellion in Italy and the Hannibalic war – but "so far from being overcome by these misfortunes that she derived from them a strength even greater than she had before, being enabled to meet every danger, thanks to the number of her soldiers. . . . ." [73]

The myths show us that there can be a variety of underlying reasons for welcoming, ranging from warm human emotions such as feelings of connection and empathy to purely practical reasons – such as that a bigger population will mean more taxes and a bigger army. All have implications for the way we think about welcoming today, which I will explore further in Part II. One of the issues raised by the myths is that if people are most comfortable with newcomers they have connections or familiarity with, what happens in a modern liberal world that tries to welcome people from all different backgrounds?

The process of welcoming

I have described these scenes in some detail because I think they reveal the delicacy of the relationship between welcomer and welcomed that may be lost in today's polarized debates over migration. In the myths, the newcomers knew they were in the role of supplicants; they had to explain who they were, why they were there, what they wanted, and they kept their demands deliberately modest. The response in all these cases was overwhelmingly positive, far beyond what was being requested. When we consider the reasons, one was certainly the emotional goodwill born of connections and commonality, but another was that there were benefits for the welcomers. Dido was starting a new city, so the addition of the famous Trojans would have been a plus. King Latinus saw Aeneas as his new son-in-law and future king, so his generosity was an investment in the long-term future. To Evander, Aeneas was a god-sent means of dealing with the long-term threats his community had been facing from the forces assembling against the Trojans: "You are the one whose age and breed the Fates approve,/the one

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[72] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.17.2.

[73] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities* , 2.17.3.

the Powers call."[74] Thus we can see how Virgil's portrayal of Aeneas' search for a home illustrates the complex and delicate balance between those seeking welcoming and those with the power to grant or withhold it. There were rules of politeness and etiquette to be observed in what was almost a ritualistic performance. And although the results may have seemed heavily weighted in favour of the newcomers, in reality, there were benefits to both sides.

Virgil had the poet's advantage in describing the nuances of the welcoming process in *The Aeneid*. Livy's version of the main welcoming event in the Romulus founding myth – the opening of the asylum– was the brief statement that it succeeded in filling up the city. However, Dionysius of Halicarnassus was more expansive about the balancing act involved. Romulus got his population; in return, he offered the fugitives protection from their enemies as well as citizenship and a share of land taken from enemies: "And people came flocking thither from all parts, fleeing from their calamities at home; nor had they afterwards any thought of removing to any other place, but were held there by daily instances of his sociability and kindness."[75]Safety, land, citizenship, sociability and kindness could be seen as part of the process of welcoming in Romulus' early city. While, as I have said, Livy did not dwell on these aspects of welcoming, we may be able to read into his wording another way that Romulus welcomed newcomers. Immediately after his city was filled, Romulus "turned to social organization,"[76] appointing 100 senators who would become the patrons in the patron-client system that helped integrate newcomers. The quick institution of this new system could be seen as part of the welcoming process. Although Livy's description was far more cryptic than anything Virgil wrote, it was also describing ancient processes for welcoming newcomers.

This section has dealt in detail with what the myths said about the reasons for welcoming and what welcoming looked like in ancient Rome. On the former, we have learned that they emphasized the importance of connections, and that practicality played

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[74] Virgil, *The Aeneid*, 258.

[75] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.15.4.

[76] Livy, *History*, 40.

a role. On the latter, we have seen that welcoming involved a delicate dance between the parties, as well as some straightforward promises of land, help and citizenship. We will see how these elements fit into modern times when we return to them in Part II.

The myths and the darker side of welcoming

As much as the myths say about welcoming, they also include some important points about non-welcoming. *The Aeneid* especially, with its tale of the wandering Trojans' many rejections and the opposition to them when they landed in Latium, is a good vehicle for an examination of why newcomers may not be welcome, what rejection looks like, and where that may lead. This is an important area to explore given the antagonism toward newcomers that I will be dealing with in the second part of this project. And, as with welcoming, I think non-welcoming includes underlying emotions and reactions that are timeless; the poet Virgil captured two-millennia-old responses that could happen in any modern setting today. One of these is the almost-automatic suspicion of outsiders. When Evander's son Pallas spotted strange ships landing, he issued the age-old sentry's challenge: "'Where are you going? Who are your people? Where's your home? Do you bring peace or war?'"[77] In the myths, the suspicion could sometimes be allayed, but sometimes it turned to outright hostility, as happened after the Trojans landed in Latium. *The Aeneid* was particularly astute in pointing to the factors underlying that hostility. One is that newcomers disrupt the settled order of things, and while some of the resulting changes may be positive, there can be many negative ones. Newcomers can usurp the established and threaten their privileges and expectations. They can change or threaten the local culture, and violate existing rules and customs. Many of these issues arose in Virgil's tale. Aeneas usurped Lavinia's previous suitor when her father decided the Trojan hero should marry her instead. The ousted suitor, a local prince named Turnus, was furious. "'Phrygian blood will corrupt our own, and I, I'm driven from the doors!'"[78] he raged, firing up for a bloody war between the Latins and the Trojans. Lavinia's mother was equally unwelcoming, calling Aeneas a "'lying pirate'" who would "'desert us,

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[77] Virgil, *The Aeneid*, 245.

[78] Virgil, *The Aeneid* , 232.

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setting sail on the high seas, our virgin as his loot!'"[79] The Trojans committed another

gaffe that angered the locals: Aeneas' son killed a beautiful stag that, unbeknownst to the

strangers but well known to the indigenous, was a beloved pet.[80] All these instances

reflect common human responses to outsiders: the fear of losing out; the automatic

denigration ("corrupting blood," "lying pirate"), and the suspicion (Aeneas would flee

with Lavinia instead of settling down and being a responsible citizen). The killing of the

stag illustrated how newcomers can do damage because of their ignorance of local norms.

The Trojans also showed how newcomers can change the political, social and cultural

landscape; they triggered wars and alliances that would not have occurred if they hadn't

set foot in Latium. Turnus, who would likely have been the next king of Latium if Aeneas

hadn't arrived, ended up dead at his hands instead. Although the victorious Trojans gave

up their culture and language for the Latin one, preserving the existing local culture, their

presence alone would have had effects, if only in the longstanding legends that the

Roman race originally came from a foreign land. Such an idea in itself changed how the

Romans viewed themselves in the long term.

One of the curious aspects of Virgil's tale about the Trojan wanderers' many

rejections as they searched for a welcoming home was his frequent use of supernatural

forces and creatures, as if to illustrate the extreme opposite of welcoming. The Trojans'

first effort at settlement, in Thrace, failed spectacularly when the earth of a small mound

began oozing blood when plant shoots were plucked from it.[81] The shoots turned out to

be the outgrowth of lances in the body of a Trojan murdered earlier by a Thracian leader

who had turned against Troy. The horror of the bleeding mound was compounded by the

voice of the murdered man, who warned the newcomers to flee. The Trojans tried to

settle in Crete, but were driven out after a year by a mysterious plague that blighted the

crops, sapped their energy and killed many of them.[82] Later, blown by a storm into

Strophades, where there were fat cattle to slaughter, they were forced to flee by monsters.

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[79] Virgil, *The Aeneid*, 225.

[80] Virgil, *The Aeneid*, 229.

[81] Virgil, *The Aeneid*, 104.

[82] Virgil, *The Aeneid*, 108.

The Harpies, loathsome birds with the faces of women, attacked them mercilessly as they attempted to eat the cattle they had slain.[83] And later still, after riding out a storm at a harbour in Sicily, they narrowly escaped the clutches of a man-eating one-eyed Cyclops.[84] While the Trojans did confront human foes, especially after landing in Latium, I think Virgil may have been sending messages with his supernatural monsters. He may have been saying that a certain degree of commonality, or perhaps a human connection, is necessary in order for welcoming to occur. Or perhaps the message was that not everybody belonged everywhere, and strange forces would make sure they knew it.

Livy's asylum and rape myths also provided examples of non-welcoming, and of how hostility to outsiders can result in conflicts and changes to an existing society. Romulus' new city wasn't welcome; it disrupted the status quo and raised the neighbours' fears and suspicions. "[E]veryone despised the new community and at the same time feared, both for themselves and for posterity, the growth of this new power in their midst."[85] There was also a hint that Romulus had violated the norms by welcoming the lowly to his asylum. His efforts to obtain intermarriage rights with the neighbours were met with not just rejection but mockery: "More often than not his envoys were dismissed with the question of whether Rome had thrown open her doors to female, as well as to male, runaways and vagabonds, as that would evidently be the most suitable way for Romans to get wives."[86] The rejection of the newcomers escalated into the rape of the Sabine women and the ensuing wars to avenge it, all of which had long-term effects on the political, social and cultural makeup of the area. When neighbouring cities that attacked Rome over the abductions were defeated, their citizens were allowed to move to Rome, while Romans were sent out to colonies established in the cities, changing the population makeup everywhere. And when the Romans and the Sabines reached a peace agreement after the abductions, they created a joint Roman/Sabine city,

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[83] Virgil, *The Aeneid*, 110-111.

[84] Virgil, *The Aeneid*, 125.

[85] Livy, *History*, 40.

[86]. Livy, *History*, 40.

blending their populations and cultures. All these changes were the indirect result of the non-welcoming attitude of Rome's neighbours.

Thus, the myths make it clear that non-welcoming can have just as many effects, and perhaps more, than welcoming. They also indicate that there will be disruptions when strangers arrive, whether they are welcomed or not welcomed. I will return to the issue of welcoming versus non-welcoming in Part II, where I will look at how modern nations who have received large numbers of uninvited migrants are choosing to deal with them.

Finding harmony through welcoming and compromise

The founding myths illustrate a common practice that helped the Romans absorb large numbers of people, promote harmony and soothe the anger stirred up by their many conflicts. In the myths as well as in real life, they often sought compromise with those they conquered, and welcoming was part of the strategy. Instead of punishing the defeated, a frequent tactic was to transform them into Romans, giving them full or partial citizenship, as well as the right to live in Rome. In his version of the myth about the wars that followed the rape of the Sabine women, Dionysius of Halicarnassus described the compromise/welcoming strategy in some detail. Calling in the abducted women from the first two cities to be defeated in their avenging wars against Rome, Romulus told them that while their fathers and brothers deserved "every severity," they would be treated with moderation because "we not only fear the vengeance of the gods, which ever threatens the arrogant, and dread the ill-will of men, but we are also persuaded that mercy contributes not a little to alleviate the common ills of mankind, and we realize that we ourselves may one day stand in need of that of others."[87] The defeated were allowed to keep their liberty, their possessions and all their advantages, and could choose to stay in their own cities without penalty, or move to Rome and become citizens there.[88] However, Romulus took one-third of the land of the defeated territories as colonies and sent 300 Roman citizens out to each as a way of averting future conflicts between Rome and its

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[87] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.35.3.

[88] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.35.4.

neighbours. Dionysius' extremely positive description of this compromise makes it sound like nobody suffered or was inconvenienced; Rome got a bigger population and colonies, and the defeated could choose where they wanted to live. Even more positive was the peace agreement with the Sabines, which united both cities under a single government, with Romulus and the Sabines' Titus Tatius becoming joint kings. Since all citizens now belonged to a new joint city, this could be seen as a compromise involving a mass welcoming of all citizens to the new entity. But as Rome retained the seat of power, effectively doubling its population under the new arrangement,[89] it seems that efforts were made to even things out with favours to the Sabines. Romulus named wards of the city after the abducted women, and as a gesture to the Sabines, the Romans decided to call themselves Quirites, after the Sabine town of Cures. The cultures of both were welcomed and exchanged: According to Plutarch, the Sabines adopted the Roman months for their calendar, and the Romans adopted the Sabines' armour and oblong shields. They shared feasts and sacrifices, "not discarding any which the two peoples had observed before, but instituting other new ones."[90]

These stories have very positive outcomes for an incident that started with non-welcoming and led to rape. History tends to be written by the winners, so we don't know what the Sabines or the people from the defeated cities thought of the Romans' actions. But the way these stories go is that the Romans did not take full advantage of their victories, instead choosing to compromise with the defeated by welcoming them to Rome and giving them Roman citizenship. The effect was to transform one-time enemies into citizens who could be beneficial to Rome, adding to its population and perhaps to its tax intake and army. It's the point Dionysius made about what make Rome successful compared to Greek cities. Another advantage of compromising with the defeated is that it takes the sting out of defeat, meaning future harmony that could be worth more than what it might cost the victors.

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[89] Livy, *History*, 46.

[90] Plutarch, "Romulus," in Loeb Classical Library *Plutarch Lives*, Vol. 1, translated by Bernadotte Perrin, edited by Jeffrey Henderson (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1914), 155.

Romulus' treatment of the abducted women right after their seizure could be seen as another example of using welcoming and compromise to smooth over conflict. The day after the women were taken, the Roman leader expended much effort to welcome them, "going from one to another"[91] with promises that they "would share all the fortunes of Rome, all the privileges of the community,"[92] and that their husbands would treat them all the more kindly to make up for the homes and parents they had lost.[93] As already described, his ploy worked to the point that the women felt equally attached to their new families in Rome and their previous ones.

Another, more unusual instance of using welcoming as part of compromise occurred after the Trojan victory over the Latins, which ended with the victors essentially being 'welcomed' into the race of the conquered. In what Virgil's *The Aeneid* portrayed as a compromise between the gods Jove and Juno, the Trojans gave up their name and culture in favour of the Latin one, essentially subsuming themselves into the Latin race. Livy's version of the Aeneas story explained it this way: the hero "conferred the native name of Latins upon his own people; the sharing of a common name as well as a common polity would, he felt, strengthen the bond between the two peoples."[94] According to Livy, this move won Aeneas the Latins' loyalty, and the two groups "were rapidly becoming one people."[95] Although transformations didn't usually go in this direction, this myth showed that the idea of welcoming people to a different culture as part of a compromise to smooth over divisions after a conflict was well embedded in Roman thinking.

These mythical tales of welcoming, compromise and moderation are a sharp contrast to modern attitudes toward migration, which tend to be highly polarized, with parties becoming locked into extreme positions. I think of Aeneas' refusal to take advantage of his victory, and instead make sacrifices in the hopes of ensuring a more

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[91] Livy, *History*, 41.

[92] Livy, *History*, 42.

[93] Livy, *History*, 42

[94] Livy, *History*, 32

[95] Livy, *History*, 32-33.

harmonious future: the winner doesn't necessarily have to take all. Taking the sting out of defeat may be a valuable thing to do, and it may be a good idea to remember, as Romulus did, that the tables may be turned one day. Nor do such ideas have to be based on altruism or humanitarianism; perhaps Aeneas and Romulus were being purely practical. Maybe they thought their communities would thrive better if both sides felt the other had given a little; maybe they thought it was better if the conquered were not steaming with pent-up anger. I will be returning to the idea of compromise and welcoming when I discuss modern migration in Part II.

Rome's welcoming strategies: social mobility, unity, and flexibility

> There is no parallel in antiquity to the way in which the Roman state succeeded, without bursting its bounds, in enabling hundreds of thousands of citizens to live and work together for centuries, regularly absorbing individuals and populous communities, bringing the mosaic of Italian people into a single Romanized pattern, and conquering the loyalty of all its subjects by the relative freedom of entry into the upper orders of society and the political class.[96]

This section will explore what welcoming looked like in ancient Rome, a place where, according to C. Nicolet's evocative description, a mosaic of citizens could live and work together long-term, absorb newcomers, feel like part of a united whole, and enjoy the ability to rise in their new world. I will argue that the Romans used a number of strategies to create a welcoming society, including opening up paths to social mobility for newcomers, promoting unity and community and employing flexibility in dealing with different cultures. Discussing these strategies will help answer some of the questions raised in my introduction, such as how the Romans successfully absorbed large numbers of new arrivals, how they enabled diverse cultures to get along together, and how they dealt with fears of cultural change as a result of newcomers. As we have seen from the myths, welcoming doesn't always go so smoothly; the arrival of newcomers can cause tension and conflicts. I will talk about these conflicts when they arise in the following

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[96] C. Nicolet, *The World of the Citizen in Republican Rome*, translated by P.S. Falla (London: Batsford Academic and Educational Ltd., 1980), 388.

discussions, but will also explore them separately later under a section called "Welcoming and non-welcoming in Rome."

This section contains three subsections, labelled social mobility, unity and flexibility. On the first, I will argue that social mobility is an important aspect of welcoming because newcomers who feel there is a chance of improving their lives in their new environment feel more welcome. And Rome was a place of hope and opportunity for many. The most dramatic example was the Romans' readiness – unusual for the time – to free large numbers of slaves and immediately turn them into citizens, conferring status and opportunities on a group initially considered the lowest of the low. I will argue that connections and the patron-client system played an important role in the social mobility that was part of Roman welcoming. But the social mobility of newcomers caused tensions with the established, so a discussion of the conflicts it caused is another part of this section. On the issue of unity, I will argue that one aspect of welcoming outsiders is finding or creating common links between them and the existing society, so the newcomers and indigenous all feel part of a common entity. The Roman-style buildings and town plans still evident in distant parts of the former empire are an example of how Rome brought diverse communities under one big umbrella. On the issue of flexibility, I will argue that one of the key reasons the Romans were able to be as welcoming as they were is that they were endlessly innovative and adaptable. Even though they thought of themselves as traditional, the Romans were always coming up with something new, whether that meant creating new types of alliances and networks with neighbours, creating various kinds of colonies serving different purposes or devising new forms of citizenship. Welcoming may not have always been their ultimate goal, but it was often the end result.

Social mobility

One way of welcoming people is to provide opportunities for them to flourish in their new surroundings. Social mobility, which enabled people to improve their status or living conditions, was one of the features of ancient Rome. This occurred in very practical ways, which I will deal with below, but historian Emma Dench argued that it

also involved something more abstract – the idea of mobility and metamorphosis, often embodied in the transformation of slaves into freedmen in Roman society.[97] She cited historian Thomas Wiedemann's idea of placing less emphasis on the actual number of slaves manumitted and more "on the *idea* of manumission as a possibility, a culturally specific important belief, which might serve a number of functions."[98] Thus, as we discuss the very real processes of mobility in Roman society, another aspect to bear in mind is the element of transformation in Roman cultural beliefs. Emperors rose from humble beginnings and turned into gods upon their deaths; lowly slaves like Petronius' fictional Trimalchio turned into wealthy magnates, gambling was a national obsession,[99] and as Dench noted, rags-to-riches themes were favourites in Roman novels.[100]

In real life, what did welcoming through social mobility look like? Historians write with awe about how people from subjugated territories moved to the capital to achieve power and success, in the senate and elsewhere. Slaves were freed in great numbers, giving them immediate Roman citizenship, and some gained tremendous wealth and power. Four of the 10 richest men from the principate (27 BCE to 235 CE) were former slaves, "courted for their immense influence even by members of the elite orders."[101] Slaves and ex-slaves climbed high in the administration of the empire, and a few became confidants of the emperor. They dominated lower-level commerce – running businesses and working in trades – and their descendants were (eventually) eligible for positions open to any free-born citizen: "The mobility of sons and (more generally) descendants of freedmen is the most traceable and remarkable aspect of a much broader phenomenon: it is no exaggeration to say that mobility was very much part of the 'everyday life' of the ancient Italian community. Countless visible records of social transformation are a prominent and well-advertised feature of Roman life, and not least

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[97] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 143.

[98] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 144.

[99] Jerome Carcopino, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome*, translated by E.O. Lorimer, edited by Henry T. Rowell (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), 250-251.

[100] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 145.

[101] Peter Garnsey and Richard Saller, *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 120.

the life of the upper classes."[102] The military opened up opportunities for the lower classes to rise. Even the humblest-born soldier from the farthest-flung reaches of the empire had a chance of gaining his own plot of land and perhaps even a place in the local elite when he retired.

But there were limits to this mobility. Slaves destined to work in chain-gangs in the fields or in terrible conditions in mines had little hope of a bright future – or of a very long future of any kind. Freed slaves who rose too high or gained too much power aroused anxiety and sometimes fury in the free-born: "Freedmen, with their inherently transitional status, can both represent a challenge to an idea of continuity and stand as a symbol of the mobility that characterized Rome from her very beginnings."[103] Peasants, forced off their small farms by the depredations of war or pushed out by slave-owning elites, often struggled in the city; historians said such free-born poor were actually at a disadvantage compared to urban slaves. Soldiers who were given confiscated lands in reward for their service weren't necessarily welcomed by their new neighbours. And provincial aristocrats who tried to rise to the top in Rome had to overcome the prejudice of the traditional elite. Even though the famous statesman and orator Cicero reached the top job with his election as consul, he was never quite accepted, and never dropped his defensiveness about coming from a town outside Rome.

Welcoming through freedom and support; the case of slaves

We cannot talk about slaves being "welcomed" into Rome any more than we can describe the abducted Sabine women as being welcomed, but once their involuntary arrival had taken place, I think we can use the word welcoming to describe treatment that enabled them to flourish in some way from that point on. I will discuss slaves in detail here because they are the most dramatic example of social mobility in ancient Rome, considering how high they could climb and the depths from which they rose. We cannot summarize their lives or opportunities as a group, since according to historian Mary Beard, there was no such thing as a typical slave; they "were just as varied in background

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[102] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 145.

[103] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 145.

and style of life as free citizens."[104] But I think this variety is useful because it provides a sense of the many ways that newcomers beginning from the very bottom can prosper in a society that welcomes them with at least some support and opportunities.

One potential for mobility is simple luck. In his *Satyricon*, Petronius painted an over-the-top portrait of the fictional ex-slave Trimalchio, who inherited "a senator's fortune"[105] upon his master's death and turned it into a series of businesses that made him extravagantly wealthy. Such inheritances were not unusual, according to historians. When there were no heirs to a family and the property was passed to outsiders, it was a "peculiarity" of the Roman system that those who tended to benefit were lower-class dependents such as freedmen and slaves "who had won the confidence or affection of their master."[106] There were many other avenues for slaves to improve their fortunes. One was through education or training, as Roman masters, unlike those in some slave societies, were willing to develop their slaves' potential, according to historian Keith Hopkins: "Education and literacy were in no sense thought of as subverting slavery."[107] Slaves who could "take responsibility as thinking persons, not things,"[108] did well, serving as doctors, teachers, writers, accountants, agents, bailiffs, overseers, secretaries and sea-captains. Slaves from Greece had a particular advantage because the Romans admired their culture; wanting to imitate it, they imported Greek-speaking philosophers, teachers and doctors:[109] "Slavery was one of the chief methods of recruiting the highly cultured to work in Roman Italy. The sophistication of Rome as the cultural capital of the empire depended considerably on educated, foreign-born slaves."[110] Slaves also benefited from the reluctance of the free-born to work as long-term employees of fellow Romans,

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[104] Beard, *SPQR*, 329.

[105] Petronius, *The Satyricon*, translated by William Arrowsmith (New York, NY: The New American Library, 1959), 82.

[106] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 110.

[107] Keith Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves: Sociological Studies in Roman History*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 117.

[108] Keith Hopkins, *Slaves*, 123.

[109]Keith Hopkins, *Slaves*, 123.

[110] Keith Hopkins, *Slaves*, 124.

considering it akin to slavery.[111] The fact that employers also preferred slaves and ex-slaves over the free-born[112]meant the field was wide open for slaves and ex-slaves to use their talents and rise in Roman society. Some became extremely powerful, as emperors recruited them when they began developing a bureaucracy to administer the empire. There is evidence that "several top slaves and ex-slaves had privileged access to the emperor; they provided him with, or cut him off from information; they were his trusted confidants."[113] Rewards to such people sometimes went far beyond manumission. Claudius gave his ex-slave Pallas the rank of praetor, and the senate offered him 15 times the minimum fortune of a senator as a reward for his "outstanding loyalty and devotion to duty," which he rejected, outraging the nobility.[114] But it was in business that slaves and ex-slaves particularly excelled, and in this, their connections with masters were crucial. Through a "series of flexible compromises with the weaknesses and rigidity of chattel slavery,"[115] masters could make use of skilled slaves in responsible positions. For example, there was a legal fiction that an agreement made by a slave acting as his master's accredited agent was binding on the master; the slave was assumed to be an extension of the master's body, working with his master's mind.[116] In other cases, the master limited his liability to the extent of the slave's own private purse, the *peculiam*.[117] This money could be advanced to the slave, giving him working capital "borrowed" from his master: "The use by slaves and ex-slaves of their master's capital gave them a decisive advantage over the free poor, and must have been an important factor underlying the prominence of slave and ex-slave enterprises in Roman commerce and manufacture."[118] Slaves couldn't necessarily sell their labour on the market as they chose, but many worked in positions where they could make a profit for themselves, and there is

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[111] Keith Hopkins, *Slaves*, 124.

[112] Morley, "Social Structure," 315.

[113] Hopkins, *Slaves*, 124.

[114]Hopkins, *Slaves*, 116.

[115]Hopkins, *Slaves*, 125.

[116] Hopkins, *Slaves*, 125.

[117] Hopkins, *Slaves*, 125.

[118] Hopkins, *Slaves*, 125.

evidence masters actually paid some slaves a regular monthly wage.[119] Given all these possibilities, as historian Neville Morley has noted, slaves may have been "utterly dependent and exploitable, lower than any free man,"[120] but in practice, many had better prospects and lived in better conditions than many of the free.

Ancient Romans were unusually welcoming in two of the ways they dealt with slaves, both of which encouraged social mobility. For one thing, they were unusually willing to free their slaves; for another, they almost automatically granted their freed slaves Roman citizenship. Both practices moved slaves up the social scale and led to rights and privileges they didn't have before. As noted earlier, Rome's granting of citizenship to freed slaves was so unusual in the ancient world that Philip V of Macedon commented on it in a letter to the Greek city of Larissa in Thessaly in the third century BCE. "The Greeks observed the practice with some astonishment,"[121] according to historian Erich S. Gruen: "The ready entrance of freedmen into the citizen body signified a level of comfort with foreigners that was unmatched elsewhere in the classical world."[122] By contrast, in Athens, very few slaves were freed, and those who were "went into a form of stateless limbo,"[123] noted Beard.

As open-hearted as this might seem, there were degrees of welcoming for slaves in Roman society. Freed slaves didn't have all the privileges of free-born citizens, and slavery bore a stigma that was only gradually erased with succeeding generations. And some slaves, especially those who bought their freedom, were heavily weighted with obligations to their former masters, which must have impeded their chances of getting ahead themselves. Sometimes these duties were so onerous that the courts had to rule that an ex-slave must be given enough time to earn his own food, or be fed while working for his former owner.[124] Sometimes there were unspecified obligations, such as an ex-slave

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[119]Hopkins, *Slaves,* 126.

[120] Morley, "Social Structure," 313.

[121] Erich S. Gruen, "Romans and Others," in *A Companion to the Roman Republic*, edited by Nathan Rosenstein and Robert Morstein-Marx (Malden MA: Blackwell Publishing), 464.

[122] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 465.

[123] Beard, *SPQR*, 68.

[124] Hopkins, *Slaves*, 130.

being "at his patron's service until his death and when he died at his children's,"[125] and to help maintain his former master if he fell on hard times. As for why the Romans were so willing to free their slaves, Beard and Hopkins agreed it may have been mostly a matter of practicality. Beard suggested it might have been cheaper to free them rather than keep them in their "unproductive old age."[126] Hopkins argued that frequent manumissions may have actually helped perpetuate the slavery system.[127]Not only could ex-slaves be expected to continue helping their masters, but the prospect of freedom "kept a slave under control and hard at work, while the exaction of a market price as the cost of liberty enabled the master to buy a younger replacement."[128]Thus we can see that there were catches to what might have appeared to be generosity or humanity on the part of the Romans toward their slaves; obligations and stigma from a previous lower status lingered. This raises something to ponder in terms of modern migration: how different are our attitudes from the Romans' when it comes to needy newcomers from disadvantaged backgrounds? How much generosity and humanity is mixed into modern nations' treatment of migrants, and how much exploitation and stigma?

From the point of view of the twenty-first century, we cannot really know what social mobility was like in ancient Rome, or how welcoming it seemed to the slaves who arrived there in shackles. But a sense of energy and vitality bursts out of the long rows of their funerary plaques, slabs and urns in the museum at the Baths of Diocletian in Rome: we can almost hear the fishmongers, butchers, goldsmiths and clothes-makers chattering at each other across the aisles. Memorials were expensive, so the very existence of this huge trove of epigraphical material from slaves and ex-slaves is some evidence of their success. The commercial class is prominent here – people such as freedwoman Gaavia Philumina, a shop-keeper on the Aventine, who had enough money to build a tomb for herself and two freedmen. Freedman M. Caedicius Eros, a goldsmith with a shop on the Via Sacra, set up a tomb for himself, his concubine and two other freedmen. Contract

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[125]Hopkins, *Slaves*, 129.

[126] Beard, *SPQR*, 330.

[127] Hopkins, *Slaves*, 118.

[128] Hopkins, *Slaves*, 118.

baker M. Vergilius Eurysaces, whose own towering funerary monument, thought to resemble a bread-kneading machine, still stands on the streets of Rome, contributed a plaque to his wife Atista, who "lived as the best of women." Eurysaces was likely an ex-slave who, judging from the size of his monument, made a great deal of money from his business, according to Beard.[129] The museum displays also include reminders of slaves and ex-slaves who served important roles in the empire's administration – imperial freedman Publius Aelius Liberalis, who was responsible for the supply of grain to Ostia, for example, and freedman P. Pompeius Pylades, a secretarial scribe. A cast of a great block with an inscription more than five metres long is from the funerary monument of Epafrodito, Nero's freedman, who was much decorated for discovering a conspiracy against Nero and is credited with helping him escape and later to kill himself. Slaves who weren't freed figure here too. One funerary slab, placed by his daughters, is for imperial slave Threptus, who was in charge of ornaments and jewelry. There is a great slab belonging to the tomb of Iulius Pietas, placed by the imperial slave Epelys, who was inherited by Claudius from his mother Antonia. Another, humbler display hints at the enormous personal pride of moving beyond the status of slave; it depicts a husband and wife and boy, the latter wearing a ceremonial Roman toga. "It has been suggested that the relief represents a family of freedmen, proud of their freeborn son," says the explanatory material. These memorials illustrate not just social mobility, but also hint at the kind of newcomers who did well in ancient Rome, why the Romans would have welcomed them and how they absorbed them. These were people who helped the empire jog along from day to day – from the bakers to the scribes to the loyal supporters of the emperors, they were its practical innards.

Welcoming through connections

The museum display hints at the high level of connectedness that I would argue was an important factor in social mobility and welcoming in Rome. A big part of this was the patron-client system, involving a reciprocal relationship between a more established member of society and a less-established one. Scholar Neville Morley described Roman

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[129] Beard, *SPQR*, 451.

society as a gigantic system of "dependence and dominance,"[130] with slavery the most extreme expression of this, but the same principle applying to relationships between former owner and freedman, patron and client, husband and wife, father and children, and even Rome and its allies and subjects.[131] I will explore the patron-client system separately below, but here I will argue that a number of other Roman institutions and policies also had the effect of both connecting people and promoting social mobility. For example, after subjugating or annexing a territory, the Romans often welcomed the people of those areas with grants of citizenship: "Roman citizens might have jealously preserved their own status, leaving other peoples in a state of subjection; instead they granted equal rights more or less promptly and spontaneously, to larger and larger groups of aliens, first in Italy and later in the provinces."[132] Citizenship not only linked newcomers with all other citizens in the empire, guaranteeing them certain civil and legal rights, but it was also "key to advancement, the essential condition of entry into the small circle of those who governed, or rather administered the state."[133] Citizenship was necessary in order to serve in the legions or become an officer; to become a civil servant, especially of equestrian rank; or to have any hope of becoming a magistrate or senator, or of reaching high military or civilian posts.[134] Thus, one way the Romans welcomed newcomers was to readily grant them the citizenship that connected them to other citizens and opened up the possibilities of social mobility.

The military itself could be viewed as a means of connection and social mobility. While initially only citizens with a certain level of wealth, as determined by the census, could serve in the military, this changed dramatically over the years. As Rome conquered or annexed other territories, these territories were often required to provide Rome with a certain number of soldiers, which would have brought large numbers of newcomers under the auspices of the Roman military. The military, with its unique traditions and training methods, in itself would have been a system of connecting all who served.

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[130] Morley, "Social Structure," 316.

[131] Morley, "Social Structure," 316.

[132] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 17.

[133] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 20.

[134] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 20.

Meanwhile, wealth qualifications for joining the military kept dropping and were finally eliminated in 107 BCE, leading to what is often called the professionalization of the army. Citizens with no land could join up, enticed by the potential of booty and the promise of a piece of land when they retired. Those who survived a career of fighting ended up small landholders and sometimes members of the local elites, a big step up from where many had started. A republican veteran called Marcus Billienus appears to have exemplified that scenario. According to a funerary inscription, he fought at Actium and settled in Ateste, where he later became a member of the town council, illustrating that "many veterans became well-to-do members of the local elite."[135]

At higher levels, too, the military was a place of connections and social mobility. Top Roman leaders were expected to be both warriors and politicians, so young men who could prove themselves on the battlefield as well as give stirring speeches could climb the political ladder even if their families were not fully ensconced in the traditional Roman nobility. Connections always helped. Thus there is a letter from the orator and politician Cicero asking Julius Caesar, then commander in Gaul, to take under his wing the young jurist C. Trebatius Testa, a protégé of Cicero's, to advance his career.[136] But it wasn't necessary to have noble beginnings to reach the top through the military, as the story of Ventidius Bassus illustrates. According to the story told by Aulus Gellius in *Attic Nights,*[137] , Ventidius Bassus was born in Picenum "in a humble station," taken prisoner with his mother by Pompeius Strabo in the Social War, and later carried in his mother's arms in Strabo's triumph in the parade of captives. When he grew up, he became a buyer of mules and carriages, supplying them to magistrates heading out to the provinces they had been allotted to oversee. In this role, he caught Caesar's eye, who recruited him for his campaign in Gaul and taught him military tactics. "Then, because he had shown commendable energy in that province, and later during the civil war had executed

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[135] Paul Erdkamp, "Army and Society," in *A Companion to the Roman Republic*, edited by Nathan Rosenstein and Robert Morstein-Marx (Malden MA: Blackwell Publishing), 295.

[136] Elizabeth Deniaux, "Patronage," in *A Companion to the Roman Republic*, translated by Robert Morstein-Marx and Robert Martz, edited by Nathan Rosenstein and Robert Morstein-Marx (Malden MA: Blackwell Publishing), 404..

[137] Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights*, 15.4 edited by John C. Rolfe, , http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:abo:phi,1254,001:15:4

numerous commissions with promptness and vigour, he not only gained Caesar's friendship, but because of it rose even to the highest rank."[138] That friendship led to connections with Mark Antony and positions as a tribune of the commons, praetor and later the pontificate and consulship. Which according to Gellius led to posters mocking his humble beginnings being put up on the streets: "A portent strange has taken place of late;/ For he who curried mules is consul now."[139] After Caesar's assassination, Antony put Ventidius in charge of the eastern provinces, where he routed the Parthians when they invaded the Syrians, resulting in his being awarded a triumph. Thus, someone who had been paraded in a triumph as a baby ended up having his own. Of interest to us is how Ventidius initially worked himself into the web of the elite. According to a paper on Ventidius by G.J. Wylie of Monash University, Melbourne, it likely had as much to do with Caesar's unique characteristics as Ventidius'. As an expert rider knowledgeable about terrain, Caesar would have inspected the livestock provided by Ventidius "with a critical eye" and summed him up "as a no-nonsense man who knew his job and was not afraid to speak up."[140] Wylie contended that if Caesar had been a more ordinary person, he would have thanked Ventidius and ended the connection there, but the Roman leader, "confident in his lineage and free from petty snobbery, was used to getting alongside of and sizing up all sorts of people."[141] The result was that Ventidius went with Caesar to Gaul with an army staff posting that offered the possibility of entry into public life.[142] Ventidius and Caesar were likely both extraordinary people, but this story illustrates how Rome, after first welcoming newcomers, provided opportunities for even the humblest to rise; in this case through military connections.

The military was just one of many institutions promoting connections in Roman society; there was also the legislative system, the electoral system, the courts and social events, so that for those who wanted to participate fully, "being a citizen was a full-time

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[138] Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights,* 15.4.

[139] Aulus Gellius, *Attic Nights,* 15.4.

[140] G.J. Wylie, "P. Ventidius—From '*Novus Homo*' to 'Military Hero,'" *Acta Classica*, Vol. 36 (1993): 130, http//www.jstor.org/stable/24594909.

[141] Wylie, "Ventidius," 130.

[142] Wylie, "Ventidius," 130.

profession."[143] Historian C. Nicolet painted a lively picture of what this could have looked like, with citizens flocking to Rome to take part in crammed-full civic and social agendas including military levies, yearly elections, voting on laws, nearly constant court sittings, regular games and shows and extra events such as funerals and triumphs.[144] What's of interest to us is the way that this would have connected people, exposed newcomers to the workings of Roman society and potentially given them chances to work their way up in it. The long list of events involved "thousands and sometimes tens of thousands of people travelling to the City, not only from the surrounding countryside but from the whole of citizen Italy: anyone was allowed to come, and everyone came who could,"[145] Nicolet wrote: "One has the impression that civic life, even more than economic life, set up continual migratory movements throughout Italy. Groups and individuals travelled regularly to Rome and back, and political life flowed through society like a bloodstream."[146] It wasn't only civic life that was highly connected; individuals were as well, with geographical and horizontal ties that were complicated by vertical and social ones such as the patron-client relationship, marriage, friendship, and the exchange of services: "Almost every male citizen was thus involved in a network of relationships of all kinds, their density, ramifications and complications being all the greater because of the intertwining and overlapping of political and social connections, those freely chosen and those imposed by circumstances."[147] I think Nicolet's picture of tens of thousands of people travelling regularly to Rome from all over Italy to participate in civic affairs may be somewhat overblown, given the state of transportation and the likely finances of the general public, but my other readings bear out his concept of a highly networked society. Martial's *Epigrams*, for example, points to a village-like sense of community where people not only knew each other, but everybody's background business. The letters of Cicero and Pliny the Younger to friends in various parts of the empire have the gossipy sense of a highly connected world.

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[143] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 237.

[144] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 389.

[145] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen,* 389.

[146] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen,* 389.

[147] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen.*, 389-390.

We could also look at the physical city of Rome itself as welcoming people through connectivity. I would argue that inhabitants, especially the poor, were both pushed and pulled into the city's public spaces, where interactions, and connections, were more likely. Pushed because private living spaces for all but the wealthy tended to be austere if not downright miserable. And pulled because the inhabitants of those living spaces would have been drawn to the city's impressive public facilities – luxurious baths, amphitheatres, race-courses, gardens and spacious assembly areas. Both by accident and design, Rome was a very public place. Its streets were the setting for processions, spectacles and religious events; its legal and political business were conducted in public areas; and places of entertainment essentially put community leaders on public display. Even the homes of the wealthy were quasi-public, with their entrance atriums built to receive clients in the mornings, doors traditionally left open, and war trophies hung outside for passersby to see.

Living conditions for the poor were notoriously crowded and dangerous, as might be expected given that Rome's population had quintupled to one million from 200,000 between the second and first centuries BCE, making it the biggest city in the western world until London in the eighteenth century.[148] The poor lived crowded together in flimsily built apartment buildings that tended to fall down and burn up, in "fires and midnight panics,"[149] as the poet Juvenal recounted in *Satire 3*. Such buildings lacked cooking facilities, water and toilets (the aqueducts and sewers were not built to service private buildings), forcing inhabitants outside to meet basic needs,[150] according to historian Jerome Carcopino. In the public latrines, for example, people paid a small fee to sit with each other in a semicircle or rectangle of marble seats, behind which channels of water would continuously circulate: "People met there, conversed, and exchanged invitations to dinner without embarrassment."[151] The rich had kitchens at home, but the

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[148] John R. Patterson, "The City of Rome," in *A Companion to the Roman Republic*, edited by Nathan Rosenstein and Robert Morstein-Marx (Malden MA: Blackwell Publishing), 351.

[149] Juvenal, *Satire 3*, 94.

[150] Jerome Carcopino, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome: The People and the City at the Height of the Empire*, ed. Henry T. Rowell, trans. E. O. Lorimer (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), 36-41.

[151] Carcopino, *Daily Life*, 41.

poor had to eat out: "Roman towns were full of cheap bars and cafes, and it was here that a large number of ordinary Romans spent many hours of their non-working lives."[152]

On the other side of the equation was Rome's long tradition of superb public facilities, including baths. Beautifully appointed and accessible for a small fee at first, then later free, they "put personal hygiene on the daily agenda of Rome and within reach of the humblest; and the fabulous decoration lavished on the baths made the exercise and care of the body a pleasure for all, a refreshment accessible even to the very poor."[153] The poet Martial, writing in the first century CE, gave a taste of the city's delights as he contemplated what an acquaintance might be doing:

> ...is he pacing the temple portico or ambling along the colonnaded walks of the Argonauts? Or maybe he sits or strolls among box-trees warmed by delightful Europa's afternoon sun, free from stinging cares? Or is he washing in the Baths of Titus, Agrippa, or shameless Tigellinus?[154]

Entertainments brought huge crowds together in places like the Coliseum, which sat about 50,000 and the Circus Maximus, which "seemed a city in itself"[155] with seating estimates ranging from 250,000 to well over 300,000.[156] The events, ranging from watching gladiators die in the Coliseum to chariot races at the Circus, bound crowds together in excitement. At the Circus, "everything combined to quicken their curiosity and arouse their excitement; the swarming crowd in which each was carried off his feet by all, the almost incredible grandeur of the setting, the perfumes and gaily coloured toilets, the sanctity of the ancient religious ceremonies, the presence of the august emperor, the obstacles to be overcome, the perils to be avoided. . . ."[157] Another aspect of this very public city was that the elite were expected to be part of it. In their prime viewing seats in the Coliseum or the theatre, they were in full public view, and supposed to show their solidarity with the masses by joining in the excitement. After Julius Caesar

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[152] Beard, *SPQR*, 456.

[153] Carcopino, *Daily Life*, 254.

[154] Martial, *Epigrams*, trans. Gideon Nisbet (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 45.

[155] Carcopino, *Daily Life*, 215.

[156] Carcopino, *Daily Life*, 215.

[157] Carcopino, *Daily Life*, 215.

earned disapproval for doing paperwork during the gladiatorial games, the emperor Augustus "never failed to take a share in them, with ostentatious zeal and deliberate seriousness. . . If he stayed to the end, he was never seen to let his attention wander. . . ."[158] The emperor's presence at such events created connections between him and the people; the masses felt drawn to him "by the vicissitudes of the race, the fight or the drama, sharing his emotions, his wishes, his pleasure, and his fears."[159] Thus we can see how the spaces of Rome pushed and pulled its inhabitants together emotionally and physically; even poor newcomers would have had a hard time remaining isolated.

Welcoming through the patron-client system

As dawn broke in ancient Rome, there would be a scurrying through the streets toward the grand houses of the nobles. There, the lesser would queue up to extend greetings to the greater in the ritual known as the morning salutation. It was all part of an aspect of Roman society so fundamental that early historians pin it on Romulus at the very founding of the city. Under the patronage system, the populace was divided into patrons and clients, with patrons supposed to offer their clients "fatherly care," and clients obliged to reciprocate with other favours. The system appears to have deteriorated by the end of the republic, with few benefits for the poor and the upper classes using it mainly to exchange favours among themselves, but I would argue that overall, it was a way of welcoming newcomers by offering connections and the potential for social mobility. It gave freed slaves, who usually came from distant lands, a pathway into Roman society because their former masters automatically became their patrons. New citizens could choose patrons from the established classes and voluntarily become clients. Huge numbers of outsiders gained immediate connections to Rome when their cities or territories were defeated, as conquering generals customarily assumed the role of patrons, with defeated populations becoming clients. Dionysius of Halicarnassus emphasized how broadly the system welcomed newcomers: "[E]very colony of Rome and every city that

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[158] Carcopino, *Daily Life*, 210-211.

[159] Carcopino, *Daily Life*, 209-210.

had joined in alliance and friendship with her and also every city conquered in war had such protectors and patrons among the Romans as they wished."[160]

I think the significance of the patronage system can be measured by Livy's very early nod to its beginnings in his *History*: The first thing Romulus did after welcoming one and all to his city was to turn his attention to "social organization" and appoint 100 senators, called variously fathers, heads of clans or *patres*, whose descendants were known as patricians.[161]Livy went into no further detail, but this appears to have been the beginning of the patron-client system that Dionysius of Halicarnassus described at length, although he placed it slightly later in the story of Rome's founding. Modern scholars have various interpretations of the system, its purpose and why it deteriorated, which I will discuss later. But here I will provide Dionysius' account and explain how it ties into my theme of welcoming through connections and social mobility.

Assigning "kindly services and honours in accordance with merit,"[162] Romulus divided the populace into patricians, or fathers, who would serve as patrons; and plebians, who would be their clients. Patricians were chosen because they were "eminent for their birth, approved for their virtue and wealthy for those times" while plebians were the "obscure, the lowly and the poor."[163]Patricians were to be priests, magistrates and judges, and to help manage public affairs while the plebians, lacking the knowledge and time to perform such duties, were to farm, breed cattle and engage in trades:[164] "This was to prevent them from engaging in seditions, as happens in other cities when either the magistrates mistreat the lowly, or the common people and the needy envy those in authority."[165] Plebians could choose whichever patrician they wished to serve as their patrons, and Dionysius contended they were treated much better than their Greek equivalents, who were sometimes beaten like slaves and denigrated by being called

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[160] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.11.1.

[161] Livy, *History*, 40.

[162] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.8.1.

[163] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.8.1

[164] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.9.1.

[165] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.9.1.

"toilers" and "hirelings:"[166] "But Romulus not only recommended the relationship by a handsome designation, calling this protection of the poor and lowly a 'patronage' but he also assigned friendly offices to both parties, thus making the connection between them a bond of kindness befitting fellow citizens."[167]

As for their duties, patrons were to explain the laws to their clients; "to take the same care of them when absent as present, doing everything for them that fathers do for their sons with regard both to money and to contracts that related to money,"[168] and to represent them in court. In return, clients were to help patrons provide dowries for their daughters, pay ransoms in cases of hostage taking, and make up their patrons' losses in private suits and fines to the state, "not as loans but as thank-offerings," as well as to help patrons with the costs of their official duties and public expenditures "as if they were their relations."[169] Neither side was to accuse each other in lawsuits, testify against each other or be found among each other's enemies – the penalty for violations could be death.[170] Dionysius' assessment of how the system worked was glowing. Patron-client connections continued for generations, "differing in no wise from the ties of blood relationship and being handed down to their children's children,"[171] while it was praiseworthy for great families to hold on to hereditary patronages and add more.[172] "And it is incredible how great the contest of goodwill was between the patrons and clients, as each side strove not to be outdone by the other in kindness, the clients feeling that they should render all possible services to their patrons and the patrons wishing by all means not to occasion any trouble to their clients and accepting no gifts of money."[173]

I don't think we can look for factual accuracy in this optimistic, anachronistic account of the patronage system, written just as it was becoming increasingly irrelevant at

[166] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.9.2

[167] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.9.3.

[168] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.10.1.

[169] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.10.2.

[170] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.10.3.

[171] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.10.4.

[172] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.10.4.

[173] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*,2.10.4.

the end of the republic. But when we look at the spirit of what Dionysius was trying to convey, I think an argument can be made that it pointed to what the Romans considered to be welcoming, and the forms that took. Some of the message of welcoming was conveyed through language, with Dionysius noting that Romulus used a "handsome designation" to refer to the protection of the poor and lonely. Dionysius also pointed out the degrading words – "toilers" and "hirelings" – the Greeks used to refer to the equivalent of Rome's plebians. Some of the welcoming came through actions: Dionysius described Romulus as assigning "kindly services and honours in accordance with merit" as well as assigning "friendly offices" that made the connection between the plebians and patricians "a bond of kindness befitting fellow citizens." In addition, if we look at the bigger idea of simply making an effort to welcome people, Dionysius' message was that the Romans tried to do that. On the issue of connections, it seems clear that the intention was to link the lowly newcomers with the well-established in hopes of smoothing integration, avoiding the "seditions" caused by overbearing elites and envious poor. Dionysius' words did not spell out social mobility as a goal of the patronage system, and instead could be read as assigning plebians to permanent lowly work in agriculture and trades. But we could also argue that the newcomers, especially if they were the criminals and slaves legendarily attracted to Romulus' asylum, would have automatically taken a step up just by coming to a place where they would be settled into such roles, as well as receiving citizenship and a mentor. As well, when these newcomer slaves were freed, they automatically moved up the ladder, becoming clients to their former masters' new role as patrons. I would also argue that Dionysius' description of the duties of patrons and clients – which seems to apply to a later, more sophisticated era than the original primitive settlement – also hints at upward movement for the plebians. It seems unlikely that, stuck in their original humble roles, they would have had much need of legal and financial advice, or have the money to pay off their patrons' debts and help with ransom payments or dowries. There is also the fact that social mobility was entrenched in the upper classes' use of the patronage system – although the elite preferred to use the term "friends" rather than patron and client. This was especially evident in the case of "new men" – young and ambitious newcomers to Rome who lacked inherited connections seeking patrons from among the established to help them climb the ladder toward elected

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office: "Plutarch refers to aristocrats in search of high office as those who 'grow old haunting the doors of other men's houses', a reference to attendance at morning salutations."[174] When Cato the Elder, a "new man," sought to make his mark in Rome, he turned to a patrician, L. Valerius Flaccus, who supported his career and eventually held the consulship with him in 195 BCE.[175] Pliny the Younger, who came from outside Rome, depended on senior senator Corellius Rufus: "[C]orellius provided support that Pliny, as a new man, depended on for advancement in his career, while Pliny displayed respect, extended his patron's influence after the completion of the latter's career by acting on his advice, and finally provided help for Corellius' family after his death."[176] Pliny followed his patron's example, becoming patron in his turn to many proteges, who used him as a model and accompanied him on his daily business.[177] Nor was his help restricted to advancing political careers; Pliny's letters show him offering support in a legal matter relating to an inheritance and other financial favours.[178]

Patronage and social mobility were inextricably linked during the imperial period, when patrons served as a way of bringing ambitious young people to the attention of the emperor. This was important because there were no bureaucratic mechanisms in place to develop the next generation of aristocratic officials: "[I]n the absence of training schools or application procedures the emperor had to appoint those brought to his attention by senior friends like Corellius Rufus."[179] Patronage also reached far into Rome's provinces, offering connections and social mobility to provincial aristocrats seeking help or careers in Rome.[180] Governors and other officials appointed to the provinces by Rome played the role of patrons, helping provincials secure citizenship, offices and honours from Rome, as well as making administrative and legal decisions in their favour.[181] They often received

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[174] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 153.

[175] Deniaux, "Patronage," 408.

[176] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 153.

[177] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 153

[178] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 154.

[179]Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 153.

[180] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 151.

[181] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 151-152.

expensive gifts in return,[182] which in modern terms smacks of bribery and corruption. But this was done openly; "the exercise of patronage in government was not considered dishonorable or corrupt."[183] During the first and second centuries CE, patronage became above all a means of connection between city and province: "[A] steadily increasing number of provincials had fellow townsmen well placed in Rome to serve as patronal mediators between themselves and the Roman rulers. This gave them alternative means of access to the benefits distributed from Rome, and also a means of influencing the administrators sent out to rule them. No longer were they governed by foreign conquerors, but by friends of friends."[184]

How effective was the patronage system in helping welcome newcomers, and promoting connections that may have led to social mobility? While the writings of the upper classes in the late republic and early imperial periods show how it helped welcome upper-class outsiders and provincial aristocrats into Roman society, the lower classes did not record their experiences in the same way, so we have less direct information about what the patronage system meant to them. Modern Roman scholars have suggested that the patronage system was more beneficial to the elite than to the lowly, and indeed may actually have been harmful to the poor:

> The elite patron gained support, votes, status and deference to further his own ambitions, and the acquiescence and cooperation of his clients in the existing political system, enshrining the dominance of the elite as a whole. The client was forced to submit in the hope of gaining access to key resources; sometimes material assistance (land, food, money), sometimes advice and influence in dealing with the law or other authority."[185]

As for how much the poor could really expect from their patrons, it was likely better than nothing: "[P]atrons might not in fact be able to assist all their clients, but assistance was unlikely from any other quarter."[186] Morley and historian A. Drummond

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[182] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 152.

[183] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 152.

[184] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 152.

[185] Morley, "Social Structure," 316.

[186] Morley, "Social Structure," 316.

suggested the patronage system may actually have disadvantaged the lower classes. Vertical connections between members of different social groups tend to weaken horizontal relations within those groups, so patronage may account for "the distinct lack of class solidarity or collective action from the poor masses of the Roman republic."[187] Drummond contended that those of lower status were placed into positions of personal dependency when they "might otherwise have sought to remedy their plight by collective action amongst themselves."[188] In fact, lower-class Romans did create groups for themselves called collegia, which were essentially mutual aid societies based on cults or occupations, that provided decent burials for the dead and festive dinners for the living.[189] The authorities were suspicious of these groups, fearing they might encourage unrest or undercover political activity, and strictly regulated them, but they are a sign that plebians were willing to be innovative if existing structures didn't meet their needs. Thus we can see from the Roman example that strategies for welcoming can encourage certain kinds of relationships while discouraging others, which may prompt other types to develop to make up for what's missing. It's something for those devising modern migration strategies to bear in mind.

If, as I have argued, the patronage system was set up to welcome and connect newcomers, what can we conclude from its deterioration? While the system persisted throughout the principate, with the upper classes busily trading favours under its auspices, by the late first century BCE it was becoming increasingly irrelevant to the lower classes. I think the patronage system, which may always have been weighted in favour of the upper classes, declined because the original structure it was set up on had changed enough to undermine it. Whatever original balance it had was gone. Perhaps the message is that systems have to change along with their societies if they are to survive.

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[187] Morley, "Social Structure," 317.

[188] A. Drummond, "Rome in the Fifth Century I: The Social and Economic Framework," in *The Cambridge Ancient History* 2nd ed. Vol. 7, Part 2, edited by F.W. Walbank, A.E. Astin, and M.W. Frederiksen and R.M. Ogilvie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 145.

[189] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 156-157.

One thing that had changed by the first century BCE was that Rome's population had swollen; it may have just grown too big for a patronage system based on a small city:

> Just as the enormous expansion of slave numbers had depersonalized relations between masters and most of their slaves, so the city of Rome had grown to such a size that personalized patron-client relationships of the traditional kind can have involved only a small proportion of its population; it was increasingly a city of migrants and their descendants, disconnected from their old social relationships and alienated from the society in which they now lived.[190]

Another major change that unbalanced the system was the erosion of the old electoral system with the end of the republic. Popular assemblies became impotent and politicians no longer had to woo voters, which had been an important aspect of the patronage system.[191] Based as it was on reciprocity – the requirement that a favour given had to be repaid – the patronage system had worked well with the traditional voting system. In return for their patron's favours – usually a small amount of money to buy food – the poor could vote for him and accompany him around town to swell his entourage. Once aristocrats no longer needed votes, the poor had no leverage. The aristocrats' disrespect for their clients was a popular theme for satirists Juvenal and Martial, who bitterly described rushing through darkened streets to be first to greet their patrons in the morning, with the reward being the occasional offhand invitation to a bad dinner:

> 'Was it for this,' you wail, 'that day after day
>
> I left my wife so early, went hurrying up the steep
>
> And chilly Esquiline streets, while violent springtime
>
> Hailstorms bombarded me, or some sudden cloudburst
>
> Beat through my sodden cloak? Was it for this?'[192]

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190 Morley, "Social Structure," 317.

191 Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 151.

192 Juvenal, *Satire 5*, 119.

Much was made of the fact that the patron would serve disgusting cheap food to his clients while eating only the best himself:

Just get the size of that crayfish: it marks out a platter

Reserved for my lord. …

….But *you* get half an egg

Stuffed with one prawn, dished up in a little saucer

Like a funeral offering. . . [193]

To sum up, I would argue that the patron-client system illustrates the extreme importance the Romans placed on welcoming newcomers. I think this is shown by the fact that patronage was a basic foundation of Roman society; it was how people were brought in, integrated, connected and helped to advance. From our modern perspective, we can quibble about many aspects of this system. It likely benefited the elite far more than the lower classes, and may in fact have been to the detriment of the latter. It was a dominance-dependence system very unlike the egalitarian model of modern liberal democracies. It was also based on reciprocity, a novel idea for today, that those who received favours were obligated to return them in some way. But I think there are aspects of it that we may find helpful in considering modern migration. One is the importance it placed on connections, especially on a one-on-one basis. Another is the emphasis on integration into the existing society by linking newcomers and the established, and providing clear roles for the newcomers. Clearly the Romans felt it was important for newcomers – at least those arriving in the city in the early times – to be absorbed into the existing society. Newcomers were not left to their own devices, but linked with people who knew the system and given jobs that made them part of the system. Dionysius' patronage model is obviously not real life, and we don't know how early newcomers were actually treated in Rome, but some aspects of it were observable during the republic and imperial period, so it is not entirely fantasy. My argument is that these ideas are

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[193] Juvenal, *Satire 5*, 119-120.

worth at least thinking about today when we wonder how the Romans successfully absorbed large numbers of new arrivals.

Welcoming and non-welcoming

There were degrees of welcoming in Rome, ranging from enthusiasm to reluctance bordering on outright rejection. While it is clear from both the myths and real-life practices that Roman society was based on welcoming and integrating large numbers of outsiders, in practice this sometimes raised objections, especially from groups and individuals concerned about its impact on their own interests. This tension between welcoming and non-welcoming is as evident today as it was in Roman times, as I will be discussing in the second part of this paper. I think Rome's long experience in welcoming people and dealing with the results can serve as a valuable resource in deepening our understanding of the forces underlying welcoming and non-welcoming. Since the Roman attitude toward newcomers continued to be open over many centuries despite the fallout, I think they may also provide some ideas about maintaining a positive attitude toward migration. This section will also help round out the picture of what welcoming looked like in ancient Rome, the extent to which Rome welcomed outsiders and which outsiders were most welcome when they knocked on the gates of Rome.

I will start with a 48 CE discussion between the emperor Claudius and Roman senators over the admission of Gauls to the senate that I think sums up key points on both the welcoming and non-welcoming side. With some change of details, such an exchange could easily be heard in arguments over migration today. Unlike some "historical" speeches, this one actually happened, as parts of it were preserved on an ancient bronze tablet found in the 1500s in Lyon, France, but I will be relying on the version recounted in Book 11 of Tacitus' *The Annals* relating to the years 47 and 48 CE.[194] According to Tacitus, the senators vehemently opposed Claudius' proposal to help fill the senate with

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[194] Tacitus, *The Annals*, trans. Alfred John Church and William Jackson Brodribb, Book 11, http://classics.mit.edu/Tacitus/annals.7.xi.html

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people from Gallia Comata, who had long had the rights of allies and Roman citizens. The senators' argued that:

> Italy is not so feeble as to be unable to furnish its own capital with a senate. Once our native-born citizens sufficed for peoples of our own kin, and we are by no means dissatisfied with the Rome of the past . . .What distinctions will be left for the remnants of our noble houses, or for any impoverished senators from Latium? Every place will be crowded with these millionaires, whose ancestors of the second and third generations at the head of hostile tribes destroyed our armies with fire and sword. . . .Let them enjoy indeed the title of citizens, but let them not vulgarise the distinctions of the Senate and the honours of office.[195]

Claudius was not impressed, according to Tacitus. The emperor emphasized that Rome had become great by welcoming many outsiders, even enemies, to its fold: "My ancestors, the most ancient of whom was made at once a citizen and a noble of Rome, encourage me to govern by the same policy of transferring to this city all conspicuous merit, wherever found."[196]Listing the many tribes that had been admitted to the Senate over the centuries, he argued that this had led to unshaken peace at home and prosperity in foreign relations. Reaching far back into history, he asked: "What was the ruin of Sparta and Athens, but this, that mighty as they were in war, they spurned from them as aliens those whom they had conquered? Our founder Romulus, on the other hand, was so wise that he fought as enemies and then hailed as fellow-citizens several nations on the very same day."[197]He emphasized the progressive nature of history; how something that once seemed impossible eventually becomes normal:

> Strangers have reigned over us. That freedmen's sons should be intrusted with public offices is not, as many wrongly think, a sudden innovation, but was a common practice in the old commonwealth….Our city was taken by the Gauls. Well, we also gave hostages to the Etruscans, and passed under the yoke of the Samnites. On the whole, if you review all our wars, never has one been finished in a shorter time than that with the Gauls. Thenceforth they have preserved an unbroken and loyal peace. United as they now are with us by manners, education, and intermarriage, let them bring us their gold and their wealth rather than enjoy it in isolation. Everything, Senators,

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[195] Tacitus, *The Annals*, Book 11.

[196] Tacitus, *The Annals*, Book 11.

[197] Tacitus, *The Annals*, Book 11

which we now hold to be of the highest antiquity, was once new. Plebian magistrates came after patrician; Latin magistrates after plebeian, magistrates of other Italian peoples after Latin. This practice too will establish itself, and what we are this day justifying by precedents, will be itself a precedent."[198]

The senators made the same arguments against newcomers that the indigenous made in the myths. They wanted to preserve their traditions and privileges, and feared being usurped by outsiders whose past bad behaviour should exclude them from high office. On the other side, Claudius emphasized how welcoming newcomers from many places had made Rome what it was; how outsiders, even enemies, quickly became valuable contributors to Rome; and how changes – like welcoming the next set of newcomers – might seem jarring at first but become normalized over time. I will be returning to these ideas in a further discussion about welcoming and non-welcoming in Part II. In the meantime, this little exchange also addresses some of the questions raised in my introduction. We can see how Claudius' emphasis on merit shows the kind of newcomers most likely to be welcomed by the Romans. His praise of what diverse newcomers had brought to Rome illustrates at least one of the reasons the Romans were so willing to accept newcomers. His comments about how the Gauls had already united with the Romans in "manners, education, and intermarriage" indicates an understanding of what is needed for a smooth integration of diverse people.

Given that we will be discussing modern opposition to newcomers in comparison to ancient Rome's, I think it is important to give a sense of the political process that governed welcoming in ancient times. Who actually decided to bring all those newcomers in? Roman voting systems varied over the centuries, and historians disagree on how much power ordinary people actually had, but they do agree that citizens had the right to elect magistrates and pass laws. And citizens themselves cast the ballots to approve the wars that would eventually result in slave/newcomers, and others affected by the conquests, ending up in their city. "The Roman people, who decided on matters of war and peace through the votes that they took in the *comitia centuriata*, were evidently

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[198] Tacitus, *The Annals*, Book 11.

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predisposed to vote for war,"[199] according to historian David Potter. Writing about the Roman army in the third century BCE, he listed a series of decisions by citizens in favour of war, including one in 264 BCE, when they went against senate advice and voted to send an army to support the people of Messina in Sicily, allegedly because they thought it would be profitable.[200] Historian Fergus Millar argued that the fact the citizens alone had the right to legislate "is by far the strongest reason why, in purely formal terms, the Roman *res publica* has to be characterized as a democracy."[201]While the senate had important deliberative, decision-making and administrative functions and its members were there as an indirect result of election to public office, "it was in no sense a representative body, was not a parliament, and could not legislate."[202]The two main citizens' assemblies, which had the right to elect magistrates and pass legislation, were the *comitia centuriata* and the *comitia tributa*, the former based on wealth, the latter on geography. Both were divided into subgroups, with the majority vote from each subgroup counting toward the overall vote. Because there were more subgroups for the wealthy in the *comitia centuriata*, they could outvote the poor, so this body is often portrayed as the way the rich actually controlled decisions in Rome. But Millar argued the *comitia centuriata* rarely passed laws, which ordinarily went to the other assembly, where "no form of social stratification applied and each citizen's vote counted equally."[203]The other point of view, argued by historian C. Nicolet, was that ordinary citizens had little power. Since wealth qualifications barred them from military command, the senate and the magistracy, they were "no more than electors with the role of voting for one magistrate or another or for the adoption of laws"[204]and in doing so were restricted to a "yes" or "no" vote without discussion or debate.[205] Moreover, the voting system "was weighted and

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[199] David Potter, "The Roman Army and Navy," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Republic*, edited by Harriet I. Flower (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 73.

[200] Potter, "Army and Navy," 73.

[201] Fergus Millar, *The Crowd in Rome in the Late Republic* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998), 210.

[202] Millar, *Crowd in Rome*, 209.

[203] Millar, *Crowd in Rome*, 209.

[204] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 7.

[205] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 7.

subdivided to such an extent that only the richest and most eminent of the citizenry had any real influence."[206] But Nicolet agreed the system did change: By the end of the second and beginning of the first centuries BCE, even the poorest people had gained "a larger measure of influence on political decisions"[207] because of the increased importance of the *comitia tributa,* and the introduction of the secret ballot.[208] We don't know why ordinary Romans would have plumped for war, given that it tended to be the rich who benefited most. But war was a way of life for the Romans, who considered themselves a warrior society, and its results – including the arrival of newcomers – would have been one of the built-in expectations. Also, war booty benefited the poor as well as the rich. It meant the end of direct taxation for Roman citizens as of 167 BCE, as well as financing free grain handouts in Rome, lavish entertainments and luxurious public facilities. Historian Harriet I. Flower also pointed to how the Roman system in its ideal form incorporated the will of the public. She noted the Latin word *res publica*, literally "the public thing," could refer to the state itself, its constitution, or its common interest, with the latter equivalent to "commonwealth" or "common good:"[209] "It is typical of the Romans that they actually did not have a separate name for their political system; it was simply equated with the community itself and its best interests. Political life consisted of involvement with this community of shared concerns and values."[210] One aspect of this focus on the community was that the state took precedence over the individual, which is a contrast to the modern emphasis on individualism. There was a reason Rome's early legends were often about heroes willing to sacrifice their lives, or the lives of people they loved, for the good of the community.

Ancient Rome's propensity for extending citizenship widely, first throughout Italy, then to individuals, groups and communities throughout the empire, illustrated the problems that can result from exuberant welcoming. How do you envisage a city whose

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[206] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 7.

[207] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen, 386.*

[208] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen, 386.*

[209] Harriet I. Flower, "Introduction," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Republic*, edited by Harriet I. Flower (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 2.

[210] Flower, "Introduction," 2.

citizens are spread throughout an empire; and how do those citizens envisage themselves? "There is a strong sense of grappling with a gap between older, ethnically and geographically tighter models on the one hand, and an almost impossibly redefined universe on the other,"[211] according to historian Emma Dench. At the end of the republic and in the early imperial period, there were heated debates about the merits and problems of Rome's "mobile and multi-ethnic nature,"[212] and the idea of "outsiders within"[213] arose. Status became a big issue: "On the one hand, being foreign could be perceived as a transitional state, and the idea of social mobility, articulated through motifs of luck, ambition, and metamorphosis, was a powerful cultural belief. On the other hand, highly restrictive ideas of what it was to be 'really' Roman were at times very loudly articulated and hostile comments about foreigners could happily include large numbers of people who were resident at Rome or even Roman citizens."[214] While there were numerous panegyrics to Roman citizenship, especially during the imperial period, they "give no sense that extensions of the citizenship were regularly and for different reasons heavily contested, often in strongly stated and downright chauvinistic terms."[215] Thus, the Romans give us an example of the insecurities and ambiguities that arise when the welcoming of newcomers causes great changes for existing populations.

While the state may have officially welcomed newcomers, that did not mean established citizens had to actually like them or treat them well. They accepted, even celebrated, the fact that they themselves were of mixed origins, but they still venerated the noble Roman families with roots so ancient that they claimed gods as ancestors. The non-Rome-born were never quite as good. Juvenal's *Satire 3* narrator Umbricius was so poor he was being forced out of Rome, but because he drew his first breath "on these Roman hills, and was nourished on Sabine olives!"[216] he thought he deserved to take

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[211] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 95.

[212].Emma Dench, "Roman Identity," in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Studies*, edited by Alessandro Barchiesi and Walter Scheidel (Oxford University Press, 2010), 274.

[213] Dench, "Roman Identity," 274.

[214] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 96.

[215] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 96.

[216] Juvenal, "Satire 3," in *The Sixteen Satires*, ed. Betty Radice, trans. Peter Green (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1977), 90.

precedence over those "blown into Rome along with the figs and damsons."[217] The famous orator, writer and politician Cicero, who reached the pinnacle of success in Rome by winning the consulship for the year 63 BCE, was never quite forgiven for being born in the small town of Arpinum, about 113 kilometres from Rome. Even though his family was well connected with the noble families of Rome and his birthplace had had full citizenship since 188 BCE,[218] he was considered a "new man" because his family had never been prominent in Rome's political scene. Rivals called him a "lodger," and a "part-time citizen,"[219] while others scorned him as a "foreign king" or a "newcomer to Rome."[220] Despite his own status as a "new man," Cicero was as adept as anyone at joining the Roman sport of denigrating those considered to be outsiders: "Harsh judgments by Roman writers on alien peoples seem common and characteristic,"[221] wrote historian Erich A. Gruen, who catalogued some of the insults. To Cicero, Cappadocians were "emblematic for stupidity, tastelessness, and a low form of humanity,"[222] Syrians and Jews were "born for servitude;"[223]; and Gauls, Spaniards and Africans were from "monstrous and barbarian nations."[224] Gruen noted that Livy criticized the servile nature of Syrians[225] and Catullus accused the Spaniards of brushing their teeth in urine.[226] And, "Egyptians were beyond the pale. No eastern people drew greater derision among Romans."[227] Gruen suggested stereotyping and denigration was a way of Romans asserting their distinctiveness, the result of a history that right from the start had involved confrontations with other cultures such as the Etruscans and Greeks.[228] Historians differ on Roman attitudes toward race. Manumission applied to all races and ethnicities alike,

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[217] Juvenal, "Satire 3," 89.

[218] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 43.

[219] Beard, *SPQR*, 29.

[220] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 43.

[221] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 460.

[222] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 459.

[223] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 459.

[224] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 460.

[225] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 459.

[226] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 460.

[227] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 460.

[228] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 459.

and there is no suggestion black freedmen suffered any liability because of their skin colour, according to Gruen.[229] *Aithiops,* the conventional description for a black man, "carried no negative connotation,"[230] and in fact, Ethiopians had a favourable reputation in Greek literature, Gruen contended. Dench argued that the ancients thought differently about race and colour than we do today, but that doesn't mean they weren't racist: "[A]ncient thought does not closely associate physiognomy and skin colour with rhetorics of descent, 'race', and blood purity."[231] The *Aithiops* existed as a type of "extreme and alarming blackness,"[232] but this was not necessarily inherited and a child would be described as such only if they looked like an *Aithiops.*[233] "While an Aithiops, Moor, Gaetulian, or Egyptian at Rome might be assumed to be a slave, the corollary is not true: it was notoriously difficult to detect slaves by their appearance. None of this is to say that Rome was a 'tolerant' or 'non-racist' society."[234]

Instances of Romans rejecting the incorporation of newcomers pop up regularly over the centuries. As Rome expanded, some people understood early on that extending citizenship beyond the city would mean the people of the city itself would have less say. In 122 BCE, a proposal to give Roman citizenship to Italians, especially the Latins, was defeated after a passionate plea by the consul C. Fannius. According to Nicolet's account, Fannius "appealed to the most selfish instincts of the urban plebs: 'If you give the city to the Latins, do you think you will have as much room as you have now at public meetings like this one, or at the games, or for your festivities? Don't you see that they will crowd you out?'"[235] The follow-up was that the senate decided to expel the Latins and allies from Rome; an instance where the concept of welcoming did not prevail.

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[229] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 474.

[230] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 473.

[231] Dench, "Roman Identity," 273.

[232] Dench, "Roman Identity," 273.

[233] Dench, "Roman Identity," 273.

[234] Dench, "Roman Identity," 273.

[235] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 40.

A similar issue occurred after the 91-89 BCE Social War, which ended with the extension of Roman citizenship to the free inhabitants of Italy. For the upper classes of Italy, it meant a chance to enter politics in Rome, and for ordinary Italians, the protection of Roman citizenship and the right to vote. But according to Nicolet, a "considerable section of Roman opinion – essentially the urban plebs and some of the prouder nobles – for a long time made no secret of its contempt for the Italians,"[236] and tried to find ways to limit their influence. Cicero's rise to the top job was a "spectacular exception,"[237] and few provincial nobles rose high on the career ladder between the Social War at the start of the first century BCE and Augustus' takeover toward the end.[238] Further, "The network of social contacts between elite families throughout Italy. . . was no guarantee that the Roman senatorial class would be willing to share power, and Cicero's sensitivity on the subject indicated that an Italian background was a drawback."[239]

When Julius Caesar became dictator in 44 BCE, he raised much enmity when he elevated men from the provinces to the Roman senate, where people joked that the newcomers would have to doff their native garb for togas: "Urban humour blossomed into scurrilous verses about Gauls newly emancipated from the national trouser, unfamiliar with the language and the topography of the imperial city."[240] During the civil wars under the triumvirs, Romans began to fear the loss of their language, habits and religion and that the ruling people "would be submerged in the innumerable hordes of its subjects. The revolutionary years exposed Rome to the full onrush of foreign religions or gross superstitions, invading all classes."[241] There was, for example, T. Sextius, Caesar's general in Africa, who carried a bull's head wherever he went.[242] Later, after victory in the civil wars, Augustus tried to promote unity by ensuring the senate included people

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[236] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 43.

[237] Kathryn Lomas, "Italy During the Roman Republic, 338-31 BC," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Republic*, edited by Harriet I. Flower (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 221.

[238] Lomas, "Italy During," 221.

[239] Lomas, "Italy During," 222.

[240] Ronald Syme, *The Roman Revolution* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967),79.

[241] Syme, *Revolution*, 256.

[242] Syme, *Revolution*, 256.

from all over Italy. No longer were senate posts reserved for nobles from the traditional Roman families, who had always sneered at the backward provincials: "The Italian bourgeoisie had their sweet revenge when the New State was erected at the expense of the *nobiles*, as a result of their feuds and their follies."[243]

Others who earned hatred by their rise in the world were the soldiers of the first century BCE. The once-peasant/citizen army had turned largely professional after property qualifications for service were dropped, and the indigent – who came from all over Italy – signed up with whichever warring general promised them the best payouts in money or land. "The best way of keeping the army on one's side was to make it rich, and the years from 44 to 40 witnessed a revolution of unexampled ferocity whereby 400,000 or 500,000 soldiers or ex-soldiers came into possession of a considerable slice of the wealth of Italy, with predictable consequences in the demographic, economic, social fields and even in the realm of geography,"[244] according to C. Nicolet: "In the last resort the sole victor of the civil wars was the *miles impius* (godless soldier), more terrible than any foreign foe."[245] The soldiers were hated in proportion to their good fortune, "not only by the rich but, before long, by a majority of the people of Italy."[246] A.J.N. Wilson noted that the number of families uprooted from 82 to 30 BCE by giving half a million soldiers confiscated land "was certainly very great, even on the assumption that one largish farm was often divided into holdings for more than one veteran."[247]

Virgil gave voice, albeit very mildly – possibly because of his connection with Augustus – to those thrown off their land. In *Eclogue 1,* a farmer who had lost his farm in the confiscations for military veterans after the wars of the first century BCE lamented his deportation to far-off lands:

> But we must go hence – some to the thirsty Africans, some to reach Scythia and the chalk-rolling Oaxes, and the Britons, wholly sundered from the

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[243] Syme, *Revolution,* 453.

[244] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 148.

[245] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 148.

[246] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 140.

[247] Alan J. Wilson, *Emigration from Italy in the Republican Age of Rome* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1966), 79.

world. . . Is a godless soldier to hold these well-tilled fallows? A barbarian these crops? See where strife has brought our unhappy citizens![248]

In *Eclogue IX*, another ousted farmer lamented:

. . . we have lived to see the day – an evil never dreamed – when a stranger, holder of our little farm, could say: "This is mine; begone, old tenants![249]

But for the most graphic portrayal of hostility to outsiders, we must turn to Juvenal's *Satire 3,* with its over-the-top fury about the impact of newcomers on a beloved city. Juvenal was clearly enjoying being exaggeratedly nasty, the joy of his art form, but beneath the play of words I would argue were real emotions and ideas that reverberate in the hostile reactions to migration today. Juvenal's main character Umbricius felt he was being squeezed out of Rome by its costliness, which he blamed on newcomers, especially Greeks. He was mourning the loss of something he truly loved – not just the ability to stay in the city where he was born, but what that city used to be, and the morals and principles that once governed it. His fury took the form of vicious xenophobia. "I cannot, citizens, stomach a Greek Rome,"[250] he raged, accusing Greeks of fawning sycophancy, sexual promiscuity, eager betrayals and chameleon qualities. In truth, Umbricius didn't approve of anyone except an upstanding native-born citizen like himself, but there was a particular venom in his singling out of foreign places and the people who come from them:

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[248] Virgil, "Eclogue I," *Eclogues*, trans. H.R. Fairclough, Loeb Classical Library Volumes 63 and 64 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1916) 1.64 https://www.theoi.com/Text/VirgilEclogues.html

[249] Virgil, "Eclogue 1X," *Eclogues*, trans. H.R. Fairclough, Loeb Classical Library Volumes 63 and 64 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1916) 9.2 https://www.theoi.com/Text/VirgilEclogues.html

[250] Juvenal, "Satire 3," 89.

For years now Syrian

Orontes has poured its sewerage into our native Tiber –

Its lingo and manners, its flutes, its outlandish harps

With their transverse strings, its native tambourines,

And the whores who hang out round the racecourse.[251]

He wrote of people from Sicyon, Macedonia, Andros or Samos "lighting out for the City's classiest districts/And burrowing into great houses, with a long-term plan/For taking them over,"[252]as if they were foreign cockroaches. Along with the hatred of foreigners and foreign ways was anger at how they had changed the rules that once gave him standing. A rich man's slave can shoulder a free-born man off the sidewalk,[253] and poor men like him have to give up their front-row seats for a "pander's son and heir, spawned in an unknown brothel."[254]His lament went beyond the perpetrators of these indignities to the city itself, which he saw as having been simpler and more virtuous before the newcomers arrived. "How happy the good old days/ of Kings and Tribunes, when Rome made do with one prison/ only!"[255] Even the physical changes to the city marked the decline. Egeria's grotto had been modernized with "flash marble,"[256] destroying its sanctity and atmosphere. Moral principles were gone. Money was the only thing that mattered; the piety of the old heroes no longer counted. "Each man's word is as good as his bond – or rather,/ the number of bonds in his strong-box"[257]Cheats, scam-artists and blackmailers thrived while honest men (like himself) were elbowed out of a livelihood.

As we can see from these examples, there is another side to welcoming that should be considered when any state opens up the doors to newcomers. For all the

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[251] Juvenal, "Satire 3," 89.

[252] Juvenal, "Satire 3," 89.

[253] Juvenal, "Satire 3," 91.

[254] Juvenal, "Satire 3," 92.

[255] Juvenal, "Satire 3," 98,

[256] Juvenal, "Satire 3," 87.

[257] Juvenal, "Satire 3," 92.

positives that newcomers may bring – as Claudius described so eloquently – the fear, anger, ridicule and loss they may trigger are powerful forces to deal with. The Romans themselves voted for the wars that brought in the newcomers, but then had to deal with the upheaval and reconfiguration of their city and their society that resulted. Rome had the advantage of a tradition of welcoming and great wealth to smooth over the difficulties, but modern countries may not be so lucky. I will be returning to these examples when I discuss modern negativity toward migrants in Part II.

Before we leave this section, I will talk about another group of newcomers to Rome who weren't welcome but who had to be accepted because they were Roman citizens. The free-born poor, often agricultural workers forced off their land by various misfortunes, are of interest to us because they represent the kind of problems that can arise when large numbers of poor people with few skills arrive in an area and must be dealt with. The fact that no aisles of the Baths of Diocletian museum are set aside to celebrate the accomplishments of the free-born poor who flooded into Rome in the first and second centuries BCE likely says as much about their social mobility as the long aisles of monuments to ex-slaves says about theirs. Rome could be "an anonymous and potentially hostile place"[258] for such people, and there was limited support for migrants, especially if they had no family ties there, wrote historian John R. Patterson. Interestingly, all his suggestions about how they might have survived entailed connecting with others. One idea was to exploit possible patronage connections for places to live.[259] Evidence from Pompeii suggests ex-slaves, individuals and families favoured by the rich might be allowed to occupy flats, balconies and workshops around their homes, and this might have happened in Rome as well.[260] Another possibility was to do what modern migrants do – contact people from their hometown or region. The existence of an area in Rome called Fregellae suggests this might have been a place where expats from that town gathered in the city.[261] Or newcomers might get involved with collegia, the previously

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[258] Patterson, "City of Rome," 353.

[259] Patterson, "City of Rome," 353.

[260] Patterson, "City of Rome," 353.

[261] Patterson, "City of Rome," 353-354.

mentioned associations linked with a cult, city neighbourhood or a trade, and gain support through them.[262]As for living quarters, those with a tiny amount of money could rent rooms in taverns or on the cheapest levels of apartment blocks. The truly poor slept rough, in shanties or squatted in tombs outside the city. But the grim reality was that extreme poverty in the Roman world "was a condition that usually solved itself: its victims died,"[263]according to Beard. As for work, displaced countrymen lacked the skills and experience for shop-keeping and crafts, which were mainly in the hands of freedmen.[264] They likely survived by going out into the country for the harvest, and by doing casual work in construction, long-shoring, or transport.[265]As previously mentioned, employers preferred slaves over the free-born, and the free poor did not like to work for fellow Romans. Being free-born defined them as superior, no matter how poor they were, which "probably limited their willingness to compete with slaves, to work full time as the overt dependents of other citizens,"[266]according to Keith Hopkins.

Unlike slaves, though, the free-born poor had clout. Thanks to their Roman citizenship, which gave them legal and voting rights, and their sheer numbers, they could not be ignored. According to Jerome Carcopino, the overall drift to Rome meant there were large numbers of underemployed and unemployed men in the city who could have made trouble – 150,000 "complete idlers supported by the generosity of the public assistance"[267] and an equal number who worked only until about noon. A hungry, aimless population in a city where the extremes of wealth and poverty jostled daily on the streets was an invitation to trouble, so authorities took steps. Julius Caesar and the emperor Augustus sent tens of thousands of urban poor to colonies, but the main solutions were Juvenal's famous "bread and circuses" – free grain and an ever-increasing round of public entertainments to keep people amused. The idlers were an expensive proposition; free grain for as many as 320,000 people was a huge drain on the treasury. At first the

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[262] Patterson, "City of Rome," 353-354.

[263] Beard, *SPQR*, 444-445.

[264] P.A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower 225 BC-AD 14* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), 110.

[265] Brunt, *Manpower*, 110.

[266] Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves*, 112.

[267] Carcopino, *Daily Life*, 210.

grain was only subsidized, but in 58 BCE it was made free, a move that Cicero warned would cost the state nearly one-fifth of all its revenues,[268] Nicolet wrote. That plus the sheer number of entertainments – costly in themselves -- must have made the city inefficient and unproductive. Carcopino estimated that by the second century CE there was at least one day of holiday for every working day.[269] By Claudius' time (41-54 CE), the Roman calendar had 159 days marked as holidays, 93 of them devoted to games given at public expense.[270] By the third century CE, there were 200 public holidays, of which 175 were days of games.[271]

I include this example of how Rome dealt with large numbers of poor newcomers because it's a situation many modern nations are facing today. The Romans had the wherewithal to handle these crowds, with free grain, entertainment and possible resettlement on land outside the city, but even then, there was some rioting and problems with these crowds. These may not be very likely solutions for modern nations with more limited resources, and hopefully there are more enlightened ways to assist newcomers, but I think it is valuable to understand what it took for ancient Rome to keep these crowds under control. I will be looking further at how modern nations can help poor newcomers in Part II.

Unity

As we have seen from Rome's founding myths and the historical incidents I have already outlined, welcoming newcomers has an inevitable impact on an established society. If the newcomers come from different backgrounds – think of the Trojans settling in Latium in *The Aeneid* – they can disrupt the unity of the existing society. And if newcomers feel they aren't truly welcome, they may keep themselves separate from the main society, resulting in long-term disunity. Aeneas' understanding of that, to the point of giving up the Trojan culture to ensure long-term harmony with the established

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[268] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 194.

[269] Carcopino, *Daily Life*, 206.

[270] Carcopino, *Daily Life*, 206.

[271] Carcopino, *Daily Life*, 206.

majority, reflects what I think is an important element of Roman welcoming. From their actions, both mythical and in reality, it seems the Romans understood the potential consequences of admitting disparate newcomers. Their response was to find ways of encouraging unity, often by creating common links between the newcomers and the existing society, so all would feel part of a common entity. The Romans did not always succeed, they weren't always consistent, and sometimes they didn't try very hard, as when they plunked down colonies of military veterans among long-time populations and left them to work out their differences. An element of force was almost inevitably part of the picture, too, given that this was ancient Rome assembling an empire. But I think it is important in terms of our discussion about modern migration to acknowledge that the Romans understood the potential divisive effects of welcoming newcomers, but also that efforts could be made to mitigate them.

I suggest this understanding of the importance of unity worked in combination with another aspect of their culture when it came to welcoming newcomers. That second element – which helped unify the long-established and ensure newcomers wouldn't disrupt that unity – was the traditional concept that the good of the community outweighed that of the individual. As I wrote earlier, historian Harriet I. Flower noted that the Romans didn't even have a separate name for their political system because they equated it with the community itself and its best interests.[272] Real-life Romans didn't always abide by this ideal of placing the public good over their own interests, just as they failed to resolve the internal conflicts that tore society apart in the first-century BCE civil wars. But these concepts of a united society, aided by self-sacrificing individuals, were traditional touchstones for the Romans. The fact that a warrior people so highly trained and versed in war managed to preserve a strong united front for centuries before finally tearing themselves apart in the first century BCE speaks to a high degree of restraint.

Where did the Romans learn about the importance of unity and sacrificing for the good of the community? One potential explanation may be a legendary, notoriously lengthy fifth-and-fourth-century BCE struggle known as the Conflict of the Orders. Livy

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[272] Flower, "Introduction," 2.

described it in detail, although later historians like Kurt A. Raaflaub suggested that his version of a 200-year struggle fed by essentially the same causes is "historically implausible."[273] However, I would suggest the actual veracity did not matter so much as that it was part of the Roman historical tradition and shaped people's thinking. The conflict involved the lower-class plebians struggling for privileges and rights closed to them by the upper-class patricians, as well as for an end to exploitive economic practices that could transform indebted plebians into slaves. The conflict reached such a pitch in 495-493 BCE, that according to Livy, the plebians left the city and refused army service until their demands were met.[274] By the time the conflict ended in the early third century BCE, the plebians had achieved most of their goals, and a new mixed aristocracy consisting of elite plebeian and patrician families arose.[275] All that was left of the original patrician privilege was the right to hold a few ancient priesthoods and to wear a particular kind of fancy shoes.[276] How did this conflict affect Roman unity? One logical assumption would be that such a long internal struggle between the state's two major factions would tear Rome apart. But Raaflaub argued the opposite occurred. Because Rome was also facing severe external pressures over the same period, this internal battle actually strengthened it instead of weakening it.[277]

> The elite, on whose qualities of leadership the community depended, developed a specific system of values that focused entirely on these qualities and on service for the community, and exceptional cohesion that helped control constant fierce competition for the highest ranks and offices. The commoners learned to value discipline and solidarity; despite intense social disagreements, and despite their indispensable and powerful role in army and assembly, they did not seek to overthrow existing structures and hierarchies. The community as a whole developed a remarkable ability to

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[273] Kurt A. Raaflaub, "Between Myth and History: Rome's Rise from Village to Empire (the Eighth Century to 264," in *A Companion to the Roman Republic*, edited by Nathan Rosenstein and Robert Morstein-Marx (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing), 140.

[274] Livy, *History*, 146.

[275] Raaflaub, "Myth and History," 140.

[276] Beard, *SPQR*, 147.

[277] Raaflaub, "Myth and History," 141.

forge compromises and to emerge from serious conflict stronger and more unified.[278]

Thus, as Raaflaub described it, the elite put aside their ambitions and the lower classes chose not to exercise the full extent of their power; both factions chose unity and their community over their personal interests. The republic's eventual destruction by "overambitious"[279] generals and armies shouldn't obscure its central aspect – "the success and prosperity created by its ability to find an enduring balance between competition and cooperation over many generations, despite and perhaps because of the extraordinarily high demands and risks inherent in its system,"[280] according to historian Harriet Flower. Constant expansion required a basic consensus at home, and the sense of a shared set of values was cultivated for a "surprisingly" long time.[281] The political system itself encouraged unity and setting aside personal interests for public ones, as it involved yearly elections that forced politicians to learn to rotate between time in office and private life, to accommodate each other, to develop a sense of community among their senate peers, and to engage in a "dynamic dialogue" with the public.[282]

When we think about the measures that welcomed people into the Roman Empire by making them feel they were part of a unified whole, we should remember the attitudes that lay behind those measures. The emphasis on unity and the importance of state interests over individual ones played a role in the census, the citizenship and the military system, all institutions that welcomed and unified newcomers. I will discuss these institutions in the following two subsections, then conclude the discussion of Roman unification techniques with a section on Romanization and colonization. In Part II of this project, I will return to the issue of how overall societal attitudes shape our welcoming of newcomers in modern times. Of interest will be the priority modern liberal societies place

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[278] Raaflaub, "Myth and History," 141.

[279] Flower, "Introduction," 8.

[280] Flower, "Introduction," 9.

[281] Flower, "Introduction," 9.

[282] Flower, "Introduction," 9.

on unity, and where community-versus-individual interests lie when it comes to welcoming migrants.

Welcoming through the census, citizenship and the military

The census and citizenship were the institutions that transformed newcomers into Romans, and so could be seen as both welcoming and unifying. They brought outsiders into the great citizen body of fellow Romans, gave them certain legal protections, and qualified them for military service, another institution that I will argue also served as a unifying force. I will deal briefly with the census and citizenship, then discuss in more detail how the military was both a uniting and welcoming force. Historians viewed the census, which organized citizens into classes and centuries according to their wealth, as effective in creating consensus,[283] which I am considering equivalent to unity. The census gave the rich more political power, but they paid heavily for their privileges, as they were expected to lead armies in warfare, administer the city and use their own money to pay for public amenities and entertainments. The poor, as Dionysius described it, may have had "but the slightest share in government," but "finding themselves exempt both from taxes and from military service, prudently and quietly submitted to this diminution of their power; and the commonwealth itself had the advantage of seeing the same persons who were to deliberate concerning its interests allotted the greatest share of the dangers and ready to do whatever required to be done."[284] Such a system, which meant each person's rights and privileges conformed to a constant ratio, suited Rome, "which could only survive on the basis of broad consensus,"[285] according to C. Nicolet. He noted that Cicero, Dionysius and Polybius all thought the consensus among Roman citizens, at least until around 100 BCE, "was remarkably strong, proof against internal tension and the most redoubtable foreign enemies."[286]To sum up, the census system provided a structure for welcoming newcomers into Roman society and because its norms were generally accepted, it was a unifying force. For those not content with their allotted place in the

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[283] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 14.

[284] Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 4.21.2

[285] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*,57.

[286] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*,14.

system, as I have described in my section on social mobility, there were some opportunities to change that.

Roman citizenship was both unifying and welcoming in that it accepted newcomers into the existing community of Romans and granted everyone the same legal rights. Wherever they found themselves in the empire, Roman citizens could demand those rights and expect those in charge to honour them, which I think created a form of unity among Roman citizens. The stories of St. Paul successfully claiming his citizenship rights in successive incidents at Philippi in Macedonia, in Jerusalem, and at Caesarea, where he demanded his case be taken before Caesar in Rome,[287] make that point. Citizenship conferred a legal status that gave possessors protection from arbitrary treatment by appealing to the Roman people in the form of the emperor.[288] Cicero made much of the protection due to Roman citizens in his prosecution of the former Sicilian governor Gaius Verres in 70 BCE. One of the charges was that Verres had had Publius Gavius, a Roman citizen living in Sicily, imprisoned, tortured and crucified despite his protestations that he was a Roman citizen.[289] The argument was that his citizenship should have protected him from such degrading punishment.[290]

In myth and in reality, the Romans sometimes conferred widespread citizenship on the people of defeated or annexed territories, effectively welcoming them into the empire and unifying them with the rest of Roman citizens. Romulus set the precedent, at least in mythical terms, when he invited the people of the towns defeated after the rape of the Sabine women to come to Rome and become Roman citizens. In real life, this happened after Rome defeated rebellious Latin towns in the Latin War of 338 BCE and extended various forms of citizenship to them. It occurred on a bigger scale after the 91-89 BCE Social War, when citizenship was extended throughout the Italian peninsula south of the Po River, and again, even more dramatically in 212 CE, when the emperor Caracalla extended citizenship to all free people of the empire. All these mass extensions

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[287] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 18-19.

[288] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 19.

[289] Beard, *SPQR*, 254.

[290] Beard, *SPQR*, 254.

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of citizenship led to bigger and bigger groups of people with something in common to unify them. Citizenship was also a unifying tool in a much smaller, more targeted way. The Romans used it as a lure for local elites in outlying areas, promising to elevate top families to citizenship status in return for helping "reconcile local and imperial loyalties."[291] It was tempting – citizenship meant protection under the Roman law and pathways to high-ranking positions in the imperial administration or army.[292] The strategy's effectiveness in distant places was illustrated by the conferral of citizenship on a leading family in an ethnic group living high in the Atlas Mountains in Morocco.[293] In response, they had plaques made up celebrating their status as "part of an empire-wide elite who enjoyed a privileged, special relationship with Rome."[294] Such incidents encouraged imitation, and "subjugated provincial elites were swiftly and successfully transformed into the empire's ruling class. Conquerors and conquered could now both describe themselves as Roman."[295] The result was to encourage unity amongst all those welcomed into the Roman bosom: "The possession of Roman citizenship publicly marked out a group who together could fairly claim full membership of a coherent Mediterranean-wide community of mutually convergent interests."[296]

However, any discussion of citizenship as a welcoming and unifying force must also acknowledge that it was not always considered desirable and was not always equal. There were degrees of citizenship, such as *civitas sine suffragio* (citizenship without a vote), which conferred civil right but not the right to vote, disbarring holders from the political process. Widely used after Rome came to dominate nearby Latin towns following the 338 BCE Latin War, it was initially seen as a reward for loyalty, but later sometimes viewed as a punishment, a way of keeping distrusted populations under

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[291] Christopher Kelly, *The Roman Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 49.

[292] Kelly, *Short Introduction*, 49.

[293] Kelly, *Short Introduction*, 49.

[294] Kelly, *Short Introduction*, 49.

[295] Kelly*, Short Introduction*, 50.

[296] Kelly, *Short Introduction*, 49.

control while imposing military and financial obligations on them.[297] In the fourth and third centuries BCE, even full citizenship was sometimes greeted with hostility, as it too came with obligations to provide Rome with manpower and military support: "Roman citizenship became more sought after in the second century BCE, but in earlier times it was viewed as a punishment and was greatly resented."[298] The Aequi, for example, were willing to go to war in 304 BCE because they feared Rome would try to force them to take Roman citizenship: "Autonomy was highly valued and Roman citizenship could be seen as a gross imposition and was fiercely opposed."[299]

Another example of the resistance to citizenship – and the unity that was supposed to come with it – occurred after the Romans extended citizenship throughout Italy after the first-century BCE Social War. Italy was a diverse territory, with a wide variety of well-established communities, often with their own languages, cultures and local aristocracies[300] that didn't necessarily want to be welcomed into the empire. Many found ways of delaying and evading the expectation that they would surrender their autonomy and take on the status of a community of Roman citizens; one technique was to simply apply Roman titles to existing offices.[301] However, compliance occurred over time, and many aspects of local culture had been subsumed to Roman ones by the time of Augustus' death.[302] But welcoming newcomers against their will can have surprising effects. The imposition of the Roman culture and language on some communities actually enhanced local solidarity – for example, in Umbria, "the notion of a collective identity as Umbrians appeared for the first time after the Social War."[303] Whereas before they had identified themselves according to individual communities, "afterwards, they began to develop a collective identity as Umbrians alongside their identity as Roman citizens."[304]

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[297] Nicolet, World of the Citizen, 26-27.

[298] Lomas, "Italy During," 204.

[299] Lomas, "Italy During," 204.

[300] Lomas, "Italy During," 219.

[301] Lomas, "Italy During," 220.

[302] Lomas, "Italy During," 223.

[303] Lomas, "Italy During," 222.

[304] Lomas, "Italy During," 222.

For all its flaws, the Romans' readiness to extend citizenship was one of the wonders of the ancient world, often cited as the reason that Rome grew into a massive empire. For our purposes, what's of interest is the way it united diverse peoples, from a freed slave in the centre of Rome to a leading family in the mountains of Morocco, into one common body. It shows the value of creating a common denominator to encourage welcoming.

The army as a welcoming and unifying force

We can look to the military as an example of how people from all over the empire were welcomed into a Roman institution that, with its high participation levels, long history and unique traditions, served as a unifying force. According to early historians, the army was originally restricted to Roman citizens with sufficient wealth to supply their own military equipment; they were part-time soldiers, fighting mostly on a seasonal basis and close to home. The incorporation of outsiders into the military began early on, when Rome started demanding that annexed and subjugated territories contribute soldiers to help fight Roman battles. Historian Paul Erdkamp provided an example of how this would have worked from the Samnite wars at the end of the fourth and beginning of the third centuries BCE, when soldiers from Rome's Latin allies served alongside the Romans. Organized and equipped similarly to the Romans, the allied units served under Roman command and were "assimilated to and incorporated in"[305] the Roman army: "From a military point of view, there was little distinction between the Roman legions and the allied forces."[306] As Roman citizenship was spread more widely, especially after the Social War of 89-91 BCE, soldiers came from farther and farther afield. Besides this larger pool of citizens to draw from, Rome also readily accepted foreigners to its citizenship and could also recruit from the defeated communities it sometimes incorporated into the Roman state.[307] Over the centuries, wealth requirements were dropped, and by the imperial period, the military had evolved into an empire-wide professional force that provided lifetime careers and retirement benefits to anyone who

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[305] Erdkamp, "Army and Society," 283.

[306] Erdkamp, "Army and Society," 283.

[307] Erdkamp, "Army and Society," 287.

wanted to join. The big turning point was 107 BCE, when general Marius, seeking soldiers for an African campaign, ignored property qualifications and accepted as many volunteers who wanted to come forward: "From then on, the Roman army ceased to be a militia of rich bourgeois, serving voluntarily or not as the case may be, and became increasingly an army of indigent volunteers."[308] While the first century BCE saw the army become a source of disunity, rather than unity, with soldiers signing up to fight with the warring Roman generals who would promise them the best rewards, this ended with rise of Augustus as emperor. Augustus, who had participated in this free-for-all, transformed the army once again into a unifying force. He sent the legions far away from Rome, to guard the distant frontiers and become once more the "bulwark of the nation."[309] The army was reduced in size, placed on a permanent footing, and given regular financing.[310] Soldiers, who came less and less from Italy, were recruited to serve for most of their lives, with promises of land or money to finance them in retirement.[311]

Eventually, the army became a sort of United Nations of soldiers, a mixture of people from everywhere. Even in the third and second century BCE wars against Hannibal, Rome's allied soldiers reflected the tremendously variegated peoples of the Italian peninsula, according to historian Emma Dench:[312] "While only Roman citizens fought in the legions, the Roman army had become a vast umbrella concept, with its numerous auxiliary units."[313] Rome's success depended on transforming the "competing and ethnically diverse peoples of Italy into a Roman war-machine," but annalists' descriptions indicate that these allies retained, and may even have exaggerated, their specifically local identities, according to Dench. They were the opposite of the homogenous hoplite troops portrayed in fifth-century Athenian literature, she maintained:[314] "In fact, the Roman army comes much closer to the picture of the Persian

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[308] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 92.

[309] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 148.

[310] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 148.

[311] Erdkamp, "Army and Society," 295.

[312] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 123-124.

[313] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 124.

[314] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 124.

army as described by Herodotus, defeated peoples in their variegated dress swept up in a huge mass. This is a model of empire that is much closer to that of Rome."[315]

Historian Mary Beard conveyed a similar impression from a different place and time. Evidence left by the soldiers, administrators and probable military hangers-on from the Hadrian's Wall area of Britain hints at the broad mixture of people who had been welcomed into the empire and brought together by the army. For instance, the wall garrison wasn't "a miserable bunch of soldiers from sunny Italy being forced to endure the fog, frost and rain of northern Britain,"[316] but largely made up of people from equally foggy places such as Holland, Belgium and Germany.[317] She noted that funerary material indicates many wall-community members came from the opposite ends of the empire – an ex-slave identified on his tomb as a "Moor;" a former governor whose family tomb was in northern Algeria; another from Palmyra in Syria.[318] It's not known if the latter came to the area in a military capacity, but he commissioned a tombstone depicting the British ex-slave he married as a Palmyrene matron and showing her name in his homeland's Aramaic language.[319] Some of these people were only peripherally connected with the army, but their far-flung homelands seem to hint at how the army would have attracted people from all over the empire. I think we can see them as an example of how people from everywhere were welcomed into the empire and united under the broad institution of the army.

Military training and service, with its rigorous discipline and codes of behaviour, would in itself have been a unifying factor, given the high proportion of the population that spent years under orders. Kelly noted that sustaining an army of around 130,000 in the second century BCE would have required the enrolment of 60 percent of all 17-year-olds for seven years: "In other words, over half of all Roman male citizens might expect

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[315] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 124.

[316] Beard, *SPQR*, 509.

[317] Beard, *SPQR*, 509.

[318] Beard, *SPQR*, 509.

[319] Beard, *SPQR*, 510.

to serve in the army until their mid-20s."[320] All those young men would have been exposed to the same regime of sacred oaths, harsh training and discipline, which was ferocious about disobedience. That led to stories like the one about the consul who had his own son killed for disobeying his orders and engaging in combat with an enemy, even though his son was victorious.[321] Given the high proportion of citizens who would have been exposed to such experiences and treatment, we can see how the military would have been a source of tremendous bonding and unity amongst the population.

Ideas and themes surrounding the military would also have been unifying because they were widespread and deeply embedded in Roman thinking, in fact becoming "positive obsessions, pervading the citizen's subconscious as well as the official ideology,"[322] according to Nicolet. Such themes included the idea that "the Roman, any Roman, is first and foremost a warrior,"[323] and took the idea of the individual's subordination to the community to a much higher level than in other societies.[324] The emphasis was not on individual brave exploits, but rather being "a disciplined citizen forming part of a machine whose redoubtable efficiency is the result of its coherence."[325] The perfect illustration of this, according to Nicolet, was the Roman refusal to discuss terms of peace with Hannibal after the disastrous defeat at Cannae or to pay ransom for prisoners, who were sacrificed with the support of the Roman public.[326] There are aspects of the military that may be hard for us to understand today, but they were part of common Roman thinking that I suggest would have had a unifying impact. For example, military service wasn't just a duty or a burden, but also a privilege that gave individuals a share of war booty and a chance to gain distinction through bravery and patriotism:[327] "Service and reward, praise and hardship were connected by the workings of a subtle and archaic

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[320] Kelly, *Short Introduction*, 10.

[321] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 106.

[322] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 90.

[323] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 90.

[324] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 90.

[325] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 90.

[326] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 90-91.

[327] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 92.

code of honour, which is not fully clear to us but which we can perceive vividly in operation on certain occasions."[328] These ideas, passed along through stories and legends, were part of what being Roman was all about. Newcomers and later generations may not have practised them, but knowing about them created a unifying set of ideas about what "Roman-ness" stood for.

Thus we can see how the military was one of several institutions that laid the groundwork for unifying the people who were welcomed to Rome. One of the main lessons that came out of these institutions was that the state took priority over the individual, whether it was a politician suppressing his own ambition, the census ensuring that everyone contributed an appropriate amount to the community, citizenship making it clear that individuals who held it were privileged over those who didn't, or the military emphasizing the importance of working together instead of seeking individual glory. Once welcomed into the Roman state, newcomers would have been expected to adopt the Roman mentality of working together in unity for the good of the community. One of the questions that arises out of this exploration, to be discussed further in Part II, is what plays the role of such institutions today, and what they teach about welcoming and uniting newcomers.

Welcoming and unifying through creating common grounds

How do you welcome large numbers of people with different languages, cultures and religions and create one unified entity to which all feel they belong? No one can say that the Romans did this perfectly, but to the extent they achieved it – and they did to some degree – I will argue it was because they created areas of commonality to link all those different peoples and regions. Politically, they did this through setting up the empire as a big Roman umbrella under which a wide variety of territories with different relations to Rome could shelter, often while retaining much of their own autonomy. Socially, they did this through various strategies of Romanization, defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as "assimilation to Roman customs or models." This included such practices as using colonization to spread Roman culture and the Latin language

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[328] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 92.

throughout first Italy, then the empire; encouraging Roman-style governance structures, town layouts and buildings; creating an emperor cult with the rise of Augustus to give everyone the same divinity to bow to, and making prolific use of symbols to emphasize Romans' common history and traditions. I will focus on two aspects of this Romanization process – the use of symbols and the use of colonies, as these seem significant strategies for transforming newcomers into Romans and uniting them with the rest of the populace. I suggest that the Romanization policies could be viewed as welcoming – even for those in the empire under duress – in the sense that they brought newcomers into the larger culture so they could be part of their new society and potentially partake of its benefits. This may not have happened for everyone, it may have taken a long time for others, and it may indeed have also benefited the Romans, but in the long term, I think it could be considered welcoming to try to unite newcomers with the dominant society. While the specifics of the Roman strategies may not be applicable to the modern world, I suggest the idea behind them – the importance of unifying a diverse society – is as relevant to today as it was in Roman times. In Part II, I will look at the modern response to the issue of preserving unity amongst increasingly diverse populations. This section also addresses my introductory questions about how the Romans successfully absorbed large numbers of new arrivals, and how they ensured harmony among diverse populations.

Symbols

To a newly arrived slave in ancient Rome, streets full of statues celebrating his captor's heroes and history may have seemed exclusionary, divisive and even somewhat insulting. But a few years later, if that same slave was freed and flourishing in a by-then-familiar city, those statues may have felt like a welcoming embrace. From this perspective, our new Roman citizen could see the statues as a unifying element, linking him or her and all the other citizens of the empire to the city's history, heroes and traditions. I use this hypothetical slave as an illustration of how I think ancient Rome used symbols as a way of welcoming and uniting once-outsiders. Non-citizens and those in Rome under duress may not have felt any affinity for the symbols at first, but if they were able to join the mainstream, which as I have written was a possibility for newcomers in ancient Rome, all those representations of Roman traditions would appear

in quite a different light. I am focusing on symbols as one element of the unification policy because they were so ubiquitous and seemingly important in ancient Rome. My interest is in what they meant and how they might have been used to bring people together, an issue I will revisit in Part II when I discuss the modern use of symbols and how they may be seen as controversial in increasingly diverse societies.

Even today on Roman streets, the letters "SPQR" (*Senatus PopulusQue Romanus*, or the "Senate and People of Rome"), are everywhere – on water fountains and manhole covers, carved into dedicatory plaques and spelled out in floor mosaics. But according to historians, symbols were even more ubiquitous in ancient Rome. For example, the streets leading to the Roman Forum were lined with statues and monuments recreating incidents from the past: "The populace walked under a kind of city in the sky, where roof sculptures, honorific column portraits, and arch groups gave high place to the highly placed."[329] Often commemorating real or mythical incidents and placed where those events allegedly happened, the statue groups "let the modern, living Roman trespass back into time, as far back as the first woodland valley of the satyr kings."[330] Nor were the symbols restricted to the city of Rome. The fact that images of the wolf that legendarily saved Romulus and Remus have been found all over the ancient world indicates that these symbols, and presumably at least some of their meaning, would have been familiar to the farthest-flung inhabitants of the empire. According to historian Mary Beard, citizens of the Greek island of Chios left behind evidence of their second-century BCE decision to erect a monument to the twins; a fourth-century CE mosaic of the wolf and the twins has been found in Aldborough in the north of England, and there were statue groups of them in ancient Rome's Forum and on the Capitoline Hill.[331]Statues and images like these, encountered regularly in everyday life, would have been a constant reminder of the traditions and values of Roman society, which I suggest would have emphasized commonalities between newcomers and the long established, and promoted some sense of unity. At least everyone would have had some understanding of Roman

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[329] Kuttner, "Roman Art," 318.

[330] Kuttner, "Roman Art," 319.

[331] Beard, *SPQR*, 325.

history. Similarly, once newcomers had been welcomed into Roman society, they may have experienced the elaborate public rituals of triumphs and funerals as unifying events, in that they taught a great deal about Roman history, traditions, and their fellow citizens. Funerals of great public figures would have been especially educational, as they included retellings of heroic deeds performed by each of the dead man's ancestors. Such occasions "created a sense of identity, solidarity and tradition for the community as a whole,"[332] and "served as a vehicle for communication between all citizens, as all participated together in celebrating and reaffirming the common values, shared goals and political institutions of the community."[333] Another example of how symbols could be both welcoming and uniting was the Romans' propensity for reaching back to their diverse origins for their symbols. The curule chair, the ivory folding stool that magistrates carried with them and sat on when giving judgments, was of Etruscan origin. In using it, the Romans were honouring an Etruscan tradition, a message not just to citizens of Etruscan heritage but to those of all origins that their traditions could also be welcomed into Roman culture. I suggest that the knowledge that pieces of their culture were incorporated into the larger one would also have had a unifying effect amongst the great combination of people who made up Roman society. Turning back to the founding legends in Virgil's *The Aeneid* and Livy's *History,* we can see the weight both authors placed on symbols, perhaps reflecting Augustus' efforts to revive reverence for ancient traditions. In *The Aeneid*, clothing, language and names were so important that they were the means by which the newcomer Trojans ensured unity with the Latins. Even though the Trojans were victorious, they were willing to sacrifice their cultural markers to the defeated Latins in the interests of long-term harmony. In Virgil's telling of the story, the goddess Juno, who had stirred up trouble for the hated Trojans throughout, finally acquiesced to their settling in Latium after asking the supreme god Jove never to:

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[332] Harriet I. Flower, "Spectacle and Political Culture in the Roman Republic," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Republic,* edited by Harriet I. Flower (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 338.

[333] Flower, "Spectacle," 322.

. . . command the Latins, here on native soil,

to change their age-old name,

to become Trojans. . . ,

alter their language, change their style of dress.[334]

Jove in turn promised:

Latium's sons will retain their fathers' words and ways.

Their name till now is the name that shall endure.

Mingling in stock alone, the Trojans will subside.

And I will add the rites and the forms of worship,

And make them Latins all, who speak one Latin tongue.

Mixed with Ausonian blood, one race will spring from them.[335]

Thus, the defeated Latins were to retain their name, language, and style of dress, while the victorious Trojans were to give up their name and language and be content with mixing their blood with that of the Latins to create one race. Names were also a factor in Livy's story about the Romans making a conciliatory gesture to the Sabines by adopting the name Quirites, after the Sabine town of Cures, and naming newly created wards of the city after the abducted Sabine women.[336] In these stories, names were symbols used to unite once-warring groups and to make newcomers more acceptable. From these brief examples of the use of symbols in ancient Rome – real and fictional – we can see the significance the Romans attached to them and how they seemed to be part of the constant process of integrating newcomers into the larger society while also preserving unity. When we look to the Roman strategies for modern ideas about absorbing large numbers of people and finding ways of ensuring diverse cultures get along together, they may seem irrelevant to current realities, or unworkable in today's world. But when we

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[334] Virgil, *The Aeneid*, 382.

[335] Virgil, *The Aeneid*, 382.

[336] Livy, *History*, 46.

consider the amount of effort the Romans put into these strategies, one message we can take away immediately is that they thought unifying people was extremely important. Which leads to the question of where unity sits on the priority list in the modern world.

Colonies

Colonization – sending out groups of Latins or Romans to settle on land confiscated from defeated territories –was a way of spreading the Roman culture to subjugated areas, as well as to create unity between these areas and Rome. We could also consider it a welcoming strategy if we apply our previous theory that subjugated people and territories – once a conquest is complete – may actually benefit in the long term from being welcomed and integrated into the conqueror's society. In the case of colonies, there is the additional complication of who should be called the newcomers, as the Roman settlers were actually the new arrivals in an established territory. However, because the established indigenous could be considered "new" to the Roman Empire, I will view them as the newcomers – who usually must play the fitting-in role while the established have most of the power. Colonies, which also served defence and settlement purposes, are of interest to us because they showed how groups of culturally different people can quickly change the society of an area, as well as the tensions that can cause. The fact that colonization – and through that, Romanization – was practised from the mythical time of Romulus, through the republican era and vigorously taken up by the emperors, was a sign of how well it was perceived to work. In the first two centuries CE, colonies "were one of the most important factors in knitting the empire together then and in promoting its political unity,"[337] according to E.T. Salmon, author of *Roman Colonization under the Republic*. Julius Caesar and the emperor Augustus were two of the most vigorous proponents of colonies, with Caesar settling about 100,000 urban poor away from the city on land outside the city.[338] And through his colonies, Augustus "was more responsible

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[337] E.T. Salmon, *Roman Colonization Under the Republic* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1970), 152.

[338] Salmon, *Colonization*, 132.

for the diffusion of the Latin language and of Roman practices generally than anyone else in history."[339]

Predictably, as I have already mentioned in connection with the half a million soldiers who received confiscated land in Italy after the civil wars, not everyone was happy about the creation of colonies and the arrival of strangers often caused tensions. When a maritime citizen colony was established in about 338 BCE at Antium, on a site of an "old, populous and important"[340] town, some of the town's original inhabitants were admitted to the colony, but some weren't, leading to years of political machinations and problems: "It is impossible to say how much time elapsed before the two communities, Roman colonists and native Antiates, coalesced into one."[341] According to historian Kathryn Lomas, even a small colony could have a big impact on the surrounding area, undermining indigenous settlements and transforming land use and economic activity. For example, a Roman colony established in 194 BCE in the Bussento valley in southwestern Italy caused an inland city to disappear and farms and villages, once evenly spread around the valley, to concentrate around the new colony of Buxentum, which replaced the small Greek coastal city of Pyxus.[342] Another example was the former Greek colony of Paestum, where in 273 BCE a Latin colony was installed, possibly to dilute the Oscan and Greek population and pacify the area.[343]Its already highly developed urban infrastructure was reinvented in a more Roman mould; the city's government was reorganized; Oscan and Greek disappeared from inscriptions in favour of Latin, and part of the city's centre was rebuilt – the Greek agora was replaced as the centre of public life by a new Roman forum built right next to it.[344] Lomas cited Paestum and Buxentum, along with Pompeii, which I will deal with below, as illustrations of the huge impact new settlers can have: "In all of these examples, despite the substantial differences in the pre-Roman settlements and the circumstances of colonization, the colonists imposed their

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[339] Salmon, *Colonization*, 144.

[340] Salmon, *Colonization*, 75.

[341] Salmon, *Colonization*, 76.

[342] Lomas, "Italy During," 209-210.

[343] Lomas, "Italy During," 210.

[344] Lomas, "Italy During," 211.

own vision of Romanized existence, disseminating Romanized forms of urbanization as well as settling large concentrations of Roman or Romanized people in already populated parts of Italy."[345]

As for Pompeii, it was one of the many colonies created after the Social War in the first century BCE to provide land for discharged soldiers, "who could alter the culture of a community even more drastically than non-military immigrants."[346] For instance, Sulla settled his troops in communities that had opposed him, such as Pompeii, where 2,000 to 3,000 colonists were added to a city with a population of 10,000 to 12,000.[347] Inscriptions show that in little more than a generation, the pre-Roman elite disappeared from positions of influence and were replaced by colonists; Latin replaced Oscan as the language of the inhabitants, and fierce political strife broke out between the colonists and the indigenous population.[348] Under the emperors, these military colonies became the most common type, according to Salmon.[349] Often located at the edges of the empire, where retiring soldiers had served out their careers, they were closed civic communities that provided discharged legionaries with farms and integrated them into the civilian life of the empire.[350] There is debate about whether they were specifically intended to spread the Roman influence, but that was their effect, according to Salmon:[351] they were "centres of Roman influence from which the Latin language spread into the surrounding sea of alien tongues; they helped to promote the imperial cult; and they familiarized the natives with Roman institutions."[352] That didn't make them liked: "As beneficiaries of provincial soil and as the permanently privileged local upper class, the colonists were often objects of hatred and suspicion to the natives in whose midst they lived."[353] But

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[345] Lomas, "Italy During," 212.

[346] Lomas, "Italy During," 212.

[347] Lomas, "Italy During," 212.

[348] Lomas, "Italy During," 212.

[349] Salmon, *Colonization*, 145.

[350] Salmon, *Colonization*, 148.

[351] Salmon, *Colonization*, 148.

[352] Salmon, *Colonization*, 148.

[353] Salmon, *Colonization*, 150.

sometimes they were on equal terms with the locals and sometimes they were "positively welcomed as centres of law and order, sources of prosperity and city-life. . .and [for] affording protection against bandits and foreign foes."[354]

As we can see from the story of Roman colonies, there is nothing simple about encouraging unity by wiping out one culture and replacing it with another. The Romans showed it is quite possible to change the language, culture and physical environment of a community by imposing a dominant new group of residents and rebuilding the community so it fits into the dominant society. This may have the long-term benefits of enabling members of the non-dominant community to fit better into the larger one. But there is a cost. Besides the conflicts and tensions of the transition process, cultures and languages are lost. The Roman scenario can raise questions for us about what constitutes welcoming when it comes to the balance between unity and preservation of different cultures. Should newcomers with different cultures be forced to give theirs up so they don't damage the unity of the receiving culture? Should the indigenous be willing to modify their culture to reduce the difference between theirs and new ones? How important is unity compared to welcoming in the modern world anyway? These are some of the issues raised by the Roman colonies that I will look at in Part II, drawing on my explorations of how the Romans absorbed large numbers of new arrivals and found ways for diverse cultures to get along together.

Flexibility

Flexibility played a key role in ancient Rome's long history of welcoming newcomers. The Romans' willingness to accommodate, to adapt, to innovate, and to transform, enabled them to bring together a wide variety of peoples, cultures and religions and keep them under the same roof, mostly harmoniously, for centuries. On the surface, Roman society was the opposite of flexible and adaptable; it appeared to be a traditional and conservative hierarchy based on the census of ancient pre-republican times. But the constant addition of new territories and people over the centuries produced

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[354] Salmon, *Colonization*, 152.

a continual pressure for change. According to historian Emma Dench, the Romans found ways of dealing with this under the guise of their conservative traditions: "Innovation through conservatism is a familiar aspect of Roman institutions and Roman identity more generally: appeal to the *mores maiorum*, the 'ways of our ancestors', is the usual way to preface either innovation or reaction to change."[355] The idea that Rome could accommodate the once-unthinkable within its traditions was one aspect of Claudius' previously quoted 48 CE speech defending the admission of Gauls to the senate – recall his emphasis on how everything considered to be of the "highest antiquity" had once been innovative and new: "Plebian magistrates came after patrician; Latin magistrates after plebeian, magistrates of other Italian peoples after Latin. This practice too will establish itself, and what we are this day justifying by precedents, will be itself a precedent."[356] His message that Roman traditions could be maintained even while the rules around them changed, which I think is an example of what Dench was suggesting.

The flexibility of the Romans in welcoming newcomers is important to us because it addresses some of the most contentious issues accompanying the arrival of people from diverse backgrounds today. How do they fit into nations where the majority population is different? What compromises are necessary, and who will make them? The modern and ancient circumstances surrounding newcomers are very different, but I think it is valuable for us to examine the Romans' very flexible thinking and strategies. They may help us think about our own in a different way.

Flexible identities, transformation and welcoming

I touched earlier on the concept, put forward by historian Emma Dench, that transformation – or metamorphosis – was a big part of Roman thinking, and how identities could shift in the Roman world. According to Dench, the "potential transformation of both selves and other people"[357] was a key feature of Roman thought. Here, I am interested in how that flexibility about identity would have affected attitudes

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[355] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 95.

[356] Tacitus, *Annals*, Book 11.

[357] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum,* 22.

in ancient Rome. Are people more likely to be welcoming if they think both they and newcomers can be transformed? The Romans seemed to have a remarkable ability to shift their thinking about outsiders. One day slaves were chattels, "thinking tools" who could be thrown to wild beasts in the arena on a whim; the next, after a brief ceremony of manumission, they could be welcomed as citizens with almost the same rights as their former masters. Defeated enemies – civilians and soldiers alike – could be transformed into Roman citizens as soon as a conflict was over. Livy described Romulus as setting that precedent after his first round of battles with his neighbours following the rape of the Sabine women. He ordered the defeated residents of Caenina to tear down their houses and accompany him to Rome to become equal citizens with the people there.[358] Roman generals like Julius Caesar, who fought 10 years in Gaul, admired the toughest troops they faced and after defeating them, looked forward to turning them into Roman soldiers. In his 48 CE speech to the senate, the emperor Claudius described Romulus as being "so wise that he fought as enemies and then hailed as fellow-citizens several nations on the very same day."[359] And of course the idea of transformation was part of the asylum myth that welcomed all comers to Rome and turned them immediately into citizens. The idea of transformation – that a person could be a slave or an enemy one day; a fellow citizen or friend the next – must have encouraged a sense of fluidity about identity generally. As I have previously discussed, that didn't necessarily mean that outsiders were welcomed with kindness, but it may have meant lower barriers to allowing them in at all.

Possibly because of all the tales about their own mixed background and the firm rejection of autochthony, the Romans seem to have had very flexible ideas about their own identity. Descended from Trojan exiles, living on a site first settled by the Arcadians, they were "distinctively not-quite-Greek figures"[360] who still had major roles on an "emphatically Greek world stage."[361] As the republic grew rich and luxurious, they looked back nostalgically to a golden age of simplicity and virtue, but that was no longer

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[358] Livy, *History*, 40.

[359] Tacitus, *Annals*, Book 11.

[360] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum,* 61.

[361] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum,* 61.

them: "Romans were forever telling themselves stories about their own estrangement – from the land in which they lived, or from the Greek world—about the moral virtue that defined their Roman-ness, even if they might temporarily have strayed from such high expectations, and about the simplicity and primitivism of their roots, so far from the glory of imperial Rome. . . ."[362] Even established figures like Cicero and the emperor Augustus were masters of quick-shift transformation. Cicero tried to overcome his stigma as a "new man" by assimilating into the nobility, but when it suited his purposes, he would take advantage of the image of austerity and "clean hands" that attached to being from outside Rome.[363] Augustus wore homespun clothes and affected simple living, but in fact took part in the flamboyant and self-indulgent lifestyle of the Roman elite. [364] Freedmen – that mixture of former slave and current citizen – were uncomfortable figures both to themselves and others, according to Dench.[365]They aroused anxiety about status among the Romans, as they could "represent a challenge to the idea of continuity,"[366] illustrated by the horror with which Pliny the Younger and Tacitus greeted the honours Claudius granted his freedmen Pallas and Narcissus.[367]Referring to the precarious and transitional existence exemplified by the fictional ex-slave Trimalchio in Petronius' *Satyricon,* Dench described his position as "a terrible no man's land, with its basis in advertised wealth, but its ability only to ape imperfectly the attributes of upper-class distinction."[368] The discomforts surrounding transformation were major themes of early-imperial-era writers like Juvenal and Horace, who held up the old Roman morality against the new decadence; the virtues of simple country living against the lures of the city; the virtuous old-fashioned Roman against the slick, untrustworthy newcomers. Thus, we have the sense of Juvenal's *Satire 3* narrator Umbricius in deep conflict, simultaneously deriding the city he obviously loved and extolling the virtues of a simpler, cheaper country life while at the same time mourning his lost city life and reluctant to begin his country one.

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[362] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum,* 62.

[363] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum,* 185.

[364] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum,* 186.

[365] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum,* 145.

[366] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum,* 145.

[367] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum,* 145.

[368] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum,* 150.

In *Satire 6*, Horace professed to long for the simplicity of his beloved country home while also obviously delighting in aspects of his city life – his importance, his busy-ness, the envy provoked by his connections with his patron Maecenas: "With occupations like these I waste my day pitifully, while I utter prayer after prayer: 'O my country estate, when shall I set eyes on you? When shall I be free to drink sweet forgetfulness of life's worries, now with books of ancient authors, now with sleep and hours of idleness!'"[369] The homely country mouse/city mouse tale included in the satire emphasized the theme of the virtuous and safe pleasures of country life compared to the luxury and dangers of a city one. From these glimpses of Roman attitudes about identity, their own and others, we get a sense of tremendous uncertainty and flux – freedmen who arouse anxiety and don't fit in themselves, a "new man" and an emperor vacillating between luxury and rusticity, and a populace living one life while nostalgically thinking another one was better.

This all adds up to the idea that while the Romans welcomed newcomers and were flexible in their attitudes toward both them and their own identities, none of this was easy or comfortable. The flexibility of the Romans enabled them to assemble an empire, but it also meant living amidst flux and uncertainty. Transformation may be useful and open up possibilities, but it also causes stresses and tensions. I think one lesson we can take away from the very adjustable Romans is that we should not expect welcoming to be comfortable or easy.

Culture, flexibility and degrees of welcoming

The Romans demonstrated great flexibility in welcoming the many peoples around the Mediterranean, with all their different cultures, into their empire. Some they embraced with warmth, treating them almost as superiors; some they cultivated as helpers in administering and Romanizing the empire; others they virtually ignored. What's of interest to us in terms of modern migration is what motivated the Romans to treat groups differently, and the impact that had. From this, we may be able to draw some ideas about why modern peoples may be more welcoming to some groups than others, and how

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[369] Horace, "Satire 6," *Horace Satires and Epistles*, trans. by John Davie (Oxford University Press, 2011), 54.

newcomers might be affected by that. In this section, I will be dealing mainly with the provinces of the Roman Empire after Augustus assumed power toward the end of the first century BCE. In this case, the long-established people in the provinces were "newcomers" in the sense that the Roman conquerors were welcoming them to the empire.

The Romans exerted various degrees of pressure on different territories and peoples to adopt Roman customs and the Latin language, and they certainly had the legions to back them up. But in an empire as large and variegated as the Roman one, it would have been difficult to enforce a set standard of "Roman-ness." Indeed, historians Mary Beard, Peter Garnsey and Richard Saller suggested that after establishing a certain framework, the Romans largely left it up to people to Romanize themselves. "It was bottom up rather than top down,"[370] according to Beard: "There was a dynamic combination of forces at work here: on the one hand, the power of Rome made Roman culture an aspirational goal; on the other, Rome's traditional openness meant that those who wished to 'do it the Roman way' were welcome to do so – and of course, it suited the stable maintenance of Roman rule that they should."[371] According to Garnsey and Saller, both republican and imperial Rome saw the role of government as very limited, and the emperors were more concerned about controlling their officials than in directing the lives of their subjects:[372] "Roman emperors lacked any grand design to spread the culture of Rome through the empire. Romanization, better described as the fusion of imperial and local institutions and cultures, was the joint product of central government actions and local initiatives."[373]

Common origins

When we look at the different degrees of welcoming the Romans extended to their subjugated territories, it appears that common origins were extremely important to them. This favouritism, hinted at in Aeneas' emphasis on his common Dardanian

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[370] Beard, *SPQR*, 495.

[371] Beard, *SPQR*, 496.

[372] Garnsey and Saller, Roman Empire, 203.

[373] Garnsey and Saller, Roman Empire, 202.

ancestry with king Evander, goes far back. Despite their complicated, even confused origins, the Romans were essentially Latins and favoured people with Latin backgrounds when they were assembling their empire. According to historian A.N. Sherwin-White, Rome confined its earliest grants of citizenship to communities of the Latin race, while devising looser ties for non-Latins.[374] This wasn't due just to "sentimental blood consciousness,"[375] but because "the juridical and social situation rendered the incorporation of Latins, and only of Latins, possible without any intermediate stage."[376] Eventually Rome changed its policy and began incorporating non-Latins, "but only after a probationary period during which these peoples were brought under the influences of Romano-Latin discipline and culture."[377] In the period before Rome became a continental power, "there is no certain instance of the immediate incorporation in the Roman state of a distinctly foreign people"[378] – it took as long as 150 years for some non-Latin communities to win citizenship.

In the second century BCE before the Social War, Italian allies, considered true foreigners in language and geography and with non-Latium political foundations,[379] sometimes had to show many years of subservience to Rome – asking it for advice and allowing Roman roads to be built through their territory – before being admitted to citizenship. But finally, "[t]he localization of the states was so complete, the penetration of Roman authority so thorough, and the performance of military *munera* (duties) so customary, that the Italian allies were not only justified in their demands, but fitted, from a Roman point of view, to receive the citizenship,"[380] wrote Sherwin-White: "They had been not only the subjects but the pupils of Rome, both in the art of war and in the conduct of public affairs."[381] Later, it was Italian, not Latin, origin that was crucial for

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[374] Sherwin-White, *Roman Citizenship*, 61.

[375] Sherwin-White, *Roman Citizenship*, 61.

[376] Sherwin-White, *Roman Citizenship*, 61.

[377] Sherwin-White, *Roman Citizenship*, 61.

[378] Sherwin-White, *Roman Citizenship*, 61.

[379] Sherwin-White, *Roman Citizenship*, 119.

[380] Sherwin-White, *Roman Citizenship*, 129.

[381] Sherwin-White, *Roman Citizenship*, 129.

winning citizenship in the provinces. When the first large-scale extension of Roman citizenship occurred in provincial areas under Caesar and Augustus, it was based on there being a "firm foundation of a genuine Italian immigration, either of legionary veterans, or of farmers, merchants and businessmen."[382] Civic rights were rarely granted to a purely native community; where natives predominated, they were given Latin rights rather than citizenship.[383] The key to citizenship was an original core of immigrant Italians, who were "the intermediaries for the transmission of their political culture to the natives."[384]

Sherwin-White's account illustrates how seriously the Romans took the idea of common origins – that Romans, Latins and Italians shared some valuable quality that gave them priority for citizenship and that in turn could be used to help make outsiders eligible. There was also the idea of citizenship being a prize that had to be earned – probationary periods, for example, and demonstrating the right level of obedience and cultural knowledge. Historian Erich Gruen hinted at this conditional state of things when he wrote about the Roman acceptance of the idea that former slaves from Cilicia, Spain and Syria should be allowed to vote: "Assimilation to Roman ways sufficed to authorize the award of full civic privileges."[385] I think Gruen's reference to "assimilation to Roman ways" suggests that despite their flexibility in accepting newcomers from different backgrounds, the Romans also expected them to have some acquaintance with Roman culture before they participated in the electoral system. In other words, Roman flexibility had its limits. The emperor Claudius made a similar point in his Tacitus-reported speech of 48 CE about admitting Gauls to the Roman senate. He said that ever since the Roman war with the Gauls ended, "they have preserved an unbroken and loyal peace"[386]– in other words, had started earning the Romans' trust. Then: "United as they now are with us by manners, education, and intermarriage, let them bring us their gold and their wealth rather than enjoy it in isolation."[387] In his reference to the Gauls being "united" with the

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[382] Sherwin-White, *Roman Citizenship*, 225.

[383] Sherwin-White, *Roman Citizenship*, 225.

[384] Sherwin-White, *Roman Citizenship*, 227.

[385] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 465.

[386] Tacitus, *Annals*, Book 11.

[387] Tacitus, *Annals*, Book 11.

Romans in the crucial areas of manners, education and intermarriage, I think he is saying that they had essentially assimilated with the Romans, earning the right to be treated the same. (In that same speech, Claudius also referred to wanting to carry on his ancestors' policy "of transferring to this city all conspicuous merit, wherever found,"[388]another indication of what qualified an outsider to become a Roman citizen.) I think these examples of the Romans' emphasis on origins and cultural understanding opens up questions for us about what's expected of newcomers before they are welcomed in modern times. Are the kind of origin links the Romans prized between themselves and Latins important, or are they just a way of excluding people who seem too different? How important is it that newcomers be inculcated into the culture of their new nations? What does such incorporation mean, both for newcomers and the receiving culture? Should citizenship be viewed as the sort of hard-won prize that it was sometimes in ancient Rome?

Culture

Just as they favoured people of the same origins as themselves in welcoming newcomers, the Romans also favoured certain cultures, classes and lifestyles. People from the eastern empire got a warmer welcome than those from the western and northern areas. The upper classes in the provinces were favoured over the lower ones, and city folk over country folk. Generally, the easterners were viewed as having highly developed cultures that the Romans admired or left undisrupted. "In the eastern provinces, where an indigenous civic culture was already entrenched and flourishing, no attempt was made to disturb it,"[389] according to Garnsey and Saller. While the historians contended that the emperors never had any grand design of spreading Roman culture through the empire, they noted that in the expanding western provinces, they "stepped up the traditional Roman policy of imposing metropolitan political and cultural institutions as an essential complement to military conquest."[390] However, the result was not so much Romanization

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[388] Tacitus, *Annals*, Book 11.

[389] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 178.

[390] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 178.

as the creation of distinctive Romano-Iberian, African, Gallic or British cultures through the fusion of imperial and local elements.[391]

As for the Greeks, their "cultural superiority was not contested by the Roman governing classes,"[392] and was in fact enhanced during Augustus' political integration of the Mediterranean.[393] I have previously referred to the common Roman practice of enslaving highly educated Greeks to bring their culture to Rome; how the Romans accepted Greeks writing Roman history and using Greek myths as the basis of Roman legends; and how they adopted so much of Greek culture that they created what has been called the Greco-Romano culture. Historian Mary Beard painted a picture of what the Romans' hands-off policy in the eastern part of the empire looked like in the first two centuries CE, where Greek rather than Latin continued as the operative language, and local calendars were barely adjusted to Roman times and events:[394] "Local traditions flourished in everything from clothing (trousers and Greek cloaks) to religion. It was a world full of gods and of festivals in a vast variety, whose strangeness lost nothing in the telling."[395] Roman culture did make some progress in the east, with entertainments such as gladiatorial games taking place, the construction of Roman-style temples and amphitheatres, and openly imitative Roman buildings in Jerusalem and Caesara.[396] But Greek cultural tradition "was much too powerful to be undermined on home ground,"[397] and instead the Romans tended to protect and promote Hellenic civic culture at the expense of local eastern cultures, which the authors suggested helps explain the Greek willingness to accept long-term political subservience to the Romans.[398]

By contrast, the peoples of the west and north were viewed from the start as barbarians with rough, undeveloped cultures that could and should be improved by

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[391] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 178.

[392] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 178.

[393] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 178.

[394] Beard, *SPQR*, 489.

[395] Beard, *SPQR*, 490.

[396] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 190.

[397] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 191.

[398] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 191.

Romanization. There were stories about the Gauls' habit of pinning enemy heads to the entrances of their homes, about Druids practising human sacrifice (although the Romans did bury people alive from time to time themselves), and about Britons who used woad to dye themselves blue so they would look more fearsome in battle. Tacitus' account below of how his father-in-law Agricola, a Roman administrator in Britain, tried to inculcate civilized habits into the Britons, gives a sense of how westerners were viewed. No such thing would have been attempted in the east, according to Beard: "[N]o official from Rome would have dreamt of instructing the Greeks in 'civilization' like this."[399]

> In order, by a taste of pleasures, to reclaim the natives from that rude and unsettled state which prompted them to war, and reconcile them to quiet and tranquility, [Agricola] incited them, by private instigations and public encouragements, to erect temples, courts of justice and dwelling-houses. He bestowed commendations upon those who were prompt in complying with his intentions, and reprimanded such as were dilatory; thus promoting a spirit of emulation which had all the force of necessity. He was also attentive to provide a liberal education for the sons of their chieftains, preferring the natural genius of the Britons to the attainments of the Gauls; and his attempts were attended with such success, that they who lately disdained to make use of the Roman language, were now ambitious of becoming eloquent. Hence the Roman habit began to be held in honor, and the toga was frequently worn. At length they gradually deviated into a taste for those luxuries which stimulate to vice; porticos, and baths, and the elegancies of the table; and this, from their inexperience, they termed politeness, whilst, in reality, it constituted a part of their slavery.[400]

This much-quoted excerpt shows several things of interest to us. One is that the persuasion to Romanize was by carrot, not by stick – there were incitements to do it and reprimands for being slow, but not outright force. Another aspect, as I will mention below, is that Agricola was only concerned about the upper classes. The other aspect was Tacitus' opinion that by falling for the luxuries of the Romans, the Britons were doing Rome's work for them and essentially Romanizing themselves.

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[399] Beard, *SPQR*, 495.

[400] Tacitus, "The Life of Cnaeus Julius Agricola," in *The Germany and the Agricola of Tacitus*, commentator Edward Brooks (The Oxford Translation Revised, 2013), 21. http://www.gutenberg.org/files/7524/7524-h/7524-h.htm#link2H_4_0003

Colonies and cities

I have previously described how Roman and Latin colonies successfully spread the Roman culture and Latin language to surrounding areas, sometimes wiping out local languages, cultures and even whole towns in the process. Garnsey and Saller's version of what happened when the imperial period began was much more positive for local cultures. Instead of being eliminated, they were fused with imperial elements, resulting in the creation of distinctive joined cultures – Romano-Iberian, African, Gallic or British.[401] Garnsey and Saller hinted at a possible reason: By the time the emperors took over, the Roman culture had become increasingly receptive to others, and was itself "a blend of indigenous and foreign elements."[402] The fact that the metropolitan culture being imposed on provincial cities was already a blend perhaps made it open to further blending. But the Romans were still very Roman when they transplanted their metropolitan culture into these "artificially created urban settings,"[403] which included newly founded cities, cities promoted to Roman status and tribal capitals.[404] They imposed the Latin language, ignoring all local languages, and the Roman-style education they introduced was for elites only.[405]Bit by bit, Roman-style orthogonal street grids and public buildings for administration and entertainment all made their appearance in these locations.[406] Even under this bias toward Roman-ness, the result was a flourishing blend of Roman and native cultures that produced artists, writers, intellectuals and leaders who later made their mark in Rome.[407] They included Quintilian, Seneca and Lucan from Spain, and from Africa the biographer Suetonias, the orator Fronto and the grammarian Sulpicius Apollinaris.[408] The arts thrived in these areas of rapid urban growth, which drew artists and craftsmen who brought metropolitan and Italian influences with them,[409]

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[401] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 178.

[402] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 178.

[403] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 186.

[404] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 188.

[405] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 186.

[406] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 188.

[407] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 186.

[408] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 187.

[409] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 188.

according to Garnsey and Saller. Sometimes this had little effect on local art, sometimes it led to derivative work such as the pottery industry of Gaul, and sometimes to distinctive local styles blending foreign and native elements:[410] "It was in the context of the city, for the most part in the western empire, that Roman and native came into contact and combined to form Romano-African, Romano-British or some other particular and original culture."[411] While the Romans were still imposing their culture on others, they were no longer wiping out local ones when they went to what they considered underdeveloped areas. The fact that rich new blended styles were arising and that talented provincials were able to make their way in Rome were examples of how Roman flexibility could be seen to be welcoming.

Elite and non-elite

As mentioned earlier, the Romans also offered different degrees of welcome to the elite provincials and the poor masses. One explanation for the Romans' warm embrace of local elites is that they needed their help because the empire operated on a skeletal administrative model: "A reasonable estimate is that across the empire at any one time there were fewer than 200 elite administrators, plus maybe a few thousand slaves of the emperor, who had been sent out from the imperial centre to govern an empire of more than 50 million people."[412] The local elites acted as middlemen between the Roman governor and the population at large, raising taxes and encouraging loyalty.[413] Their payoff was Roman citizenship, the potential to climb in Roman society, and the attention of Roman governors like Agricola. As we can see from Tacitus' excerpt, Agricola's efforts were aimed at the upper class – the education was for chieftain's sons, and peasants were unlikely to have been wearing togas or learning Latin. In fact, "many inhabitants of the empire had little experience or conception of Rome,"[414] according to Garnsey and Saller. Beard suggested the majority of the 50 million inhabitants of the

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[410] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 188-189.

[411] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 189.

[412] Beard, *SPQR*, 490.

[413] Beard, *SPQR*, 492.

[414] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 203.

empire would have been peasant farmers struggling to grow enough to feed themselves:[415] "For these families, Roman rule made little difference, beyond a different tax collector, a bigger economy into which to sell their produce and a wider range of trinkets to buy if they had any spare cash."[416] Indeed, archeological traces from Britain indicate peasant farmers' lives changed little for more than a millennium, from the end of the Iron Age through to the Middle Ages.[417] The adoption of Roman culture would have been a preoccupation of local elites mainly in their own interests, according to Garnsey and Saller:[418] "After Rome made its initial impact, Romanization was largely self-directed, a response of local elites to the prospect of enhanced status, wealth and power under the protection of the imperial authority."[419] Those who stood to gain – soldiers, functionaries and elites – were a small part of the population.[420]A cartoon in Beard's *SPQR*[421] pokes fun at the idea that the Romans had much effect on ordinary people, although it also indicates the poor would put on a show of support if necessary. The drawing is of a troop of Roman soldiers marching past a façade of Roman-style buildings that hides a peasant's round, straw-roofed hut. The peasant is depicted as struggling to support the facade with a pole, and telling his wife, who is peering out at the departing soldiers: "I can't keep this up much longer, dear!"

City and country

The difference in Roman welcoming for urban and rural residents reflects the same reasons as for the elite/peasant divide. The Romans welcomed the city folk because they were useful, while those living in the country were mostly ignored. Peasants would have had some contact with the Romans through taxation, conscription, rural markets, itinerant soldiers and civilian officials, but there was no requirement or motivation for them to adopt Roman culture: "[T]heir commitment to the vernacular languages and their

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[415] Beard, *SPQR*, 442.

[416] Beard, *SPQR*, 442

[417] Beard, *SPQR*, 442

[418] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 203.

[419] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 203.

[420] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 203.

[421] Beard, *SPQR*, 443.

native customs in general remained firm."[422] On the Roman side, there was no "*mission civilisatrice* undertaken in the interests of the mass of the subject population. . . [I]f rural populations gave no trouble and fulfilled their essential obligations, then the imperial administration was content to leave them in peace."[423] Nor were local elites, who viewed Roman culture as a mark of superiority, interested in encouraging that culture in the masses.[424] Because large areas of the empire were under-urbanized, there were vast regions where populations retained their original distinctive cultures[425] – in one area, residents were still Punic speakers six centuries after the Roman conquest.[426]

This section about Roman flexibility in welcoming newcomers raises questions about favouritism that we could ask ourselves today. Is it legitimate for societies to extend a warmer welcome to newcomers with whom they feel cultural or ethnic links? What about treating different cultures as if they are superior or inferior, as the Romans did in differentiating between the Greeks and "barbarians"? The Romans showed a whole range of possibilities for how dominant cultures can treat others – from wiping them out, to blending with them to create vibrant new cultures, to admiring and imitating them. Regarding the Roman favouritism toward the provincial elites, we can ask about the legitimacy of basing welcoming on sheer usefulness – which in fact is what modern nations do in admitting especially skilled or unskilled workers who will do jobs that citizens either can't or won't. This look at Roman flexibility in the way they welcomed newcomers is useful because it shows us a wide range of possibilities and raises questions about some of our modern Western assumptions.

Flexibility in welcoming religions and cults

Another illustration of Roman flexibility was their willingness to welcome the wide variety of religions and cults that came under their purview when they conquered the Mediterranean. Historian Erich Gruen argued this was not tolerance, which implies a

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[422] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 193.

[423] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 194.

[424] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 194.

[425] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 196.

[426] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 193.

central religious structure lenient toward deviance, which he contended doesn't apply to Rome's "fundamentally pluralist and polytheist" society.[427] The Romans were neither tolerant nor intolerant, he argued: "The embrace of ostensibly alien cults was part and parcel of Roman identity, not a matter of broadmindedness or liberality."[428] Perhaps the best illustration of Rome's openness to other religions was its own propensity for stealing, consulting with, or importing various cults and deities from around the Mediterranean. For example, Livy recounted how in 396 BCE, the Romans followed up the defeat of their long-time bitter foe, the Etruscan city of Veii, by moving its patron deity Juno to a temple in Rome.[429] According to Gruen, that meant the Etruscan divinity "became a Roman one, not a defeat of the other's god, but an appropriation of it."[430] Other non-Roman religious entities consulted by the Romans included the Delphic oracle, considered the most sacred and venerable of Greek shrines, and the Sibylline Books, a collection of Greek oracles in verse that legendarily arrived in Rome in pre-republican times. On the advice of the Sibylline Books, Rome had the Magna Mater, a Hellenized Anatolian divinity, shipped from Asia Minor to Rome.[431] The Romans had been expecting a statue and were surprised to receive a large black meteorite, accompanied by a group of priests – long-haired, self-castrated, self-flagellating eunuchs with tambourines.[432] The senate quickly purged the cult of its more extreme features and made it unavailable to Roman citizens.[433] The incident is interesting to us because it pointed to another aspect of Rome's flexibility about religions: there were limits. The Romans disapproved of the Gauls' practice of nailing heads of enemies to the entrances of homes and put a halt to human sacrifice, which had been practised in some parts of the empire.[434] The senate moved dramatically against the Bacchic cult in 186 BCE, dissolving its associations, persecuting its leaders, hunting down its adherents and

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[427] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 467.

[428] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 467.

[429] Livy, *History*, p. 395.

[430] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 467.

[431] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 467.

[432] Beard, *SPQR*, 207.

[433] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 170.

[434] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 168.

suppressing its worship.[435] While the reasons remain obscure, it's thought the Romans feared that its highly organized cells cutting across conventional social groups made it a powerful religious community outside the control of the state;[436] by that interpretation, the Romans were clamping down for political reasons rather than objections to the religion itself. However, Gruen stressed that the episode "was extraordinary, lacked real precursors and set no precedents."[437] There were other occasional state crackdowns, against Jews and astrologers in 139 BCE, and against the shrines of Isis in the 50s and 40s, but Gruen contended these had no lasting effects "and very likely intended none."[438] "The exhibit of Roman authority had its uses from time to time, when ad hoc circumstances called for it. But there was no enduring repression of foreign rites."[439] According to Garnsey and Saller, "unless their moral sensibilities were outraged, as in the extreme case of human sacrifice, the Romans intervened with force only against cults and priesthoods held to be politically subversive."[440]

We could point to the Romans' flexible attitude toward religions as a positive model for modern societies to emulate. At a time when frictions are rising about the different religious practices of newcomers arriving in Western societies, we could say the Romans showed it wasn't essential for newcomers to have the same beliefs and practices as the host society; differing religions didn't have to mean conflict. But we should be wary of trying to equate modern and ancient treatment of religions. Historian Mary Beard warned that it's impossible to overstress how alien the Roman religion system is to moderns: "This alienness goes far beyond the simple unfamiliarity of Roman religious practices, rules and assumptions; it impinges also on our understanding of the intellectual and social space occupied by 'religion' at Rome and its boundaries with other areas of

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[435] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 466.

[436] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 466.

[437] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 466.

[438] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 466.

[439] Gruen, "Romans and Others," 466.

[440] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 202.

Roman experience."[441] For example, as previously mentioned, the Romans had limits on what they thought were acceptable religious rites and banned human sacrifice, but at the same time practiced it themselves three times in their history. According to Beard, no good explanations have ever been found for the Romans' decision – in 228, 216, and 114/113 BCE – to bury Greek and Gaul couples alive. So for us, it's not a simple matter of saying the Romans accepted all religions, and we could too – our societies' concepts of religions and their meanings must also be borne in mind.

Welcoming through flexible innovations

Innovation and adaptability were important aspects of the flexibility that enabled the Romans to begin – and continue – welcoming newcomers through the centuries. They illustrated this in many ways, from the different techniques they used to bring new territories into the empire, to the development of different categories of citizenship to accommodate their new populations. I will deal briefly with Rome's techniques for adding new populations to its empire, but focus on citizenship, as this seems to be an excellent example of Roman innovation in welcoming. I will be referring back to it in Part II discussions about successful ways of incorporating newcomers.

The Romans were remarkable from the beginning for the inventive strategies they used to bring new areas under their control. While as I have argued, this can't be seen as welcoming in itself, it can lead to the welcoming of subsequent newcomers into a dominant culture. The Romans conquered much of their territory through war, but also used many other techniques. They expanded through equal – then less equal – alliances with neighbours, followed by various kinds of treaties, networks, colonies and citizenships. After their victories, they sometimes incorporated defeated communities into the Roman state, and sometimes formed alliances leaving them autonomous except for military contributions. Referring to the aftermath of the 338 BCE Latin War, when Rome assumed dominance in central Italy, historian A.N. Sherwin-White emphasized Rome's willingness to change strategies as needed: "There is nothing haphazard in the

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[441] Mary Beard, "Religion," in *The Cambridge Ancient History* 2nd ed., Vol. IX, edited by J.A. Crook, Andrew Lintott, and Elizabeth Rawson (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 733.

choice of the methods that Rome used; when one principle has exhausted its fertility in one region, it is transplanted to fresh fields, where it can and does flourish anew, its place being taken by some other form of political union whose merits have been well tested elsewhere."[442] For example, after the fourth century BCE, Rome stopped using tribal treaties for groups of city states, applying them only in non-urbanized areas. In urbanized areas, it began using separate treaties, imposing "citizen without a vote" status, and incorporating territories within the Roman state.[443]

But it is in the evolution of different forms of citizenship and belonging that the Romans were particularly inventive. When Rome's expansion had resulted in the creation of citizens first throughout Italy, then all over the Mediterranean, the traditional idea of citizenship as restricted to one's home community virtually had to change. Historian Emma Dench gave a sense of the enormous shift in thinking involved: "At the end of the republic and in the imperial period, Roman citizenship became an increasingly extraordinary conceit within the classical world. For citizenship was traditionally imagined to be first and foremost all about the active participation in the obligations and privileges of one relatively small community, rather than a marker of social and juridical privilege wherever the citizen might travel within the Roman world."[444] No longer was citizenship just about one location; citizens took it with them wherever they went, reflecting the reality of wide-scale travel and movement throughout the empire.

Major changes in the thinking about citizenship came with the end of the Latin War in 338 BCE, which is usually described as a revolt of Rome's Latin neighbours against the dominant position of the Romans in the region.[445] Although it was a local conflict, it was "notable, even revolutionary"[446] because of the arrangements afterwards that gave Roman citizenship to vast numbers of the defeated throughout central Italy.[447]

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[442] Sherwin-White, *Roman Citizenship*, 38.

[443] Sherwin-White, *Roman Citizenship*, 38.

[444] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 94.

[445] Beard, *SPQR*, 158.

[446] Beard, *SPQR*, 158.

[447] Beard, *SPQR*, 158-159.

This was variously interpreted as generosity or oppression – because along with privileges, citizenship brought obligations such as military duty and taxes – but "it was a crucial stage in the changing definition of what it meant to be 'Roman.'"[448] No longer were Roman citizens primarily to be found in the city of Rome. Out of the Latin War settlement also came the creation of the category of *cives sine suffragio* – citizens without the vote – which meant that people had the duties and privileges of citizens but without suffrage. According to historian A.N. Sherwin-White, this was extremely significant because it led to the concept of dual citizenship: the way it developed meant the Romans "were able to conceive the idea that citizenship was not entirely incompatible with membership of another, secondary community."[449] Had there been no *civitas sine suffragio*, he argued, "Rome would perhaps never have acquired the technique for the creation of a political form which ended by embracing the whole world."[450] Dual citizenship, as described by Cicero in his treatise *On The Laws,* means people can have two countries – one in which they originated, and one in which they "have been received," with the strongest affection going to the latter: "For this country it is that we ought to sacrifice our lives; it is to her that we ought to devote ourselves without reserve; and it is for her that we ought to risk all our riches and consecrate all our hopes. But still that land which produced us is not much less dear to us than that which has received us."[451] Dual citizenship figured in another aspect of the Latin War settlement – the large-scale creation "for the first time in Roman history"[452] of the concept of municipalities. These allowed for the idea that people could have dual citizenship – be a citizen of both Rome and a provincial town, and "that a provincial town could enjoy its own local government while at the same time being wholly part of the Roman state."[453] Another aftermath of the Latin War was the innovative concept of Latin rights, which had nothing

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[448] Beard, *SPQR*, 159.

[449] Sherwin-White, *Roman Citizenship*, 57.

[450] Sherwin-White, *Roman Citizenship*, 58.

[451] Cicero, "On the Laws," in *The Treatises of M.T. Cicero*, translated and edited by C.D. Yonge, 429 (London: Henry G. Bohn, n.d.).
https://books.google.ca/books?id=AdAIAAAAQAAJ&pg=PA398&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false

[452] Oakley, "The Early Republic," 25.

[453] Oakley, "The Early Republic," 25.

to do with ethnicity, but rather was a package of rights such as intermarriage with Romans, free movement, and mutual rights to make contracts – a "halfway house"[454] between foreigner and full citizen. By placing colonies with Latin rights all over Italy, the Romans redefined the word Latin so it referred to political status rather than race or geography:[455] "This set the stage for a model of citizenship and belonging that had enormous significance for Roman ideas of government, political rights and nationhood."[456]

Some of these innovations, such as the dual citizenship that is commonplace today, were very successful, but others were less so. The status of citizenship without a vote was sometimes resented, as territories had lost their sovereignty for what they considered second-class status; some rebelled and some pushed for upgrading.[457] By the early second century BCE, full citizenship had been granted to all those who had been citizens without a vote.[458] Nor were the Romans ever able to fully solve the problems created by their innovative idea of giving citizenship to all the citizens of Italy following the 91-89 BCE Social War. This dramatic move had made Italy into the "closest thing to a nation state the classical world ever knew,"[459] and turned the earlier-established principle of dual citizenship into the norm, according to Beard,[460] but it also created headaches. It had increased the number of Roman citizens by about threefold, leading to fierce debate about how they were to be incorporated into a voting system set up to handle the electorate of a fairly small city. In the end, the Romans "never effectively adjusted their traditional political or administrative institutions to manage the new political landscape. There was never any system for registering votes outside Rome, so in

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[454] Beard, *SPQR*, 165.

[455] Beard, *SPQR*, 166.

[456] Beard, *SPQR*, 166.

[457] Oakley, "The Early Republic," 26.

[458] Beard, *SPQR*, 235.

[459] Beard, *SPQR*, 239.

[460] Beard, *SPQR*, 239.

practice only those Italians with the money and time to travel would have taken advantage of their new political clout."[461]

Thus we can see how innovations can create both long-term solutions and difficult problems, but the Romans had little choice but to make many changes regarding citizenship and belonging when they ventured to welcome peoples from all around the Mediterranean into their empire. Through flexibility regarding alliances and their willingness to experiment with different aspects of citizenship, the Romans found ways of transforming a large section of the developed world into a Roman one. Most modern nations won't be trying to find workable ways of bringing vast territories with all their peoples under their control, but the Romans demonstrated the importance of devising inventive new ways of welcoming newcomers. It's an overall lesson that I think applies to migration today as much as it did to welcoming in ancient times.

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[461] Beard, *SPQR*, 240.

Part II.

Ancient lessons in welcoming for the modern world

As discussed in the introduction to this project, Part II will apply lessons, ideas and principles from the Part I exploration of ancient Rome to modern migration issues. I will roughly follow my Part I outline, digging back into the points raised by the myths, and about social mobility, unity and flexibility for what they can tell us about those areas in modern times. As an example of the process I use in Part II, let's look at the message we might glean from the Romans about how modern nation-states can deal with the disruption to their homogeneity caused by the arrival of diverse newcomers. This is a real issue fueling some of the anti-immigration talk in some modern Western nations. Looking to the Romans, we might draw two lessons from them. One would be the inevitability and strength of migration, as illustrated by the founding myths. The other is emperor Claudius' 48 CE advice to the senators who were objecting to the admission of Gauls to the senate: Everything changes, he told them, and these changes can be richly rewarding. So, both of the messages the Romans have for modern nation-states is that they will have to get used to admitting diverse newcomers. But we can look to the Romans yet again for advice on how to make that work. Masters of connectivity themselves, they would tell modern nations to create links between the newcomers and the indigenous. Join people together, they would say, and all will eventually be well. This is an illustration of the process I went through as I considered how the main aspects of Roman welcoming policies might apply to modern migration issues.

Guiding my understanding of the controversies surrounding modern migration for this part of the project were four texts, two of which I consider mainly positive toward migration and two quite critical, containing some controversial ideas. On the positive end of the spectrum were *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World* (2014)*,* written by professors based in Australia, England and the U.S., who tried to present all sides of the issues, but tended to come up with conclusions more sympathetic to migrants than to the comfortable established. Even more sympathetic to migrants was *The New Odyssey: The Story of Europe's Refugee Crisis* (2017) by

journalist Patrick Kingsley, who travelled side by side with many of them during the 2015-2016 migrant crisis when he was the *Guardian* newspaper's first migration correspondent. Less sympathetic to the migrants attempting to move to the developed world were Oxford University professor Paul Collier, author of *Exodus: How Migration is Changing our World* (2015), who specializes in studying the world's poorest countries; and Eric Kaufmann, a professor of politics at the University of London, Birkbeck College. Kaufmann's *Whiteshift: Populism, Immigration, and the Future of White Majorities* (2019), a comprehensive and up-to-date survey of immigration controversies, argued that the demise of white majorities and their fears about immigration are fueling the rise of far-right populism. Because migration is such a timely issue, I also used many articles from daily newspapers as stories have arisen during the time I have been focusing on this project. These modern books and articles provided a lively, ever-changing counterpoint to the ancient Roman material that I focused on in the first part of the project.

One of the important things to remember in applying Roman lessons to modern Western nations is the major differences in the circumstances. The scenario in modern Western countries is that of newcomers arriving voluntarily, either regularly or irregularly, often from poorer countries. Many of the newcomers to Rome were involuntary, and some were from wealthy, well-developed areas. Some went to the city of Rome itself, as slaves or captives as the result of war, joined by large numbers of the free-born poor. However, many of Rome's so-called newcomers never left home; they found themselves Roman subjects when their territories were taken over. All these newcomers were dealt with in various ways, depending on the era and the territory involved. In the highly developed, highly admired cities of the east, as I have said, the Romans tended to allow the locals to continue on much as before, while in the "barbarian" west, they were more emphatic about imposing the Latin language and Roman culture. But even there, their efforts were limited. As I have discussed, the Roman administrative structure was skeletal in the provinces, relying heavily on local elites to deal with the population. While the Romans encouraged the aristocrats to adopt their culture and language – as we have seen in Tacitus' description of Agricola's efforts in Britain –- neither party was much concerned with the rural population as long as they

caused no trouble. In the end, they too were left much on their own, and peasants in large rural swaths of the western and northern empire may have hardly noticed that they had new Roman overlords.[462] Despite these major differences between migration in ancient and modern times, the common theme is relocation, and all the questions that raises. Part II of this paper will search the Roman experience for answers to those questions.

A modern-day lesson about geography from Rome

The link between geography, migration and the destiny of nations was graphically illustrated in 2015, when thousands of migrants landed on the beaches of Greece every day, and the same number every week in the ports of Italy. With only the Mediterranean between terrible conditions at home and the potential of a better life across the water, about 1.8 million people arrived in Europe by sea in the years after 2014, all willing to risk dying to feel the solid earth of a different country under their feet.[463]Like the strangers who showed up to use the river crossing in ancient Rome, they were in a new land because it offered something of value not available in their own. And just as happened two millennia ago, the people of the receiving territory had to make decisions about welcoming the new arrivals. Both the ancient and the modern cases are examples of how the simple accident of geography is tied to migration and how the response to it can significantly affect the future. We have seen how Rome chose to embrace the diversity that resulted from its location, as well as to create a tight, disciplined society that could defend its exposed position, as well as invade others if it chose. We have also noted how Greek cities opted to use their natural isolation to exclude outsiders and close themselves off. Out of those decisions came Rome's continuing expansion and Greece's eventual subjugation within it: One developed an empire, but the other developed a culture that permeated the Mediterranean and still speaks to us today. The choices of each surrounding migration and their geography had significant impacts on their future. In modern times, the 2015-2016 migrant crisis affected many more nations than Greece and

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[462] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 194-195.

[463] Patrick Kingsley, "Migration to Europe is Down Sharply. So Is It Still a 'Crisis'?", The New York Times, June 27, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/06/27/world/europe/europe-migrant-crisis-change.html

Italy, as the migrants who landed on their beaches soon made their way around Europe, looking for nations that would welcome them. Germany accepted about one million of them, while other nations put up fences and walls to keep them out. Italy ended up with about 640,000 of the new arrivals, who were not considered welcome. Elections in 2018 resulted in the formation of an anti-immigrant coalition and the rise of a prominent anti-immigrant minister, Matteo Salvini, who began prohibiting rescue boats with migrants aboard from docking, closed several reception centres and increasingly rejected asylum applications. But the coalition collapsed in the summer of 2019, Salvini lost power, and the new coalition that replaced it was expected to ease up on anti-immigrant strategies. Before the latest turn of events, Matteo Villa of the Institute for International Political Studies, a think tank looking at interior ministry numbers, predicted in February of 2019 that the rules in place at that time could have meant more than 670,000 asylum seekers living irregularly in Italy, as the government didn't have the capacity to deport them.[464]

It is too early to know the effects of the 2015-2016 crisis on any of the European nations that were faced with large numbers of newcomers, but the fact that many of Germany's migrants were well-educated Syrians may eventually be a great boon to that country. Meanwhile, other countries that have seemingly been protected from similar migration challenges because of their geography should not be complacent. For example, Canada's relative isolation has meant it has not had to deal with large numbers of newcomers arriving irregularly. That's changed in the last few years with an estimated 52,000 people entering the country outside official border points from the U.S. Now Canada is having conversations similar to what have occurred in Europe. "We've been sheltered by three oceans and our border to the south," Canadian Immigration Minister Ahmed Hussen said in a Nov. 1, 2018 CBC story.[465] "But as we've seen with growing numbers of asylum seekers crossing irregularly from the United States between ports of

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[464] Lorenzo Tondo, "Italy Rejects Record Number of Asylum Applications: Hardline policies from Italy's right-wing government having devastating effects on migrants," *The Guardian*, Feb. 14, 2019. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/feb/14/italy-rejects-record-number-of-asylum-applications

[465] Kathleen Harris, "Liberals Launch Pro-Immigration Campaign to Calm 'Anxieties' as Conservatives Turn Up Heat: 'We cannot take what we have for granted,' Immigration Minister Ahmed Hussen says of anti-immigration surge," CBC News, Nov. 1, 2018. https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/liberals-hussen-immigration-matters-campaign-1.4887252

entry ... we're starting to see some of the challenges faced by others, although the numbers pale in comparison."[466]

Thus, we can look to ancient Rome for an example of how geography can affect migration, and how the response to newcomers – to welcome or not to welcome? – can affect the future. But I suggest ancient Rome offers no answers about what the response should be – only that whatever it is, it will have long-term effects.

What the myths tell us about the inevitability of migration

The ancient Romans may have been saying many other things in their founding myths, but I think one of their important messages for modern times is that migration is a fundamental aspect of human existence. Why else create founding stories in which outsiders play such prominent roles? Aeneas, the founder of the Roman race, was not even from Italy, but a foreigner from far-away Troy. Romulus, the founder of Rome, came from nearby, but was still a stranger who invited outsiders from everywhere to fill up his new city. We can speculate about what lay behind the use of outsiders as the basis of the founding myths – perhaps it was the idea of bringing fresh new blood to an area, or the ingenuity and resourcefulness of newcomers, or maybe that their desperation or determination made them unusually strong. While there are no definitive interpretations of what may have been meant, I think one message we can take away is that it is unrealistic to oppose migration; our efforts should go toward learning to live with it instead. Through the stories they tell, the myths make more understandable and real the findings of modern migration authors who say we should accept that migration is "a constant, not an aberration, in human history."[467] Migration is not a new phenomenon, nor a crisis to be halted or mitigated: "Population movements have always accompanied demographic growth, economic transformations, technological change, political conflict and warfare,"[468] according to *The Age of Migration* authors. Focused as they were on outsiders, the Roman tales can broaden and deepen our understanding of the kind of

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[466] Harris, "Liberals launch," CBC.

[467] Castles et al., *Age*, 317.

[468] Castles et al., *Age*, 317.

people on the move today, and the forces motivating them. Virgil's hero Aeneas was brave, resourceful and resilient – all qualities that may be necessary for modern migrants fleeing terrible conditions at home and trying to outmanoeuvre barriers put up against them. Aeneas' wandering Trojans were many times driven away from areas where they weren't wanted, as well as battling storms, evading monsters and having their ships wrecked: "[W]here will they end, our backbreaking labours?/ Where can we turn for help from all our toil?"[469] Aeneas cried as the Trojans fled the plague that descended on them in Crete, one of their hoped-for new settlements. In his words, we can hear those of migrants searching for new homes through all the ages. Virgil also captured the homesickness experienced by many migrants in his scene of Aeneas encountering a miniature Troy built by the former king's son, now living in Buthrotum: "I recognize a little Troy/ a miniature, mimicking our great Trojan towers,/and a dried-up brook they call the river Xanthus,/and I put my arms around a cutdown Scaean Gate"[470] Through the tale of Aeneas' wanderings, his eventual landing in Latium and the war he had to fight to be allowed to stay there, Virgil showed us why migration is so powerful and unstoppable in any era. Modern journalists like Patrick Kingsley, who traced the journeys of a number of refugees to Europe at the height of the 2015 migrant crisis, are sometimes able to reach beneath the surface to convey a hint of what Virgil did. When Kingsley asked hundreds of migrants why they were risking death to reach Europe, the most common answer was that there was no other option; they had nothing to lose.[471] A former Syrian army officer facing death threats from his country because he refused to shoot unarmed protesters told Kingsley that people would still take to the sea even if there were threats to bomb their boats "because the individual considers himself dead already. Right now Syrians consider themselves dead."[472] Kingsley was interviewing him in Egypt, where he was living without papers, waiting to make a second attempt to reach Italy by sea. Even economic migrants, often considered to have less right to resettle than those fleeing violence, are

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[469] Virgil, *Aeneid*, 108.

[470] Virgil, *Aeneid,* 115.

[471] Patrick Kingsley, *The New Odyssey: The Story of Europe's Refugee Crisis* (London: Guardian Books, 2016), 294.

[472] Kingsley, *Odyssey*, 129.

desperate enough to risk death. "'You can't escape us immigrants,'"[473] Paul Ohioyah, an economic migrant rescued from near death at sea, told Kingsley. "'We won't stop trying. We won't stop taking risks.'"[474] Kingsley argued that the West is going to have to figure out how to absorb such people, "who genuinely believe it's better to die trying to get to Europe than live in poverty at home. Their desperation will ultimately prove stronger than our isolationism. . . ."[475] As the indigenous populations in the stories of both Aeneas and Romulus found, the newcomers, toughened by their travails and desperation to succeed, were stronger than the established when it came time to do battle. The authors of *The Age of Migration* reiterated that ancient funding: "Neither restrictive measures nor development strategies can stop international migration, because there are such powerful forces stimulating population movement. . . . The world community will have to learn to live with large-scale migration for the foreseeable future."[476]

Ancient lessons in social mobility for modern times

I have earlier described ancient Rome as a place of opportunities for many and how after welcoming newcomers, the ancient Romans often provided pathways toward social mobility. This was manifested in some very practical ways, such as the Romans' willingness to free their slaves and provide training, capital or inheritances that could help them succeed. Besides this practicality, there was an almost magical aspect to social mobility – the idea, as suggested by historian Emma Dench, that people could be transformed almost overnight from one status to another.[477] One of the best illustrations of this was the phenomenon of freed slaves and fantastical tales about their successes, such as Petronius' story of the rich freed slave Trimalchio.[478] But from the perspective of today's liberal Western world, what can the Romans teach us about social mobility for newcomers? Most modern nations offer educational and integration programs that the

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[473] Kingsley, *Odyssey*, 55.

[474] Kingsley, *Odyssey*, 55.

[475] Kingsley, *Odyssey*, 55.

[476] Castles et al., *Age*, 323.

[477] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 144-145.

[478] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 144-145.

Romans could only dream of, had they even thought such things necessary. It's true that the Romans had no official government programs aimed at integrating newcomers. And their society had many elements we would not want to imitate – such as the institution of slavery, the belief in torture, and the lack of sanitation, health care and public education systems. But for all its negatives, there were certain aspects of Roman society that encouraged welcoming, integration and mobility in ways that I think still provide some lessons for our modern world. Rome's high degree of social connectedness, and the way that was achieved, will be the focus of my discussion on what we can learn about welcoming and social mobility from the ancients. But I will begin with a discussion of the first step toward social mobility – welcoming itself, and what the ancient Romans can tell us about that.

What we can learn from the rites of welcoming in ancient Rome

What makes people welcome? Why are some people more welcome than others? How do you go about asking for a welcome? In today's polarized, sensitive climate, these questions may not be at the forefront of discussions about migration. But Rome's founding myths, based as they were on outsiders being welcomed or not welcomed, the reasons behind it, and the consequences, provide insights that I think can help deepen our understanding of the dynamics surrounding modern migration. And when people weren't welcomed, the myths point to some ways of overcoming that.

When Virgil described the newly arrived Aeneas bonding with king Evander over their distant kinship, the poet was making a key point about welcoming that was as true in ancient times as it is today – commonality matters. As I have previously discussed, *The Aeneid* is full of instances where the wandering Aeneas was welcomed because he was a friend, an acquaintance, a relative, or even because of his reputation. The message is that those who have something in common are far more open to each other than those who are very different. This has always been a factor in immigration; it is usual for emigrants from the same countries to create communities together in their new one. Unfortunately, the flip side of this is also true; that where outsiders seem totally foreign and there are no obvious links, welcoming is less likely. I think this is what Virgil was saying when he

had horrible supernatural creatures – like the Harpies and the Cyclops – chase the Trojans away from places where they'd landed or hoped to settle. Similarly, in many modern Western countries, newcomers with different appearances, customs, languages and cultures are less likely to receive a warm welcome than those more similar to the indigenous. "Many people perceive culture mainly in terms of language, religion and values, and see non-European migrants as very different,"[479] according to *The Age of Migration* authors. "Migrant languages, religions and cultures become symbols of otherness and markers for discrimination, as shown particularly by the growth in hostility to Islam and its visible symbols – such as women's clothing."[480] The point is underlined by the fact that newcomers who are culturally and socio-economically similar to the majority of the receiving population, such as British settlers in Australia, or Austrians in Germany, often merge into the general population more quickly than those with very different backgrounds. [481]

But the lack of familiarity can be overcome, and the Romans were expert at facilitating that. In both real life and in the myths, they found ways of welcoming newcomers by creating conditions that gave them something in common with the established, or created links between them. In the Aeneas myth, for example, the Trojans gave up their name and culture so they would share a common culture and language with the Latins. In the founding tale of the city of Rome, which involved people with no common connections or knowledge of each other arriving at Romulus' asylum, Romulus took steps to overcome that lack of familiarity. He created the patron-client system, which existed in the real world as well, to establish links between the newcomers and more senior members of the new community. The message we can take away from the Romans is that while we may be more inclined to welcome people who look and behave like us, there are ways of bridging the gap and welcoming the unfamiliar too.

I discussed earlier how the myths showed that welcoming can be a delicate dance between involved parties, almost a negotiation, because it balances the needs, wants and

[479] Castles et al., *Age*, 283.

[480] Castles et al., *Age*, 291.

[481] Castles et al., *Age*, 282.

possible contributions of newcomers and the potential risks and benefits to the established. This was illustrated by the polite and modest behaviour of the wandering Trojans as they sought shelter or help during their journey. Besides their demeanour, they were helped by their familiarity with their hosts, and the fact that their hosts had something practical to gain from granting their requests. In the case of the fugitives to Romulus' asylum, there was no familiarity and the newcomers were unknown quantities because they came from everywhere. However, they had leverage because they were needed to populate the new city; in return, Romulus offered them land, citizenship and created the patron-client system to integrate them into the new city. I suggest that viewing the process of welcoming as a balancing act, as illustrated by the Romans, will help us understand some of the negativity surrounding modern irregular immigration. The argument can always be made that people fleeing for their lives are entitled to seek shelter elsewhere, and indeed, they have the right under international treaties to do so. But when large numbers of people show up outside the regular immigration process, established populations get nervous. This was the response during the 2015-2016 migrant crisis in Europe, and what has happened more recently in Canada with the border-crossers from the U.S. The newcomers may well meet international qualifications as refugees, and they may actually be needed in the labour force of recipient countries. But I suggest the outcry that arose was not just because the indigenous feared the impact of the new arrivals, but also because the delicate balance of the welcoming process had been upset. At polarized times like these, I think the Roman tales can help us understand what may lie behind the hostility directed at newcomers who stray from the usual paths.

Why we need Rome's lesson: our disconnected societies

If we look at the underpinnings of Western societies, which are based on individualism rather than the community, opposite to Rome's philosophy, we get a hint as to why we might be less welcoming to newcomers. Modern liberal societies have nothing like the connections celebrated by historian C. Nicolet in his portrayal of Roman citizens deeply involved with each other and their society. His description of "thousands

and sometimes tens of thousands of people"[482] travelling to Rome for a packed calendar of social and political events, and political life flowing through society "like a bloodstream"[483] is probably over the top, but it paints a vastly different picture than exists in most modern Western societies. The rise of the gig economy, the loss of traditional workplaces, increased automation and online shopping have all reduced social connections in the physical world, however much they have risen in the virtual one. Instead of social media encouraging broad discussions among a wide range of people, it seems to have increased isolation, with the like-minded sticking together and becoming more polarized and extreme. These changes have been accompanied by a rise in disconnection and loneliness in Western societies, as documented in numerous news reports, articles and books on the topic. In March of 2019, Statistics Canada reported that the number of Canadians living alone has more than doubled in the past 35 years, making single-person households the most common type.[484]

A recent Angus Reid Institute survey found that nearly half of Canadians sometimes or often feel alone, according to an Aug. 10, 2019 *National Post* story by Sharon Kirkey.[485]And according to a 2018 poll of 20,000 Americans, nearly half said they lack companionship or meaningful relationships, Kirkey wrote. Looking even further afield, around one-third of people in industrialized countries report feeling lonely, one in 12 severely so, and the proportions are increasing, according to Kirkey's summary of a 2018 article in *The Lancet* by American researcher and neuroscientist Stephanie Cacioppo and her late husband John Cacioppo.[486] In January of 2018 in Britain, then-Prime Minister Theresa May appointed a minister for loneliness, following up on a 2017 report that more than nine million people in the country often or always feel lonely. "For

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[482] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 389.

[483] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 389.

[484] Brandie Weikle, "More Canadians Live Alone Than Ever Before: StatsCan report: Single-person households have more than doubled in the past 35 years," CBC News, March 6, 2019. https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/canadians-living-alone-single-statistics-canada-1.5045116

[485] Sharon Kirkey, "Researchers Are Working on a Pill for Loneliness, as Studies Suggest the Condition is Worse Than Obesity: For some, the idea is just another sign of the creeping medicalization of everyday human woes: Is it really the best we can do to fix the loneliness 'epidemic'?", *National Post*, Aug. 12, 2019. https://nationalpost.com/health/all-the-lonely-people

[486] Kirkey, "Researchers," *National Post*.

far too many people, loneliness is the sad reality of modern life," May said in a statement reported by the *New York Times*.[487] Government research found that about 200,000 older people in Britain had not had a conversation with a friend or relative in more than a month. In our corner of the world, ever since 2012, the Vancouver Foundation has been sounding the alarm about loneliness, lack of connections and declining community participation in Metro Vancouver.[488] And in Toronto, author Maria Coletta McLean used an April 24, 2019 *Globe and Mail* opinion piece[489] to describe the lack of real-world interactions in a society dominated by automation and the internet. Seeking connections one day, she realized that people don't phone each other much anymore. Turning to Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp, she found only unsatisfying emojis, thumbs up and the briefest comments. Out in the real world, grocery-store, coffee-shop and library patrons were all on their phones. Clerks and cashiers proffered payment machines, but virtually no personal interaction. At her bank branch, teller counters were being torn out for more ATMs. At the new local Japanese restaurant, ordering and paying was through an iPad at the table; the hostess and server were polite but silent. "No one approaches to ask if everything's all right, if I need more water, if I'm enjoying the food, ready for the bill. I check the iPad. It tells me where to tap for the bill, for the credit card machine: debit or credit? More bowing. Silence accompanies me as I leave the restaurant."[490]

How much of today's loneliness is due to social media is a matter of contention, according to those quoted in Kirkey's article. Susan Matt and Luke Fernandez, authors of *Bored, Lonely, Angry, Stupid: Changing Feelings about Technology, from the Telegraph to Twitter*, argued that modern technologies "have raised hopes for constant sociability while making us seriously paranoid about being lonely."[491] The authors read diaries,

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[487] Ceylan Yeginsu, "U.K. Appoints a Minister for Loneliness," *The New York Times*, Jan. 17, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/17/world/europe/uk-britain-loneliness.html

[488] Vancouver Foundation, *Connect & Engage: A Survey of Metro Vancouver, 2017,* https://www.vancouverfoundation.ca/connectandengage/key-findings

[489] Maria Coletta McLean, "I'm Feeling Lonely in this Hyper-Connected World," *The Globe and Mail*, April 24, 2019. https://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/first-person/article-im-feeling-lonely-in-this-hyper-connected-world/

[490] McLean, "Feeling Lonely," *Globe and Mail*.

[491] Kirkey, "Researchers," *National Post*.

letters and memoirs from nineteenth and twentieth century Americans, and concluded that by contrast, people today are surprised to be lonely and worry about it more.[492] Kirkey wrote that Dr. Allen Frances, a professor emeritus at Duke University and one of the world's foremost psychiatrists, said internet social networking helps some find a place of virtual belonging, but online relationships provide only the shadow of real ones. "They can be a life raft for those who have nothing else. But they can also be an anchor that drags people into even more isolation."[493]

Kirkey's article pointed to other factors in modern life that make people feel more isolated, such as the mobility of the population resulting from the need to move for jobs. She reported that neuroscientist and author Dean Burnett said the result is there are fewer communities where everyone knows what their role is and who their neighbours are.[494] And Kirkey noted that cultural historian Fay Bound Alberti argued in her new book, *A Biography of Loneliness: The History of An Emotion*, that loneliness is a product of neoliberal individualism.[495] Her argument, as summarized by Kirkey, is that individualism and nationalism took away the safety blanket that meant we automatically 'belonged' to some sense of community, whether that was good or bad: "At its extreme, individualism states that we are not only disconnected from others, but in competition with them,'" Kirkey quoted Bound Alberti as saying.[496]

Poet Rachel Rose caught another angle of the disconnections inherent in Western society in a poem, "Cooking Lesson: Kebbeh," about two recent refugee arrivals from Syria teaching Westerners how to cook a Syrian dish.[497] The poem was included in an anthology edited by Rose called *Sustenance: Writers from BC and Beyond on the Subject of Food* that linked immigration and food. Rose, Vancouver's poet laureate in 2017,

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[492] Kirkey, "Researchers," *National Post*.

[493] Kirkey, "Researchers," *National Post*.

[494] Kirkey, "Researchers," *National Post*.

[495] Kirkey, "Researchers," *National Post*.

[496] Kirkey, "Researchers," *National Post*.

[497] Rachel Rose, "'All of Us Have Something to Say About Food,'" *The Tyee*, Nov. 29, 2017. https://thetyee.ca/Culture/2017/11/29/All-of-Us-Have-Something-to-Say-About-Food/

included the poem in a November 2017 article in the online *Tyee*[498] about the anthology, which she called her effort to build an inclusive table instead of excluding walls. The poem portrayed newcomers not just in a different world, but in a far more disconnected one than they were accustomed to. (In the following extract, the words of the refugees are in italic; Rose's are in plain typeface):

> *We used to cook all together. When we made Makoubeh,*
>
> *we turned it over with many hands. Now we cook alone.*
>
> Yes, now you cook like Canadian women, each in her lonely kitchen.
>
> *Yes, like that. We lost everything.*[499]

These voices portray a lonely, isolated society – obvious especially to newcomers from a more communal world – that seems less likely to be welcoming to newcomers than a more engaged, connected one. No doubt there are many engaged, connected people in the modern West, just as there were lonely, isolated ones in ancient times. Juvenal's Umbricius, for example, described how a poverty-struck acquaintance who lost his few possessions in a fire apparently had no friends to help: ". . .no one will offer him lodging/Or shelter, not even stand him a decent meal. . ."[500] But I suggest that overall, the fact that Roman society placed such emphasis on the community, with its veneration of the *res publica* – which I am using here in the sense of "the common good"[501] – and its prioritizing of the community over the individual, produced a more connected society than modern ones that emphasize individualism and place less priority on the community.

What the streets and baths of Rome can tell the modern world

This may be a good place to consider how the physical cities of the modern West encourage social interactions – or not – compared to the city of ancient Rome. With its discomforts and its grandeur seeming to force connections between people, as I have previously discussed, Rome may have been a place where our Toronto column-writer

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[498] Rose, "Food," *Tyee*.

[499] Rose, "Food," *Tyee*.

[500] Juvenal, "Satire 3," 94.

[501] Flower, "Introduction," 2.

McLean would have had an easier time finding someone to talk to. Whether she was forced out of her austere lodgings to find something to eat, or drawn out by the attractions of the chariot races, she would have been in the midst of people engaged in similar activities, none of whom would be on cellphones. Living conditions for most in the modern West are far more comfortable than for the majority in ancient Rome, but combined with technology and the emphasis on individualism, they have helped empty the public sphere of human connections. If even well-connected, well-established people like McLean, author of two books and an English professor in a big city, feel isolated, imagine how much more difficult it must be for migrants, especially those separated from their families. Lack of connections to the surrounding society must hamper integration and social mobility, as well as make newcomers feel extremely lonely.

Ancient Rome gives us a chance to look at how the attitudes of a different kind of society shaped an urban landscape. Along with its emphasis on the common good, and the duties of the elite to contribute to that common good, Roman society championed religion, traditions and history. The result was a city that looked very different from those of the modern West, especially recently built ones. Since the ancients strongly believed that the gods shaped their fortunes, their city reflected that. Temples built by generals to honour the deities that had helped them win their victories lined the processional route for triumphal parades, appropriately named The Sacred Way. Romans' deep connection to history and traditions was evident in the many statues honouring incidents and people from the past, many placed in the spot where those incidents allegedly took place. For example, a fifth- or fourth-century BCE bronze casting of a she-wolf representing the one that legendarily suckled Romulus and Remus once sat at the Lupercal cave: "At the Lupercal cave, under the original fig tree, the Lupa (wolf) brought you into history on the spot where it transpired."[502] The importance of the citizens of Rome was illustrated in the many public facilities, such as marketplaces, forums, baths, parks, and places of entertainment such as the Coliseum and the Circus Maximus. In line with the belief that the elite had a duty to further the common good, many of these facilities – religious and otherwise – were built by nobles, and later, by emperors. There was a sense of openness

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[502] Kuttner, "Roman Art," 302.

to the public – anyone could attend the speeches and court cases in the Forum; the doors of noble houses were traditionally left open, and aristocrats hosted the previously mentioned morning salutations in their atriums to greet their clients. The streets themselves reflected Roman society's great emphasis on spectacle: "The topography of the city developed partly in response to increasingly elaborate shows and parades and served as a kind of theatrical stage for these performances."[503] Thus we can see how the city was a physical manifestation of Roman society, reflecting its priorities, attitudes and beliefs. While none of these aspects of the city could be described as specifically aimed at welcoming newcomers, my argument is that this welcoming attitude was embedded in the society as a whole, aided by the many ways of connecting through public arenas, noble houses, spectacles, art, and religion.

What can the streets and buildings of ancient Rome teach us about welcoming in modern times? I think that in fully embodying the essentials of its society, the physical city of Rome can serve as a model for us in examining how our modern-day cities reflect our societies. Since this project is about welcoming, we would look at how – or if – our cities reflect our society's attitude toward newcomers. What kinds of streetscapes, buildings and neighbourhoods does our society promote? Do they feel welcoming and connecting, or cold and alienating? Do they make it easy to connect with others, or encourage people to keep to themselves? How would they appear to newcomers? Are there local traditions, such as the evening strolls featured in some European cities, or street festivals or car-free days that encourage interactions? Every city and every society is different, so we cannot pretend that we should look to ancient Rome as a solution to the problems of loneliness and disconnection in our times. But Rome does give us an example of how a city reflects its society, and we can use it to ask some questions about what our own cities say about ours, and what they in turn say to newcomers.

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[503] Flower, "Spectacle," 323.

A Roman model of friendship for a modern world

The Romans understood – in a way that I would argue we don't – the important role connections play in integrating new arrivals into a society. Livy illustrated this in his *History* when he made it one of the first things Romulus addressed after filling up his city with outsiders. The resulting patron-client system, which connected the newcomers to well-established citizens, formed the backbone of the Roman social system for centuries thereafter. Such a system – voluntary but regulated, potentially abusive but possibly helpful, unbalanced but reciprocal – might seem strange in modern eyes. But because of its longevity and its role of connecting newcomers and society, I think it deserves a look from a modern perspective. Included in what may have originally been a system for ensuring the lowly stayed subservient and the elite dominant may be some ideas worth thinking about today. What would happen, for example, if we plucked the best elements out of the patronage system and created one for modern times? We could start by renaming it a "friendship" system to avoid the patronizing aspect of "patron-client" and more accurately reflect its intentions. I imagine it as a voluntary society-wide system enabling every newcomer to choose a mentor who would then help him or her settle into the host society. Its key feature would be its extensiveness; like the Roman patronage system, it would be a major pillar of society – well-known, well-publicized, with widespread participation at all social levels. Another important element we could borrow from the Romans is the concept of reciprocity, which tends not to be thought about much these days. But I think the idea that both parties have something of value to offer in a relationship adds dignity and balance to what might otherwise be seen as a one-sided, charitable endeavour. In Rome, we saw how clients' dignity evaporated when the end of the republic removed their leverage as voters. If we were paralleling the Roman system, we'd ask that mentors have some standing in the business, educational or legal world so they could help newcomers through bureaucratic hurdles, but in reality any well-meaning person with reasonable knowledge would do. The point is that they would have the capacity to be useful in helping people get established in a new society. The newcomers would in turn offer something to the mentors – perhaps lessons in their language or culture or even skills from their previous lives. Maybe the "return" would be a pledge to learn the language of the new country well enough so the two could have meaningful

conversations. Another valuable aspect of the system would be its one-to-one quality, giving both parties a chance to see the other as individuals, even though they may be from very different worlds. Such relationships would increase the chance of each learning about the other's culture, surely a positive thing in a society where people of many different backgrounds must learn to get along. At a time of rising isolation and loneliness, with smaller and split-apart families common in the modern Western world, one potential scenario is for kinship-like relationships that could be passed down to the next generation. In the ancient world, Dionysius of Halicarnassus described patron-client relationships as continuing for many generations, "differing in no wise from the ties of blood relationship and being handed down to their children's children."[504] Many aspects of the Roman system would have to be reworked for modern times. While it forbade patrons from charging their clients for their services, which seemed to be mainly representing them in court, it seemed to expect clients to assist their patrons financially in many ways, for example by helping them pay fines and ransoms.[505] I suggest any modern system should ban all financial transactions between the parties, as well as ensure that the relationship is strictly voluntary, with both sides able to end it at any time. To avoid exploitation and abuse, it would have to be strictly regulated, which would require regular oversight and a source of stable funding. Rome's system was also regulated, but the rules appear strange to modern eyes. Certain violations, such as patrons and clients accusing each other in lawsuits, or testifying or voting against each other were deemed worthy of the death penalty,[506] while it wasn't considered wrong for patrons seeking office to extract votes and a show of support in return for whatever help they gave their clients.

The system I have envisaged may seem idealistic in our busy, individualistic world, but it is interesting to imagine how it could break down barriers, reduce resentments, help newcomers to flourish and assist the indigenous in feeling more comfortable with their changing society. Rome's patron-client system may have had

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504 Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.10.4.

505 Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.10.1.

506 Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities*, 2.10.3.

some problematic aspects, but I think it also illustrated that the Romans understood the importance of linking newcomers with the indigenous, in the interests of both sides.

Current models of mentorship

Although the patronage system no longer operates in Italy, the purpose it once fulfilled in welcoming newcomers can be seen from the fact that small organizations – in Italy and elsewhere – continue to work toward some of its old goals. These migrant assistance and advocacy groups, some with government funding and some mainly volunteer, try to connect newcomers with the community and open up pathways for them to succeed in their new world. Their efforts are restricted by their size and funding; unlike the old patron-client system, they are not part of the structure of society. I will discuss a few of these efforts as a way of illustrating the kind of needs once fulfilled by the patronage system that I suggest should now be served in a much more extensive, organized way.

One of the modern-day efforts to connect newcomers with the larger society and help them succeed takes place at the end of a cul-de-sac in the ivy-draped Trastevere area of Rome. The Sant'Egidio language school, part of the larger Community of Sant'Egidio, offers free Italian language courses seven days a week, open to all. It also teaches newcomers about Italy's culture, food, history and music as part of its overall goal of helping them to integrate into Italian society. It was set up in 1982 after the 1979 murder of a Somali man in Rome because it was clear a strong commitment to integration was needed "not only to react to racism, but also to get the best from the presence of 'new Europeans' in our countries," according to the Sant'Egidio website.[507] Thus, the group understood, as the ancient Romans did, the importance of connecting newcomers with the larger society, which in turn would allow them to thrive in it. The importance of making connections – even with fellow students – seems to be an important aspect of the school's philosophy. Graduates are encouraged to return as volunteers, helping the next round of migrants find their way, Community of Sant'Egidio worker Monica Attias said in an

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[507] Sant'Egidio Language School, "Sant'Egidio School of Language and Culture." archive.santegidio.org/pageID/39/langID/en/Sant-Egidio-Language-School.html

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April, 2018 interview at the school. "So it's like being part of a movement, a big family," she said. "But it's also a place where they learn to commit to help others. This is very important." Outside the school compound, the Community of Sant'Egidio finds other ways to integrate newcomers into a sometimes-resistant world. Attias has transformation stories reminiscent of the ancient Romans' concept that people can change overnight. She described how many seniors in the community had picked up fears of African migrants from the media: "'Oh, the blacks are coming!'" But the strangeness disappeared and relationships sprang up when the seniors were paired with young Nigerian women migrants – all victims of human trafficking – to teach them traditional Italian household arts. "And now wonderful friendships have started. And so the prejudice, the fear, has been overcome by a simple being together." She also recalled the relationship that developed between a Lampedusa fisherman and the young Eritrean man he rescued (by hooking him through a belt loop) from a 2013 shipwreck in which 300 migrants drowned. When the young man got out of hospital, Sant'Egidio workers took him to meet his rescuer. Attias said the fisherman's greeting was: "'This is my new son.'" And now, she said, the young man "regards him as a father really because it's a new life." But the community isn't always so welcoming, she said sadly, recounting several recent incidents of migrants being shot in Italy, apparently targeted for their skin colour alone.

Another effort to connect newcomers with their new country is in Denmark, which saw a surge of anti-immigrant sentiment after the refugee crisis of 2015. A Sept. 5, 2016 story in *The New York Times*[508] cataloguing the problems there also included a section about the thousands of Danes trying to help the newcomers settle in. Participating in Facebook groups called Venligboerne, or Kind Citizens, they volunteer a certain amount of time each month to help immigrants, and ease them into the Danish culture. One of them is Karin Anderson, a 62-year-old retired teacher, who spends several days each month with a Syrian family. She told the *New York Times* that Danes are very concerned about losing their culture, "but how many help the ones who want to be part of

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[508] David Zucchino, "'I've Become a Racist': Migrant Wave Unleashes Danish Tensions Over Identity: The thousands of Muslim asylum seekers pouring into Denmark have spawns a backlash, and questions over whether the country has a latent racial hostility at its core," *The New York Times*, Sept. 5, 2016. https://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/06/world/europe/denmark-migrants-refugees-racism.html

it?"[509] In Vancouver, the Immigrant Services Society of B.C. runs a small-scale version of the kind of friendship system I proposed earlier. The Community Connections program matches newcomers with volunteers, who commit to spending four to six hours a week for four to six months acquainting the newcomers with aspects of Canadian life, ranging from trips to the library and local amenities to sharing meals. Immigrant Services Society of B.C. settlement services director Chris Friesen said in a March 2018 interview in Vancouver that the program enlarges newcomers' support networks and gives them access to a navigator, a helpline. "The results are a greater feeling of acceptance, integration, welcoming, inclusion, greater social and professional networks, especially for those who have no pre-existing family or friends. For mentors, it's a chance to better understand "that a stranger is the same as you and me, wants the same things." It also promotes a civil society "because we will be less likely to make judgments about X, Y, Z if we have a better understanding of who X, Y, Z is through experience that brings together individuals or families." Another, more committed version of this is Canada's community-based refugee sponsorship model, now being promoted around the world. Through it, individuals, communities and organizations partner with governments to settle and integrate refugees, with sponsors providing financial, emotional and integration support. The experience is transformational, "as powerful bonds between sponsors and refugees are established, and positive attitudes towards refugees are fostered," according to a joint statement of support by ministers from Canada, the U.K., Ireland, Argentina, Spain and New Zealand. "Sponsors frequently comment that this is the most meaningful activity they have ever been a part of."[510] The joint statement in support of the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative was issued in London in July, 2018. The model is being used in Italy as part of the Humanitarian Corridors project which involves both the Community of Sant'Egidio and the Federation of Evangelical Churches in Italy. The groups are allowed to bring asylum seekers directly from Lebanon to Italy, where community members house and support them and help them integrate. The Community

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[509] Zucchino, "Racist," *New York Times*.

[510] Joint statement by ministers from Canada, the U.K., Ireland, Argentina, Spain and New Zealand in support of the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative, (London, U.K., July 16, 2018). http://refugeesponsorship.org/_uploads/5b4ca01e5c883.pdf

of Sant'Egidio's Attias said the program has brought forth tremendous goodwill, even in the country's populist north. "Many families have opened the doors of their own house as well as giving for free small apartments that they do not rent," she said in an interview. "Entire communities in small towns have been reconstructed, the cohesion of the community has been reconstructed, around the presence of one, two, three, Syrian families."

These efforts differ from the ancient Roman patronage system in that they are small-scale rather than system-wide, and involve specific groups instead of most of the population. They do not necessarily involve one-on-one long-term relationships, and they do not ask for reciprocity – although Attias did say that school graduates are encouraged to return as volunteers to help other newcomers. But they are interesting to us because they perform some of the work done by the patronage system in ancient times, and emphasize that such work is an important part of welcoming newcomers. It's an indication that the Romans understood what it took to welcome people, and a message to us to pay attention.

What modern societies can learn from ancient conflicts over welcoming

What can ancient Rome's long experience with welcoming – and not-welcoming – teach us about the growing hostility toward migrants in modern times? I suggest it provides a historical perspective on an issue that appears to have been as true in ancient times as it is today – that a common reaction to the arrival of strangers is suspicion and fear. I think it is helpful to know that the negative responses we're seeing today are similar to those of our ancestors – we have not become "worse" people over the millennia. This section will look at the similarities in the reasons for this response in ancient and modern times, as I think it is helpful to understand what triggers such inhospitable reactions. It will also provide some examples of how non-welcoming manifests itself in modern societies, which will be useful throughout the rest of this project as it pursues solutions to this kind of negativity. One of the main lessons we can

take away from the Romans is that there are ways of overcoming the usual response to strangers: fear and suspicion do not have to guide our policies for welcoming newcomers.

If we compare modern negativity toward migration with the literary and historical examples I gave earlier of Roman opposition to newcomers, similar themes emerge. People who have certain expectations and privileges don't want strangers snatching them away. In *The Aeneid*, Turnus, who was to marry the Latin king's daughter Lavinia, was infuriated that the newcomer Aeneas was to marry her instead. In Livy's *History*, Romulus' neighbours were suspicious of his new city, fearing its impact on their own. Umbricius in Juvenal's *Satire 3* was angry about rich newcomers taking away the privileges traditionally accorded the native-born. The farmers in Virgil's *Eclogues* were complaining about being ousted from their confiscated land by "godless" soldiers, strangers and barbarians. There is also the instance of the consul C. Fannius in 122 BCE arguing that citizens would be crowded out of gatherings in their own city if the Latins were given citizenship. And in 48 CE, senators warned the emperor Claudius that people like themselves would be crowded out if he insisted on admitting Gauls to the senate. Sometimes the hostility to newcomers seemed to be more about fear of change to the status quo rather than fear of personal losses. That would explain the objections to the "new man" Cicero, who climbed to the consulship despite the negative jibes of the established Roman nobles. Similarly, Caesar's efforts to get provincials into the senate led to jokes about out-of-towners not knowing about togas, Latin or how to find the senate, all ways of saying that people from different cultures and backgrounds did not belong in power in Rome.[511] And aside from the personal affronts he was facing, Umbricius was also railing at changes to the status quo – how newcomers had altered his beloved city physically and culturally, with their strange costumes and outlandish behaviour, the desecration of a once-revered grotto, and the sacrifice of Rome's ancient morals and principles to the new rule of wealth.

Migration scholars point to similar themes behind the hostility to migration today. People fear losing some advantage they thought was theirs, and they fear changes to the

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[511] Syme, *Revolution*, 79.

status quo. They worry that newcomers from different societies and cultures will "fundamentally change the social, cultural, economic and political fabric of societies, particularly in the longer run,"[512] according to *The Age of Migration*. Nor are those idle concerns: "Quite literally, international migration has changed the face of societies."[513] Ethnic and cultural diversity has increased, for example, raising dilemmas about how to respond to the changes.[514] Many young people of immigrant background "are protesting against their feeling of being excluded from the societies in which they had grown up (and often been born)."[515] And some politicians and elements of the media "claim that immigrants are failing to integrate, deliberately maintain distinct cultures and religions, and have become a threat to security and social cohesion."[516] Thus we can see how migration has aroused fears and antagonism to change among the indigenous, and how young people of immigrant background are being affected by those fears.

On a worldwide scale, the fallout from the fear of change has been making headlines for the last few years. *The Age of Migration* was published before the Brexit referendum and the election of U.S. President Donald Trump, both 2016 phenomena frequently attributed to migration issues. But even before that, the authors saw migration concerns being reflected "in the rise of extreme right-wing, anti-immigrant and anti-Islam parties and a subsequent move to the right of the entire political spectrum on migration and diversity issues."[517] In its most extreme form, migration-related fury has led to mass killings. In March 2019, attacks on Muslim worshippers in two New Zealand mosques killed 51 people, resulting in charges against an Australian white supremacist. Eight years earlier, 77 people were killed in Norway when a man attacked a youth camp of the

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[512] Castles et al., *Age*, 1.

[513] Castles et al., *Age*, 3.

[514] Castles et al., *Age*, 3-4.

[515] Castles et al., *Age*, 4.

[516] Castles et al., *Age*, 4.

[517] Castles et al., *Age*, 1.

Norwegian Labour Party to protest what he saw as the party's deconstruction of Norwegian culture and the mass importation of Muslims.[518]

Migration author Eric Kaufmann focused on white-majority fears about the impact of migration on the status quo in his 2019 book *Whiteshift.* White concerns about their declining numbers in many Western nations is fueling the rapid rise of the populist right, he argued. Whites are already a minority in most major North American cities; North America and New Zealand are both projected to be 'majority minority' by 2050, and Western Europe and Australia will reach that situation later in the century, [519] he wrote: "This shift is replacing the self-confidence of white majorities with an existential insecurity channeled by the lightning rod of immigration. No one who has honestly analyzed survey data on individuals . . .can deny that white majority concern over immigration is the main cause of the rise of the populist right in the West."[520] As described by Kaufmann and fellow U.K. migration scholar Paul Collier, the anger of the once-dominant groups is not just about losing their position as a majority, but that they feel they are being asked to smother their own cultural traditions while supporting and celebrating those of others. Collier contended that certain models of migration, such as permanent cultural separation, leave the indigenous with no role: The dominant message to them is 'don't be racist, 'make way,' and 'learn to celebrate other cultures,' which Collier described as belittling and a potential reason for the indigenous to 'hunker down.'[521] Kaufmann's solution is to shift the status quo so whites are considered ethnic groups, just like minorities. All would be considered separate from the nation-state and free to celebrate their own traditions: "We need a new 'cultural contract' in which everyone gets to have a secure, culturally rich ethnic identity as well as a thin, culturally neutral and future-oriented national identity."[522] Once secure in its identity, the majority

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[518] Castles et al., *Age*, 1-2.

[519] Eric Kaufmann, *Whiteshift: Populism, Immigration, and the Future of White Majorities* (New York, NY: Abrams Press, 2019), 2.

[520] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 2.

[521] Paul Collier, *Exodus: How Migration is Changing Our World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 243.

[522] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 535.

group – which Kaufmann foresaw as being a "beige" group due to the increased blending of whites and visible minorities – would be more likely to seek social cohesion. "Sometimes majorities are more willing to sacrifice parochial ethnic concerns for the benefit of the whole, though this is less the case when they feel insecure. In addition, national cohesion is often a by-product of confident ethnic majorities, who often feel an automatic connection to the state."[523] In these authors' comments, we can see how migration has stoked anger about changes to the status quo and the loss of once-established positions for dominant groups in Western countries.

Fears that the arrival of newcomers from other cultures will change the status quo have affected even countries with progressive traditions like Denmark and Sweden. The arrival in Denmark of 36,000 mostly Muslim asylum seekers in 2015 and 2016 was a tiny number in a nation of 5.7 million, especially compared to the one million absorbed into Germany or the 163,000 absorbed into Sweden in 2015, but was still a shock in a place where 88 percent of the population is native-born, according to the earlier-mentioned *New York Times* story about the Danish response to migration.[524] The shock was enough to make Johnny Christensen, a 65-year-old retired Danish bank employee, tell the paper: "'I've become a racist.'"[525] He contended he had always considered himself welcoming to migrants and sympathetic to people fleeing war, but had come to fear the newcomers were draining the welfare system while failing to adapt to Danish customs.[526]"'Just kick them out,'" he said. "'These Muslims want to keep their own culture, but we have our own rules here and everyone must follow them.'"[527]The story noted that Denmark's centre-right government had backed harsh measures targeting migrants, that hate speech had spiked and that the anti-immigrant Danish People's Party had become the second largest in Parliament.[528] The story also quoted historian Bo Lidegaard as stating that many Danes feel strongly that they are now a multiethnic society and must realize it "'but

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[523] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 536.

[524] Zucchino, "Racist," *New York Times.*

[525] Zucchino, "Racist," *New York Times.*

[526] Zucchino, "Racist," *New York Times.*

[527] Zucchino, "Racist," *New York Times.*

[528] Zucchino, "Racist," *New York Times.*

we are not and should never become a multicultural society.'"[529]Denmark's unwelcoming attitude continued into 2018, when the government announced plans to house unwelcome foreigners on an isolated island that researches contagious animal diseases.[530] A ban on face coverings, called the "the burqa ban" was introduced, and there were plans for legislation requiring handshakes during citizenship ceremonies, although some Muslims said they cannot shake hands with those of the opposite sex.[531]

In September of 2018, Swedish voters added their country to the list of European nations – including Italy, Germany and Austria – where populist and anti-migrant parties had made significant political gains since 2015. The far-right Sweden Democrats came only third, but increased their vote to 17.6 percent, up from 13 percent in 2014, reflecting the population's concerns about integrating large numbers of newcomers, many of them Muslims from Africa and the Middle East.[532] According to an Associated Press report, it was a reflection of how old taboos are collapsing: "Only a few short years ago, Swedes would be shunned as racist for suggesting the country had limits on how many migrants it should take, or for expressing the view that it is hard to integrate Africans and Arabs. But people increasingly are expressing such ideas more freely,"[533] the story stated. Sweden, with a population of 10 million, took in a record 163,000 migrants in 2015, the highest per capita of any European country, following the earlier arrival of hundreds of thousands of asylum seekers.[534] Lund University Professor Anders Sannerstedt, whose research focuses on the Sweden Democrats, told *The Globe and Mail* that the party reflects the views of about half of Swedish residents, who want a more restrictive immigration

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[529] Zucchino, "Racist," *New York Times.*

[530] Martin Selsoe Sorensen, "Denmark Plans to Isolate Unwanted Migrants on a Small Island," The New York Times, Dec. 3, 2018. https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/03/world/europe/denmark-migrants-island.html

[531] Sorensen, "Denmark," *New York Times*.

[532] Pietro Decristofaro and Jeff Schaeffer, Associated Press, "Sweden Joins Europe's Move to Right Over Migration Backlash: Sweden has become the latest European country to have its political order shaken by a backlash against large-scale immigration, with voters giving a boost to a far-right party and weakening the more established ones," *US News and World Report*, Sept. 10, 2018. https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2018-09-09/sweden-votes-in-election-amid-heated-debate-on-immigration

[533] Decristofaro, "Sweden," *US News and World Report.*

[534] Decristofaro, "Sweden," *US News and World Report.*

policy. People worry about the cost of the refugees "and that refugees from other parts of the world represent a culture that is very different from the Swedish one, for instance when it comes to our view of gender equality."[535]

The fears about migrants aren't restricted to their culture. On the economic front, as *The Age of Migration* put it in an earlier-cited quote, the frightening image in developed countries is of masses of people flowing in from the poorer ones, "taking away jobs, pushing up housing prices and overloading social services."[536] Such fears are "empirically unjustified,"[537] but migrants are an obvious target when people's lives are changing in an unpredictable way, due to global restructuring, the rise of neoliberalism, the loss of old-fashioned blue-collar jobs and the 2008 global economic crisis,[538] according to the authors: "For many people, immigration is the most concrete manifestation of rather intangible processes such as globalization and neoliberal economic policies."[539] Migration scholars agreed that in fact, immigration has a minimal effect on wages, but Paul Collier contended that if migration continued to accelerate, basic economic forces would drive wages substantially lower.[540] As for other effects, even moderate rates of migration have a negative impact on the indigenous poor when it comes to scarce publicly provided services such as affordable housing, and higher migration rates would make them "substantially negative."[541] There's always a trade-off between the costs and benefits of migration, and at some point, the costs outweigh the benefits, he contended, so the question always has to be "how much is best?"[542]

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[535] Meghan Davidson Ladly, "For Migrants in Sweden, Election Season Puts the Promise of Tolerance to the Test," *The Globe and Mail*, Sept. 7, 2018. https://www.theglobeandmail.com/world/article-for-migrants-in-sweden-election-season-puts-the-promise-of-tolerance/

[536] Castles et al., *Age*, 19.

[537] Castles et al., *Age*, 19.

[538] Castles et al., *Age*, 19.

[539] Castles et al., *Age*, 19.

[540] Collier, *Exodus*, 254.

[541] Collier, *Exodus*, 254.

[542] Collier, *Exodus*, 254.

We can see from these examples that newcomers in modern times arouse similar fears that the ancient Romans experienced. The arrival of strangers brings fears of being usurped or superseded, of losing out economically, or of unwanted social, cultural and political changes. The current high levels of migration have placed the governments of modern Western nations in the difficult position of trying to negotiate these issues, treading a fine line between public hostility toward newcomers and the economic and humanitarian arguments for admitting them. In the following sections, I will explore the strategies that enabled the Romans to overcome the negative voices of non-welcoming and go down in history as being famous for their high degree of generous welcoming. Despite our very different worlds, some of their strategies have messages for us.

Unity

The Romans understood, seemingly from the beginning, the fine balancing act they had launched: The more diversity they encouraged, the harder they had to work at promoting unity. Hence the early institution of the patron-client system to ensure that newcomers were integrated into the society, and the pre-republic creation of the census slotting people into social, electoral and military roles to ensure a united citizenry that could both defend and invade. Hence, also, the extraordinary use of symbols, spectacles, events and art to pull a diverse population together, and the creation of colonies to spread the Roman culture around the empire. While many of these strategies would be inappropriate or unworkable in today's very different world, I think there is still something valuable to be learned from them: Taken together, they illustrate the sheer weight of the importance the Romans placed on unity. The empire survived as long as it did because of many factors, including the size of its armies and the cleverness of its leaders, but underlying everything was an understanding of the importance of a common glue to hold it together. I would argue that unity, defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as "the harmonious combination together of the various parties or sections (of the Church, a state, etc.) into one body," is valuable because it makes the resulting entity more powerful, and usually economically and politically stronger. In terms of the early Roman republic, it was the unusually harmonious combination of the plebians and the nobles – the plebians farming and fighting and the nobles governing – that created a

tightly bound populace strong enough to launch an empire. This was shattered later during the wars of the first century BCE, but my argument is that this early concept of a unified populace working together for a common cause was the blueprint upon which Roman society was based.

In any era, nations that are united rather than divided by factions simply work better. Migration author Paul Collier, whose studies focus on the poorest nations of the earth, distinguished between high-functioning and low-functioning societies, noting that the latter tend to be less unified. High-functioning societies have high mutual regard, trust, and willingness to pay taxes for the redistribution of wealth. Low-functioning ones have more distrust and less willingness to cooperate for the general good.[543] In a society divided by warring clans, for example, there is more honour in scooping up public goods for one's clan than in ensuring they are fairly distributed.[544] I would argue that very early on, Rome in effect created a high-functioning society, organized so that people paid taxes and contributed militarily for the good of the state. Efforts were made to ensure that the burden was fair, with the poorest contributing less and the wealthy more. Before the system fell apart at the end of the republic, it was an extremely cooperative one.

By contrast, I would argue that the importance – the very value – of unity has been pushed to the backburner in many modern Western societies. Diversity has increased without the finely calculated measures the Romans used to ensure that their empire remained united. The result has been a great deal of disunity – splits between pro- and anti-immigration factions within many nations, splits between the general public and decision-makers over immigration policies, and splits between the indigenous populations and newcomers. These conflicts have led to an increase in populism and anti-immigrant sentiment in many countries, including European ones commonly known for their progressive values, and even classical immigration countries such as the United States. Thus we can see how ignoring the example set by the Romans two millennia ago

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[543] Collier, *Exodus*, 30-32.

[544] Collier, *Exodus*, 239.

of balancing immigration with unification measures has helped make modern societies less welcoming to newcomers.

How diversity weakens social cohesion and Roman ideas that might help

I suggest that one of the reasons the Romans expended so much effort promoting unity was that they understood something modern scholars are only beginning to confirm through research – and that is that diversity weakens social cohesion. A 2007 study by Harvard University political scientist Robert Putnam on the impact of migration on indigenous communities, based on a survey of 30,000 Americans, unleashed a flurry of interest and follow-up studies. Putnam found that the greater the proportion of immigrants in a community, the lower the mutual levels of trust between immigrants and the indigenous population.[545] Not only that, but high levels of immigration were associated with lower levels of trust within the indigenous community itself.[546] "Putnam refers to this effect as 'hunkering down': indigenous people living in a high-immigrant community retreat into themselves, trusting less and taking less part in social activities, having few friends, and watching more television,"[547] Collier wrote in summarizing the findings. A later study aimed at disproving the first one found that most of the distrust was expressed by whites who felt uncomfortable living amongst racial minorities, according to a Feb. 9, 2018 article on populism in *The Globe and Mail* by columnist John Ibbitson and pollster Darrell Bricker.[548] Migration scholar Eric Kaufmann noted that follow-up studies to Putnam's original showed more diverse neighbourhoods "were strongly associated with lower trust in strangers,"[549] an effect found in both the U.S. and Canada, but even stronger in Canada. Further research reviewing about 90 studies of

[545] Collier, *Exodus*, 74.

[546] Collier, *Exodus*, 74.

[547] Collier, *Exodus*, 75.

[548] Darrell Bricker and John Ibbitson, "What's Driving Populism? It Isn't the Economy, Stupid: Countries around the world have been gripped by an incoherent, rage-fuelled nihilism that rejects elites on the left and the right. It's not income inequality, as many think, but a fear of immigratnts undermining culture and a way of life, argue Darrell Bricker and John Ibbitson," *The Globe and Mail*, Feb. 9, 2018. theglobeandmail.com/opinion/what-is-driving-populism-it-isnt-the-economy-stupid/article37899813/

[549] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 420.

diversity and social cohesion in Europe, North America and Australasia showed the majority revealed that diversity was linked with lower neighbourhood trust, especially for whites in diverse areas.[550] Longitudinal studies had similar results. One carried out over an 18-year period in Britain found that among people who stayed in their neighbourhood, levels of community attachment "declined significantly" as their communities became more diverse.[551]

Evidence from a generation of studies since Putnam's "provocative article" confirms he is clearly right that "local diversity reduces local trust and attachment among whites,"[552] according to Kaufmann. However, further claims by Putnam and others that diversity reduces national trust in politics, making it harder for societies to share wealth and provide effective public services, can't be so straightforwardly proven.[553] In developing countries, diversity does reduce solidarity, as competition between ethnic groups makes it harder to distribute wealth and government jobs.[554] And in the U.S., a study has found that ethnic diversity has a negative impact on public provision because richer, often older whites don't want to pay for the public services used mainly by poorer, often younger minorities.[555] But in some countries like South Africa, Malaysia or Fiji, the minorities are richer than the majorities, and the majorities vote for a strong welfare state.[556] In the U.S. and Europe, minorities are poorer than the majority "so diversity inclines some voters away from redistribution."[557] But in Canada, studies have shown that while diversity leads to reduced local trust, it has no effect on support for redistribution: local mistrust does not automatically scale up to the national level.[558] In the West overall, there appears to be a "modest relationship between increasing diversity

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[550] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 420.

[551] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 420.

[552] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 421.

[553] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 421.

[554] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 422.

[555] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 422.

[556] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 423.

[557]Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 424.

[558] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 424.

and falling support for welfare states. But many other factors matter, such as national traditions and economic trends,"[559] according to Kaufmann.

John Ibbitson and pollster Darrell Bricker noted in their opinion column that Canadian politicians like Justin Trudeau like to say that "diversity is strength," which they argued may be true when it comes to cultural creativity or business innovation, "but it doesn't play out on the street."[560] In actual fact, "diversity, whatever its other strengths, weakens social cohesion."[561] As examples, they cited white discrimination against African-Americans in the U.S.; linguistic and cultural divisions in Canada that led to two referenda on Quebec sovereignty, and the anti-immigrant component of the Reform Party stoked by Western alienation in the 1990s.[562] (Ibbitson and Bricker stressed that they are strongly in support of immigration and multiculturalism; their column was about how to deal with the populist fears that immigration will undermine the host nation's culture and way of life.)

We can be fairly sure that the Romans had nothing like this modern research to guide their actions, but I suggest their intensive unification efforts indicate they knew all about it anyway. Today, with this research in hand, modern Western nations should be taking a lesson from ancient Rome that unifying measures are needed if they are going to successfully welcome newcomers. The institutions, attitudes and strategies that worked to keep Romans together in ancient times have changed or disappeared, and some would not be appropriate today. Most modern nations can't depend on the military to provide a bonding experience for a large part of their population, for example, and individualism has routed the earlier concept of self-sacrifice for the good of the state. But when we think about what held Rome together, I suggest it was the spirit and attitude of the people, sparked and harnessed by the institutions, that was the most important thing. I think of C. Nicolet's description of the "aggressive self-confidence and complete subordination of

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[559] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 424.

[560] Bricker, "Populism," *Globe and Mail*.

[561] Bricker, "Populism," *Globe and Mail*.

[562] Bricker, "Populism," *Globe and Mail*.

the individual to the community"[563] that prevailed after the disaster at Cannae. Citizens supported the senate's refusal to discuss terms of peace with Hannibal, which would have meant giving up land, and accepted the sacrifice of countrymen who had been taken prisoner instead of giving Hannibal the ransom money he needed.[564] Nicolet noted that the historian Polybius was so struck by this attitude that he concluded: "When a city accepts without a murmur such a hard decision on the part of its public authorities, it deserves to win victories. . . ."[565] What would it take to recreate that kind of cohesive spirit in modern times – hopefully for more peaceful purposes? Canadians got a hint of what that might look like during the Toronto Raptors' NBA championship run in the spring of 2019, when people from all backgrounds across the country drew together to cheer on the team, which many saw as representative of Canada's diverse population. "Not just the whole city, but the whole country came together over the Raptors,"[566] wrote *Globe and Mail* columnist Marcus Gee, describing the June 17, 2019 victory parade in Toronto as evidence of Canada's success in accepting and absorbing people from all over the planet: "Every background, every language, every country was represented on those packed streets – and no one gave it a second thought."[567] The idea of unity being reinforced by institutions that reflect the public makeup was also the theme of a June 10, 2019 *New York Times* story. Its headline encapsulated that idea: "Raptors Fever Takes Toronto as a Diverse City Embraces a Team That Looks Like It."[568] The story quoted 19-year-old Andrew Nguyen, whose parents came to Toronto from Vietnam, saying: "'You

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[563] C. Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 90.

[564] C. Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 90-91.

[565] C. Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 91.

[566] Marcus Gee, "The Raptors' Victory Parade Was More Than a Celebration – It Was a Glimpse of Today's Canada," *The Globe and Mail*, June 14, 2019. https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/toronto/article-the-raptors-finals-run-and-celebration-parade-has-shown-what-a/

[567] Gee, "Raptors," *The Globe and Mail*.

[568] Ian Austen, "Raptors Fever Takes Toronto, as a Diverse City Embraces a Team That Looks Like It," *The New York Times*, June 10, 2019. https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/10/world/canada/basketball-toronto-raptors.html

only see white people playing hockey. But basketball is more like what the nation is like.'"[569]

But sporting events like that and the Olympics, which also draw people together to support their country's athletes, only occur occasionally and their cohesive effects tend to be fleeting. What about something more permanent? Given the intense engagement of young people with the issue of climate change and the environment, why not create an institution that makes use of all that energy and passion? I am thinking of a Peace Corps-like organization aimed at recent high-school graduates that would provide a year or two of education, training and hands-on work for those who want to do something substantive about climate change. Perhaps they could help build wind farms, install solar panels or learn how to retrofit buildings – for many, it could be the start of a career in environmental issues. The unifying aspect of this proposal is that, like the Roman military, it would bring together young people from all backgrounds, from all across the country, to work toward a common goal. I suggest more emphasis on a widely accepted and passionately championed goal and less focus on individual differences is more likely to bring people together than initiatives specifically aimed at dealing with dissimilarities. Differences fade away and cohesiveness grows when people come together over common goals bigger than themselves, whether these amount to fighting Hannibal or finding ways to mitigate climate change.

This is only one idea for a modern way of following the Roman example of bringing people together. If we look at what's behind many other unifying Roman practices, we may come up with other ways of applying their principles to modern use. For example, there is the previously mentioned concept of widespread involvement, as shown by the military, electoral and patron-client systems. Having a large proportion of the population engaged in any system promotes cohesiveness. There is the principle of accommodation and cooperation between politicians in the interests of the public good, as practised before the civil wars of the first century BCE. Are there ways of revising modern political systems to encourage more cooperation, and more emphasis on the

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[569] Austen, "Fever," *The New York Times*.

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common good? There is the principle of fairness, with the rich taking on much heavier societal burdens in return for their greater power and privileges. Some would argue that current tax systems do in fact require a bigger contribution from the rich, but I am thinking of a weightier societal expectation, like that placed on Roman nobles who felt it was a duty, even an honour, to provide facilities for the public out of their wealth.

Why struggling modern integration needs the lesson of Roman unity

For the last half-century, modern Western nations have been struggling to incorporate newcomers from many different backgrounds into their societies. These efforts have not gone well, migration scholars agree. "All of the different approaches to incorporation have proved problematic in one way or another, so that by the early twenty-first century there appeared to be a widespread 'crisis of integration',"[570] according to the authors of *The Age of Migration*. Given ancient Rome's reputation for successfully integrating people from all around the Mediterranean into one empire, what did they know or do to make it work? And alongside this, what are modern societies doing, or not doing, that makes it so hard?

Going back to the basics of Roman society that laid the groundwork for Roman behaviour, I think there are several aspects of the way they viewed themselves and others that help explain their success. Descended from outsiders themselves, they had no expectation that everybody would be the same. They were accustomed to many different cultures, and as polytheists themselves, they were accustomed to many different gods and religions. Another attribute was their flexibility; they came up with different forms of citizenship and different ways of treating conquered peoples and territories depending on circumstances and what they thought would work best at the time. But I think the Romans' awareness of the importance of unity was the main factor that enabled them to incorporate a wide variety of outsiders while keeping an empire together. Knowing that diversity erodes social cohesion, they created an intensively linked society with symbolic and physical reminders everywhere of what citizens had in common. I suggest that in the

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[570] Castles et al., *Age*, 270.

individualistic and increasingly cynical and isolated societies of the modern Western world, it's harder for nations to encourage connections and commonality among citizens. The kind of symbols the Romans used to remind citizens of their glorious past tend to be controversial and divisive in modern times. The British monarchy that once drew awe and passionate loyalty from colonial subjects is no longer a common glue. Statues of one-time heroes are removed because what they once represented, or did or said, is no longer considered appropriate. In July 2018, for example, Victoria city council had a statue of former Canadian Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald removed from the front steps of city hall as a gesture of reconciliation. (Macdonald's government oversaw the Indian Act in its formative years and established the residential school system.) In Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's post-national Canada, where there is no mainstream or core identity, symbols of commonality become few and far between. I suggest that unlike the Romans, moderns haven't understood that the more they promote diversity, the harder they have to work at promoting social cohesion.

I will draw on modern migration writers to summarize how Western societies have arrived at the point where their incorporation strategies are described as failures. Throughout, we must bear in mind the differences between Roman and modern migration. Many Roman "newcomers" were only new to the empire because of territorial acquisitions, and in fact stayed at home where they faced various levels of Romanization. The other large contingents were slaves forced to go to Rome, or free-born poor who migrated there after leaving their land, voluntarily or otherwise. The modern newcomers I am referring to are voluntarily moving to more developed countries from poorer ones, although many have been driven out of their homelands by war or natural disasters.

Perhaps because there are only so many ways of absorbing newcomers, ancient and modern societies used similar strategies. There was assimilation, described by *The Age of Migration* as a "one-sided process of adaptation" in which migrants were to "give up their distinctive linguistic, cultural or social characteristics and become indistinguishable from the majority population."[571] There was integration, a "slower and

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[571] Castles et al., *Age*, 266.

gentler form of assimilation,"[572] with the goal still absorption into the dominant culture, but a recognition "that adaptation was a gradual process that required some degree of mutual accommodation."[573] And there was multiculturalism, which meant that "immigrants (and sometimes non-migrant minority groups) should be able to participate as equals in all spheres of society, without being expected to give up their own culture, religion and language, although usually with an expectation of conformity to certain key values."[574] The Romans did not use such terms or, likely, even think in the same way about integration. But looking at how they treated newcomers from today's perspective, we can apply some modern terminology to their practices. At one extreme would be the assimilation of slaves, who were stripped of their past to become deeply embedded in their master's family and through that into Roman society. At the other extreme would be a form of multiculturalism, where some conquered territories, often highly developed ones such as Greek cities, were allowed to keep their own cultures, languages and governance systems even after they came under Roman control. But the most common policy was likely what *The Age of Migration* authors have described as integration – a slower and gentler form of assimilation – where adoption of Roman culture and the Latin language was encouraged with various degrees of pressure, with the reward being Roman citizenship, and for the provincial aristocracy, a chance to rise in the halls of power in Rome itself.

While the Romans were always trying to bring people together, the bias of Western nations seems to have been to support differences to the greatest degree possible, which to me seems like a logical offshoot of individualistic societies. Beginning with assimilation, which didn't encourage differences, the moderns moved on to other forms, culminating in multiculturalism, which allowed for maximum retention of origin cultures with minimal interference from host countries. But that degree of diversity turned out to be too much for many nations. There was a "widespread backlash"[575] that forced most –

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[572] Castles et al., *Age*, 268.

[573] Castles et al., *Age*, 268.

[574] Castles et al., *Age*, 270.

[575] Castles et al., *Age*, 293.

Canada and Australia are the two main exceptions – to retreat from multiculturalism and put greater emphasis on social cohesion. "The pendulum has swung back from celebrating diversity to insisting on forms of 'civic integration' based on often rather unclear ideas about social cohesion and national values,"[576] according to *The Age of Migration* authors. Various explanations are given for the failure of multiculturalism, but the return to an emphasis on social cohesion indicates to me that it lacked an element the Romans found crucial – encouraging unity.

As incorporation of newcomers is an important part of this topic, I will briefly summarize the efforts over the last half-century that have led to the situation today, as described in *The Age of Migration*. When immigration to highly developed countries started to gain ground in the post-1945 boom, the numbers weren't expected to be big and there was a belief that assimilation – that one-sided adaptation referred to earlier – would bring newcomers safely into their new societies.[577] This worked well in the classical immigration countries with a European background when newcomers were from the same areas as earlier settlers, but fell apart with the arrival of migrants from many different backgrounds.[578] These newcomers often ended up in poor jobs, lived together in specific areas, and continued practicing their cultures, languages and religions.[579] Thinking assimilation had failed, governments tried the previously described integration, which accepted that newcomers might need to maintain their cultures and form communities for a while, but expected that they would eventually join the dominant culture.[580] When group differences persisted and seemed to be there for the long term, multiculturalism, launched by Canada, began taking hold in the 1970s, the authors wrote. By the early 1990s, some form of it had replaced assimilation almost everywhere except France.[581] Multiculturalism wasn't the same everywhere; for example, the U.S. didn't think it was the state's role to work for social justice or support the maintenance of ethnic

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[576] Castles et al., *Age*, 270.

[577] Castles et al., *Age*, 266.

[578] Castles et al., *Age*, 266.

[579] Castles et al., *Age*, 268.

[580] Castles et al., *Age*, 268.

[581] Castles et al., *Age*, 293.

cultures.[582] But in Canada, Australia, the U.K., Sweden and the Netherlands, multiculturalism implied "both the willingness of the majority group to accept cultural difference and state action to secure equal rights for minorities."[583] After the previously mentioned backlash, Canada and Australia were among the few countries that retained the term multiculturalism. While most countries kept special programs to help immigrants integrate, Sweden, the Netherlands and the U.K. all relabeled their policies to emphasize integration, social cohesion and core national values.[584] The idea of individual integration took hold, based if necessary on compulsory integration contracts and citizenship tests.[585] But *The Age of Migration* authors noted this is the French individual-assimilation model, and France had minority youth riots in 2005 and 2007, which indicates it doesn't work very well either.[586] Concluded the authors: "All the varying approaches to incorporation of immigrants thus seem problematic…multiculturalism appears to lead to separatism, and assimilation can perpetuate marginalization and conflict."[587]

Migration scholars have different ideas about what caused multiculturalism to lose favour, but inevitably refer to the 2001 riots in Northern England between white and South Asian Muslim youths. A report on the riots by Ted Cantle, former chief executive of Nottingham city council, concluded the towns involved showed deep polarization around segregated communities living "a series of parallel lives,"[588] according to a *Guardian* summary of the report. The report proposed measures to bring some level of commonality to the separate groups. It suggested an oath of national allegiance from

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[582] Castles et al., *Age*, 270.

[583] Castles et al., *Age*, 270.

[584] Castles et al., *Age*, 281.

[585] Castles et al., *Age*, 294.

[586] Castles et al., *Age*, 294.

[587] Castles et al., *Age*, 294.

[588] Staff and agencies, "Key Points of the Cantle Report," *The Guardian*, Dec. 11, 2001, https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2001/dec/11/race.world5

immigrants might help future race relations, and that politicians, community leaders and the media should promote "a meaningful concept of citizenship."[589]

The report, which migration author Eric Kaufmann described as championing integration over a multicultural celebration of differences, marked a change in attitude toward a policy that many had assumed was the way of the future: "[S]uddenly, in the mainstream and centre-left media outlets such as the BBC and the *Guardian*, there was talk of moving 'beyond multiculturalism',"[590] Kaufmann wrote. "Community cohesion, not the politics of difference, was to be the watchword."[591] But he noted the shift away from multiculturalism had begun earlier in continental Europe due to far-right successes in the 1990s, prompting centrist parties to denounce it in favour of an "uncompromising civic nationalism."[592] The shift was solidified by a series of Islamist terror attacks in Amsterdam and Madrid.[593] Even in Germany, which had been one of the staunchest opponents of right-wing trends, Chancellor Angela Merkel declared in 2010 that multiculturalism had "failed, utterly failed."[594]

The Age of Migration authors attributed the backlash against multiculturalism to a growing awareness of the continuing marginalization of certain groups, especially non-Europeans; a tendency to blame ethnic minorities for clustering together and refusing to integrate, and a growing fear of Islam and terrorism: "In this interpretation, recognition of cultural diversity has had the perverse effect of encouraging ethnic separatism and the development of parallel lives."[595] As for the failure of integration policies overall, the authors blamed racism, saying host societies have not dealt with "the deep-seated cultures of racism that are a legacy of colonialism, imperialism, anti-Semitism and other forms of intolerance."[596] They also cited greater inequality resulting from globalization, economic

[589] Staff and agencies, "Cantle Report," *The Guardian*.

[590] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 156.

[591] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 156.

[592] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 156.

[593] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 156.

[594] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 158.

[595] Castles et al., *Age*, 293.

[596] Castles et al., *Age*, 294.

restructuring, deregulation and privatization that has led to fewer, poorer jobs, depleted welfare systems and less ability to redistribute income.[597] But the authors emphasized the cause is not hopeless: "Incorporation of migrants into society does take place, particularly in the longer term, often leading to processes of upward social mobility and dispersal of initial ethnic clusters."[598] We must remember that absorption didn't always go smoothly in ancient Rome, either, although we have only hints of what went wrong. The soldiers who were settled on Pompeii caused friction there for years, and the imposition of Roman and Latin colonies sometimes killed off local towns, languages and cultures.

We cannot make close comparisons between integration in modern and ancient times for the reasons I have explained. But the modern struggles to integrate diverse newcomers seem to indicate that emphasizing differences rather than commonalities leads to difficulties. The Romans never insisted that all groups in the empire drop their own cultures for the Roman one, although in certain times and places they exerted pressure for that. But through the widespread granting of citizenship and other measures, they provided a common link of "Roman-ness" that joined people while allowing for great differences. Modern failures with multiculturalism seem to confirm that policies that result in groups leading "parallel lives" without encouraging common interests do not work well. Overall, I suggest that ancient Rome's example of allowing diversity, but balancing it off with strenuous efforts to promote unity, is one that modern societies should emulate.

How moderns split with their leaders over migration while Romans stayed united

One of the sharpest divisions over migration that has arisen in many modern Western democracies is between the electorate and the people who are supposed to represent them. As described by the migration authors I am using in this project, the problem was that mainstream politicians, along with industry leaders, media commentators and academics – a group often lumped together as the "elite" – tended to

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[597] Castles et al., *Age*, 294.

[598] Castles et al., *Age*, 292.

favour immigration, while the general public tended to oppose it. While the countries in question are democracies, "their migration policies have often not reflected the views of the indigenous electorate,"[599] according to migration author Paul Collier, who noted that for example, 59 percent of the British population, which includes immigrants, consider that there are already "too many" immigrants.[600] *The Age of Migration* authors cited a study hypothesizing that the reason the elite support migration while the general public is more opposed is that "immigration produced concentrated benefits, especially to employers and investors, and diffuse costs borne by the general public, especially over the medium and long term. The insulation of pro-immigration political elites from electorates generally less supportive of liberal immigration policies led to a general pattern of expansive immigration policies in Western democracies."[601] Although this was just a hypothesis about the reason for the differences, the reality of the split eventually showed up in election results. The effect in recent years has been a rise in populist, anti-immigrant parties that have shifted the political landscape, as well as huge rifts between pro- and anti-immigration forces in many nations.

I have earlier discussed how historians differ on the amount of influence the Roman public would have had on decisions affecting the arrival of newcomers, but noted there is agreement that they did have some say through citizens' assemblies enabling them to elect magistrates and pass laws. As earlier described, these assemblies were divided into subgroups, with the majority vote in each being counted toward a final decision. But C. Nicolet noted that the commonly accepted view is that citizens were restricted to casting a "yes" or "no" ballot without discussion or debate, which "apparently precluded discussion and debate, if not freedom of information.[602] There is also the previously discussed issue that one of the citizens' assemblies, the *comitia centuriata*, was heavily weighted toward the wealthy, causing Nicolet to say that "only the richest and most eminent had any real influence."[603] We can't make direct

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[599] Collier, *Exodus*, 60.

[600] Castles et al., *Age*, 313.

[601] Castles et al., *Age*, 313.

[602] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 7.

[603] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 7.

comparisons between the Roman political system and those of modern Western democracies, as the structural setups and societal attitudes are very different. But what we can think about are the relative avenues that ordinary citizens have for influencing politicians in modern times, compared to the avenues citizens had in ancient Rome. How much actual contact do citizens and politicians have in the modern world? How aware are politicians of the attitudes of people who don't frequent their social and political circles? An argument could be made that the ubiquity of social media should make it virtually impossible for various elements of society not to be aware of great shifts happening at different levels of society. But that argument fails when we consider the surprise with which the media and political world greeted the election of Donald Trump, and the results of the Brexit referendum. What was happening among large groups of people did not filter up to the commentators and decision-makers. By comparison, I suggest it may have been harder for leaders in ancient Rome not to know what was going on in the minds of the general public. According to Nicolet, the Roman system "implied a certain degree of communication, not all of it one-way, between the masses and the political class."[604] Roman voters may have been restricted to simply casting ballots in their assemblies, with no avenue for discussion, but they had other ways of making their views known and for influencing politicians. One was to take advantage of the great religious and civic spectacles such as public games, where all the leaders of the city were assembled, to "express forthright opinions on individuals and matters of public concern, with an astonishing freedom of language and attitude."[605] Although such expressions had no legal status, "they were so regular and frequent that they must in the long run have affected the machinery of decision-taking. At least for the political class, they provided what might be significant indices of public opinion."[606] As well, although the communication within the political system mainly depended on politicians taking the initiative, it could also work the other way: "[T]he masses could successfully assert some of their essential claims and manifest their elementary needs and preferences in such a

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[604] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 397.

[605] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 387.

[606] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 387.

way that the political system had to take account of them,"[607]according to Nicolet. This would have been done mainly by finding a politician willing to champion a cause, which was quite possible because the system was diversified enough that there would usually be someone willing to take issues on, if only to raise his own profile.[608] Another factor that kept the public in touch with the politicians was that most debate was conducted in the open – "the business of the community was communal, and was almost entirely conducted in the open air,"[609] whether it was politicians' speeches, trials, or meetings of citizens' assemblies. Everyone congregated at the Roman Forum, where trials were held, the senate met, and politicians gave speeches and canvassed for election, according to historian Fergus Millar.[610] Only the business of the senate wasn't audible or visible to the crowds, but the results of its deliberations were quickly conveyed to the crowds waiting outside.[611] From these glimpses of how politics and public life were conducted in Rome, we get a sense of the kind of communications that may have kept ancient politicians more attuned to public attitudes than seems to occur in some modern Western nations. Between their dependence on technology and the reality of modern security concerns, today's politicians may simply have less face-to-face exposure to the public than Roman leaders who were expected to make appearances at regular public events. The lesson from the Romans for modern times may be simply for the elite – especially politicians who are supposed to represent the public – to find more ways of regularly communicating with levels of society they don't ordinarily frequent.

How did the rift between decision-makers and the public over migration issues develop? How did migration go from being considered not a central political issue before the 1980s into what the authors of *The Age of Migration* called one of the "most emotive subjects in contemporary societies"[612] today? One of the themes emerging among scholars and commentators is that migration has exploded into such volatility because of

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[607] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 397.

[608] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 397.

[609] Millar, *The Crowd*, 212.

[610] Millar, *The Crowd*, 25.

[611] Millar, *The Crowd*, 212.

[612] Castles et al., *Age*, 1.

a lack of public discussion and consultation. According to authors Eric Kaufmann and Paul Collier, both professors in the U.K., politicians and other members of the elite for too long refused to deal with the concerns that migration was raising among the general population. Discussion of migration in the U.K. was shut down after politician Enoch Powell's 1968 "rivers of blood" speech opposing the immigration of people of African and South Asian origin,[613] Collier contended. Fear of racism accusations made it taboo to even talk about migration: "Most migrants from poor countries are racially distinct from the indigenous populations of rich host countries, and so opposition to immigration skates precariously close to racism."[614] Instead, people went in the opposite direction. For the liberal circles that usually provide the most informed discussion on policy issues, the only permissible opinion on migration was "to bemoan popular antipathy to it."[615] Economists rushed to endorse wide-open migration on the basis of utilitarian universalism – "the greatest happiness of the greatest number"– ignoring the impact on the people in receiving countries as long as there were global gains overall.[616] Social scientists "strained every muscle to show that migration is good for everyone."[617] Politicians shied away from it, seemingly "embarrassed by the preferences of their citizens."[618] Mainstream parties in some countries refused to "properly debate what . . . voters regard, rightly or wrongly, as the most important issue facing their country."[619] This opened the door to the irrational, who took over the discussion: "The space left by the mainstream political parties rapidly came to be occupied by a gallery of grotesques: racists, xenophobes, and psychopaths found themselves with an audience of decent, ordinary citizens who were increasingly alarmed by the silence of the mainstream parties."[620] Eric Kaufmann made a similar point in *Whiteshift*: Ideological norms arising out of the 1960s' countercultural movement, which he called left-modernism, prevented discussion of

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[613] Collier, *Exodus*, 20.

[614]. Collier, *Exodus*, 20.

[615] Collier, *Exodus*, 13-14.

[616] Collier, *Exodus*, 58.

[617] Collier, *Exodus*, 26.

[618] Collier, *Exodus*, 15.

[619] Collier, *Exodus*, 53.

[620] Collier, *Exodus*, 52.

national identity and immigration in the name of anti-racism,[621] he contended. That "introduced a blockage in the democratic process, preventing the normal adjustment of political supply to political demand."[622] Instead of those who wanted more – or less – immigration negotiating reasonable trade-offs, the subject was forced underground, "building up pressure from those whose grievances were ignored by the main parties" and creating an opportunity for the populist right.[623]

Concerns about lack of discussion are even being raised in welcoming Canada, which *The Age of Migration* called "one of the few countries of the world with an active and expansive permanent immigration policy."[624] In a column about a March 2019 Conference Board of Canada immigration event where speakers included immigration department officials and other migration experts, *The Vancouver Sun's* immigration columnist Douglas Todd noted that some expressed concerns about lack of government transparency and public discussion.[625] Canada's politicians and mandarins are "almost unique in the obscure way they dictate the country's powerful immigration policies from behind closed doors,"[626] Todd reported of their comments. UBC political scientist Antje Ellerman, for example, told the gathering that Canada "has a high degree of (immigration) policy-making behind closed doors," and that the immigration agenda has "traditionally been dominated by the government and civil servants, and rarely engaged the public in meaningful ways."[627] Todd wrote that Ellerman is among those who think it

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[621] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 3.

[622] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 3.

[623] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 3.

[624] Castles et al., *Age*, 134.

[625] Douglas Todd, "Douglas Todd: Who Cares About 'Winning' the Immigration Debate? Not many Canadians are extremists, either for or against current immigration policy or rates. The bulk of the population seems hazy about Trudeau's plan to continue to increase immigration levels to 350,000 a year," *The Vancouver Sun*, March 18, 2019. vancouversun.com/opinion/columnists/douglas-todd-who-cares-about-winning-the-immigration-debate.

[626] Todd, "Winning," *Vancouver Sun*.

[627] Todd, "Winning," *Vancouver Sun*.

unwise for governments in Canada, Europe or elsewhere to ignore the populist voices that worry about immigration, and that doing so could feed anti-immigration radicalism.[628]

Adding to the public distrust of the elite over migration have been examples of what appear to be bungling or misinformation that have had negative consequences for the general public. Collier cited the mass arrival of Polish workers in Britain after Poland joined the European Union. Unlike most other major EU countries, Britain did not impose interim entry restrictions on Polish workers, apparently because of a "spectacularly wrong"[629] civil service prediction that few East Europeans – no more than 13,000 a year – would want to migrate to Britain, Collier wrote. Instead, about one million arrived in the following five years, leading to widespread resentment by indigenous workers and an eventual government admission that the open-door policy was wrong.[630] Trust is also lost when supposedly reliable bodies provide inaccurate information, as happened in the debate over the amount of foreign property ownership in Vancouver. According to *The Vancouver Sun*, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. president Evan Siddall stated in November of 2016 that offshore buyers owned only 2.2 percent of Metro Vancouver's condos.[631] A March 2019 CMHC report using new methodology and more data showed that in fact, about 11 percent of Metro condos are owned at least in part by people living outside Canada.[632]

Chris Friesen of the Immigrant Services Society of B.C. suggested in a March 2018 interview in Vancouver that more consultation about Canada's annual immigration numbers and a much broader vision are needed. A royal commission should be appointed to take a wide-ranging look at immigration "because nothing is changing society the way immigration has" and it would be helpful to have an "all-of-Canada, all-of-government

[628] Todd, "Winning," *Vancouver Sun*.

[629] Collier, *Exodus*, 20.

[630] Collier, *Exodus*, 21.

[631] Dan Fumano, "Dan Fumano: A $75-Billion Snapshot of Foreign-Owned Vancouver Real Estate: 'This is like a Polaroid image. . .As we see the image emerge, are we going to like what comes out of it?'," *The Vancouver Sun*, March 28, 2019. https://vancouversun.com/news/local-news/dan-fumano-a-75-billion-snapshot-of-foreign-owned-vancouver-real-estate

[632] Fumano, "Snapshot," *The Vancouver Sun*.

vision for Canada, looking outward over the next 10 years." People need to know that significant increases in immigration will be needed in order to maintain and sustain old age security and CPP, he suggested. "Or we collectively decide, as Japan has, to embrace an economy that will mean a reduction in GDP and that reduction will of course come with a reduction in services and support and the safety net."

The differences that have arisen over migration between the public and their leaders in modern Western democracies point to systems that have allowed wide gaps to grow between different segments of society. The migration writers I have quoted allege a taboo on discussing migration is fueling anti-immigration attitudes that then emerge at the ballot box. As I will discuss later, these taboos have now been broken in many countries, but this has occurred along with the rise of anti-immigrant sentiment. One suggestion could be that allowing open discussion of issues that are worrying citizens may head off the kind of hostility that has arisen in many countries. Another aspect of this issue is lack of meaningful communication between politicians and the public. When we think of the ubiquity and importance of public speakers in ancient Rome, where the Forum was an open-air centre for airing issues and swaying opinions, we could ask, what are our modern equivalents? What kind of meaningful debates over important issues occur in modern times? Where are our orators, our Ciceros of today? A face-to-face society where robust discussions were constantly underway, where yearly elections meant politicians were always canvassing for votes, and where voters had to cast their ballots in person seems much more likely to have encouraged discussion about whatever issues voters had in mind than our modern models. We cannot remake our society, but from the Romans, I think we can learn that modern democracies would likely benefit from better and deeper communication between leaders and the general public. Roman leaders had to be talented orators to hold their audiences in the Forum; perhaps modern leaders would benefit from learning some of their skills.

What we can learn about unity and welcoming from Rome's lines and walls

The concept of walls is anathema to many in the modern Western world, but I think walls, lines and borders played an important role in promoting unity and welcoming

newcomers in ancient Rome. And even though it seems contradictory, I would argue that squeamishness about drawing firm lines between insiders and outsiders has resulted in disunity and a less welcoming attitude toward newcomers in modern times than in ancient ones. My theory is that Rome compensated for the constant state of instability caused by its warfare by deliberately creating a sense of order for its populace. I suggest it did this by intensively organizing, classifying, and yes, drawing lines. One of the earliest examples was the legendary creation of the census by the pre-republican king Servius Tullius, which classified all adult male citizens into levels according to wealth, with exact levels of wealth given, along with a precise list of the military equipment each level must supply for themselves.[633] I think the Romans did this because they understood that at times of great turmoil, people need a sense of order and structure in their daily lives before they can feel unified or look outward to welcome others. The modern world is in turmoil too, facing issues such as globalization, migration, climate change and technological change, but there are no similar efforts to create order to counteract this. By contrast, I think modern ambivalence about lines and borders has created a sense of disorder, disunity among the populace and helped fuel anti-immigrant sentiment. While some modern Westerners would like to eliminate borders and allow people to live wherever they want, results at the ballot box have shown they're not in the majority. It's that group that rises up when authorities are perceived not to be doing their part to ensure borders are protected. We saw this in the increase in support for anti-immigrant parties and politicians after the 2015-2016 migrant crisis in Europe, notably in the rise of an anti-immigrant coalition in Italy after the irregular arrival of about 640,000 people there. Donald Trump was able to arouse considerable anti-immigrant sentiment with his allegations that a "caravan" of migrants from Central and South America was going to storm the border from Mexico. In Canada, there has been a backlash over the arrival of about 52,000 people seen as skirting the rules by avoiding regular border crossings between Canada and the U.S. while the federal government seemingly turned a blind eye. The arrivals began after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau sent out a tweet that some saw as implying Canada had no borders at all. "To those fleeing prosecution, terror & war,

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[633] Livy, *History*, 82-83.

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Canadians will welcome you, regardless of your faith. Diversity is our strength #WelcomeToCanada," he wrote on Jan. 28, 2017, following U.S. President Donald Trump's new restrictions on travelers from certain Muslim-majority countries. Trudeau later toned down his message, but Conservative immigration critic Michelle Rempel blamed it for creating a "shambles" in the immigration system.[634] As these examples show, when the lines that usually distinguish between insiders and outsiders become blurred, hostility is the result.

Modern Western nations are so loath to draw lines about migration, in the form of placing limits on it, that the very topic of reducing migration levels is taboo in some nations.[635] That's still the case in Canada, Australia, Ireland, Spain and Portugal, according to Eric Kaufmann.[636] But the taboo has gradually broken down in other countries, including Europe in the late 1990s and early 2000s, when mainstream politicians and media commentators began calling for lower migration levels.[637] Kaufmann noted that as late as 2013, Sweden's immigration minister was attacked in the media for suggesting Sweden needed to debate the volume of immigration to the country, but the migrant crisis changed things. By 2015, the government had begun scaling back its refugee intake and closed the border with Denmark.[638] Paul Collier argued that limits, just like the lines drawn by the Romans, are essential: "Only from the wilder shores of libertarianism and utilitarianism can it be argued that migration controls are ethically illegitimate."[639] While there is a clear moral obligation to help very poor people in other countries, and allowing some of them to move to rich countries is one way of helping,

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[634] Ashifa Kassam, "Trudeau Forced to Backtrack on Open Invitation to Refugees: Prime minister accused of reducing immigration system to 'shambles' as Canada struggles to cope with asylum-seekers crossing border from US on foot," *The Guardian*, Aug. 25, 2017. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/aug/25/justin-trudeau-forced-to-backtrack-on-open-invitation-to-refugees

[635] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 348-349.

[636] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 349.

[637] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 348.

[638] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 348.

[639] Collier, *Exodus*, 246.

this "cannot imply a generalized obligation to permit free movement of people across borders."[640]

While the concept of limits is controversial today, the very inclusive Romans, who amazed the ancient world with their generous awarding of citizenship, had no such reservations. I've attributed that to their understanding that people need a sense of stability and order at home when the outside world is in turmoil, but I think they also knew that distinguishing between who belongs and who doesn't encourages a sense of commonality among the insiders – exactly what a nation trying to unite disparate peoples wants. Throughout Roman history, careful lines were always being drawn: There were citizens and non-citizens and partial citizens – citizens without a vote. There were the free-born, the slaves and the freedmen, all with different privileges (or in the case of slaves, none). There were plebians, equestrians and senators, carefully categorized by wealth, with privileges and roles distributed accordingly – even to the width of the purple stripe on a toga. When the emperor Caracalla gave citizenship to all free people in the empire in 212 CE, the Romans immediately drew lines between those citizens. There were *honestiores*, the rich elite and veteran soldiers, who were exempted, as all citizens once had been, from the cruel and degrading punishments once reserved for slaves and non-citizens.[641] The other group, the *humiliores*, or lower sorts, may have gained citizenship, but they lost its former protections.[642] Once granted to all, citizenship became essentially meaningless: "The new boundary between insiders and outsiders followed the line of wealth, class and status."[643] The Romans had wiped out the old lines, but they just drew new ones. The power of the differentiation between outsiders and insiders must have been dramatic in settings like the gladiatorial games. Citizens, dressed in the requisite togas, sitting in their allotted seats, with the emperor lending his paternal magnificence to the scene, would have watched as slaves and criminals were killed in front of their eyes. The victims undergoing horrible deaths in the Coliseum sand were all

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[640] Collier, *Exodus*, 16.

[641] Beard, *SPQR*, 529.

[642] Beard, *SPQR*, 529.

[643] Beard, *SPQR*, 529

outsiders; the observers – all dressed and behaving according to strict societal rules – were the insiders. How secure and connected to their equally safe compatriots they must have felt!

As I've noted, modern societies are much more ambivalent than the Romans about making distinctions between the winners and losers of life, whether it is in the arena or the chance to settle in a rich country. Many of the specific measures the Romans took to draw lines between insiders and outsiders would be inappropriate today or irrelevant to modern Western societies. But what's of interest to us is the underlying motivation for this behaviour and its effects on welcoming. As I've said, I think that people in a stable, orderly society are more likely to be united and to welcome outsiders, and this is what the Roman measures seemed to be aimed at. I suggest this basic idea is one for modern Western nations to bear in mind if they want their populations to extend a welcome to the rest of the world in the future.

Flexibility

I have previously discussed how flexibility helped the Romans welcome large numbers of diverse populations and keep them under the same umbrella, mostly harmoniously, for centuries. They used adaptation, ingenuity and accommodation to bring new territories and citizens under their control, often through creating new forms of relationships, citizenships and governing strategies. In this section, I will explore how the concept of flexibility might help modern Western nations deal with indigenous fears that newcomers from different backgrounds will change their country socially, culturally and politically, and potentially threaten its identity and unity. I will also look at what Roman flexibility may have to teach us about different cultures and religions getting along together, as Western societies become more and more diverse.

How flexibility in identities can affect welcoming

As we have already seen, the arrival of migrants from different backgrounds often sparks fears in the indigenous of modern Western nations that the newcomers will threaten their own or their country's identity. Given the Roman attitude toward identity

and the way it affected welcoming, I think it is useful to take a look at modern identity and why it appears to be a barrier toward welcoming. As I've previously discussed, Roman identity – or perhaps I should call it "Roman-ness" – was not a fixed thing. With their myths and earliest histories emphasizing that they came from outsiders from as far away as Troy, and versions of other possible origins also in the air, their real beginnings remained an open, easily rewritten mystery. Adding to this vagueness was their belief in the possibility of transformation of both themselves and others, and their various versions of themselves, some estranged from the other, as described by historian Emma Dench.[644] We don't know for certain whether this fuzziness made the Romans more likely to welcome newcomers, but I suggest it is probable. An argument could be made that if Romans accepted that they themselves originated in outsiders, and that people could transform themselves, they would be more open to welcoming as fellow citizens newcomers who also came from elsewhere and transformed themselves into Romans.

Why do people of modern Western nations feel their identity is so threatened by migrants that they begin electing anti-immigrant parties? For an answer, I will turn to *The Age of Migration* authors' discussion of modern nation-states, which includes the kind of nations this project is dealing with. Migration is problematic for them because they're based on the premise of ethnic homogeneity – a common language, culture, traditions and history,[645] according to the authors. This idea of cultural and political unity "has often been fictitious – a construction of the ruling elite – but it has provided powerful national myths. Immigration and ethnic diversity threaten such ideas of the nation, because they create a people without common ethnic origins."[646] Classical immigration countries like Canada have an easier path because absorbing immigrants has been part of their "myth of nation-building,"[647] but countries with a common culture at their heart face a bigger difficulty. Identity was not an issue at the time nation-states arose out of the American and French revolutions. Gaining global dominance in the nineteenth century, they were

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[644] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 22.

[645] Castles et al., *Age*, 20.

[646] Castles et al., *Age*, 20.

[647] Castles et al., *Age*, 20.

"innovative and progressive"[648] at first because they were inclusive and defined citizens as free political subjects, linked together through democratic structures. But the nationalism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries "turned citizenship on its head by equating it with membership of a dominant ethnic group, defined on biological, religious or cultural lines. In many cases the nation-state became an instrument of exclusion and repression."[649] According to *The Age of Migration* authors, immigration of culturally diverse people is a dilemma for nation-states because incorporating them as citizens "may undermine myths of cultural homogeneity; but failure to incorporate them may lead to divided societies, marked by severe inequality and conflict."[650] The degree of difficulty a nation faces depends on its idea of what belonging means: If it means being part of an ethnic group, as in Germany, or being part of a unitary culture, as in France, "ethnic diversity inevitably requires major political and psychological adjustments."[651] Meanwhile, countries like Canada that see themselves as nations of immigrants have it easier, because their political structures and models of citizenship are geared to incorporating newcomers.[652] *The Age of Migration* authors predicted that national states "for better or worse, are likely to endure,"[653] but that transformations will happen, given the "inescapable central trends"[654] of increasing ethnic and cultural diversity, the rise of transnational networks between emigration and immigration societies, and increased cultural interchange.[655]

From this description, we can see how homogenous societies with fixed views of their identities would have a harder time welcoming and absorbing newcomers than those – like the Romans – with more flexible ideas about who they are. Prime Minister Justin

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[648] Castles et al., *Age*, 311.

[649] Castles et al., *Age*, 311-312.

[650] Castles et al., *Age*, 64.

[651] Castles et al., *Age*, 311.

[652] Castles et al., *Age*, 311.

[653] Castles et al., *Age*, 311.

[654] Castles et al., *Age*, 311.

[655] Castles et al., *Age*, 311.

Trudeau made the same point when he argued that as the "first post-national state,"[656] Canada's lack of national identity makes it easier to absorb newcomers. In a 2015 interview in *The New York Times Magazine,* he said Canada is becoming a new kind of state, defined not by its European heritage but by its multiple identities from all over the world. "'There is no core identity, no mainstream in Canada,'" the story quoted him as saying.[657] "'There are shared values – openness, respect, compassion, willingness to work hard, to be there for each other, to search for equality and justice.'"[658] Trudeau also told *The Times* that countries "'with a strong national identity – linguistic, religious or cultural – are finding it a challenge to effectively integrate people from different backgrounds. In France, there is still a typical citizen and an atypical citizen. Canada doesn't have that dynamic.'"[659]

The idea that nation-states, nationalism and national identity are problems in an age of global migration has gained ground in recent years, to the point that their very existence has become a matter of heated debate. In the high-income world, nation-states have "become unfashionable both with educated elites and with the young,"[660] according to migration scholar Paul Collier. He attributed this to the modern emphasis on individualism and globalism, which values individuals over communities, and elevates larger entities such as the European Union above smaller ones like nation-states:[661] "Modernity strings identity between one pillar of individualism and another of globalism: many young people see themselves both as fiercely individual outsiders in their surrounding society, and as citizens of the world."[662] But Collier strongly disagreed that nation-states are problems that should be phased out; instead he argued they are crucial for creating a common identity that encourages cooperation, especially acceptance of

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[656] Guy Lawson, "Trudeau's Canada, Again: With support from President Obama and the legacy of his father on his side, Justin Trudeau sets out to redefine what it means to be a Canadian," *New York Times Magazine*, Dec. 8, 2015. https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/13/magazine/trudeaus-canada-again.html

[657] Lawson, "Trudeau," *New York Times Magazine*.

[658] Lawson, "Trudeau," *New York Times Magazine.*

[659] Lawson, "Trudeau," *New York Times Magazine.*

[660] Collier, *Exodus*, 231.

[661] Collier, *Exodus*, 231.

[662] Collier, *Exodus*, 231.

taxation for redistribution purposes.[663] He argued that building a shared identity beyond the national level has proven extremely difficult, pointing to the tiny amount of redistribution that goes on within the European Union, and the even smaller amount contributed towards aid at the global level.[664] People are willing to contribute at the national level because from an emotional perspective, identifying with a nation is an extremely powerful way of bonding: "A shared sense of nationhood. . . is a practical means of establishing fraternity."[665] Collier also argued that nation-states are valuable entities unto themselves; that they have existence value, just as much and arguably more, than animal species. The world would lose a great deal if some countries, and their cultures, disappeared: "[W]hile you may never see a panda, your life is enhanced by the knowledge that it exists somewhere on the planet. . . Societies also have existence value, arguably far more so than species and not just for their members but for others."[666] The concept of national identity, which Trudeau dismissed as applying to Canada, is also under suspicion, but is still considered valuable in some places, according to Collier. It has been "captured by the extreme political right and is consequently taboo"[667] in Britain and Germany but is still strong and politically neutral in France, the U.S., China and Scandinavia.[668] Collier contended that in countries that have never had a strong national identity, "its absence is usually a matter of regret and concern."[669] In Africa, which is Collier's field of study, "the weakness of national identity relative to tribal identities is widely regarded as a curse that it is the task of good leaders to rectify."[670] As for nationalism – defined by the *OED* as "devotion to one's nation" – Collier acknowledged the fear that it can be used as a front for racism, but argued that allowing racist groups to "hijack the potent symbol and effective organizational unit of the nation is in itself

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[663] Collier, *Exodus*, 235.

[664] Collier, *Exodus*, 235-236.

[665] Collier, *Exodus*, 237.

[666] Collier, *Exodus*, 247.

[667] Collier, *Exodus*, 17.

[668] Collier, *Exodus*, 17.

[669] Collier, *Exodus*, 17.

[670] Collier, *Exodus*, 17.

dangerous. . . .There need be no tension between being nationalist and yet antiracist."[671] Which still leaves the question of how a nation that once defined itself by its ethnic group will define itself after its population has changed through migration. Trudeau's idea was to get rid of national identity altogether and substitute it with values. Collier suggested seeing nationalism as including all the citizens of a nation, whatever their ethnicities or race.[672] Migration scholar Eric Kaufmann proposed that everybody should come up with their own definition of national identity, depending on the lens through which they view their nation. He called it "multivocalism," – a "bottom-up, emergent phenomenon which people take an active part in constructing."[673] Each vision would be equally valid: "There is no single, superior form of national identity: rather it is everywhere and nowhere, with everyone glancing at it from a different angle and belonging to it in their own way."[674]

The concepts of nation-states, nationalism and national identity did not exist in Roman times, but as we may recall from Juvenal's Umbricius, the fear of strangers threatening their – and their city's – identity was every bit as sharp, at least for some people. But as I have said previously, the Romans did not give priority to individual interests, but rather to that of the state overall. Claudius made it clear in his 48 CE speech to the senate about admitting the Gauls that Rome had always benefited from the admission of newcomers, regardless of their fears about its impact. Rome's policy was to look to the good of the state overall, and that meant being extremely flexible about admitting outsiders. As for Roman identity, we have seen that that too was flexible; as Claudius also pointed out, strangers could be accommodated within it. The Romans' message, therefore, to those concerned about the effect of newcomers on homogenous nation-states, is that they can be accommodated and they may make the nations that receive them even better. Strangers would indeed lead to changes, but as Claudius said in welcoming the Gauls: "Everything. . .. which we hold to be of the highest antiquity, was once new. . . .what we are this day justifying by precedents, will be itself a precedent."[675]

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[671] Collier, *Exodus*, 241.

[672] Collier, *Exodus*, 241.

[673] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 530.

[674] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 531.

[675] Tacitus, *Annals*, Book 11.

Despite Umbricius' grumbling, the Romans admitted strangers who changed the Roman identity, resulting for instance in the Greco-Roman culture that spread through the Mediterranean. Their flexibility in welcoming led to a mixed identity, but a thriving one. I do not see Collier's plea for the preservation of nation-states and national identity as arguments against admitting newcomers, but rather for the preservation of the valuable qualities of these institutions, such as the mutual regard that makes people willing to pay taxes. His main point seems to be that there must be a balanced plan for migration in the interests of both host and origin nations – it's a call for moderation that I think the Romans would have approved of.

Roman lessons about using flexibility to welcome different cultures

One of the issues I raised in the introduction is what the Romans could tell us about welcoming different cultural groups and religions into an existing society and still preserving harmony. The Romans do not have a totally clean record on this. As I have previously written, at certain points in their history, they created Roman and Latin colonies that sometimes wiped out local cultures and languages, and even killed off existing cities. They also exerted pressure on many subjugated territories, especially in the west and north, to adopt the Roman culture and Latin language, although the degree to which they did this was moderated by the extremely thin administration that oversaw the empire. By the time of the emperors, according to Garnsey and Saller, there was no "grand design" to spread Roman culture throughout the empire.[676] The eastern empire, with its well-developed cultures, especially Greek cities, was left undisturbed. The result was a wide variety of different cultures, cities and territories, all affected to different degrees by their Roman masters. We could compare this to today's idea of multiculturalism, where a variety of different cultures exist within one nation. As I have written, this concept has run into difficulties because of the lack of integration into the overall society, with the different groups living what has been called "parallel lives." This must have been even more exaggerated in Rome, where different groups with totally different cultures and languages were spread across a vast territory. What did the rude

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[676] Garnsey and Saller, *Roman Empire*, 202.

Britons have in common with the Egyptians and Greeks, for example? The answer, a perfect illustration of Rome's flexibility, was to provide an overall umbrella of "Roman-ness" that included them all but was vague enough to include all kinds of relationships and associations with Rome. Some areas were governed by officials sent out by Rome, while some were ruled by local monarchs who had Rome's support. As I have previously described, in the time of the emperors, many territories were left to essentially "Romanize" themselves if they chose to do so – and it was to the personal advantage of local aristocrats to do that. So how does this apply to a modern nation trying to incorporate groups of newcomers? Despite their extreme flexibility surrounding all these groups and cultures, the one thing the Romans always did was to ensure there were links connecting them all. The development of an emperor cult after Augustus took over seems like an example of the deliberate creation of a device that would link everyone in the empire. But there were other links, such as the citizenship that gave all citizens everywhere the same legal rights, and the military, which provided a common experience for all the people who joined. The message from the Romans, then, was that it is quite possible for a nation to be made up of disparate groups, but there must be something to link them to the nation and to each other.

The Romans also welcomed all kinds of religions and cults, which as a polytheistic society, it was easy for them to do. Most modern Western societies like to think of themselves as open to various religions, but this has been tested in recent years with the arrival of large numbers of Muslim migrants, whose beliefs sometimes run up against those of modern Westerners. Some societies, including Quebec and certain European nations, are objecting to the wearing of visible religious symbols, and have begun banning them. What message might the Romans have for us in this dilemma? While they were extremely flexible, they imposed their own standards on the religious practices of others. For example, even though the senate brought to Rome the cult of Cybele from Asia Minor in 205 BCE along with the goddess's cult image – a big black stone – they refused to let Roman citizens participate fully in its orgiastic rites.[677] Similarly, they banned human sacrifice and the Gauls' practice of displaying the heads of

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[677] Beard, *SPQR*, 764.

enemies on their doorposts. Religious symbols are unlikely to have upset the Romans, as religion was so deeply embedded in their culture, but given their precedent of banning what they considered unacceptable practices, I suggest they would have considered it reasonable for societies with vehement objections to religious symbols to restrict them. It seems like a matter of the degree to which something is considered offensive. Many Western societies have also imposed bans on such practices as female genital mutilation, so already have followed the Romans down the path of prohibiting what is considered beyond acceptable.

The flexibility the Romans exhibited in their welcoming of others is another issue that may have some lessons for us. As I've previously written, they issued far warmer welcomes to those of similar origins and familiar cultures than to those with more distant ones. Latins got citizenship much faster than Italians, who were subsequently favoured over non-Italians. The Romans favoured and imitated the Greeks, while considering westerners and northerners barbarians who should be civilized up to Roman standards. Favouring certain peoples and cultures over others is a touchy business in modern times, but the Romans clearly established that it has always been a reality. What would be the justifications for it? One would be the trust engendered by common family or geographic ties – at a very basic level, people from the same blood background or territory are more likely to be friendly than those with nothing in common. We saw this in operation in Aeneas' encounters in *The Aeneid*. On a practical level, newcomers would find it easier to fit into a society where the same language was spoken and cultural practices were similar. The host society would also find them more useful, faster, than those who had to learn the language and adjust to a new culture. There is also the reality that strangeness is off-putting to many; consider Juvenal's Umbricius' vicious descriptions of the clothes, hairstyles and habits of newcomers from different cultures, or the nasty stereotypes Cicero and other intellectuals of his era applied to those from other cultures or cities. As for favouring the Greek culture over others, this was likely because the Roman and Greek societies were developing at about the same pace at the same time, and there was always considerable interaction between them. Greek political systems, city structures and levels of intellectual activity would almost certainly have been more advanced than in some of the places the Romans denigrated. The Romans can remind us that hostility toward

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strangers, especially those with whom we do not share much in common, has always been a reality. Modern reactions to people from very different backgrounds are nothing new. But there is also a practical reality that it takes longer, requires more services and is a more difficult adjustment for those who arrive from different cultures without the language of the host country. Paul Collier noted that "some cultures are more distant from the culture of the indigenous population than others,"[678] and the more distant they are, the slower the rate of absorption. He suggested that education, employability, vulnerability and culture "to the extent possible without transgression into racism"[679] should be the criteria for selecting immigrants. It's easier, cheaper and more comfortable for the indigenous if newcomers have the same language, come from the same background and slip easily into the host culture. This would not have been an issue for those whose territories were taken over by Rome and were not subjected to high degrees of Romanization, but it would have applied to the many slaves who ended up in Rome, who had to learn a new language and culture. The fact that so many did this, and did it successfully enough that they produced aisles of epigraphic material, is a testimony to how well it is possible to do despite the obstacles.

Compromise

> Compromise: "A coming to terms, or arrangement of a dispute, by concessions on both sides; partial surrender of one's position, for the sake of coming to terms." Also, "Adjustment for practical purposes of rival courses of action, systems, or theories, conflicting opinions or principles, by the sacrifice or surrender of a part of each." *Oxford English Dictionary*

Today's migration debates tend to be highly polarized, with pro- and anti-migration camps flinging vitriol at each other from extreme positions. Compromise is not part of the picture when one side views any questioning of migration as racist, and the other fears the poor of the earth will swamp the developed West. And yet for the Romans, compromise, along with its complementary attitudes of flexibility and practicality, was fundamental. My argument is that the Romans understood that compromise was

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[678] Collier, *Exodus*, 262.

[679] Collier, *Exodus*, 262.

necessary first to create their empire, then to hold it together; in order for there to be unity, there would also have to be concessions. Good examples of this occurred after the fourth-century BCE Latin War and the first-century BCE Social War, when the Romans defeated former allies who were fighting for the privilege of Roman citizenship. Having beaten their enemies, the Romans promptly turned around and gave them exactly what they had been fighting for. Virgil and Livy, whose myths so clearly spelled out the tenets of Roman thinking, emphasized the importance of compromise in the interests of unity, in both *The Aeneid* and the tale of the rape of the Sabine women. As well as illustrating different kinds of compromise in bringing cultures together, they also show the extreme importance that the Romans placed on culture itself. There are messages for us today in both these stories.

In Virgil's poem, the victorious Trojans agreed to virtually disappear into the defeated Latin race in order to create one strong, united populace. As ordained by the supreme god Jove, the Trojans gave up their name and adopted the Latin language, culture, and style of dress, while the Latins were allowed to retain "their fathers' words and ways"[680] Livy's version is that Aeneas thought sharing a common name would strengthen the bond between the two peoples: the result was that the "original settlers were no less loyal to their king Aeneas than were the Trojans themselves."[681] In this story, the most powerful group thought the long-term goal of unity was important enough to give up their own culture in order to achieve it. There was no effort to keep both cultures; the implication was that unity required one to disappear. While the Trojans gave up the most, the Latins sacrificed something too. In accepting Aeneas as king and combining peacefully with the Trojans, they gave up the resentment and anger of the humiliated, with all the potential for future revenge. To me, the most striking aspect of the story is the willingness of the most powerful group to make a huge sacrifice in the interests of long-term unity. In today's terms, the indigenous of the wealthy West are the powerful. What, if anything, are they willing to give up to keep their nation together at a time when migration is causing great changes? And if compromise means sacrifice on

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[680] Virgil, *The Aeneid*, 382.

[681] Livy, *History*, 32.

both sides, what are newcomers prepared to give up to ensure harmony in their new land? I would argue that this is an instance where our modern individualistic society, with the community interest in second place, is likely to come up with different answers than the Romans did. If people are unwilling to sacrifice for the common good, given the continuing migration we are assured is inevitable, the end result is likely to be conflict and divisiveness.

The second myth, based on the truce between the Romans and Sabines following the rape of the Sabine women, illustrates unity through a different kind of compromise. In this case, neither side had defeated the other, so the parties were equal, which was reflected in a delicate balancing act to keep both sides happy and protect the cultures of both. Each side gave up its independent status, but both gained in belonging to a bigger, stronger entity that not only preserved but enhanced their cultures. In modern terms, this could be seen as an ideal example of multiculturalism, while the earlier Trojan example could be compared to extreme assimilation. These are myths, so they don't provide us with real-life outcomes of either strategy. But what they do reveal is the Romans' attitude to compromise, and how fluidly and strategically it could be used to achieve their goals, whether it was the founding of the Roman race through the Trojans' sacrifice, or the expansion of early Rome through combining its inhabitants with Sabines.

These myths also illustrate the sheer importance of culture as it relates to migration; as we have seen, fear of cultural change figures largely in the opposition to migration in modern times. They also show how culture can be used to unite or divide people, an issue reflected in modern controversies about the wearing of culturally or religiously related items such as niqabs or yarmulkes. Since 2011, a number of European countries, including France, Austria, Germany, Belgium and Bulgaria have instituted various bans on face-covering garments, measures that usually resulted in some pushback. Two Muslim women challenged Belgium's ban, for example, arguing that it violated their right to privacy and freedom of religion. The European Court of Human

Rights ruled against them, saying the law was meant to "guarantee the conditions of 'living together' and the 'protection of the rights and freedoms of others.'"[682]

In June of 2019, the Quebec provincial government aroused similar controversy when it passed a law that banned public-sector teachers, police officers, government lawyers and other figures of authority from wearing religious symbols at work. This included crosses, head scarves, turbans and other visible items of religious importance. The constitutionality of the law, commonly known as Bill 21, is being challenged by the National Council of Canadian Muslims and the Canadian Civil Liberties Association.[683] The law is so controversial that most federal politicians treated it as what *Globe and Mail* columnist John Ibbitson called a "third rail" during the 2019 election campaign.[684] Only NDP leader Jagmeet Singh, who wears a turban himself, stood firm against it, calling it "legislated discrimination."[685] Canadians outside Quebec are similarly split over the law, Ibbitson's column suggested. He quoted Mount Allison University political scientist Mario Levesque as saying that except for some of the bigger cities, he suspects there is a certain amount of support for Bill 21 elsewhere in Canada.[686] Ibbitson also quoted University of Toronto political scientist Erin Tolley as noting that research shows about one-third of Canadians oppose multiculturalism, one-third support it, and a third are "conditional multiculturalists" who according to the research findings "'approve of immigration and ethnic diversity, but only under certain conditions,' – the most important being that immigrants integrate fully into Canadian society."[687]

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[682] Liam Stack, "Burqa Bans: Which Countries Outlaw Face Coverings?" *The New York Times*, Oct. 19, 2017. https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/19/world/europe/quebec-burqa-ban-europe.html

[683] Benjamin Shingler, "Quebec's Religious Symbols Ban Causes 'Irreparable Harm,' Teachers Tell Court: Civil rights groups file affidavits ahead of appeal set for November," CBC News, Sept. 25, 2019. cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/quebec-teachers-1.5297120

[684] John Ibbitson, "Quebec's Religious Symbols Ban a Major Issue in Federal Election Campaign," *The Globe and Mail*, Sept. 13, 2019. https://www.theglobeandmail.com/politics/article-quebecs-religious-symbols-ban-a-major-issue-in-federal-election/

[685] Ibbitson, "Quebec," *The Globe and Mail*.

[686] Ibbitson, "Quebec," *The Globe and Mail*.

[687] Ibbitson, "Quebec," *The Globe and Mail*.

Culture is clearly an emotional issue, regardless of the era or nationality. Modern migration triggers the same kind of highly charged debates about cultural impacts that Jove and Juno engaged in over the Trojans and Latins. They resolved it by compromise, as did the Romans and Sabines, resulting in the union of one-time enemies into single, more powerful entities. Given that migration will continue, and that both the indigenous and new arrivals will continue to feel strongly about their cultures, I suggest that compromise will have to be the modern solution too.

Moving toward modern solutions

Given the Roman success with compromise, how should we approach the modern dilemma of Western nations' increasing hostility to migrants while more and more people from the poorer parts of the world want to move to the wealthy West? Two of the texts I have used for this project approached that question from very different points of view. *The Age of Migration* authors contended that any meaningful migration policy must begin from the starting point of accepting the inevitability of migration and the permanent settlement and formation of ethnic groups as part of the way contemporary societies are changing.[688] Instead of considering migration abnormal and trying to stop or reduce it, the focus should be on improving global economic and social equality so migration will occur under better circumstances and "enrich the experiences and capabilities of migrants and communities."[689] Genuine reform of trade policies, for example, could encourage economic growth in less-developed countries.[690]

Exodus author Paul Collier emphasized that he does not oppose migration; rather that his question is how much, how fast? Migration is a response to extreme gaps between the rich and poor nations of the world,[691] he argued, and unless countries come up with more reasonable, well-thought-out policies, it will accelerate to the point that it is no longer positive for either origin or receiving countries. A good migration policy is a

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[688] Castles et al., *Age*, 318.

[689] Castles et al., *Age*, 322.

[690] Castles et al., *Age*, 322.

[691] Collier, *Exodus,* 271.

balancing act, taking into account the effects on receiving nations, origin countries and migrants themselves, Collier argued, but current ones are not that. Shaped by "guilty reactions to different past wrongs,"[692] they vary wildly around the world – from completely closed to extremely open, with different admission criteria, different rights and different obligations – and reflect a "toxic context of high emotion and little knowledge."[693] His solution was to work out a policy package that he believes balances the various interests. Under it, the government would crack down hard on racism and discrimination by the indigenous,[694] but also make numerous demands on newcomers. Predictably on such a touchy subject, it contains some controversial ideas, such as welcoming asylum-seekers generously and swiftly but requiring them to return home once their country has stabilized so they can help rebuild it.[695] I will include some of his further proposals, not because I necessarily agree with them, but because I see them as his effort to do what the Romans did – find a way of balancing varying interests to achieve unity. To me, his solutions seem weighted toward the interests of the indigenous of host countries. But these are the people who voted for anti-immigrant parties, approved Brexit and elected Donald Trump, so their concerns cannot be dismissed. Collier's policy package includes imposing ceilings on immigration that take into account the social and economic impact of newcomers on the host society. Education, employability, culture and the rate at which newcomers are absorbed into the mainstream would be factors; the slower the absorption rate, the lower the ceiling.[696] Migrants would be dispersed geographically[697] and discouraged from remaining in "a comfort zone of cultural separation,"[698] be required to send their children to integrated schools with ceilings on the percentage from diasporas, and their right to bring in relatives would be limited.[699] They'd be required to learn the indigenous language, with resources provided

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[692] Collier, *Exodus,* 15.

[693] Collier, *Exodus,* 12-13.

[694] Collier, *Exodus,* 264.

[695] Collier, *Exodus,* 263.

[696] Collier, *Exodus,* 264.

[697] Collier, *Exodus,* 264.

[698] Collier, *Exodus*, 270.

[699] Collier, *Exodus,* 270.

to make this feasible.[700] The policy would also encourage integration by promoting "the symbols and ceremonies of common citizenship."[701] Those who would lose most from such a policy would be prospective migrants, who have interests like anyone else, but "there is no reason for their interest to trump those of others."[702] Indigenous populations of host countries have a right to control entry, taking into account not only their own interest but also a sense of charity to others:[703] "[T]heir chief concern should be the vast group of poor people left behind in countries of origin, rather than on the relatively tiny group of fortunate people who get dramatic increases in their income through being permitted to migrate."[704] Like other migration scholars, he noted that it is not the poorest people who migrate; those who have nothing stay home.

The Age of Migration authors placed more emphasis on the needs and welfare of migrants, as well as on how they can help reshape the future. For example, regarding temporary foreign workers, they argued that host countries should accept that if they admit them, at least some will stay permanently. Regarding migrants generally, the authors contended that the character of future ethnic groups will be affected by their initial treatment: "Policies which deny the reality of immigration encourage social marginalization, racism and minority formation."[705] As well, host countries should accept that immigrants need their own associations, networks, language and culture to cope with the difficulty of resettling, and that the best way to prevent marginalization and social conflicts is to grant permanent immigrants full rights by making citizenship easily available.[706] Indeed, in a changing world, the authors suggested that immigration countries may have to re-examine what it means to belong to their societies and look to newcomers for help: "Immigrants may be able to make a special contribution to the development of new forms of identity. It has always been part of the migrant condition to

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[700] Collier, *Exodus,* 264.

[701] Collier, *Exodus,* 264.

[702] Collier, *Exodus,* 270.

[703] Collier, *Exodus,* 270.

[704] Collier, *Exodus*, 270.

[705] Castles et al., *Age*, 292.

[706] Castles et al., *Age*, 292-293.

develop multiple identities, which are linked to the cultures both of the country of origin and the destination."[707] Despite the conflicts about the effects of ethnic diversity on national cultures and identity, "immigration does offer perspectives for change,"[708] the authors wrote: "New principles of identity may emerge, which may be neither exclusionary nor discriminatory, and may provide the basis for better intergroup cooperation,"[709] Thus, while Collier saw migrants as needing to fit into existing societies, *The Age of Migration* authors saw them as key to creating new identities for those same societies.

In seeking solutions to modern-day dilemmas around welcoming newcomers, the authors of both of these books were employing Roman-style strategies of trying to achieve unity through compromise. I think Collier was requiring a bigger compromise on the part of migrants, with fairly strict requirements that they learn the indigenous language and integrate through education and geographic dispersal. The requirements for the indigenous were less onerous – not to be racist or discriminatory. *The Age of Migration* authors proposed more compromise on the part of the indigenous – to accept that newcomers need the comfort of their own cultures and languages as they settle in a new land, and to look to these newcomers for ways of shaping new forms of identity more in keeping with the diversity emerging as an important part of the new world. It's implicit that the newcomers will have to compromise to some degree to adjust to the new society they are living in. In both cases, the authors are illustrating the strategies of the ancient Romans by seeking unity through compromise.

How the ancient Romans might help us discuss migration

I look to the Roman Forum, where advocates, orators and politicians constantly held forth on matters of public concern, to suggest that one way of dealing with the current negativity toward immigration is to simply open it up for public discussion. Given that scholars have pointed to anti-migration sentiment being fueled by a cone of silence,

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[707] Castles et al., *Age*, 330.

[708] Castles et al., *Age*, 330.

[709] Castles et al., *Age*, 330.

with anyone who questions migration called racist, and authorities turning a blind eye to public concerns, one obvious solution seems to be to take the cone away. But I would not suggest simply throwing the topic open to what passes for discussion today. Its sensitivity means special efforts would be required to ensure discussions are civil, moderate, respectful and based on reliable research and facts, which should be readily available to all. Perhaps the Romans could give us some help in structuring a different kind of debate than we are used to in modern times. We would learn little from the usual discussions, which tend to be dominated by people vehemently stating their points, but failing to listen to the arguments of others, let alone possibly changing their minds. The Socratic form of debate that Cicero used in some of his philosophical works presents a different way of going about a discussion. The Greek word for it, *dialogos*, connoting an "investigative discussion"[710] marks it out as very different from the kind of debates we're accustomed to. Originating in fifth-century BCE Greece and popularized in Rome in the second and first centuries BCE, it usually involved a dialogue between several speakers who didn't just defend their own positions, but were willing to change them if others' arguments were sufficiently convincing. In his philosophical treatises, Cicero used the Socratic-Platonic method instilled in him by his teacher, Philo of Larissa, which involved "treating no one as authoritative, keeping debates alive, and siding provisionally with what on each occasion strikes one as the 'truer' or 'more probable' among the competing positions."[711] This would be an unusual way of discussing migration, but if it was well done and presented in a comprehensible and accessible manner, it may just be unusual enough to have an impact. However, regardless of how well it might be done, it is probably unrealistic to expect widespread agreement on a topic as controversial as migration. Perhaps the goal instead should be an educated public, wide circulation of the real facts instead of misperceptions about it, and a lowering of the temperature surrounding the topic.

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[710] David Marsh, *The Quattrocento Dialogue: Classical Tradition and Humanist Innovation*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), 2.

[711] David Sedley, "Philosophy," in *The Oxford Handbook of Roman Studies*, eds. Alessandro Barchiesi and Walter Scheidel, (Oxford University Press), 704.

As I have earlier discussed, migration authors Paul Collier and Eric Kaufmann alleged that fear of being accused of racism meant the topic of immigration was not discussed for many years. As previously noted, Kaufmann described this as introducing a "blockage in the democratic process" that prevented the negotiation of reasonable trade-offs, and resulted in pressure building up from those whose grievances were ignored, opening the doors to the populist right.[712] When the backlash against migration began in Europe, the taboos against discussion of migration-related topics – multiculturalism, immigration and Islam – started to fall. A graphic in Kaufmann's *Whiteshift*[713] shows only Anglo-Canada, Australia and New Zealand still have taboos on questioning multiculturalism, whereas those prohibitions dissolved in Europe, the U.S. and Quebec in the 1990s. In Canada, Australia, Ireland, Spain and Portugal, there are also taboos on discussing immigration levels, whereas this became possible in most of Europe in the 1990s and 2000s; in Sweden, Germany and the U.S. in 2015; and in New Zealand in 2017.[714]

While this project is focusing on modern Western nations generally rather than one in particular, in this section I will single out Canada because, as Kaufmann's graphic points out, it seems to be in the forefront of avoiding discussion of migration issues. This may be a sign of Canada's credentials as a welcoming nation – proof of Trudeau's idea that having no national identity makes it more open to newcomers. But I suggest there is also the possibility that failing to discuss migration may result in the kind of explosion and rise of anti-immigrant sentiment that occurred in Europe. Canada's unusual attitude toward migration tends to get mentioned by migration writers: *The Age of Migration* authors called it one of few remaining countries in the world with an "active and expansive permanent immigration policy," with its aim of admitting one percent of its population in newcomers every year and one of the highest shares of foreign-born residents – at 21 percent of its population – in any developed country.[715]

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[712] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift,* 3.

[713] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 349.

[714] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 348-349.

[715] Castles et al., *Age,* 134.

Kaufmann singled out Canada as being unusual in its ability to avoid right-wing populism in spite of its rapid ethnic change and high foreign-born population: "Among high-immigration Western countries, only in Canada do all parties favour generous immigration and multiculturalism while facing no challenge from the populist right."[716] One reason may be that Anglo-Canadians "share the relatively pro-immigration outlook common to all Anglo settler societies,"[717] he suggested. As well, the linguistic cleavage in Canada may split anti-immigrant voters between conservative-minded parties in English Canada and Quebec, meaning there is never a united anti-immigrant voting bloc.[718] Another factor may be the boundaries of acceptable discourse in English Canada: Canada, unlike Australia, has no conservative tabloid press, and when the media "unites behind a set of liberal norms, it can marginalize dissenting views. . . . Only a few scattered voices, writing occasional opinion pieces, call for reduced immigration…."[719] The prohibitions are strong in Canada. Kaufmann noted that when Kellie Leitch ran for the leadership of the Conservative Party in 2017 and proposed screening immigrants for 'Canadian values' of liberalism and tolerance "she was overtly or indirectly branded as a racist by several politicians and commentators."[720] And when Trudeau raised immigration targets from 260,000 to 340,000 per year in 2017, which Kaufmann noted was equivalent to three times American or West European levels, the Conservatives criticized only the skill mix, not the levels.[721] According to Kaufmann, surveys show about 40 percent of Canadians support lower immigration levels, so there is an "important constituency of conservative and authoritarian voters in English Canada" who have no political vehicles at the federal level.[722] Kaufmann's book was written before the October 2019 federal election, which included a party whose policies pushed for lower

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[716] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 289.

[717] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 277.

[718] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 277.

[719] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 277-278.

[720] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 278.

[721] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 351.

[722] Kaufmann, *Whiteshift*, 275-276.

immigration levels. However, Maxime Bernier's People's Party of Canada received less than two percent of the vote, elected no MPs, and Bernier himself lost his seat.

Given that Canada is one of the most welcoming countries in the world to migrants right now, the question that could be asked is, what's wrong with not discussing immigration issues? But looking at Europe, I suggest that lack of discussion may have helped cause the anti-migration explosion there. Perhaps Canada could head off any such problems by opening up a debate, with exemplary high standards for how it should be conducted, on migration policies. *Vancouver Sun* immigration columnist Douglas Todd proposed just such a debate in a Sept. 30, 2017 opinion piece, describing Canada as "one of the few advanced countries that can't seem to hold an authentic public discussion about immigration policy."[723] He cited an essay by Immigration Department official Andrew Griffith in the journal *Policy Options* titled, "How to debate immigration policy in Canada," that I would argue could be applied elsewhere. Todd noted that Griffith first examined the arguments of the boosters, "the people, usually from the corporate world, who want to dramatically hike migration rates" to boost Canada's population to 100 million, soon. Among Griffith's suggestions: That advocates of expanded immigration stop labelling their opponents xenophobes and racists; that they stop making sweeping claims about the economic pluses of migration – instead of referring to the GDP, they should talk about regional impacts; that they stop talking about Canada as a vast empty land needing filling while ignoring the fact that almost all migrants move to major cities; and that they stop ignoring how technology will likely reduce jobs for domestic and immigrant Canadians "who increasingly have poorer outcomes." They should also stop dismissing critics' concerns about newcomers arriving with different cultural 'values,' and stop denying the rise of ethnic enclaves "and how slow integration can be costly to the host society, the social safety net and immigrants themselves." On the other side, Griffiths said migration critics should stop using individual examples to assign negative characteristics to entire ethno-cultural groups; to stop looking mainly at the costs of immigration while overlooking benefits, and to stop over-using labels such as elites or

[723] Douglas Todd, "Douglas Todd: How to Debate Immigration Without Distorting Facts and Foes," *The Vancouver Sun*, Oct. 6, 2017. https://vancouversun.com/opinion/columnists/douglas-todd-debating-immigration-wisely-means-not-vilifying-opponents

liberals. Todd quoted Griffith as saying debate is "normal and healthy, provided that it is conducted in a respectful and thoughtful manner." Griffith suggested fear of being labelled xenophobic "is the over-riding contributor to Canadians' unusual silence on mass migration, which has arguably defined this country more than any other," Todd wrote, adding that neither politicians nor academics are willing to critique how immigration affects the country.[724] As if to underline his point, a May 31, 2019 *Globe and Mail* editorial praised Canadian Conservative Party leader Andrew Scheer for a speech giving a "rhetorical embrace of Canada's longstanding, middle-of-the-road, Conservative-Liberal immigration consensus." At a time when conservative parties around the world "are increasingly pandering to nativist impulses, it was positive and necessary and a little bit wonderful to hear the leader of Canada's Conservative Party embrace Canada's fact as a nation of immigrants,"[725] the editorial continued.

It would appear that neither the *Globe* editorialists nor the Conservative Party want any questions raised about immigration in Canada, regardless of the 40 percent of the population that does have reservations. In the previously cited March 18, 2019 column about lack of transparency about immigration, *Sun* columnist Todd asked: "One concern is that if Canadians are purposely being kept in the dark about immigration developments, and even opposition politicians are afraid of raising the subject for fear of being labelled xenophobic or racist, how can the host society make wise choices about an issue that has defined the country?"[726]

As a classical immigration country based on the continual arrival of newcomers, Canada may be in the enviable position of Rome, which managed to successfully welcome newcomers for centuries. For countries that see themselves as homogenous, it's more difficult. But I think all would benefit from thorough, fact-based discussions so

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[724] Todd, "Debate," *The Vancouver Sun*.

[725] Globe and Mail editorial board, "Andrew Scheer, Justin Trudeau and the Immigration Consensus Nobody Wants to Admit to," *The Globe and Mail*, May 31, 2019. https://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/editorials/article-andrew-scheer-justin-trudeau-and-the-immigration-consensus-nobody/

[726] Todd, "Debate," *Vancouver Sun*.

everyone understands – even if they don't necessarily agree – on why their country is welcoming or rejecting the large number of people seeking new homes.

Conclusion

With their ruthless, all-conquering legions, colourfully dressed gladiators dying bloodily to the cheers of thousands, their golden palaces and mad emperors, the ancient Romans have always served as an example of bizarre extremes. How strange, then, to be arguing that these same people built a connected, unified, practical society that was able to welcome waves of newcomers in ways that could teach modern Westerners a thing or two. Yes, they fought bloody wars of conquest, owned slaves and believed only torture would force the truth from them, but it was attributes like flexibility, ability to compromise and an understanding of human behaviour that enabled them to create an empire full of strangers and hold them together for centuries. What started them down this path we don't know. But the earliest accounts point to their down-to-earth mindset: instead of automatically killing the people of conquered territories and razing their lands, which was common practice at the time, they transformed the defeated into Roman citizens and sent settlers to the captured lands. The result was exponential growth in both territory and population, and a policy of welcoming that continued through the centuries.

The modern Western societies that make up the other side of this project have better education, sanitation and medical knowledge, more concern for human rights and equality, and of course vast technological advantages. But this project has found they also have some aspects that make them less welcoming to newcomers than the Romans were. For example, Roman society was based on the ideal of a tightly bound citizen body working together for the common good – which included incorporating the newcomers who were constantly arriving. This ideal was shattered in the civil wars and other turmoil of the first century BCE, but it was based on very different ideas than modern societies that champion the individual above all and have political processes that can leave large chunks of the populace alienated from its leaders. Other aspects of Roman society that I think predisposed it toward welcoming newcomers were its high degrees of connectivity and unity. By comparison, research is showing that the people of modern societies are increasingly disconnected from each other and from their communities. On the issue of unity, modern societies seem to lack the Roman sense that an increasingly diverse

population requires strenuous efforts to pull it together. The results of these modern attitudes have been the kind of scenarios that sparked this project: nations so hostile to migrants that boatloads of people rescued from the sea aren't allowed to dock, asylum-seekers pepper-sprayed at the U.S. border, and rising support for anti-immigrant, populist parties in many Western nations, including some once considered the most progressive.

The Romans were certainly no saints. They brutally conquered huge territories, pillaged their cities for booty, then extracted egregious levels of taxes and manpower for the Roman army. Many of the conquered were enslaved, and it was only the luckiest who ended up in the fortunate urban positions I have described. The cruelty toward slaves and other outcasts in the fields, mines and blood-stained arenas was as horrible as popularly imagined. There were huge gaps between the poor and rich, with little help for the former and unimaginably wasteful extravagance for the latter. Ancient Rome was not a model we would like to emulate, for many reasons. But this project has been about another side of Rome, a side in which astute leaders came up with practical solutions to the obvious dilemmas of bringing together large numbers of diverse people and keeping them united. Here are some of the main areas in which I think the ancient Romans have something to teach modern societies that are also facing mass movements of people:

Connections: The down-to-earth Romans knew that connecting migrants to their new society was key, both for the newcomers and for the society. And so we have the legend that at the very founding of Rome, Romulus created the patron-client system that linked newcomers to the well-established and provided the basis for Rome's highly networked society from that time forward. Later, but still in pre-republican times, came the census, which divided the population into classes according to wealth, and assigned commensurate military and civic duties. Which led to historian Claude Nicolet's memorable picture of highly networked Roman citizens walking to and from the city by the "thousands and sometimes the tens of thousands" [727]to take part in its political, military and social life. As he described it, they all would have had multiple relationships, based on geography, marriage, patronage, civic duties and voting rights. Even the

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[727] Nicolet, *World of the Citizen*, 389.

physical city of Rome encouraged connections, offering luxurious public facilities that enticed people to mix and interact. My argument throughout has been that a highly connected society like this is more welcoming to newcomers than a disconnected one, as it creates the potential for multiple interactions and provides various avenues for integration into the community. By contrast, I do not think modern Western societies put great priority on encouraging connections. Based on individualism, with technology and automation steadily distancing people from real-life encounters, modern societies have no equivalent of the rich range of connections that Nicolet described. Or, indeed, that we can see peeping out of Cicero's or Pliny the Younger's gossipy letters. Today's migrant advocacy groups do stellar work, as I have described, and certainly help some newcomers find connections with their new surroundings. Governments also provide varying amounts of integration assistance, depending on their philosophies and resources. But overall, I suggest that the societies migrants are joining today do not have the kind of connections that Nicolet described. Meanwhile, there is the question of connections for the alienated indigenous who, according to research, begin to hunker down and withdraw from even mainstream society when diversity increases in their neighbourhoods. The assumption is that since they are indigenous, they have all the connections they need, but I think the rise of anti-immigrant sentiment is a statement that this group's concerns should not be ignored. In summary, I would argue that while we cannot magically transform Western societies into more connected ones, we can be aware of how our disconnected societies affect both migrants and the indigenous, and the welcoming they are likely to receive and extend.

Unity: I have described how intensely, almost obsessively, the ancient Romans worked to promote unity once they had welcomed newcomers. I believe they were astute enough to understand that adding people from many different backgrounds to their empire would be divisive unless they made serious efforts to link them in some way. Modern research has shown the Romans were prescient – the arrival of newcomers has been shown to reduce social cohesion, especially at the local level. Even though, unlike the Romans, modern nations have this research at their fingertips, I suggest that they are underplaying the issue and placing less priority than the Romans did on ensuring there is a sense of commonality between newcomers and the indigenous. It's true that many of

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the Roman unification strategies would not be appropriate for modern times: Establishing colonies to impose the majority culture, instituting a state religion of leader worship, or scattering historical statues and mementoes everywhere are practices that clearly belong to another era. But what's important for us today is to look at what was behind those actions – the understanding that when many different groups are brought together into one entity, they need to be linked through something. It was a lack of these common links, illustrated by the finding that different groups in England were leading "parallel lives," that seems to have led to the backlash against multiculturalism in a number of countries. As a result, there has been a return to the concepts of integration and social cohesion that the Romans, with their emphasis on unity, would have understood well. I suggest modern societies need to spend more time, thought and imagination in coming up with workable ways to establish links between the diverse groups that are the reality in most modern nations.

Flexibility: Like supple trees that bend in high winds instead of snapping, the Romans were able to keep welcoming strangers and adding territories while remaining united because of their ability to transform, shift and innovate according to changing conditions. Drawing on historian Emma Dench's ideas about metamorphosis and mobility,[728] I suggest this flexibility began with the Romans' view of their own identity and spread out from there. There were historical tales and traditions about what it meant to be Roman, and what their city and society stood for, but all could be transformed and adjusted to suit the times while remaining under the usefully broad label of "Roman-ness." Just as people could change – lowly slaves into rich businessmen, for example –so could the rules governing state affairs. As the emperor Claudius made clear in his 48 CE speech about admitting Gauls to the senate, everything changes, but that just sets a new precedent that will change in turn.[729] The Roman idea of the flexibility of both personal and state identity seems like an important one for modern times. Claudius would have had a message for homogenous nation-states balking at the acceptance of newcomers from different backgrounds: Whatever you accept today will be the new tradition for

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[728] Dench, *Romulus' Asylum*, 143-144.

[729] Tacitus, *Annals*, Book 11.

tomorrow, and your nation will ultimately be better off for the welcoming of newcomers. At the personal level, the Roman experience suggests that people who are not fixed solidly to one idea of identity – their own or others – may be more flexible about welcoming newcomers from different backgrounds. But the Romans also illustrated that a world in flux is not a comfortable one – the transformation of slaves from objects with no rights to freed people with the rights of citizens raised status anxieties among the freeborn; anyone not born in Rome, and worse, from the provinces, was subject to ridicule, and the established jealously guarded their privileges. I think one valuable lesson we can take away is that we should expect conflicts and differences when newcomers arrive, and instead of being shocked, focus our energies on overcoming them.

Predictably, Roman leaders found flexible solutions to the unease resulting from the great changes occurring in their times. One strategy was preserving the illusion of conservative traditions while in fact proceeding with whatever changes the circumstances called for. Consider Augustus' efforts to reassure the populace of the importance of the old traditions of piety, courage and simplicity, for example while at the same time taking advantage of war booty to transform Rome, as he later boasted, from a city of brick to a city of marble. This might sound two-faced or hypocritical, but I suggest it was also a flexible way of dealing with fears of change at the same time as moving forward with changes that the city's wealth made possible. The message for our times is not to practice sleight of hand, but to be aware of the anxieties raised by change and do what's possible to allay them, while at the same time moving realistically into the future.

Hand in hand with flexibility is compromise – that Roman tradition of giving ground when it was seemingly unnecessary. Aeneas modelled this when he gave up the Trojan culture for the Latin one, even though he'd defeated the Latins. In real life, the Romans did this when they granted citizenship to territories that had been fighting them for that very thing. The Romans won, but they handed over the prize anyway. I suggest their reasoning was that the resulting harmony – and maybe even some gratitude – would be far more beneficial in the long term than if they were to mercilessly crush the defeated. Such concepts may seem foreign in our polarized times, when there is an almost visceral sense of wanting to obliterate opponents. But when we think about the long-term

impact of going too far in any direction, I suggest the Roman idea of combining compromise and moderation with flexibility may serve us better.

The Age of Migration authors gave us an example of just such a potential compromise for modern times. Instead of viewing newcomers from different backgrounds as people who must be reshaped into the mould of existing societies, the authors suggested that in an increasingly globalized world, it may be time for modern nations to do some reshaping themselves. "Citizens of immigration countries may have to re-examine their understanding of what it means to belong to their societies,"[730] the authors suggested. "Monocultural and assimilationist models of national identity are no longer adequate for the new situation."[731] And who would best help with this rethinking? The newcomers themselves, the authors proposed, "as it has always been part of the migrant condition to develop multiple identities. . . ."[732] In this one idea, the authors combined flexibility, compromise and innovation – all elements of Roman strategies that helped smooth the path for welcoming newcomers for centuries.

I began this project with a description of the pluses of welcoming – museums in Rome full of treasures produced by the different cultures that all came together to create what Harriet I. Flower called a "culture of fusion."[733] Another testament to Roman flexibility, this mixture of Greek, native Italian and Roman traditions became the Greco-Roman culture that spread throughout the Mediterranean and is still evident today. Because this project has focused on the more controversial aspects of welcoming, it hasn't celebrated the enormous vitality and energy that the blending of peoples and cultures can generate. But this too, is an important lesson the Romans taught about welcoming, and should not be forgotten amidst the controversies. Fortunately, for those who question the value of blending cultures, the Roman museums are always there to provide another point of view.

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[730] Castles et al., *Age*, 330.

[731] Castles et al., *Age*, 330.

[732] Castles et al., *Age*, 330.

[733] Flower, "Introduction,"1.

The 2015-2016 migrant crisis that sparked this project is over now, with migrant numbers falling to pre-2015 levels. But the anxiety, negativity and fear it provoked linger, and the political scene in Europe has undergone significant shifts as a result. We don't know how long-lasting these changes will be, or the long-term impact on Europe of the approximately two million people from Africa and the Middle East who made their way there. But we do know there will be more migrant crises in the future, especially as climate change tears more people away from their homes. Ancient Rome's lessons about welcoming strangers will be applicable for many years to come.

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